



**Center for Health Policy
School of Public and Environmental Affairs
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis**

2007 Single Night Street and Shelter Count

Kari Christensen, Kristina Patterson, Laura Littlepage, and Eric R. Wright, Ph.D.
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On January 25, 2007, the Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention (CHIP), with the help of students from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and community volunteers, conducted the biennial count of homeless individuals in Marion County. This point-in-time count, required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, included a tally of individuals in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs, and unsheltered individuals.

The numbers are alarming, but not surprising. A total of 2,061 homeless individuals were counted (see Table 1). While the overall numbers of homeless individuals in Indianapolis are staggering, they do not tell the complete story. For example:

- approximately 79% were sheltered in either an emergency shelter or a transitional housing program while 21% were unsheltered on the street;
- individuals in families with children accounted for 26% of Marion County's homeless population;
- one out of every three individuals was identified as having chronic substance abuse problems;
- approximately 12.5% of the homeless are veterans;
- one out of every five individuals was identified as a victim of domestic violence.

Table 1: Homeless Population and Subpopulations 2007

Homeless Population	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Individuals in Households with Children	229	312	0	541
Single Individuals and Persons in Households without Children	462	631	427	1520
Total Persons	691	943	427	2061

This year's count found a comparable number of homeless individuals as the previous two counts that were completed in 2003 and 2005 (see Table 2). The number of individuals found in emergency shelters was slightly lower than in previous counts, while the number of individuals in transitional housing programs was significantly lower. The difference found in the number of homeless individuals residing in transitional housing could be due to the reclassification of some programs and the closure of others.

On the other hand, the 2007 count found a significantly greater number of homeless individuals on the street than in previous years. While it is plausible that the number is increasing, it is also likely that the increase is partially due to the methods used this year to count individuals on the street. In addition to counting individuals in known places where homeless reside, volunteers also counted individuals in and around local hospitals and in randomly selected census tracts in order to gain a more accurate count of the homeless.

Table 2: Homeless Count Totals in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and unsheltered on the street, 2003, 2005, and 2007

Number of homeless counted	2003	2005	2007
Emergency Shelter	736	740	691
Transitional Housing	1290	1193	943
Street Count	204	147	427
TOTAL	2230	2080	2061

Over the past six years, there has been a slight reduction in the homeless population in Indianapolis; however, the total estimated homeless population continues to hover around 2,000 people. The persistent large numbers of homeless individuals in Indianapolis suggest that more efforts are needed to provide these people with the help and support they need to find permanent, safe living quarters and realize the vision for the city outlined in the Mayor's *Blueprint to End Homelessness*.

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