Squamish - 2021 Homeless Count
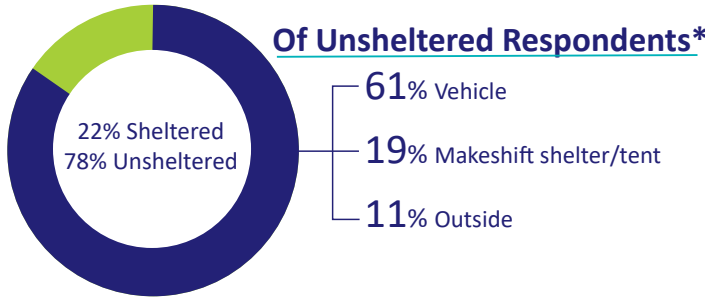
HSABC
Homelessness Services
Association of BC

The 2021 Point in Time homeless count occurred in Squamish on the evening of April 28 and the day of April 29 to help provide an overall snapshot of homelessness in the community.
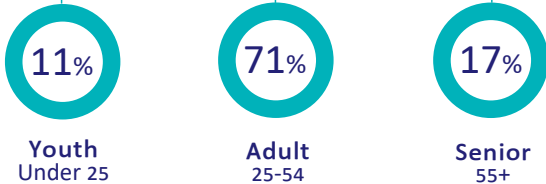
107 People were identified as experiencing homelessness. This is the first homeless count to occur in Squamish.

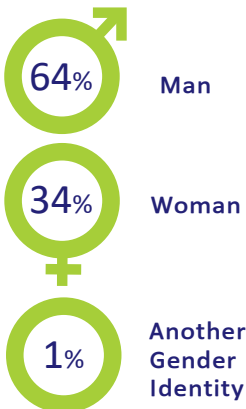## Where did individuals stay the night of the count?

22% Sheltered
78% Unsheltered

Of Unsheltered Respondents*

- **61**% Vehicle
- **19**% Makeshift shelter/tent
- **11**% Outside

AGE BREAKDOWN

- **11**% Youth Under 25
- **71**% Adult 25-54
- **17**% Senior 55+

38% Experienced homelessness for the first time as a youth

16% Had been in foster care, a youth group home, or under a youth agreement

GENDER

- **64**% Man
- **34**% Woman
- **1**% Another Gender Identity

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

12% of respondents identified as 2SLGBTQIA+

TRANS EXPERIENCE

2% of respondents identified as having trans experience
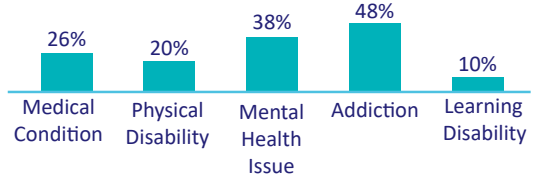
RACIAL IDENTITY

- **3**% East Asian
- **1**% Black

INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

18% of respondents identified as Indigenous

Compared to 5% of the general population (2016 Census)

HEALTH CONCERNS

- 26% Medical Condition
- 20% Physical Disability
- 38% Mental Health Issue
- 48% Addiction
- 10% Learning Disability

17% Reported an acquired brain injury

44% Reported two or more health concerns

LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS

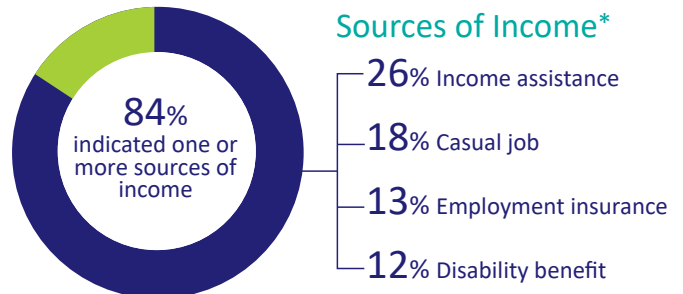- **33**% Under 6 months
- **56**% 1 year or more

82% of respondents had been in the community for at least 1 year

39% of respondents had been in the community 10 years or more

REASONS FOR HOUSING LOSS*

- **49**% Not enough income
- **15**% Substance use issues
- **10**% Conflict with others (non-partner/parent)

INCOME

84% indicated one or more sources of income

Sources of Income*

- **26**% Income assistance
- **18**% Casual job
- **13**% Employment insurance
- **12**% Disability benefit

SERVICES ACCESSED*

- **55**% Food services
- **54**% Emergency room
- **36**% Hospital (non-emergency)
- **36**% Mental health services

* Top responses highlighted

Limitations and Methodological Considerations

Please note the following considerations in reviewing this data.

In the spring of 2020, the Province of British Columbia provided funding to conduct homeless counts in 16 B.C. communities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only eight of the 16 communities were able to conduct their counts before March 17, 2020, when British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency under British Columbia's *Public Health Act*. The remaining eight communities completed their counts in 2021 with additional pandemic precautions.

The Homelessness Services Association of BC, with support from BC Non-Profit Housing Association and Urban Matters, coordinated these counts and prepared this report.

Data from counts in the count communities constitutes a benchmark to measure progress made to reduce homelessness over time.

› Point-in-Time (PiT) homeless counts provide a snapshot of people who are experiencing homelessness in a 24-hour period, their demographic characteristics, service use and other information.

› For the purpose of counts conducted in the provincially funded B.C. communities, an individual was defined as experiencing homelessness if they did not have a place of their own where they paid rent and could expect to stay for at least 30 days. This included people who:

   › Stayed overnight on the night of the count in homeless shelters, including transition houses for women fleeing violence and youth safe houses, people with no fixed address (NFA) staying temporarily in hospitals, jails or detox facilities (defined as "sheltered"); and,

   › Stayed outside in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles or were staying temporarily at someone else's place (couch surfing) and/or using homelessness services (defined as "unsheltered").

› During the count, we conduct surveys with people who identify as experiencing homelessness. In areas where surveys are not possible, and to support the PiT count, we collect additional information from shelter operators, hospitals, jails and BC Housing.

› PiT counts are an undercount and represent only those individuals identified during a 24-hour period.

   › This is because not everyone experiencing homelessness can be found and not everyone who is found consents to be surveyed.

   › While PiT counts are an accepted methodological tool, the numbers are understood to be the minimum number of people who are experiencing homelessness on a given day in that community.

   › Please note the percentages are based on the number of people who responded to survey questions and not the total number of people identified as experiencing homelessness.