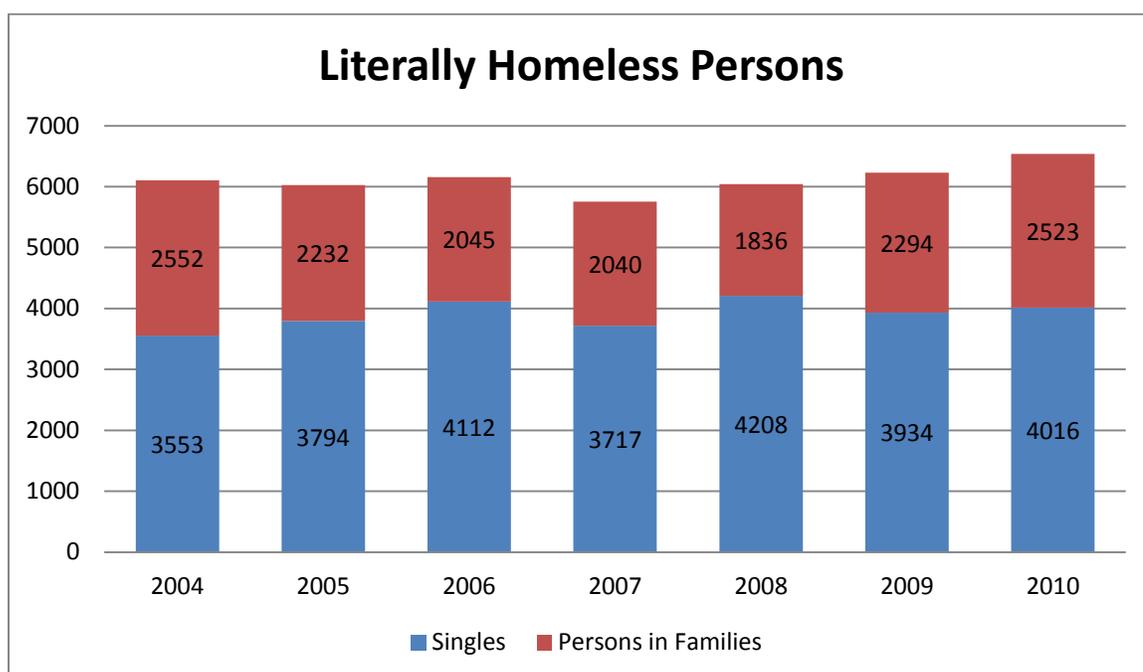


Changes in homelessness in D.C. 2004- 2010^{1,2}

Literal Homelessness

The number of literally homeless persons in the District has remained relatively stable since 2004—hovering around 6,000. However, the 2010 point-in-time enumeration had the highest number of persons counted in the six years between 2004 and 2010. In 2010, 6,539 literally homeless persons were counted, up 311 persons from 2009, and 495 from 2008 (increases of five and eight percent, respectively).



Literal homelessness of unaccompanied adults has ranged from a low of 3,553 in 2004 to a high of 4,208 in 2008. The numbers of unaccompanied homeless adults in the District decreased in 2009, to 3,934 (a six and a half percent decline from 2008 but a nearly six percent increase over 2007), and then increased in one year by five percent, to 4,015 in 2010. The number of persons in literally homeless families, as counted in the annual Point in Time enumerations, has ranged from a low of 1,836 in 2008 to a high of 2,523 in 2010. Between 2004

¹⁵ Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee (HSPCC), “The 2009 Count of Homeless Persons in Shelters and On the Streets in Metropolitan Washington,” Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC), 2009, <http://www.mwcog.org/uploads/pub-documents/zVZeVw20090513103355.pdf>, p. 23.

² HSPCC “A Regional Portrait of Homelessness: The 2010 Count of Homeless Persons in Metropolitan Washington,” (MWCOC, May 2010, <http://www.mwcog.org/uploads/pub-documents/ql5fXlw20100513103856.pdf>, p. 3.

and 2009, family homelessness declined ten percent. Within that period, however, came a marked shift. After a progressive decline (a decrease of 28 percent) between 2004 and 2008, family homelessness increased by 25 percent between 2008 and 2009, and between 2009 and 2010, family homelessness increased by another ten percent.

Another indicator of the increase of family homelessness is the number of families applying for shelter. During the week of March 22-28, 2010, 42 families³ applied for shelter. During this same time, there were already 245 families living in temporary shelter and 318 families in DHS transitional programs, while another 175 were in HUD transitional programs.⁴ Preliminary results from the 2010 Point-in-Time enumeration also show a 20 percent increase in applications for shelter at Virginia Williams Family Resource Center.⁵ (Comparisons in spring 2010 showed a 31 percent increase in the number of families applying for emergency shelter through the Family Resource Center.)

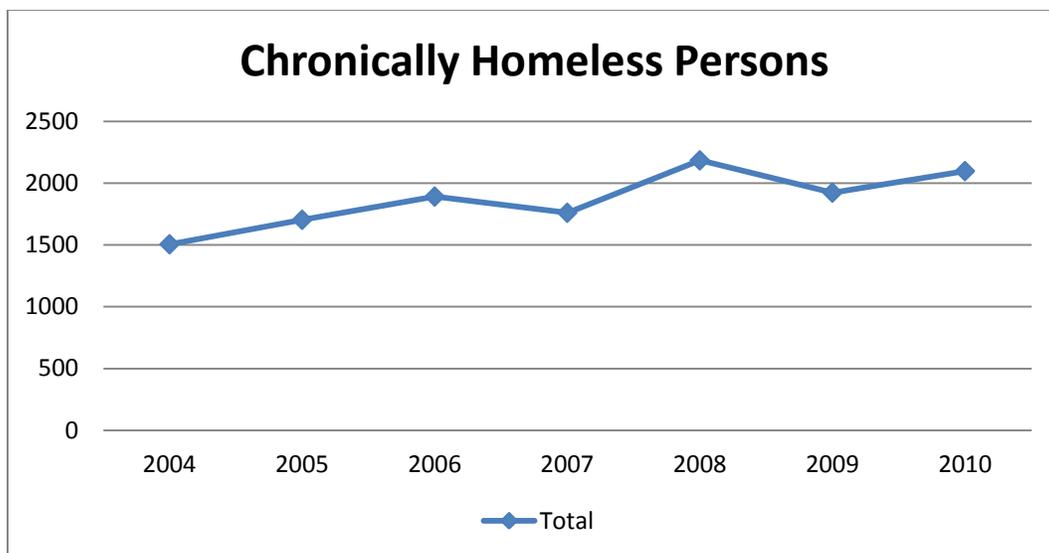
³ Eleven of those families had applied for shelter earlier.

⁴ DHS Weekly Shelter & Housing Occupancy Report for Family Programs, week of March 22-28, 2010.

⁵ PublicTestimony, March 31, 2010 Committee on Human Services Hypothermia Roundtable.

Chronically homeless persons

The 2007 Point-in-Time count showed the first significant drop (six percent) in the number of persons counted as chronically homeless in the period since 2004.⁶ The number of chronically homeless persons in the District has fluctuated between the low of 1,505 persons in 2004 and a high of 2,184 in 2008. An 11 percent decrease between 2008 and 2009 to 1,923 persons can largely be attributed to the initiation of placement of chronically homeless persons in permanent supportive housing with case management, through the Mayor’s Permanent Supportive Housing program . The 2010 enumeration showed a nine percent increase in chronic homelessness (to 2,097 persons), but that result is still lower than the 2008 high.⁷



Persons “on the street”

The 2009 Point-in-Time enumeration showed the largest decrease in persons on the street since the count began.⁸ This would indicate that more persons were seeking services and attempting to access housing than in previous years. This number may also have reflected the substantial increase in the number of persons placed in permanent supportive housing.⁹ The 2010

⁶ HSPCC, “Homeless Enumeration for the Washington Metropolitan Region 2007,” MWCOG 2007, <http://www.mwcog.org/uploads/pub-documents/z1hbWg20070613141807.pdf>, p. 23. The raw number in 2007 was 1,760.

⁷ HSPCC, “A Regional Portrait of Homelessness: The 2010 Count of Homeless Persons in Metropolitan Washington,” MWCOG, May 2010.

⁸ HSPCC, 2010, p. 11.

⁹ The Homeless Pulse Project (HPP), “Third Quarterly Report,” January 2009, p. 5.

enumeration, however, showed an increase in unsheltered persons from 2009, with 387 unsheltered persons in the District in late January 2010.¹⁰

Changes in homelessness nationally

Generally, D.C. reflects the trends in increases and decreases in homelessness nationally. Between 2005 and 2007, national homelessness decreased by 10 percent,¹¹ largely as the result of new federal and local programs, such as the ones D.C. began implementing. However, as the economy changed in 2008, more persons became homeless, most likely because of increased unemployment, rising housing costs, and decreasing funding for social services.

According to HUD's Annual Homeless Assessment Report, the overall national number of literally homeless unaccompanied individuals decreased by one percent in 2008; however, the number of homeless persons in families increased nine percent.¹²

According to a 25-city survey completed in late 2008 by the United States Conference of Mayors, only four cities reported a reduction in individual homelessness between 2007 and 2008. In the 19 cities reporting increases, homelessness increased on average by 12 percent. Two cities did not report changes. Meanwhile, only two cities had decreases in family homelessness, while three reported that family homelessness stayed the same.¹³

During the third quarter of 2009 (July-September), the most recent available national statistics at the time of this writing, the nine continuum-of-care systems in HUD's Homeless Pulse Project showed an eight percent increase in persons using shelters, a 10 percent increase in families seeking shelters, and a 26 percent increase in newly sheltered persons (those entering a continuum of care for the first time) during those three months.¹⁴

¹⁰ HSPCC, "A Regional Portrait of Homelessness: The 2010 Count of Homeless Persons in Metropolitan Washington," MWCOCG, May 2010, p. 11.

¹¹ "About Us," NAEH, accessed 28 April, 2010, from <<http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/aboutus>>.

¹² Office of Community Planning and Development (OCPD), "The 2008 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress: A Summary of Findings," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), July 2009, p. 3

¹³ "Hunger and Homelessness Survey: A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities, A 25-City Survey," The United States Conference of Mayors, Dec. 2008, p. 71.

¹⁴ HPP, "Third Quarterly Report," Jan 2009, p. 3.

Without the programs created by the District under **Homeless No More**, the situation in the District could be worse than it is. Currently, thousands¹⁵ of persons are in permanent supportive housing or transitional housing who would otherwise be living in emergency shelters or out of doors.

¹⁵ More than 4,000 unaccompanied adults and more than 1,000 families were counted in permanent housing and transitional housing during the 2010 Point in Time enumeration in the District.