

HOMELESSNESS IN LANE COUNTY

On any given night in Lane County, 2,296 people are homeless on the streets or living in temporary shelters (2007 Combined One Night Shelter Count and Street Count). These include:

1,702 Sheltered (based on the One Night Shelter Count in Lane County on January 25, 2007) including:

- 1,524 people who stayed in emergency shelters
- 178 people who were turned away from shelter due to lack of space
- 598 people who reported being continuously homeless for a year or more, or had at least 4 episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

594 Unsheltered (based on the Street Count in Lane County on January 25, 2007) including:

- 288 people in the Rural street count(U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Rural food pantries and rural schools)
- 56 people in the Metro street count (Eugene/Springfield, day and night access centers)
- 250 people counted by Street ministry (Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area)

Many more families are “hidden away” by doubling up and moving between family and friends, living in cars or facing imminent threat of eviction.

Homelessness: Education and County-Funded Social Services

- 1,906 children in Lane County Schools were homeless in 2005-06 (Oregon Dept. of Education)
- 6,374 individuals in 4,154 households who were homeless sought social services through Lane County Human Services Commission-funded programs during calendar year 2006.
- 1,292 individuals who were homeless sought medical services from Riverstone Health Clinic during calendar year 2006.

Cost of Homelessness

Homelessness affects all residents of Lane County because people without shelter require costly support services:

- \$362 is the average cost of a visit to the Sacred Heart Hospital Emergency Room
- \$858 is the average daily cost of care at the Johnson Unit, Sacred Heart’s acute psychiatric care facility, where the average stay is 8 days

- \$189 is the daily cost of in-patient detoxification services at Willamette Family Inc.'s Buckley Center, where treatment for alcohol takes 3-4 days and 4-5 days for heroin
- \$359 is the daily cost at Lane County Jail (\$126 for "housing" plus \$233 for arrest and booking)

Most people who are homeless are without shelter because of an acute life crisis such as divorce, domestic violence, eviction, job loss, or a medical crisis. People who are homeless struggle daily with the repercussions of unmet basic human needs for safety, stability and shelter. With a place to call home, people are more likely to overcome difficulties and succeed in school and in life.