



# City of Boston

## 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Homeless Census

*Emergency Shelter Commission – December 16, 2013*

On the night of December 16, 2013, city and community leaders joined 350 volunteers to undertake Boston's 34<sup>th</sup> annual homeless Census. On the night of the census there were **7,255** homeless men, women and children in the City of Boston, a **3.8% increase** from **6,992** men, women and children counted the previous year. Key findings and a summary table follow below.

### Executive Summary of Findings:

- The number of homeless people living on the streets was **180**, a decrease of **6.7% percent** over the total of **193** the prior year.
- The total number of individual homeless adults **increased 3.3%** from **3,597 last year** to **3,714 this year**.
- The number of adults in emergency shelter was **up 10.5%** from **1,367 last year** to **1,511 this year**.
- The number of homeless families in Boston **increased 5.8%** from **1,166** to **1,234 households this year**.
- The total number of persons in families (i.e. all homeless men, women and children) **increased by 4.3%** from **3,395** to **3,541**.
- The number of homeless children **increased by 4.3%** from **1,971** to **2,056 this year**.

### Highlights of the 2013-2014 Census include the following:

- Boston continues to see **low numbers of homeless adults living on the streets** compared to most major cities. The street population this year was approximately 2.5% of the total homeless count.
- The number of **family households sheltered in motels** in Boston, while still unacceptably high, was **down by 5%**, an improvement over last year when Boston saw a **24.5% increase** in motel-sheltered families.

### Challenges:

- **Family homelessness continues to grow.** The **increase of 5.8%** in family households includes a **26% increase** in the number of families in congregate shelter. This reflects State efforts to reduce the use of motels as shelter by increasing the number of congregate shelter beds.
- The number of **adults in emergency shelter increased by 10.5%** this count, a **17.6% increase** over the count two years ago. Boston shelters are seeing increased seasonal and regional demand. Preliminary findings indicate that **36%** of adult emergency shelter guests came from communities outside of Boston.
- The number of **homeless adults with behavioral health and medical needs increased.** Homeless adults in **substance abuse treatment programs increased by 7.6%**, including a **10.6%** increase in adults in recovery homes. The number of **homeless adults in hospitals or medical respite facilities increased by 16.1%**, perhaps reflecting, in part, the extreme cold weather on the night of the count. **Emergency room use nearly doubled, from 15 to 29 persons**, and the **inpatient census increased 26.1 %**, from **111 to 140 persons**.

**City of Boston Annual Homeless Census - December 2013 compared to December 2012**

CATEGORY	December 12, 2012		December 16, 2013		% Change
<b>City of Boston Grand Total All Homeless</b>	<b>6,992</b>		<b>7,255</b>		<b>+ 3.8%</b>
<b>Total Individual Adults</b> (Street, Shelters, Transitional, Treatment & Young Adults)	<b>3,597</b>		<b>3,714</b>		<b>+3.3%</b>
<b>Adult Homeless Breakdown</b>		<b># of Adults</b>		<b># of Adults</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Unsheltered Homeless/Street Count		193		180	-15%
Emergency Shelter		1,367		1,511	+ 10.5%
Transitional Housing Programs		762		685	- 10.1%
Detox/Substance Abuse Program		694		747	+7.6%
Hospitals and Medical Respite		218		253	+16.1
Mental Health Facilities		293		268	-8.5%
Single Adults in Family Programs <sup>1</sup>		20		23	+15%
Domestic Violence Shelter		14		19	+35.7%
Homeless/Runaway Youth		36		28	-22.2%
<b>Total Individual Homeless Adults</b>		<b>3,597</b>		<b>3,714</b>	<b>+3.3%</b>
	<b>Number of Families</b>	<b>Persons in Families</b>	<b>Number of Families</b>	<b>Persons in Families</b>	<b>% Change # of Families</b>
<b>Total All Homeless Families</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>3,395</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>3,541</b>	<b>+5.8%</b>
<b>Family Homeless Breakdown</b>	<b>Number of Families</b>	<b>Persons in Families</b>	<b>Number of Families</b>	<b>Persons in Families</b>	<b>% Change # of Families</b>
Congregate Shelter	281	663	354	810	+26%
Scattered Site Shelter	512	1,804	534	1,812	+4.3%
Transitional Housing Programs	111	300	108	272	-2.7%
Families in Motels in Boston	159	422	151	448	-5%
Domestic Violence Programs	70	140	54	125	-22.9%
Homeless Youth with Children	5	10	6	12	+20%
Families in Hospitals	1	1	2	5	+100%
Detox/Other Substance Abuse	27	55	25	57	-7.4%
<b>Total All Homeless Families</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>3,395</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>3,541</b>	<b>+5.8%</b>

For more information on Boston's annual homeless census findings please contact the Emergency Shelter Commission, as data from our more detailed annual Point-In-Time surveys continues to be analyzed. The ESC can be contacted at: [www.bphc.org/shelter](http://www.bphc.org/shelter)

<sup>1</sup>Per HUD Guidance, unaccompanied adults in family programs are to be counted as individual adults and not family households. This categorization slightly modifies the breakdown of homeless adults and families reported last year, but the total number of homeless persons is unchanged from the 2012- 2013 Key Findings.