

Evaluating Racial Disparities in the North Carolina Balance of State CoC

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Section I: Introduction

“From slavery to segregation, African Americans have been systematically denied equal rights and opportunities. The effects of long-standing discrimination linger and perpetuate disparities in poverty, housing, criminal justice, and health care, among other areas. These disparities, in turn, can contribute to more African Americans experiencing homelessness.”¹

This is evidenced by the fact that the 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) shows that nationally, while African Americans represent 13 percent of the general population, account for 40 percent of people experiencing homelessness and more than 50 percent of families with children experiencing homelessness. Other racial groups and ethnicities are also overrepresented, but African Americans make up the largest group.”².

In Home Together, the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, racial equity is listed as a strategy to improve access to emergency assistance, housing, and supports for historically underserved populations.³ Across the nation, communities are taking stock of who is experiencing homelessness in an effort to understand disparities, ensuring that the homeless and housing services system does not reinforce the disparities created by larger systems and policies⁴ within the United States and making a commitment to dismantle racism.

To understand and reveal populations within the broad “Homeless Population”⁵, national partners, advocates, and communities are taking a deeper look at the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and homelessness. Examples are SPARC’s mixed-methods research study that documented high rates of homelessness among people of color, mapping their pathways into and barriers to exit from homelessness⁶, and LAHSA’s study which showed how structural racism, discrimination, and unconscious bias in housing, employment, criminal justice, and child welfare policies have led to overrepresentation of black people experiencing homelessness⁷.

To support communities, within the last year and a half, tools to evaluate racial disparities have been created by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) Racial Equity Network. Currently, through the North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness, the NC Balance of State CoC is engaged with the Racial Equity Network and has conducted an initial assessment of racial disparities within the CoC.

¹ NAEH: <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/what-causes-homelessness/inequality/>

² NAEH Racial Equity Network (REN) ([link](#))

³ July 19, 2018: Home Together, Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent & End Homelessness, USICH (www.usich.gov)

⁴ From Exclusion to Destitution: Race, Affordable Housing, and Homelessness, George R. Carter III, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 ([link](#))

⁵ Discrimination at the Margins: The Intersectionality of Homelessness & Other Marginalized Groups, Kaya Lurie, Breanne Schuste and Sara Rankin, Seattle University School of Law, 2015 ([link](#))

⁶ SPARC <https://center4si.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SPARC-Phase-1-Findings-March-2018.pdf>

⁷ LAHSA <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=514-groundbreaking-report-on-black-people-and-homelessness-released>

North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

The North Carolina Balance of State CoC (NC BoS CoC) serves as a Continuum of Care (CoC), or regional planning body, made up of public and private partners. Through the NC BoS CoC partnership, a strategic systems-based approach is applied to prevent and end homelessness for people with a range of services and housing needs within its geographic area. The NC BoS CoC is one of twelve CoCs in North Carolina, representing 79 out of 100 counties in the state. Specifically, the counties that make up the NC BoS CoC are:

Alamance, Alexander, Anson, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Camden, Carteret, Caswell, Catawba, Chatham, Cherokee, Chowan, Clay, Columbus, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Davidson, Davie, Duplin, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gates, Graham, Granville, Greene, Halifax, Harnett, Haywood, Henderson, Hertford, Hoke, Hyde, Iredell, Jackson, Johnston, Jones, Lee, Lenoir, Macon, Madison, Martin, McDowell, Montgomery, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Onslow, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Person, Pitt, Polk, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rockingham, Rowan, Rutherford, Sampson, Scotland, Stanly, Stokes, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Tyrrell, Union, Vance, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wilson, Yadkin

In order to respond to the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness as well as create a system that will ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time only, the NC BoS CoC has formed 13 planning bodies called Regional Committees. Regional Committees function to support NC BoS CoC activities at the local level and have representatives on the NC BoS CoC Governance Committee and other region-wide sub-committees.

Based on US Census Data estimates⁸, NC has a population estimated to be over 9,845,000 people. The NC BoS CoC geographic area makes up 51% of the state's population, or just under 5,031,000 people.

US Census Data estimates 1,667,000 people were experiencing poverty across the state, with an estimated 54% residing in counties covered by the NC BoS CoC (just over 912,000 people).

When it comes to people experiencing homelessness in NC, of the just under 9,000 people counted in the annual Point-in-Time Count across the state, 34% resided in the NC BoS CoC geographic area⁹.

NC BoS CoC strategies and outcomes have a big impact on the state. Within the NC BoS CoC geographic area, many people stand to benefit from successfully ending homelessness. The NC BoS CoC has committed to ensuring that all people experiencing homelessness across its 79 counties experience success, not a select few. The CoC reflects its strong commitment to equality through its anti-discrimination policy¹⁰, which states:

...NC BoS CoC is committed to providing housing and services in an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and have equal treatment and opportunity. The NC BoS CoC's Anti-Discrimination Policies and Procedures ensure all people experiencing homelessness in the CoC have equal access to the housing and services necessary to end homelessness. The Policies and Procedures

⁸ 2011-2015 US Census Estimates were used in order to align with tools referenced later in the document.

⁹ A point-in-time count is an unduplicated count on a single night of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness that includes both sheltered and unsheltered populations. While 2018 PIT Data is available, the tools used later in the report rely on 2017 PIT data, so it is also referenced here.

¹⁰ <https://www.nceh.org/files/9056/>

apply to staff, volunteers, and contractors at all partner agencies. We strongly encourage all NC BoS CoC partners, regardless of funding source, to adopt these Anti-Discrimination policies [which adhere] to the Department of Housing Urban and Development (HUD) Equal Access Rule.

Members of the NC BoS CoC and Governance Committee recognize that policy and procedures are not enough – we need to be able to apply them and see results.

Section 2: Our Approach

Over the course of the next year the CoC will conduct ongoing and deepening analysis, grow partnerships, and foster dialogue. The goal is to develop meaningful participation and stimulate action from stakeholders throughout the NC BoS CoC. Together, we will set a path that will help us dismantle racism and eliminate racial, ethnic, and gender disparities throughout the Continuum of Care.

Our first step is to understand who is and who isn't currently accessing our system. To understand this, using tools created by federal and national partners, we've conducted an initial analysis of Point-in-Time Count and HMIS data to get clarity on who is accessing our system and housing resources.

While our initial analysis focuses solely on race and ethnicity in the NC BoS CoC geographic area, it is our intent to look at other populations and communities within the CoC to get a more detailed understanding of how they intersect with race and homelessness. This can be done using the Department of Housing and Urban Development's upcoming Stella Performance Module tools¹¹, which are projected to support this type of research.

Initially, here are the two questions we asked for this report:

- 1) Who are we serving in comparison to people in poverty and people in North Carolina?
- 2) Who is accessing housing in our system?

To answer these questions, two tools were used: **HUD's Continuum of Care Assessment Tool** and the **National Alliance to End Homelessness' Racial Equity Tool**. The following section provides detail about each tool and the results. The CoC follows the results with a discussion of what we observed and what we can do next.

¹¹ <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/stella/>

Section 3: Methodology and Results

Question 1: Who are we serving?

Assessment Tool: HUD Continuum of Care Racial Assessment Tool (HUD Tool)¹²

Description: The tool provides information about racial distributions of people living in poverty and for people experiencing homelessness by race, ethnicity, age, and Veteran status. It allows communities to visualize the racial dimensions of poverty and homelessness within their state and geographic area.

Data Source:

- *Population Estimates:* State and CoC population estimates (for everyone and people in poverty) are sourced from the US Census, specifically, the American Community Survey (ACS) 2011-2015 5-year estimates. CoC level estimates were determined from Block Group (BG) estimates along with a BG-to-CoC crosswalk.
- *Homelessness:* Homeless population and subpopulation data comes from 2017 Point-In-Time Data¹³, pulled from HUD's Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), which lists the numbers of people experiencing homelessness by demographic categories.

Limitations:

- The HUD tool uses 2017 Point-in-Time Count Data only. We believe that while it is two years old, the data is still relevant. Future analysis should work to include more recent Point-in-Time Count data. With more time and resources, the NC BoS CoC can recreate the tool with more recent data.
- While the NC BoS CoC is committed to best practices, Point-in-Time Count data is limited, so analysis should be combined with other data analysis, such as analysis of HMIS data.
- Race data for individuals in families is based on the racial identity of the head of household. It is a proxy and may not accurately represent the racial identity of all household members.

HUD Definitions used in this tool:

- **Race Categories:** White, Black¹⁴, Native American/Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Other/Multi-Racial
- **Ethnicity Categories:** Hispanic and Non-Hispanic
- **Families:** A household with at least one adult and one child.
- **Unaccompanied Youth:** Youth under 25 years old who are in households with no other children

¹² <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/new-coc-racial-equity-analysis-tool/>

¹³ The most recent data available for this tool is 2017 PIT data. HUD has not provided an updated tool that uses more PIT data from later years.

¹⁴ For the duration of this report, the term "Black" will be used because it aligns with HUD's language and incorporates everyone who identifies as black, including African Americans. Terminology is important and will continue to be evaluated and updated as the NC BoS CoC addresses racial disparities.

Key Results from the HUD Continuum of Care Racial Assessment Tool:

North Carolina and NC Balance of State CoC Populations & Race

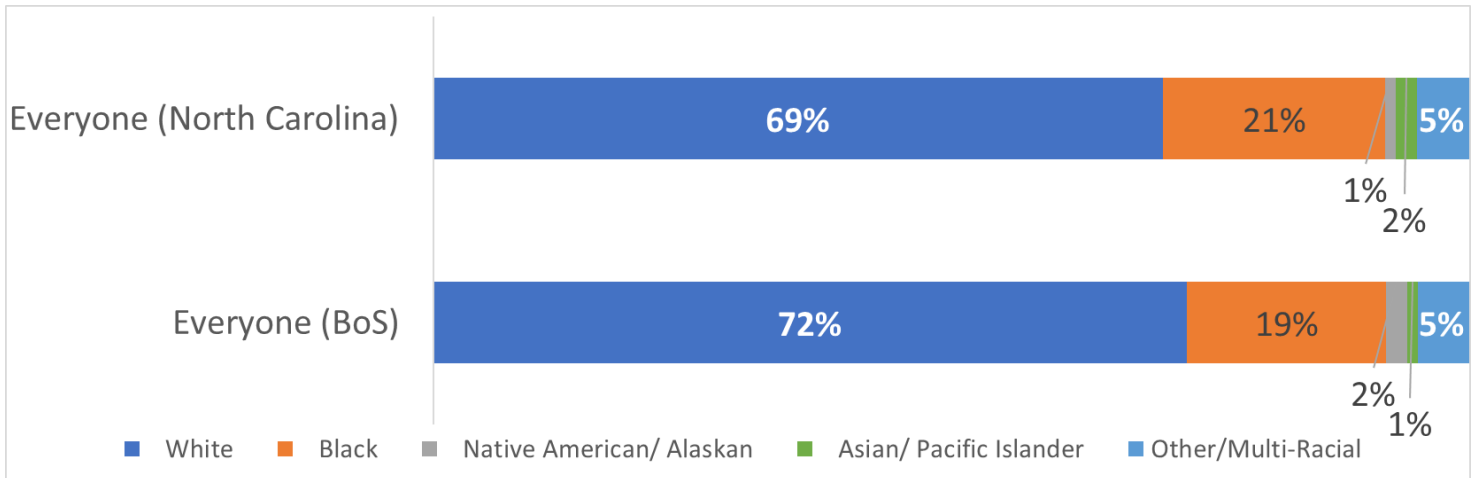


Table 1: Race in North Carolina and the NC Balance of State CoC (HUD Tool)

When comparing the general populations of the State of North Carolina and the population of everyone within the NC BoS CoC geographic area, slightly more people identified as White in the NC BoS CoC (72%) as opposed to people throughout North Carolina (69%), and slightly fewer people identified as Black (19% vs. 21%).

North Carolina and NC Balance of State CoC Populations & Ethnicity

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Everyone (North Carolina)	9%	91%
Everyone (NC BoS CoC)	8%	92%

Table 2: Ethnicity (HUD Tool)

While we see differences when it comes to race, the NC BoS CoC geographic area had a very similar ethnic profile to everyone in North Carolina, with an average of 8% of people identifying as Hispanic in the NC BoS CoC as opposed to 9% of people in North Carolina.

NC Balance of State CoC: Poverty, Homelessness, and Race

	White	Black	Native American/ Alaskan	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Other/ Multi-Racial
Percent of Everyone:	77%	19%	2%	1%	5%
Percent of People Experiencing Poverty:	55%	31%	3%	1%	10%
Percent of People in Families Experiencing Homelessness:	55%	31%	3%	1%	11%
Percent of Everyone Experiencing Homelessness:	53%	37%	4%	0%	5%
Percent of People in Families Experiencing Homelessness:	44%	40%	6%	1%	9%

Table 3: NC Balance of State CoC Populations (HUD Tool)

As highlighted in Table 1, people who identify as White made up 72% of the entire population in the NC BoS CoC geographic area. As we narrow our lens, looking first at people in the CoC experiencing poverty and then, at people experiencing homelessness and finally, people in families experiencing homelessness, we see a downward trend, with only 44% of all people experiencing homelessness identifying as White and in families.

In contrast, people who identify as Black make up just 19% of the entire population in the NC BoS CoC geographic area, while the percentage of people who identify as Black *increased* when looking at people experiencing poverty (31%), homelessness (37%) and families experiencing homelessness (40%).

While not as stark, the Native American/Alaskan population mirrors the trend we see among people who identify as Black, starting with a smaller percentage of people who make up the entire population in the NC BoS CoC geographic area and showing an *increase* in the percentage of people experiencing poverty, homelessness, and people in families experiencing homelessness.

For people who identified as Asian/Pacific Islander or Other/Multi-Racial, we observe some vacillation, with an equal or greater percentage of people who make up the population in North Carolina compared to people experiencing homelessness.

NC Balance of State CoC: Poverty, Homelessness, and Ethnicity:

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Percent of Everyone:	8%	92%
Percent of People Experiencing Poverty:	16%	84%
Percent of People in Families Experiencing Homelessness:	16%	84%
Percent of Everyone Experiencing Homelessness:	5%	95%
Percent of People in Families Experiencing Homelessness:	7%	93%

Table 4: NC Balance of State CoC Populations and Ethnicity (HUD Tool)

When comparing populations through the lens of ethnicity, the greatest difference we see is among people experiencing poverty. For people who identify as non-Hispanic, the percentage of people in poverty *decreases* from 94% to 84% when compared to the overall population. However, for people who identify as Hispanic, the population *increases* from 8% of everyone in the NC BoS CoC to 16% among people experiencing poverty.

NC Balance of State CoC: Sheltered and Unsheltered

Compared to the total number of people experiencing homelessness in the NC BoS CoC who identify as Black (37%), a larger percentage of people who were sheltered identified as Black (41%) and lesser percentage were among everyone who was unsheltered (29%). Conversely, people who identify as White made up the greatest percentage of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness (63%).

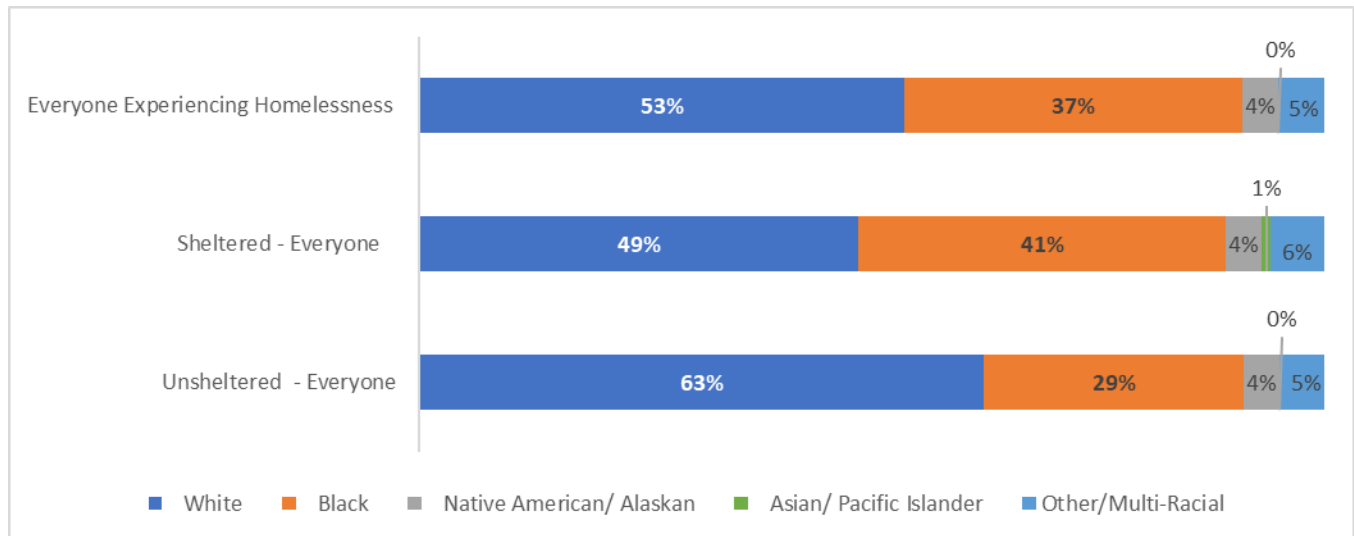


Table 5: NC Balance of State CoC Populations and Ethnicity (HUD Tool)

When looking at housing status and ethnicity, the percentage of people who identify as Non-Hispanic and Hispanic stays consistent. A slight change exists when observing unsheltered homelessness: people who identify as Hispanic make up 5% of everyone experiencing homelessness but 7% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and people who identify as Non-Hispanic make up 95% of everyone experiencing homelessness but only 93% of the unsheltered population.

Additional Populations: Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness

The total youth experiencing homelessness counted in the 2017 Point-in-Time Count was 173, or 5% of the total number of people counted in the NC Balance of State CoC. The relatively small number of youth makes it a little more difficult to parse out racial and ethnic disparities using the HUD Racial Equity Tool.

That being said, unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness appear to have a similar racial make up to all youth under 25 in North Carolina. Among unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, the group had a larger percentage of people who identify as White (62%) when compared to everyone experiencing homelessness (53%), and fewer people who identify as Black (31% compared to 37%).

When looking at housing status and ethnicity among youth experiencing homelessness, the percentage of people who identify as Non-Hispanic and Hispanic are consistent with all youth in the NC BoS CoC.

Additional Populations: Veterans

As with youth, Veterans make up about 5% of everyone counted in the 2017 Point-in-Time Count (179 Veterans). Compared to Veterans across North Carolina, the percentage of Veterans who identify as Black experiencing homelessness is almost twice as much (from 20% to 49%).

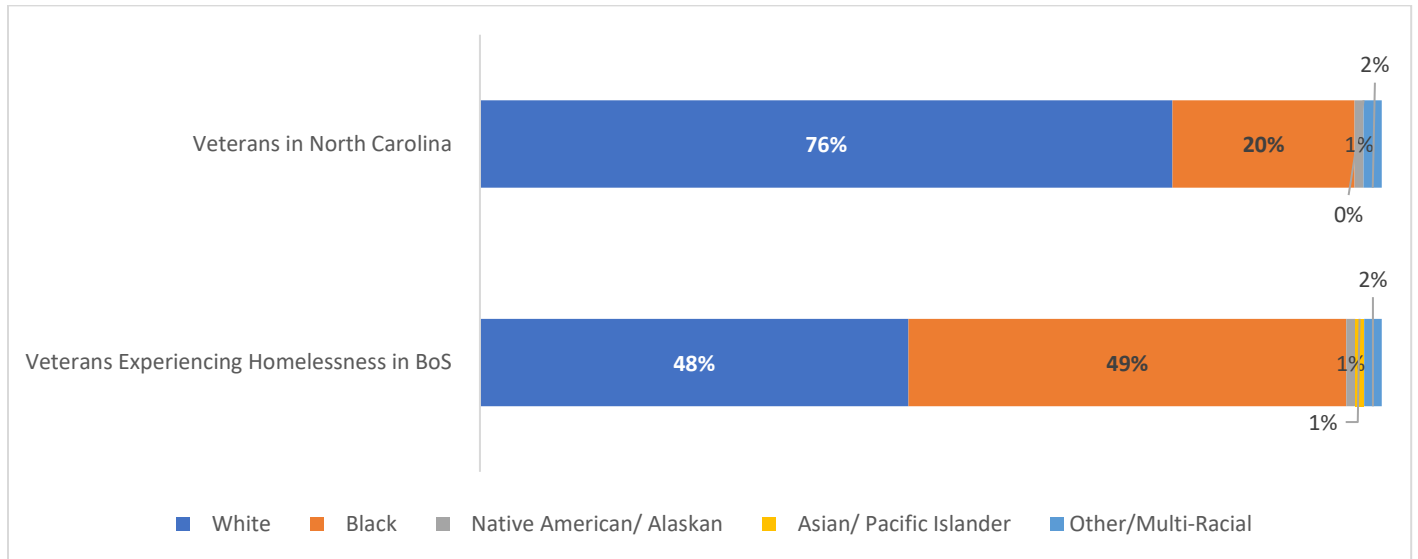


Table 6: Veteran Populations in North Carolina and NC BoS CoC(HUD Tool)

When looking at housing status and ethnicity among Veterans, the percentage of people who identify as Non-Hispanic and Hispanic are consistent with all Veterans in North Carolina¹⁵.

¹⁵ The HUD Tool did not provide Veteran population estimates for the BoS Region, only the state of North Carolina.

Question 2: Who is accessing housing?

Assessment Tool: National Alliance to End Homelessness Race Equity Tool (NAEH Tool)¹⁶

Description: The National Alliance to End Homelessness' Racial Equity Network Race Equity tool helps communities measure whether the outcomes of their system vary depending on the race or ethnicity of a person or family experiencing homelessness. This is a simple dashboard measuring key portions of a homeless program or system.

Asks four question:

1. Who is homeless?
2. Who gets into shelter?
3. Who gets into transitional housing?
4. Who gets into permanent housing?
5. Who returns to homelessness?

Data Source: Data is from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) from this time period: 1/1/2018-12/31/2018.

Limitations:

- The HMIS system can only document people who access homeless services – so many people experiencing homelessness may not be documented in HMIS. This includes people living unsheltered, people accessing DV shelters, and people accessing services from non-HMIS participating agencies.
- The current tool provides high level summaries, so is unable to provide detail about age, Veteran status, or youth status, for example.

Definitions:

- **Race Categories:** For this tool, four categories exist: White, Black, Native American, and Other Races.
 - Native American matches the Native American/Alaskan category used in the HUD tool.
 - Other includes the Asian/Pacific Islander, and Other/Multi-Racial categories used in the HUD tool.
- **Ethnicity Categories:** Hispanic and Non-Hispanic
- **Families:** A household with at least one adult and one child.

¹⁶ <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/the-alliances-racial-equity-network-toolkit/>

Key Results from the NAEH Race Equity Tool:

Who are we serving?

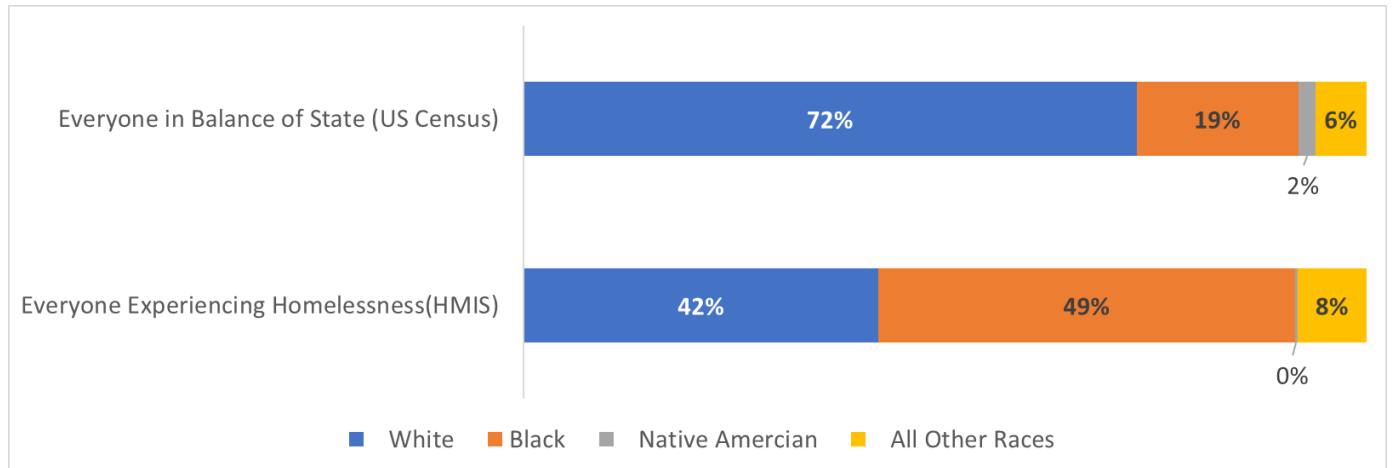


Table 7: NC Balance of State CoC: Everyone and People Experiencing Homelessness, by Race (NAEH Tool)

When comparing everyone in the NC BoS CoC geographic area¹⁷ with everyone documented as experiencing homelessness in HMIS from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018 using the NAEH Tool, a smaller percentage of people experiencing homelessness identify as White (42% compared to 72%) and a larger percentage of people identify as Black (49% compared to 37%). 0% of people counted in HMIS identified as Native Americans.

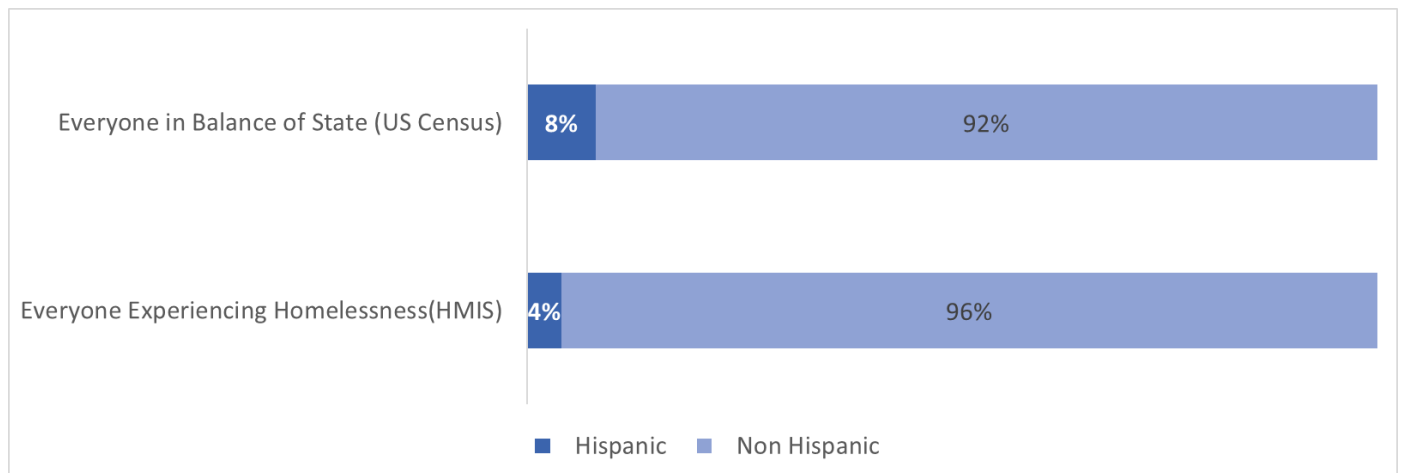
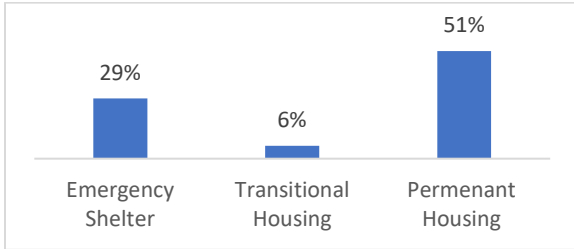


Table 8: NC Balance of State CoC: Everyone and People Experiencing Homelessness, by Ethnicity (NAEH Tool)

A similar comparison comparing everyone in the NC BoS CoC geographic area and people experiencing homelessness, looking at ethnicity rather than race, shows that about half as many people identified as Hispanic (4% compared to 8%), while the number of people who identify as non-Hispanic ranged from 92%-96%.

¹⁷ The BoS Population data is from the US Census and created by the HUD Tool.

Who accesses Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Housing?



The NAEH Racial Equity Tool allows us to look at what percentage of people accessed Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH), and Permanent Housing (PH). Of everyone documented in HMIS, 29% used ES, 6% used TH, and 52% accessed PH.

Table 8: Percent of people experiencing homelessness in NC BoS CoC accessing ES, TH, and PH

The tool also provides detail about the race of people accessing ES, TH, and PH. It shows that over half of the people who accessed emergency shelter identify as White. Conversely, the greatest percent of people accessing both transitional housing and permanent housing are those who identify as Black (62% and 61%, respectively).

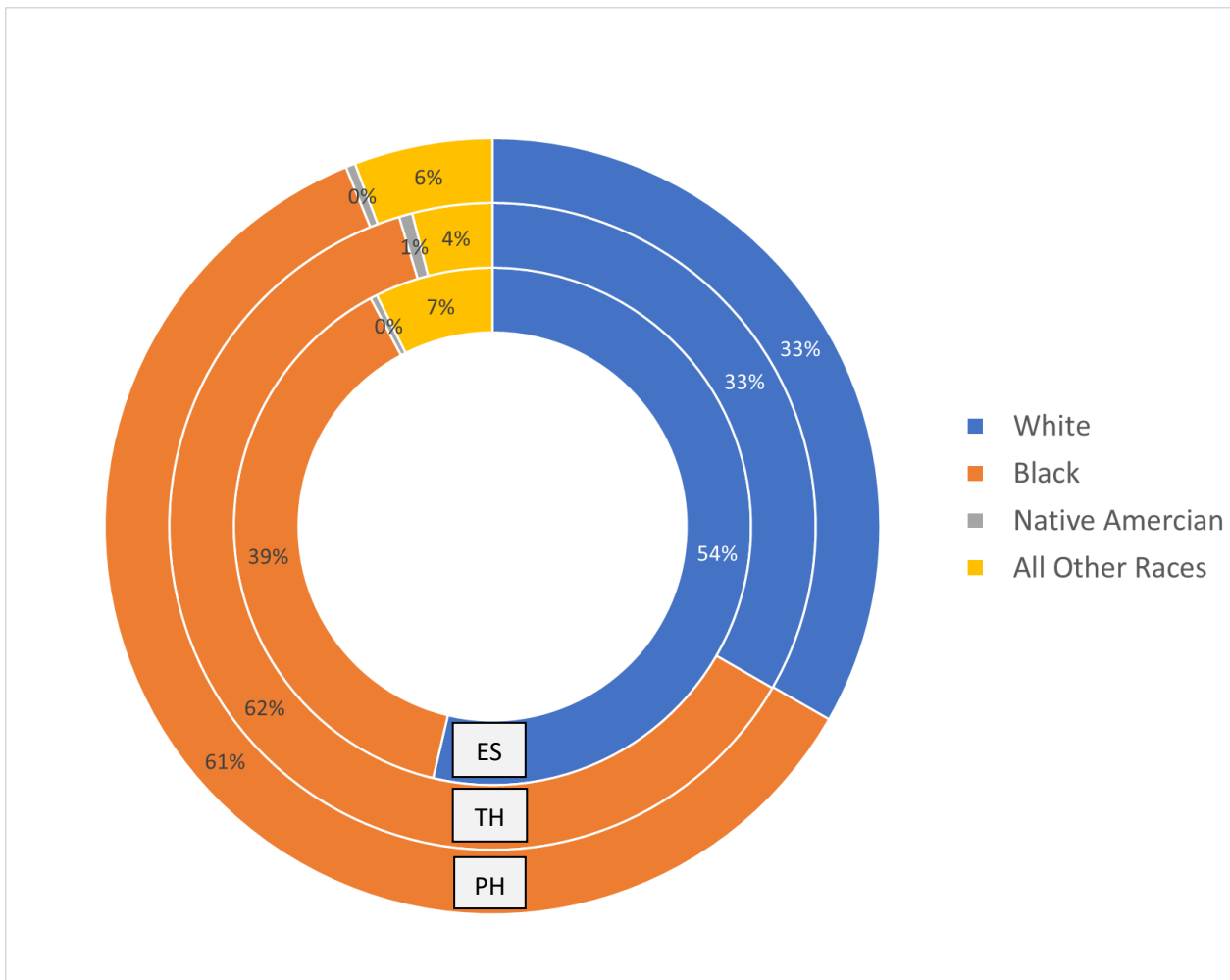


Table 9: NC Balance of State CoC: Percent of People in ES, TH, and PH (NAEH Tool)

The percentage of people who identify as Hispanic accessing emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing is between 3-4% of everyone accessing those services. This aligns with the overall percentage of people identifying as Hispanic and experiencing homelessness (4%).

Who returns to homelessness?

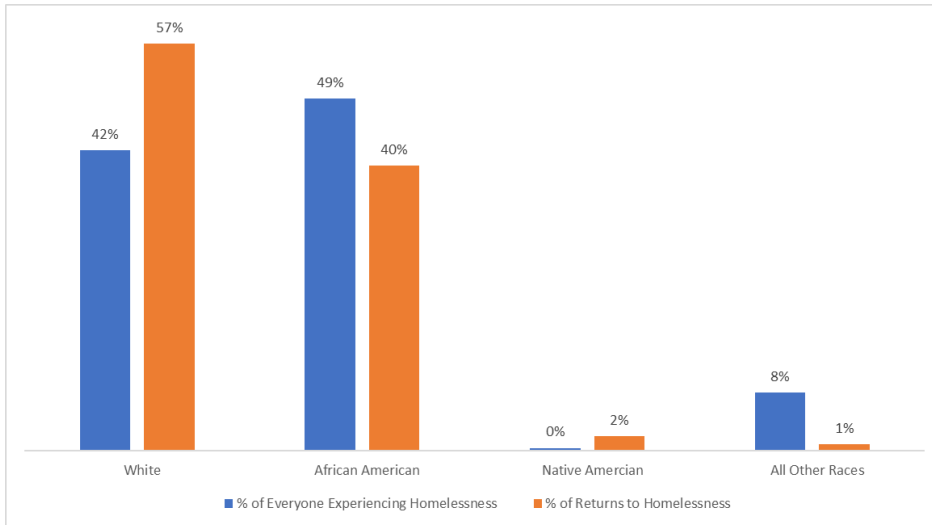


Table 10: Balance of State: Percent of Everyone Experiencing Homelessness and Percent of Returns to Homelessness (NAEH Tool)

Based on 2018 HMIS Data, a total of 300 people, or 7% of everyone experiencing homelessness, returned to homelessness. Of that group, people who identified as White made up the greatest percentage (57%), followed by people who identify as Black (40%). While Native Americans made up less than 1% of the total population, they made up 2% of people returning to homelessness.

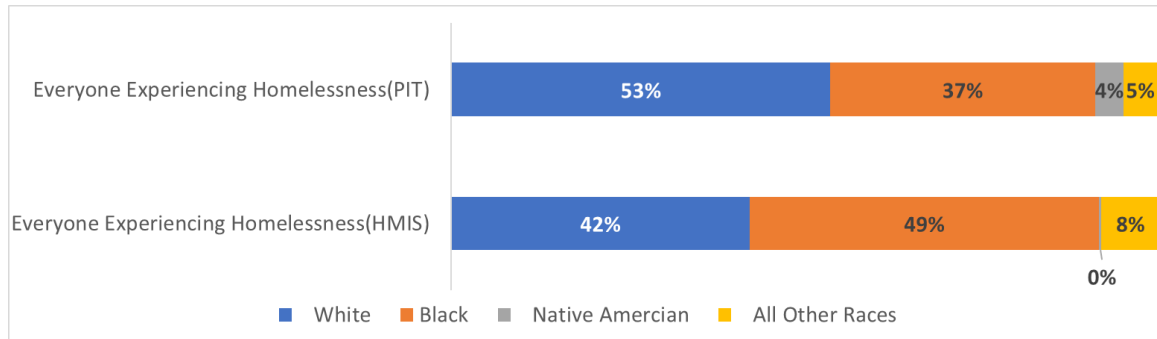
The percent of people returning to homelessness (3%) who identified as Hispanic was consistent with the overall population and number of people who identify as Hispanic and accessed emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing (3-4%).

Section 4: Discussion

- The trend observed across the US is present in the NC Balance of State CoC: people of color are disproportionately represented in poverty and homelessness, especially among families experiencing homelessness. Subsequently, to effectively end homelessness for everyone, the NC BoS CoC will need to pursue strategies that dismantle racism and end homelessness for everyone.
- The HUD and NAEH tools looked at race and ethnicity. We know that people living unsheltered show a larger percentage of people who identify as male and likewise, that families have a greater percentage of people who identify as female. Measuring the intersections of race, ethnicity, and gender in future research will further illuminate disparities and offer more nuance about who experiences homelessness and how we can solve homelessness in the NC BoS CoC.
- Some differences exist when comparing Point-in-Time Count data and data from HMIS. The HMIS data, which is the richest data set the NC BoS CoC currently has, can provide a more accurate picture of people experiencing homelessness, but it doesn't account for people who access non-HMIS participating agencies and people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Future study of disparities should build models which reference HMIS data but also incorporate information from other data sources such as by-name lists and other data from the coordinated entry system.¹⁸
 - The percentage of people experiencing homelessness who identified as Black was higher when looking at HMIS data (49% as opposed to 37%). Further research, data collection outside of the PIT

¹⁸ A current example of this type of modeling can be seen in work underway with the State of North Carolina's NC Opioid Commission Dashboard: HMIS data is combined with extrapolations based on the PIT to account for people who are not in HMIS.

process, and partnerships with non-HMIS participating agencies is needed to understand this difference. Stronger effort in this area could help us understand more about people counted in the Point-in-Time Count but not in HMIS, such as people who experience unsheltered homelessness and people accessing services at domestic violence agencies and other non-HMIS participating agencies. This can give us a fuller picture of who experiencing homelessness.



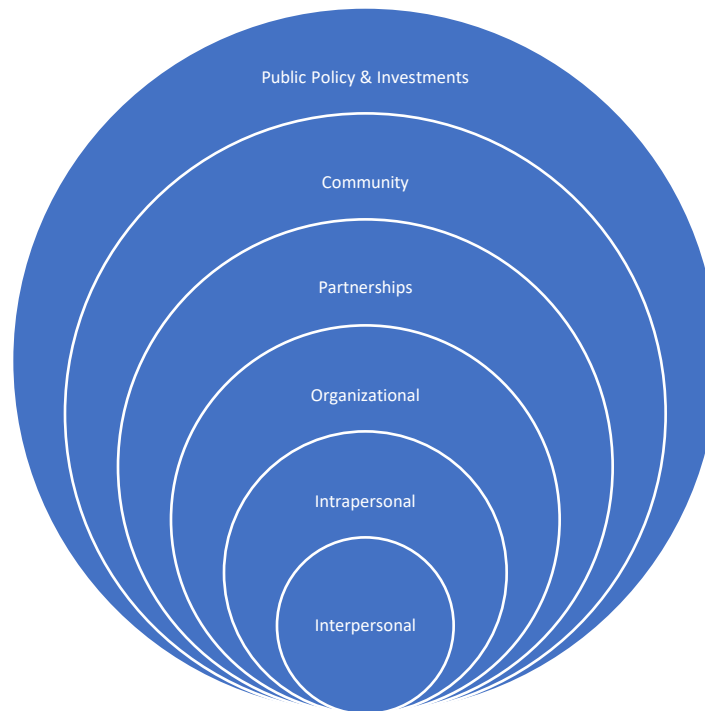
- At the same time, the HUD tool identified more people who identify as Native American (4% as opposed to 0%). This is likely because areas where Native American people live, such as the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina in southeastern NC or with Cherokee Tribe in western NC, do not have as much HMIS coverage. More research to understand housing need and access for Native Americans will help the NC BoS CoC incorporate Native Americans into the housing crisis response system.
- Similarly, HMIS showed that only 4% of people identified as Hispanic while the Point-in-Time Count identified 8% of people identifying as Hispanic. As with Native Americans, it may be that areas where people who identify as Hispanic live are not covered by HMIS. Additionally, some agencies report that people may be hesitant to present for services or report their ethnicity in the HMIS. Lastly, migrants who may experience homelessness fluctuate based on the season and may not be reached or recognized by agencies documenting services in HMIS or during the Point-in-Time Count. Given all these factors, we believe that people who identify as Hispanic are being undercounted and possibly, underserved. Better understanding this disparity will help the NC BoS CoC better respond to homelessness among people who identify as Hispanic.
- We did observe the greatest disparity among people experiencing poverty with people who identify as Hispanic. A smaller percentage of people who identify as Hispanic experience homelessness than those in poverty. Further research could help identify if data collection or system access are the cause, or if a protective factor exists preventing people who identify as Hispanic from experiencing homelessness, something that could potentially support other populations as well.
- Unsheltered homelessness had a greater percentage of people who identify as White than people who identify as Black, which is different than the overall trends observed. How much of this is due to people identifying as White eschewing the system or asking for help when in need because of their status in society whereas people identifying as Black have had to become more comfortable providing information and getting assistance because of systematic racism?

- We observed that the racial make-up of youth experiencing homelessness mirrored the larger population of youth in North Carolina. Additional research could help us better understand if there are areas where disparities exist, such as among youth who are transgender or gender non-conforming, or youth who are LGBTQ.

- When observing who accesses emergency shelter, the data generally mirrored the overall population of people experiencing homelessness. However, as we look at transitional housing and permanent housing, a greater percentage of people who identify as Black accessed those services. This same pattern is seen in returns to homelessness – the percentage of people who identify as White returning to homelessness is greater than the overall percentage of people experiencing homelessness who identify as White. Conversely, the percentage of people who identify as Black returning to homelessness is slightly less than the percentage of everyone experiencing homelessness who identifies as Black.
 - On the surface, this suggests that the NC BoS CoC housing crisis response system may be effectively counteracting disparities caused by race. Deeper research into the coordinated system as it develops will help the NC BoS CoC better understand what resources and strategies are having an impact and ensure that this can be applied across the system.
 - Coordinated entry policies prioritizing people with the highest vulnerability may be prioritizing people who identify as Black because they are more vulnerable than people who identify as White due to systematic racial discrimination over time.
 - Emergency shelters do not use the coordinated entry assessment tool for entry – are screening processes in shelters potentially screening people out or creating barriers to entry?

Section 5: Next Steps

At the July 2019 National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference¹⁹, participants discussed the *Social Ecological Model*, which can help explain the multiple relationships and experiences a person, or group of people, has with race. Collectively, these experiences develop cultures and norms. The NC BoS CoC can use this approach as we analyze and understand the impact of racism and develop strategies to combat it.



- Intrapersonal experiences are those that happen within a single person – the thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the world.
- Interpersonal experiences happen when people interact with each other, such as an interaction between a landlord and a potential tenant during a lease signing.
- The organizational experience incorporates the processes, actions, and activities of a group of people or organizations, such as the local emergency shelters.
- Partnership experiences emerge as groups of people form alliances or interact with one another as groups, such as within a Continuum of Care.
- Community experiences are created through interacting with the people and structures within the community, such as a neighborhood or city.
- Public Policy & Investments refers to the experience of interacting with policies that regulate, support, and enforce actions within society, such as HUD-VASH Vouchers, which provide housing vouchers to Veterans across the country who experience homelessness.

¹⁹ 2019 NAEH Conference: Pre-Conference Session – Race and Homelessness: What You Should Know about the Past and Present to Address Racial Inequities in Your System (Regina Cannon, Earl Edwards, Daryl Fraser, Stephanie Odera, Alex Wagman).

The NC BoS CoC and its members can impact racism at every level, especially by evaluating our institutional power, which has access to decision-makers and drives access to resources and by taking responsibility in how we build our system.

Our first step is to communicate and support the goal of dismantling racism throughout the Continuum of Care, starting with the network of people and agencies connected to the Governance Committee. Over the next year, we can focus on the following questions and strategies:

Key areas of action:

- Staff and Stakeholder Engagement: What can we do to ensure that we are aware of and intentional about our interactions in order to support racial equity?
- Agency Policies & Activities: How can our agencies design processes, programs, and policies that drive racial equity?
- CoC Governance & Accountability: How will we use our governance process to drive racial equity throughout the CoC and with our partners throughout the state and nation?

Strategies and examples:

Data Collection and Assessment: What type of data collection as well as internal and external assessment can we conduct on a regular basis to evaluate our approach and drive action?

Examples:

- Encourage and support better data entry, allowing more detailed evaluation (such as documenting chronic homeless status, county of service, or zip code in HMIS)
- Include age, ethnicity, and gender in analysis to better understand how these variables may intersect with each other, further impacting people of color.
- Conduct qualitative research during project evaluation to better understand the experience of stakeholders accessing the system.
- Develop research questions that can be answered using existing data sets, such as by-name lists, domestic violence programs, or targeted programs connected to coordinated entry.
- Study the demographics of people providing services or resources, not just people receiving them, such as landlords who rent to (and evict) tenants supported by the rehousing system (aka Homeless Response System).
- Leverage HUD data from Stella, which describes how people access the system and what their outcomes are.

Training and Support: What type of training and support can we access that will help us understand what approach(es) we can take to improve racial equity?

Examples:

- Include racial equity and anti-discrimination policy as a topic in all presentations throughout the CoC.
- Discuss how to address racial equity and anti-discrimination during program development, reviews, and evaluation.
- Engage people in dynamic ways, such as hosting a book-club to engage and support discussions on race.
- Hire facilitators experienced in racial equity to provide training and coaching, offer training modules for people who want to bring information to their partners.

Collaborative and Inclusive Dialogue and Action: What steps can we take to ensure that there is collaborative and inclusive engagement and leadership of all participants in the system, from people with lived experience to the governance committee, with a bias towards increasing participation by those who have typically been underrepresented?

Examples

- Recruit new members to improve representation on formal boards & committees.
- Make racial equity a standing topic of discussion for the CoC Governance Committee.
- Develop an active sub-committee or advisory group on racial equity for the CoC governance committee.
- Work to recruit and foster partnerships led by people of color to increase opportunities for investment in projects serving and led by people of color.
- Host dialogue on racial equity with groups throughout the Continuum of Care.