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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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From: Commissioner of Social Services  
Report: #2025-INFO-43  
Date: May 30, 2025

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**Subject:**

Key Findings from 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count in Durham Region

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**Recommendation:**

Receive for information.

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present key findings from the 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count conducted in Durham Region in November 2024.
- 1.2 The PiT Count is a national effort to measure and better understand homelessness. Communities organize their local PiT Count for one 24-hour period, to count and survey people experiencing homelessness within a geographical area.
- 1.3 The goal of the PiT Count is to better understand the scope of national homelessness and gain deeper insight on how to support those experiencing it.
- 1.4 The Regional Municipality of Durham (Region) collaborated with community partners to conduct the 2024 PiT Count from November 18 to 19, 2024. The information gathered through the PiT count will be used to understand the profile of those experiencing homelessness, inform evidence-based programming and service planning, and provide individuals experiencing homelessness the opportunity to vocalize what supports and services will help them the most.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Region serves as the provincially legislated Service System Manager (SSM) and the federally designated Community Entity, with responsibility for the planning and coordination of homelessness support services.
- 2.2 The previous [PiT Count](#) was conducted in 2021 by Community Development Council Durham (CDCD), a funded community partner. While CDCD delivered the count effectively, the decision was made as the SSM to bring the coordination of the 2024 PiT Count in-house. This shift aims to enhance internal capacity, strengthen system oversight, and ensure closer alignment with strategic priorities.

## **3. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 3.1 [Presentation: January 2024 – Integrated Homelessness System Action Plan.](#)
- 3.2 [2023-INFO-11: A Review and Renewed Homelessness Support and Coordinated Access System for Durham Region.](#)
- 3.3 [2023-SS-6: Homelessness Support and Coordinated Access System Update.](#)
- 3.4 [2023-SS-9: A Second Update on Durham Region Homelessness Support and Coordinated Access System.](#)
- 3.5 [2024-INFO-40: Update on Durham Region Integrated Homelessness System Action Plan.](#)
- 3.6 [#2025-SS-2: Durham Region Encampment Strategy.](#)

## **4. Summary of Key Findings from the 2024 PiT Count**

- 4.1 Durham Region's 2024 PiT Count identified 1,345 individuals experiencing homelessness, marking a 134 per cent increase since 2021 (n=573). Of these, 540 individuals completed the survey, a 63 per cent increase from 2021 (n=332), offering deeper insights into the scope and nature of homelessness in the region.
  - a. Demographics: Most individuals experiencing homelessness were working-age adults (25 to 49 years, 64 per cent), followed by older adults (50 to 64 years, 24 per cent). Survey respondents were 59 per cent men, 40 per cent women and 1 per cent other genders. 12 per cent of all respondents' self-identified as Indigenous, showing significant overrepresentation in comparison to the documented Indigenous population across Durham Region.
  - b. Health and well-being: High rates of mental health challenges (57 per cent), substance use issues (50 per cent), and physical mobility limitations (38 per cent) were reported.

- c. Living situations: 45 per cent of individuals were in sheltered spaces (emergency shelters and regionally funded hotels), while 33 per cent were in unsheltered spaces (public spaces, encampments or vehicles
- d. Income and employment: 55 per cent relied on social assistance, including Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program, with low levels of formal employment reported.
- e. Chronic homelessness: 57 per cent of individuals had been homeless for six to 12 months highlighting a growing trend of chronic homelessness.
- f. Household composition: While 83 per cent were single, families with children, partners and pets were also documented.
- g. Duration and causes: 36 per cent lost housing within the last 6-12 months, while 33 percent had been homeless for greater than a year and less than 5 years.
- h. Systemic vulnerabilities: 15 per cent had prior involvement in the foster care system, and 14 per cent were refugees or asylum claimants, highlighting the importance of targeted supports for youth and newcomers.
- i. Refer to appendix A for more information.

## **5. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic directions and priorities in the Durham Region 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. Connected and Vibrant Communities
  - C2. Enable a full range of housing options, including housing that is affordable and close to transit.
  - C5. Improve digital connectivity and multi-channel access to information, resources, and service navigation.
- b. Healthy People, Caring Communities
  - H2. Collaborate with partners to respond to complex social issues that improve community safety and well-being, including mental health and addictions.
  - H3. Integrate and co-ordinate service delivery for positive life outcomes, including investments in poverty prevention, housing solutions, and homelessness supports.
  - H4. Support the development of healthy children and youth, including access to affordable and quality child care.
  - H6. Collaborate with partners to co-ordinate settlement supports for newcomers.
- c. Strong Relationships

- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
- S2. Build and strengthen respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities.
- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.

d. Resilient Local Economies

- R3. Develop, attract, and support a skilled and qualified workforce, including youth and newcomers.

5.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.
- Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.
- Technology: Keeping pace with technological change to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The 2024 PiT Count findings highlight an urgent and growing need for expanded shelter capacity, affordable and supportive housing, and comprehensive health and social services across Durham Region.
- 6.2 The data reflects a 134 per cent increase in homelessness since 2021, with particularly high rates of chronic homelessness, mental health and substance use challenges, and the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples and newcomers. While the Point-in-Time (PiT) count provides valuable insight, it is important to recognize that despite our best efforts, some individuals experiencing homelessness may not have been captured. As a result, the actual number of people experiencing homelessness is likely even higher than reported.
- 6.3 These trends reflect growing pressures on the homelessness system and reinforce the urgent need for sustained investment, cross-sector collaboration, and data-driven planning. A coordinated response is essential to effectively address the complex needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and to promote long-term housing stability and community well-being.
- 6.4 A comprehensive report will be released in early summer 2025, which will provide a detailed analysis of the full scope of the findings, including key trends, system-wide impacts, and recommended actions to support informed decision-making and future planning.

**7. Attachment**

7.1 Attachment #1: 2024 Homelessness Point-In-Time (PiT) Count

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou  
Commissioner of Social Services

## Attachment 1

