



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE


Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

March 13, 2024

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #24-60
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of
Care Program Grant

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #24-60 *United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Grant* will advance racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County. The grant program will fund planning activities and supportive services for men, women, and children experiencing unsheltered homelessness, a majority of which are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), with a disproportionate share of people identifying as Black, African American, or African.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of SA #24-60 is to fund planning activities and supportive services for unsheltered homeless clients. The CoC is a competitive Federal Grant program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CoC is designed to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness and providing services to help individuals and families access transitional and permanent housing. According to HUD, the program allows governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals, families, and persons fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, as well as youth while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness. The program works to promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families, and to optimize self-

sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness.¹ The CoC program organizes funding into five program components: permanent housing; transitional housing; supportive services; Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS); and homelessness prevention.

The supplemental funding will allow the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to engage in process mapping, planning, and coordination activities across systems, and hire a newly created Street Outreach Manager position. DHHS has identified the following activities for use by the grant award:

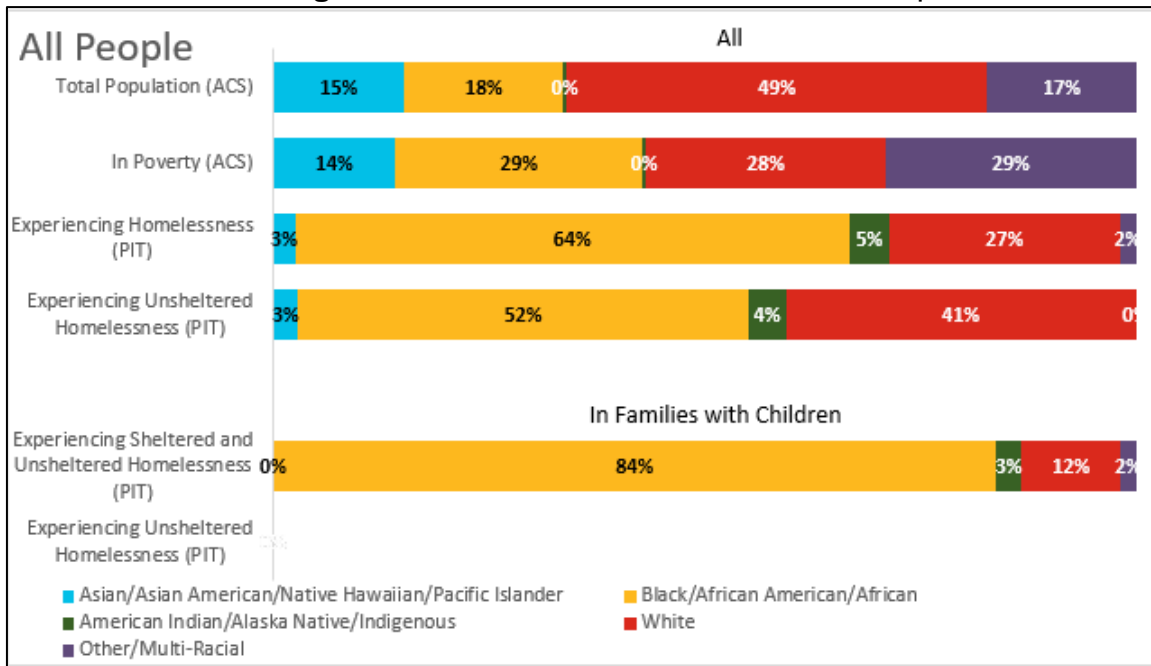
- Establish a new position dedicated to analyzing data, identifying gaps, and addressing disproportionality in unsheltered homelessness;
- Create a central point of contact for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness and community partners as well as coordinate service delivery among providers;
- Facilitate communication between those living on the streets and stakeholders regarding issues related to unsheltered homelessness; and
- Conduct a qualitative analysis of stressors and barriers faced by individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

III. **DATA ANALYSIS:** Current DHHS data from the Homeless Management Information System shows that 138 individuals are live outside, with 70% being BIPOC. A tool was created by HUD to utilize Point-in-Time (PIT) Count² and American Community Survey (ACS) data to facilitate the identification and analysis of racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness. Version 4.0 of the CoC Analysis Tool: Race and Ethnicity utilizes 2022 PIT data and ACS 2017 to 2021 5-year estimates. Montgomery County data is displayed in the following graphics, displaying that Black residents are disproportionately experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness, especially in families with children.

¹ Available at: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/coc.

² The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. HUD requires that CoCs conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night. CoCs also must conduct a count of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness every other year (odd-numbered years). Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally. Available at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hdx/pit-hic/#2024-pit-count-and-hic-guidance-and-training>.

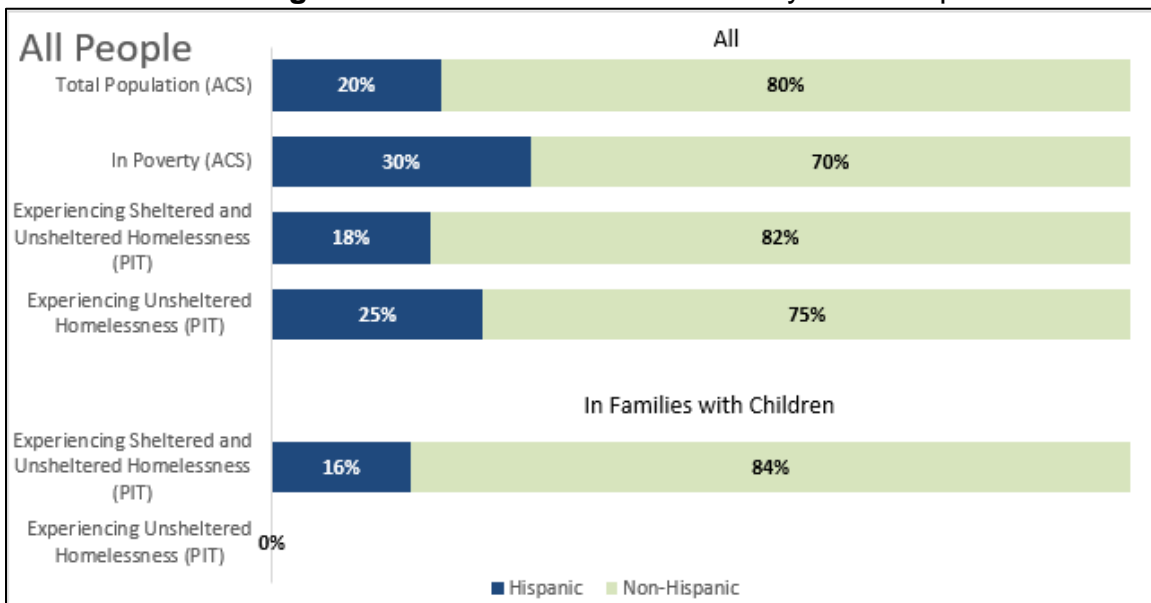
Figure 1: CoC Distribution of Race – All People



Source: HUD CoC Race and Ethnicity Analysis Tool

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5787/coc-analysis-tool-race-and-ethnicity/>

Figure 2: CoC Distribution of Ethnicity – All People



Source: HUD CoC Race and Ethnicity Analysis Tool

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5787/coc-analysis-tool-race-and-ethnicity/>

According to DHHS, despite constituting only 19% of the County's population according to the 2020 census, 56% of adults counted on the night of the County's PIT count identify

as Black, African American, or African, which underscores the ongoing necessity to prioritize efforts in reducing racial disparities throughout the system.

IV. **ANALYSIS**: ORESJ has documented and explained many of the historical and contemporary racial inequities shaping housing insecurity and homelessness in the US and Montgomery County in the following REIAs:

- #22-527 Covid-19 Rental Relief
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/21-527.pdf>
- #22-10 Assistance in Community Integration Services Pilot:
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-10.pdf>
- #22-31 Nebel Street Shelter
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-31.pdf>
- #23-86 FY23 Operating Budget American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund – Homeless Children and Youth Grant
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-86.pdf>

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) created a Racial Equity Data Tool to help measure outcomes by race and ethnicity of homeless populations.³ The tool produces a dashboard to track programs and systems along the following data points over time:

- Who experiences homelessness?
- Who gets into crisis housing (emergency shelter and transitional housing)?
- Who gets into permanent housing?
- Who returns to homelessness?

NAEH also recommends that systems, programs, and individuals that serve people experiencing homelessness monitor outcomes over time to discover and remove disparities in how services are provided. A set of short- and long-term action steps, along the lines of system entry, crisis accommodation, permanent housing, returns to homelessness, and organizational practices, is provided to guide communities with racial or ethnic disparities in their homelessness system.⁴

cc: James Bridgers, Jr., Ph.D., MBA, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Ken Hartman, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive

³ National Alliance to End Homelessness Racial Equity Network Toolkit. Available at:

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

⁴ National Alliance to End Homelessness. Available at: <https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/REN-Action-Steps-final.pdf>