



Coalition on Homelessness  
and Housing in Ohio  
**COHHIO**

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COLUMBUS – The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio today released the *2008 Ohio Homelessness Report*, a statewide analysis of homeless data that will serve as a baseline reference for future reports and homeless counts.

The report offers COHHIO’s “best estimates of the numbers of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, including a detailed look at subpopulations, in Ohio during one 24-hour period in 2008,” said Erica Mulryan, COHHIO’s housing and services coordinator and co-author of the report.

Summary findings include:

**12,821 Ohioans experienced homelessness on one night in 2008. Of those:**

- **10,327 (81%) were sheltered**
- **2492 (19%) were unsheltered**
- **5003 (39%) were persons in families**
- **7816 (61%) were individuals**
- **2431 (19%) were chronically homeless**
- **2021 (16%) were severely mentally ill**
- **3167 (25%) were chronic substance abusers**

The report utilized data from three sources: Point-in-Time (PIT) count data from 2007 and 2008, homeless service providers’ data systems (HMIS), and housing/shelter inventories. The PIT count is the total number of people experiencing homelessness in a 24-hour period as counted by volunteers and employees of HUD-funded agencies in Ohio.

Mulryan cautioned against viewing the data as conclusive or comprehensive. “All data utilized have their limitations, but The PIT count data is particularly controversial,” she said, “because of the difficulty locating unsheltered homeless people who do not want to be found; because of the potential for counting people more than once; and because of the disagreements in the definitions of homelessness.”

Still, she said, it’s a benchmark report by which to compare future reports of the same kind. “It’s the first time we’ll be able to compare apples to apples at the state level from one year to the next.” The next PIT count is scheduled for January 27, 2009.

The full report is available on the COHHIO website, [www.cohhio.org](http://www.cohhio.org)