

2022 Homelessness Report



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This report can be provided in another format upon request.

I. Executive Summary

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) collected, reviewed, and analyzed data on homelessness between January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. In that year, 4,586 individuals were released from Minnesota prisons to supervised release¹. **Approximately 19% of those releases were homeless to known or unknown locations. This is a six percent reduction, or 254 fewer releases to homelessness, than the prior year².**

The reduction in homeless releases runs concurrent to several milestone factors that are assumed to have contributed to the reduction: continued implementation of person-centered practices, the development of the DOC Homeless Mitigation Plan, decreased impacts of COVID on facility operations, increased investments by way of a federal grant for financial resources to mitigate homelessness, and enhanced process development to ensure individuals who are releasing from Minnesota prisons to homelessness are connected to public benefits.

Stable housing is critical to successful reentry into communities and disengagement with the justice system overall. When individuals are released from incarceration, access to employment, housing, positive connections in the community, medical care, and medication are directly connected to healthy communities and greater public safety.³

¹ This number captures releases from prison as well as community-based release programs (e.g., work release) to supervised release. Because individuals can be released from either prison or a community program more than once each year, this number measures the total number of transitions to a release status, not the total number individuals who exit a prison facility. Releases occurred in the following ways:

- Supervised Release/Parole 78.1%
- Community Programs 14%
- Discharge 6.5%
- Work Release-COVID .4%
- Cond Med Rel/Supervised Release – COVID 0% (2)
- Other 1%

² “Homelessness: 2021 Legislative Report”, Minnesota Department of Corrections, [2021 - Homelessness Release Legislative Report tcm1089-519043.pdf \(mn.gov\)](#)

³ “Social Determinants of Health at CDC”, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Social Determinants of Health at CDC | About | CDC](#), accessed March 23, 2023

II. Report Background

In May 2021, the Minnesota Legislature created new annual reporting requirements for the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) related to homelessness and homeless releases (Laws of Minnesota 2021, Reg. Sess. Chapter 24, Section 3). [Minn. Stat. § 241.068, subd. 2](#) requires the DOC to submit a written report to the legislature each year on a variety of data related to homelessness and releases from Minnesota state prisons.

As required by the Legislature, the Minnesota Department of Corrections is required to report on the following:

1. The total number released to homelessness from prison.
2. The total number released to homelessness by each prison.
3. The total number released to homelessness by county of release.
4. The total number under supervised, intensive supervised, or conditional release following release from prison who reported experiencing homelessness or lack of housing stability.

III. 2022 Homelessness Mitigation Plan Background

Statute ([Minn. Stat. § 241.068, subd. 2](#)) requires the DOC to develop a [homelessness mitigation plan](#) for individuals released from prison in Minnesota. The plan was submitted to the Legislature in November of 2022 and provides a foundation for the DOC to evaluate data and align its goals to reduce homelessness for individuals leaving prison. Beginning in 2024, this annual report will include information detailing progress, measures, and challenges to the implementation of the homelessness mitigation plan.

Homelessness and Corrections-Involved Individuals

The Legislature recognized that clear data is central to understanding the issue of homelessness and its impact on individuals exiting prison. In the 2021 Homelessness Release Report, published in February of 2022, releases to homelessness were categorized as “sheltered” or “unsheltered.” These terms have different operational definitions within housing service systems and these terms do not always capture releases from incarceration. Therefore, within the DOC Homeless Mitigation Plan, the DOC changed reporting terminology to provide greater clarity. “Homeless Release to Known Locations” and “Homeless Release to Unknown Locations” better captures the challenges of homelessness and housing instability experienced by corrections-involved individuals. The DOC developed definitions based on feedback from impacted persons and community partners. These phrases and their definitions are listed below:

Impacted Person: A person involved in the corrections system within a Minnesota prison or in the community, in addition to others, including their parents, caregivers, or children.

Homeless Releases to Known Location: An individual released from prison (regardless of length of time incarcerated) to a temporary living arrangement. This includes temporary housing, as well as hotels and motels paid for by a charitable organization or by federal, state, local, and tribal governments. This does not include self-payment, as outlined in exclusions below.

Homeless Releases to Unknown Locations: An individual released from prison (regardless of length of time incarcerated) who does not know where they will stay the night of their release. This includes, but is not limited to, release plans that identify an individual be released to the “county of commitment,” “agent’s office,” “homeless,” or an “emergency homeless shelter.” Access to shelters or supportive services cannot be guaranteed or reserved before the person is released from prison.

The experience of homelessness as defined by the Homeless Management Information System⁴ within the State of Minnesota includes multiple categories:

Extent of Homelessness by Minnesota’s Definition: The State of Minnesota defines as homeless “any individual, unaccompanied youth, or family that is without a permanent place to live that is fit for human habitation.” Doubling-up is considered homeless if that arrangement has persisted less than one year.

Literally Homeless: An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation;
- Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, and local government programs); OR
- Is exiting an institution where they have resided for 90 days or less and resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Imminent Risk of Homelessness: An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:⁵

- Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
- No subsequent residence has been identified; AND
- The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.

Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes:

- Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless as defined above, but who are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;
- Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;
- Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the preceding 60 days; AND
- Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period due to special needs or barriers.

⁴ The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is the required data management system for state and federal funded homeless and housing services within the State of Minnesota. Although the Minnesota Department of Corrections (MN DOC) delivers housing resources that operate similarly to established state and federal funded resources, at this time, MN DOC does not have the ability to be a HMIS user.

⁵“Definitions”, Definitions — [Definitions — Minnesota’s HMIS \(hmismn.org\)](https://www.hmismn.org), January 25, 2023

Highlighting these varying definitions is intended to illustrate the challenge in providing a complete picture of homelessness experiences for the incarcerated and supervised population of Minnesota.

Method for data analysis

Data was derived from the DOC Correctional Offender Management System (COMS), the only data system that reflects release planning documentation and other factors utilized in the separation of the data. The initial data set arrived in an excel spreadsheet format, listed all release plans within calendar year 2022, and consisted of 7,500+ lines of data. The analysis of the data included an individualized review of the release plans for each individual during the reporting period, often cross-referencing individual documentation from professionals within the DOC including corrections agents and the DOC housing coordinator.

The result is detailed analysis intended to relay the experience of pre- and post- release from Minnesota state prisons. It further validates the dynamic needs of individuals reentering the community after serving prison sentences.

Limitations of the data analysis

The information within this report is representative data and not finite granular data. The data specifically depicts 'release' as opposed to individuals, as it is possible that one individual is released from prison more than one time in a year. Although the method of data analysis was improved from the prior year's submission, it was entirely a manual process. The most prominent limitations are created by the outdated COMS data system and staff documents.

Consequences of the data analysis methodology used (cross referencing transactional data that is gathered inconsistently and without uniformity) is a byproduct in the absence of a consistent, comprehensive data management approach. The DOC is working towards establishing the necessary foundation for data management as represented by recent legislative requests.

Even with these limitations, the data and resulting analysis offers conclusions as to where people are released, locations/communities that have the most need, and pathways to housing stability.

Exclusions

Following the 2021 report, stakeholders asked for clarity regarding the release types that were not included in the data and reported homelessness information. Identifying these exclusions provides insights to the release types and other potential areas of housing instability for future consideration.

- **Releases to programs and facilities that deliver health related services.** This includes releases to Intensive Residential Treatment Services⁶, customized living⁷, or residences that offer community-based waiver services⁸. By design, these resources are meant to be temporary in nature to promote stabilization and self-sufficiency for individuals with a disability or a disabling condition. Therefore, these release locations cannot truly be considered permanent residences.

⁶ "Intensive Residential Treatment Services", Minnesota Department of Human Services, [Intensive residential treatment services / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov\)](#)

⁷ "Customized living (including 24-hour customized living)", Minnesota Department of Human Services, [CBSM - Customized living \(including 24-hour customized living\) \(state.mn.us\)](#)

⁸ "Home and community-based service waivers", [Home and community based service waivers / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov\)](#)

While not included in the data, these release types provide insight into the experience of homelessness and housing instability for individuals with disabilities and/or disabling conditions.

- **Releases indicating ‘self-pay’ at a motel.** Releases to motels where it was indicated that the person would pay for the stay are excluded. It can be reasonably assumed that a release to a hotel or motel is indicative of ‘housing instability as persons released from prison typically do not have consistent income sources.’ For purposes of these reports, these releases did not meet the definition for homeless to known and unknown locations.
- **Substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs and many residences that accept Housing Supports** (formerly known as Group Residential Housing)⁹. SUD treatment programs that have a residential component to their service delivery are temporary in nature and not considered permanent residences. In this analysis it was evident that many individuals pursued residential SUD treatment program to avoid a release to homelessness. Lastly, the purpose of Housing Support is to “provide help for housing costs for some people at risk of institutional placement or homelessness,” and eligibility is based on income/asset limitation and a condition that “limits self-sufficiency.¹⁰” While participating in SUD residential treatment removes the urgency of homelessness upon release, it may not truly capture homelessness for the person in the point in time of the data.
- **Releases to private residences.** A release to a private residence does not meet definitions of homeless to known or unknown locations. An important related factor – the length of time an individual is allowed to stay at the residence – could redefine this release from a situation of homeless to known location (i.e., ‘couch-hopping’) to a more permanent residence. In the end, it can be reasonably assumed that many stays in private residences are situations of housing instability as most persons who release from prison do not have leases to residences or own homes.
- **Releases to detainees, transfers of custody to other state jurisdictions or the federal government.** This exclusion includes detainees where an individual is released from detainees on that same day of release or in a short period of time thereafter. The current data system and lack of integration of data systems does not allow to see the sequencing of movement towards release following this event.
- **Work release and interstate supervision releases.** Overall blanket exclusion to releases to work release program and DOC Interstate Supervision.
- **Expiration of Sentence Releases.** Lastly, releases of individuals who have served their complete sentence – and not into correctional supervision in the community – following the termination of their sentence are not included within this analysis. It is known that some of these individuals are released to homelessness; however, they are no longer under correctional supervision and excluded from this report.

⁹ “Housing Support (formerly known as Group Residential Housing)”, [Housing Support / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov\)](https://www.mn.gov/housing-support)

¹⁰ Lbid.

IV. 2022 Homelessness Data

The DOC collected, reviewed, and analyzed data on homelessness between January 1 through December 31, 2022. In calendar year 2022, there were 4,586 total releases from Minnesota prisons to supervised release^{11 12}. Approximately 19% of those releases are homeless to known or unknown locations. This is a six percent reduction, or 254 releases, from the prior year’s report¹³.

The following data is based on addresses (or lack thereof) at the time of release from prison. Data analysis included a manual review of release documents, and other tracking systems that document requests for assistance from the DOC Community Stability team to mitigate homelessness.

2022 Homeless Releases	# Of Releases
Homeless-Known Location	691
Homeless-Unknown Location	184
Total	875

Milestones

The reduction in homeless releases may be a result of several notable milestones that occurred within calendar year 2022:

- The DOC began implementation of person-centered practices¹⁴.
- The development of the DOC Homeless Mitigation Plan and the work that shaped that plan
- Decreased COVID impacts on facility operations and programming increased individualized delivery of reentry services and case planning.
- An infusion of grant funding through the federal Coronavirus Emergency Response Grant provided for a full-time housing coordinator at the DOC, additional emergency housing funds, and cited culturally specific housing programs in disparate state areas.
- A renewed DOC interagency agreement with Department of Human Services increased capacity to connect higher-risk homeless persons to public assistance benefits prior to release.

¹¹ This number captures releases from prison as well as community-based release programs (e.g., work release) to supervised release. Because individuals can be released from either prison or a community program more than once each year, this number measures the total number of transitions to a release status, not the total number individuals who exit a prison facility. Releases occurred in the following ways:

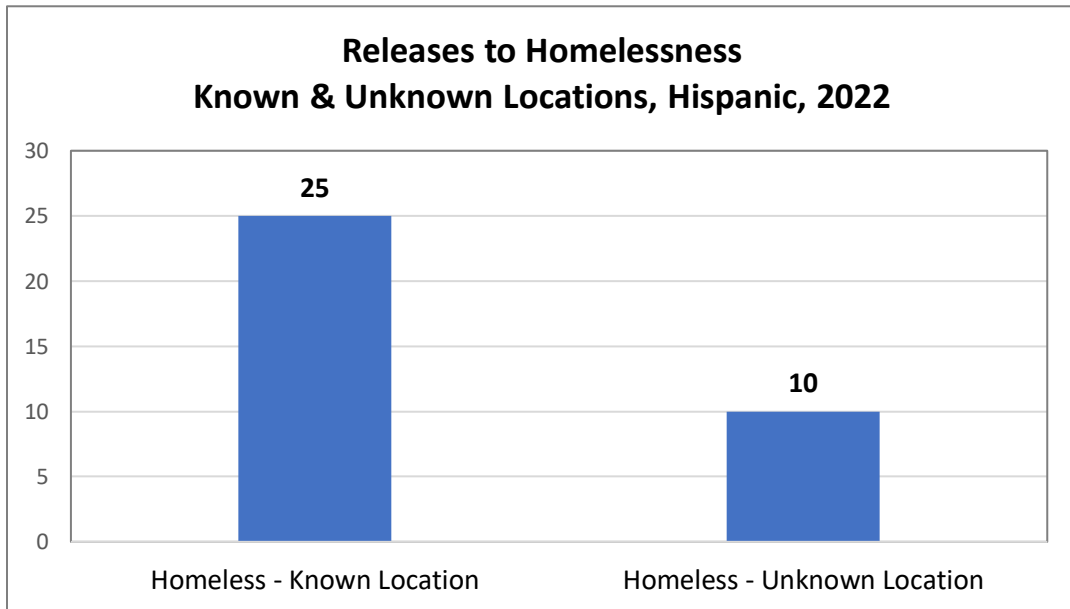
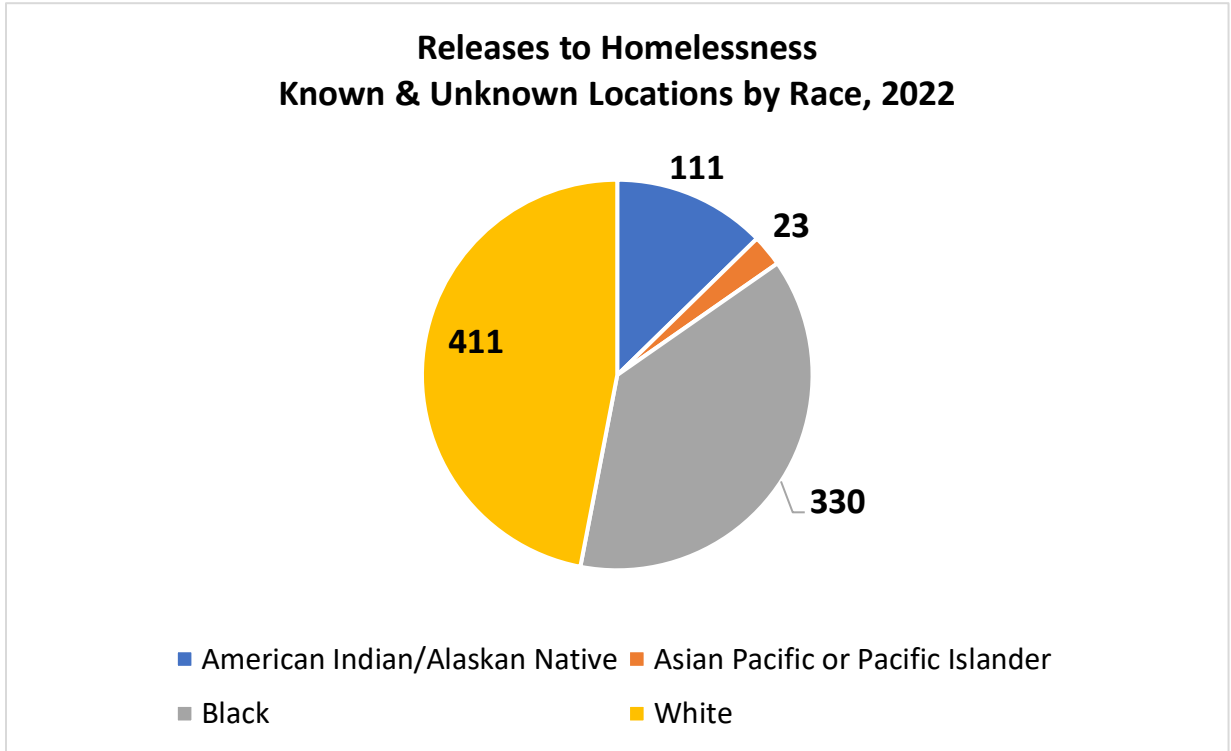
- Supervised Release/Parole 78.1%
- Community Programs 14%
- Discharge 6.5%
- Work Release-COVID .4%
- Cond Med Rel/Supervised Release – COVID 0% (2)
- Other 1%

¹² “Adult Prison Population Summary”, Minnesota Department of Corrections, [2021 - Homelessness Release Legislative Report tcm1089-519043.pdf \(mn.gov\)](#), accessed on March 6, 2023

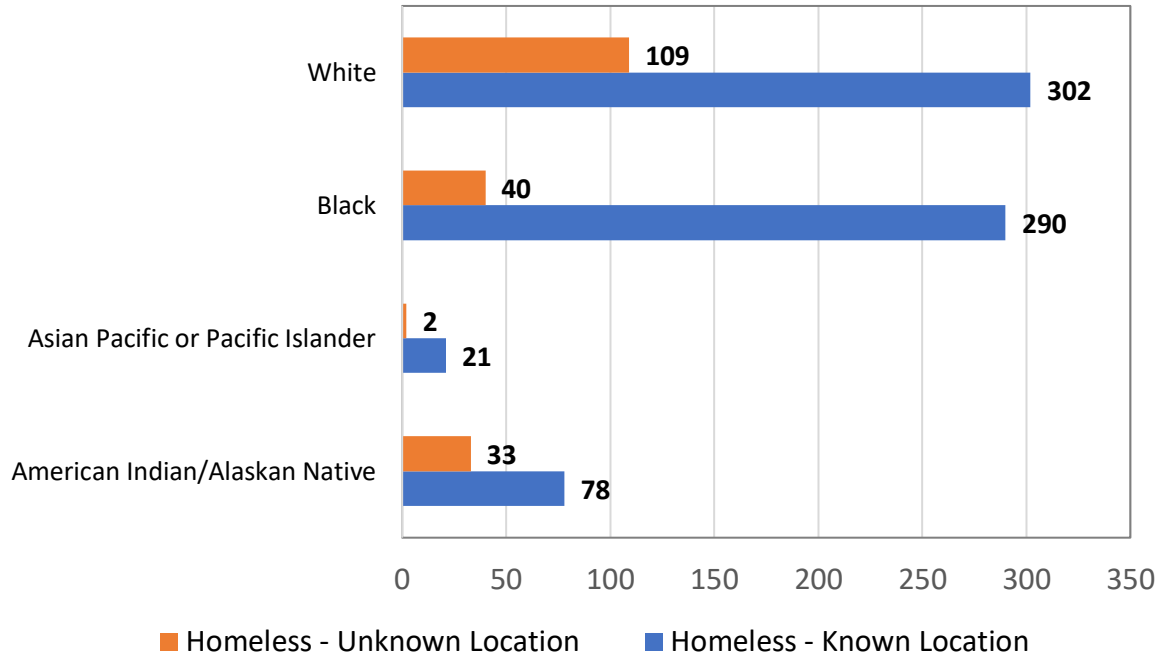
¹³ “Homelessness: 2021 Legislative Report”, Minnesota Department of Corrections, [2021 - Homelessness Release Legislative Report tcm1089-519043.pdf \(mn.gov\)](#)

¹⁴ “Person-Centered Practices”, Minnesota Department of Human Services, [Person-centered practices / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov\)](#), accessed on June 14, 2023

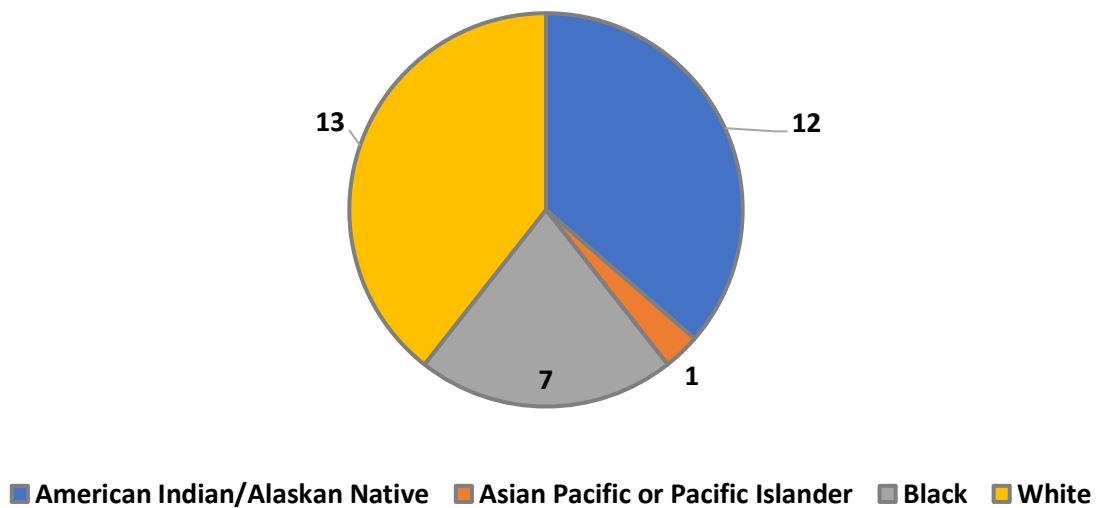
Releases to homelessness to known and unknown locations within calendar year 2022, disaggregated by race.



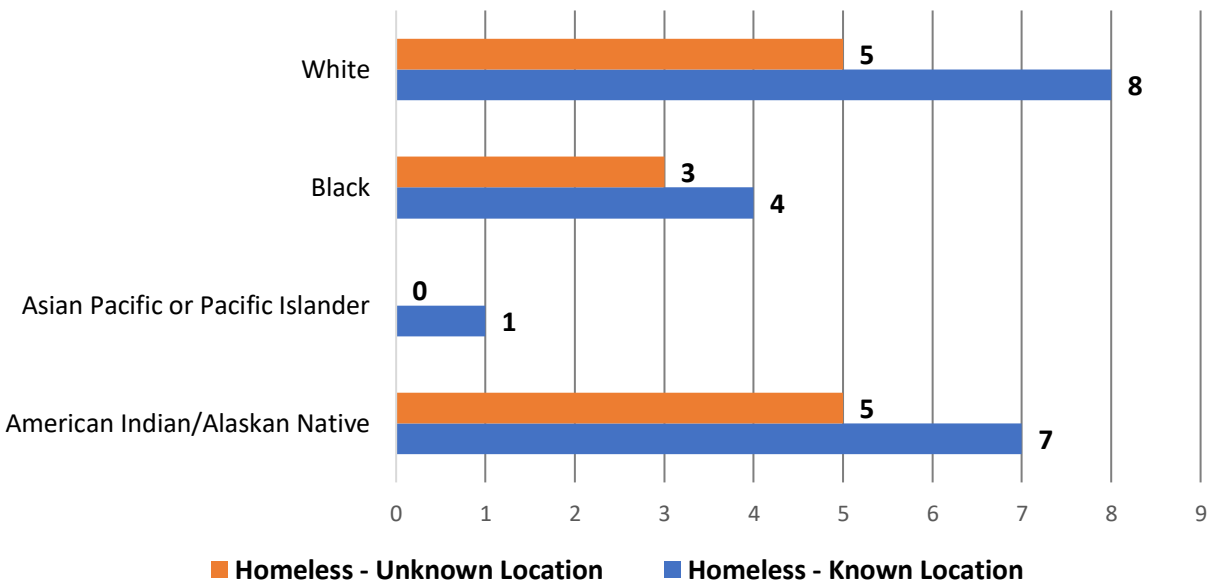
Releases to Homelessness Known & Unknown Locations by Race, 2022



Releases to Homelessness Known & Unknown Locations, Women, 2022



**Releases to Homelessness
Known & Unknown Locations by Race, Women, 2022**



Total number of releases to homelessness by Minnesota State Prison

Facility	Homeless-Known Location	Homeless-Unknown Location	Total
Faribault	179	44	223
Lino Lakes	76	21	97
Moose Lake	40	15	55
Oak Park Heights	18	0	18
Rush City	97	11	108
Red Wing	1	0	1
St. Cloud	78	54	132
Shakopee	20	15	35
Stillwater	113	22	135
Togo	45	0	45
Willow River	24	2	26
Total	691	184	875

Total number of releases to homelessness by county¹⁵

County	Homeless-Known Location	Homeless-Unknown Location	Total
Anoka	14	6	20
Becker	5	5	10
Beltrami	10	5	15
Benton	7	3	10
Blue Earth	15	1	16
Brown	3	0	3
Carver	10	2	12
Cass	4	1	5
Chippewa	6	3	9
Chisago	1	1	2
Clay	27	26	53
Crow Wing	9	4	13
Dakota	13	2	15
Douglas	3	2	5
Freeborn	3	0	3
Goodhue	3	2	5
Hennepin	230	33	263
Hubbard	0	3	3
Isanti	2	0	2
Itasca	7	2	9
Jackson	0	1	1
Kanabec	1	2	3
Kandiyohi	0	3	3
Koochiching	4	1	5
Le Sueur	0	1	1
Lyon	10	0	10
Mahnomen	4	4	8
Martin	3	3	6
McLeod	6	1	7
Mille Lacs	1	1	2
Morrison	0	2	2
Mower	7	2	9
Nicollet	0	1	1
Nobles	6	3	9
Olmsted	45	2	47
Otter Tail	1	1	2
Pennington	3	1	4

¹⁵ Data depicts the address the county on the release plan; not the 'county of case responsibility' or the county associated with correctional supervision.

Pine	1	1	2
Polk	22	7	29
Ramsey	82	20	102
Redwood	4	0	4
Rice	5	0	5
Scott	10	2	12
Sherburne	0	3	3
St. Louis	39	9	48
Stearns	37	6	43
Steele	8	0	8
Wadena	3	0	3
Washington	0	3	3
Watsonwan	1	0	1
Winona	6	2	8
Wright	10	0	10
Yellow Medicine	0	1	1
TOTAL	691	184	875

The definition of “*Homeless-Known Location*” is intended to encompass needs of services for homeless and housing stability and the experience of individuals who are preparing to be released from prison. Meaning, temporary and emergency housing, and homeless resources that are inclusive to people exiting incarceration are impactful, and an individual receiving these supports and services is taking the first steps to housing stability. Therefore, the DOC’s primary goal is to prevent and mitigate, whenever possible, releases to “Homeless-Unknown Location,” which means individuals do not know where they will sleep that night, or the person is intending to rely on emergency shelter resources that may or may not be available to them.

Clay, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties have the most individuals who are released to “Homeless-Unknown Location” and consist of approximately 43% of the total number of individuals released to this experience.

Total number of releases to homelessness from prison, both known and unknown locations, under supervised, intensive supervised, or conditional release:

Supervision Type	Homeless-Known Location	Homeless-Unknown Location	Total
Standard Supervised Release	237	180	417
Intensive Supervised Release	379	2	381
Challenge Incarceration Program Release	73	2	75
Conditional Release Program Release	2	0	2
Total	691	184	875

V. Homelessness experienced as of January 19, 2023

This report identifies homelessness experienced at time of release from Minnesota state prisons. This information alone does not capture homelessness and housing instability experienced by corrections system impacted persons across the state.

With approximately 100,000 individuals on probation, Minnesota is host to one of the highest populations of individuals on this type of supervision in the nation¹⁶. As such, the Statewide Supervision System – County, Race, and Gender Report is inclusive to all three correctional service delivery systems¹⁷ and illuminates the problem of homelessness and housing instability¹⁸ across the entirety of the corrections system in the state¹⁹.

The report allows for disaggregation of data by race and gender which draws focus to how black, indigenous and persons of color (BIPOC) experience the problem within the context of their justice system involvement. It can be argued, the experience of homelessness while involved within the corrections system perpetuates and exacerbates this inequity.

The following data details a ‘snapshot’ of the experience of homelessness and housing instability for persons on probation on January 19, 2023²⁰:

¹⁶ “Probation and Parole in the United States, 2020”, U.S Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, December 2021, NCJ 303102, [Probation and Parole in the United States, 2020 \(ojp.gov\)](https://www.ojp.gov/ncj/303102), January 25, 2023

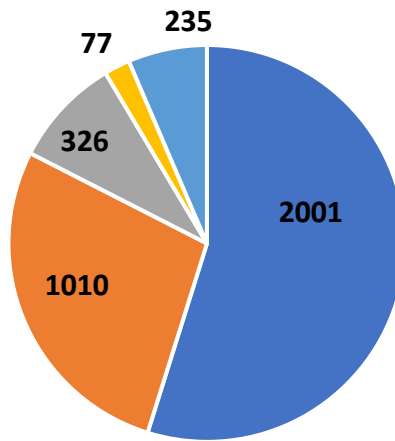
¹⁷ Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), Community Corrections Act Agencies (CCA), and County Probation Offices (CPO)

¹⁸ Homelessness and housing instability within this data system is defined as: *lacks a permanent place to live and/or, only allowed to stay temporarily at a residence by primary occupant, i.e., ‘couch-hopping’, and/or lives housing that poses a risk to the health, safety, or physical well-being of its occupants.*

¹⁹ Homelessness and housing instability is defined as *“lacks a permanent place to live and/or, only allowed to stay temporarily at a residence by the primary occupant, i.e., ‘couch-hopping; and/or lives in substandard housing (i.e., housing that poses a risk to the health, safety, or physical well-being of its occupants, neighbors and visitors, e.g., a garage, fish-house and/or residence without electricity or plumbing)*

²⁰ Statewide Supervision System-County, Race and Gender report, January 19, 2023

**Homelessness & Housing Instability, Probation
January 19, 2023**

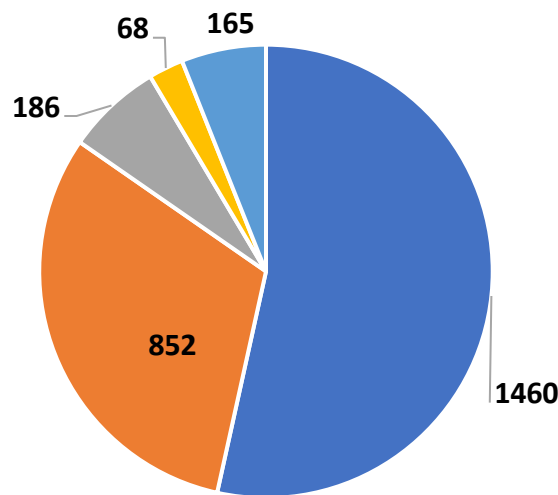


Approximately **45% of individuals** on probation experiencing homelessness and housing instability identify as BIPOC.

Total: 3,649
Total on Probation: 102,784

■ White ■ Black ■ Native American ■ Asian/Pacific Islander ■ Unknown Race

**Homelessness & Housing Instability, Probation
January 19, 2023, Men**

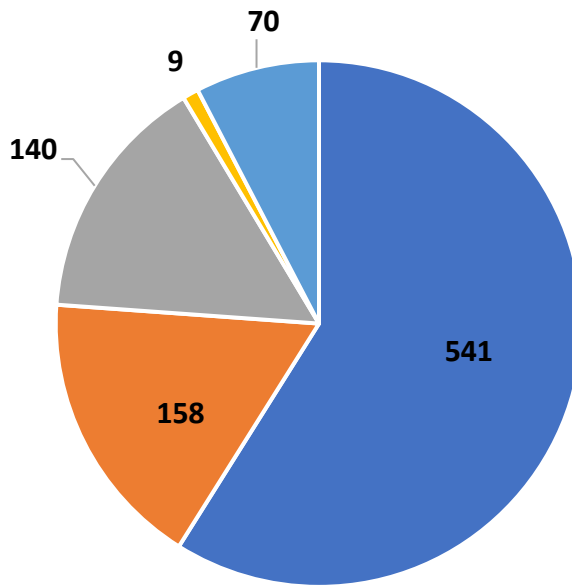


Approximately **47% of men** on probation experiencing homelessness and housing instability identify as BIPOC.

Total: 2,731

■ White ■ Black ■ Native American ■ Asian/Pacific Islander ■ Unknown Race

**Homelessness & Housing Instability, Probation
January 19, 2023, Women**



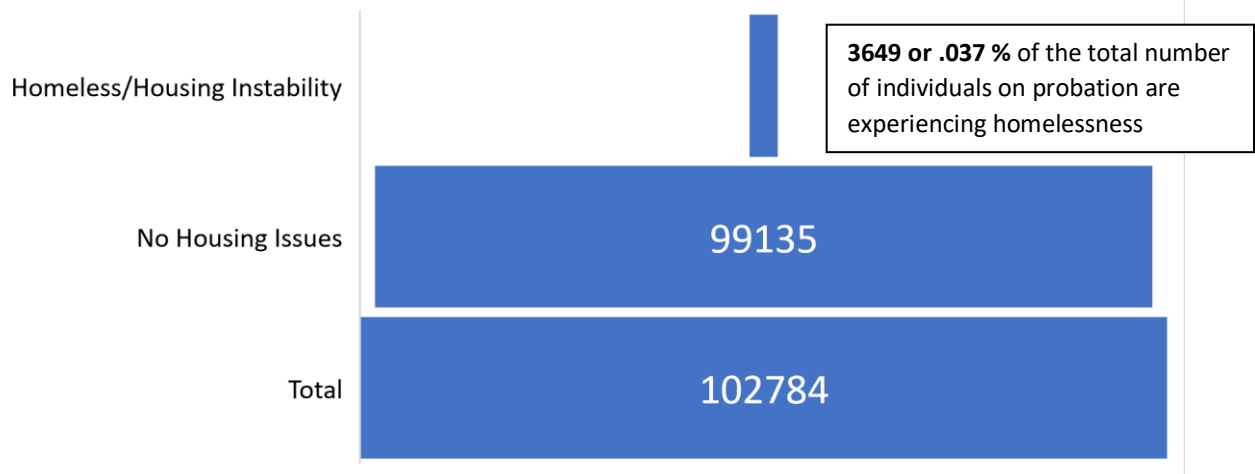
Approximately **42% of women** on probation experiencing homelessness and housing instability identify as BIPOC.

Total: 918

■ White ■ Black ■ Native American ■ Asian/Pacific Islander ■ Unknown Race

When comparing this data to the 2021 Homelessness Legislative Report²¹, the percentage of those experiencing homelessness and housing instability remains consistent.

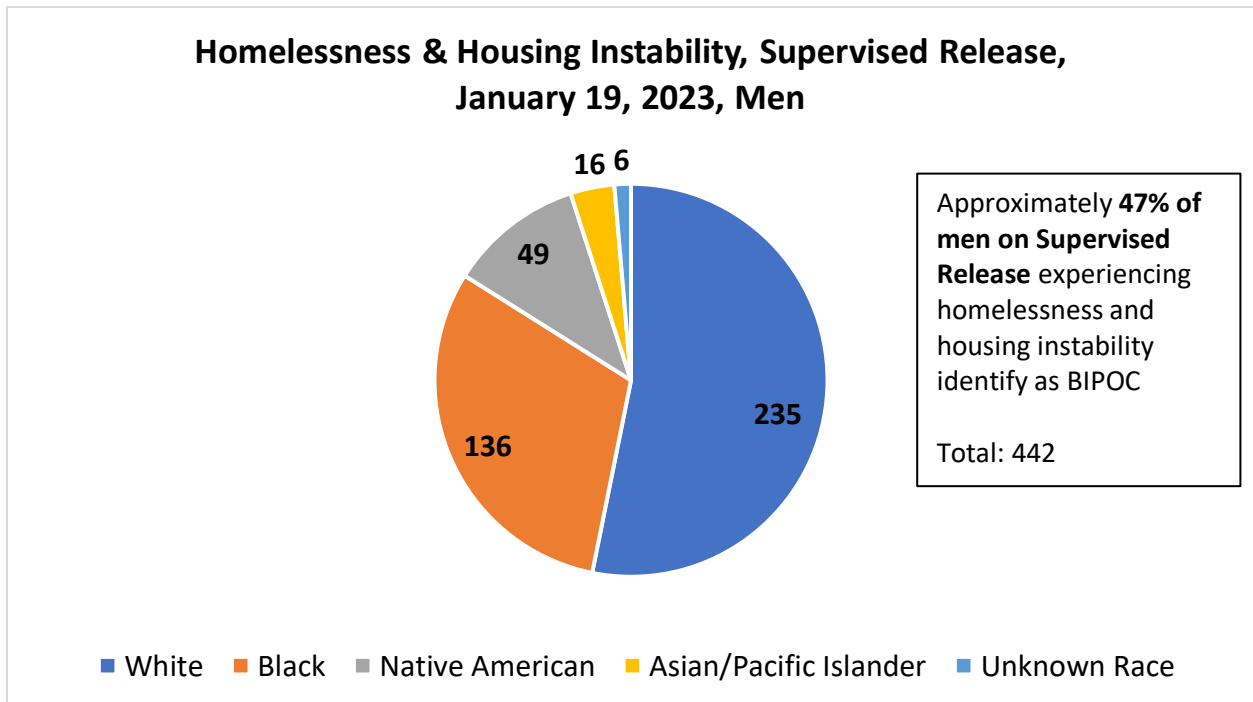
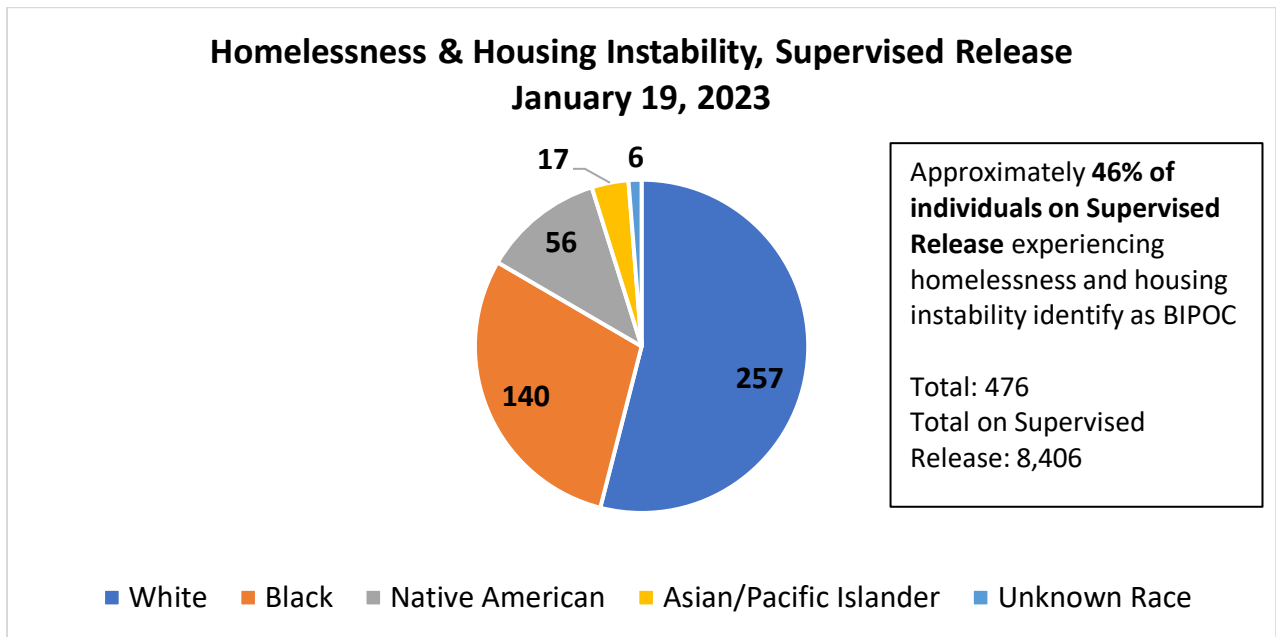
**Homelessness & Housing Instability,
Comparison to Total on Probation, January 19, 2023**



3649 or .037 % of the total number of individuals on probation are experiencing homelessness

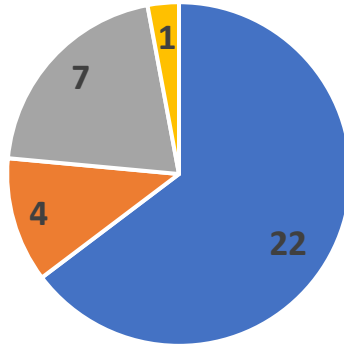
²¹ "Homelessness, 2021 Legislative Report", Minnesota Department of Corrections, [2021 - Homelessness Release Legislative Report_tcm1089-519043.pdf \(mn.gov\)](https://www.mn.gov/files/media/document/2021-Homelessness-Release-Legislative-Report_tcm1089-519043.pdf), page 10, accessed on March 23, 2023

The below data details a snapshot of the experience of homelessness and housing instability for persons on Supervised Release on January 19, 2023²².



²² Statewide Supervision System-County, Race and Gender report, January 19, 2023

Homelessness & Housing Instability, Supervised Release, January 19, 2023, Women

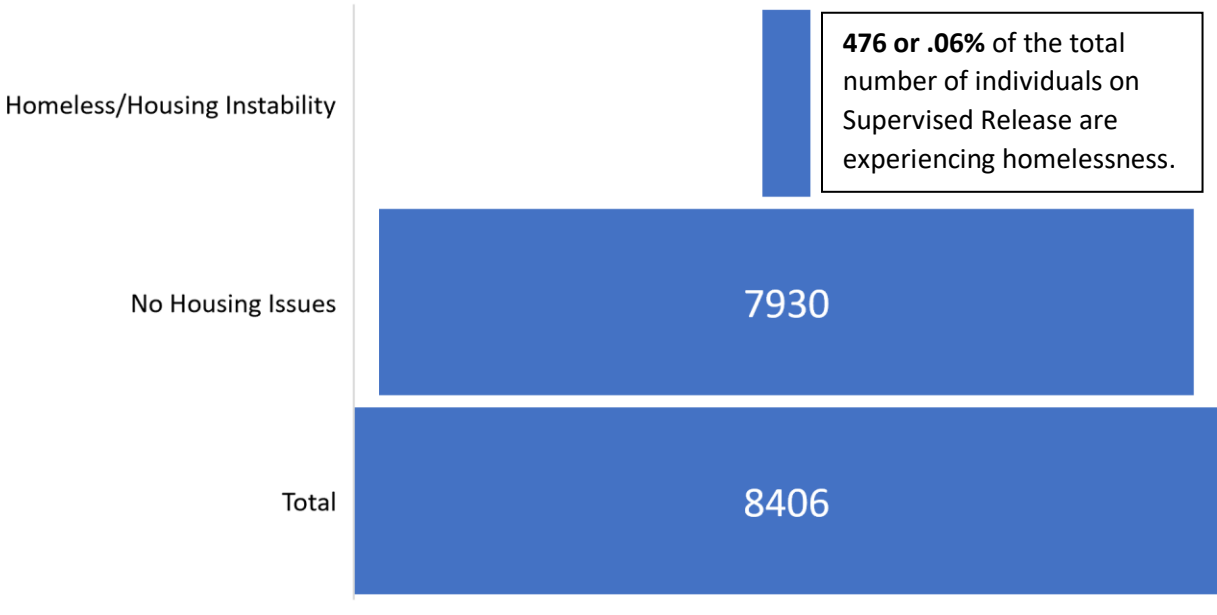


Approximately **35% of women on Supervised Release** experiencing homelessness and housing instability identify as BIPOC

Total: 34

■ White ■ Black ■ Native American ■ Asian/Pacific Islander

Homelessness & Housing Instability, Comparison to Total on Supervised Release, January 19, 2023



When comparing this data to the 2021 Homelessness Legislative Report²³, the percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability remains consistent.

²³ "Homelessness, 2021 Legislative Report", Minnesota Department of Corrections, [2021 - Homelessness Release Legislative Report_tcm1089-519043.pdf \(mn.gov\)](https://www.mn.gov/~/media/2021/05/2021-Homelessness-Release-Legislative-Report_tcm1089-519043.pdf), page 10, accessed on March 23, 2023

VI. Conclusion

This report and findings reflect the need for a more robust homeless response system within the state that is inclusive to corrections systems impacted persons, the DOC's involvement the state's homeless response system, and the development of additional data-driven practices and strategies. Although there is evidence of promising results, there is more work to be done. The DOC is grateful for and values the partnerships with all stakeholders connected to the work and these findings: impacted persons and families, community partners, government entities, and corrections systems professionals. The DOC will continue to track and analyze data with the tools that are available and improve upon those tools with newly appropriated resources.