

Older Adults Served by Homelessness Programs in California



This fact sheet is part of a series using the [Homeless Data Integration System \(HDIS\)](#) to understand how homelessness programs are reaching different populations in California. It provides a snapshot of how older adult individuals (adults aged 50 and older in households without children) were served by homelessness programs in California using information reported in HDIS during the three-year period between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2021. HDIS includes information about programs that report to a local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), but does not contain information about every homelessness response program across the state.

Characteristics of Older Adults Served by Homelessness Programs

- Approximately **148,000 older adults (aged 50 and older)** were served by homelessness programs during the three-year assessment period, about 95% of whom were served as adult individuals (in households without children).

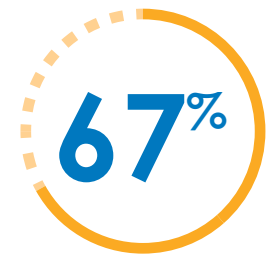


Of older adult individuals experienced chronic homelessness

(homelessness for at least one year in the previous three years, plus a disabling condition)

Over the three-year assessment period, 26% of all people served were older adults, and 42% of adult individuals served were older adults.

- 113,623** adult individuals were 50-64 years old
- 27,698** adult individuals were 65 years or older

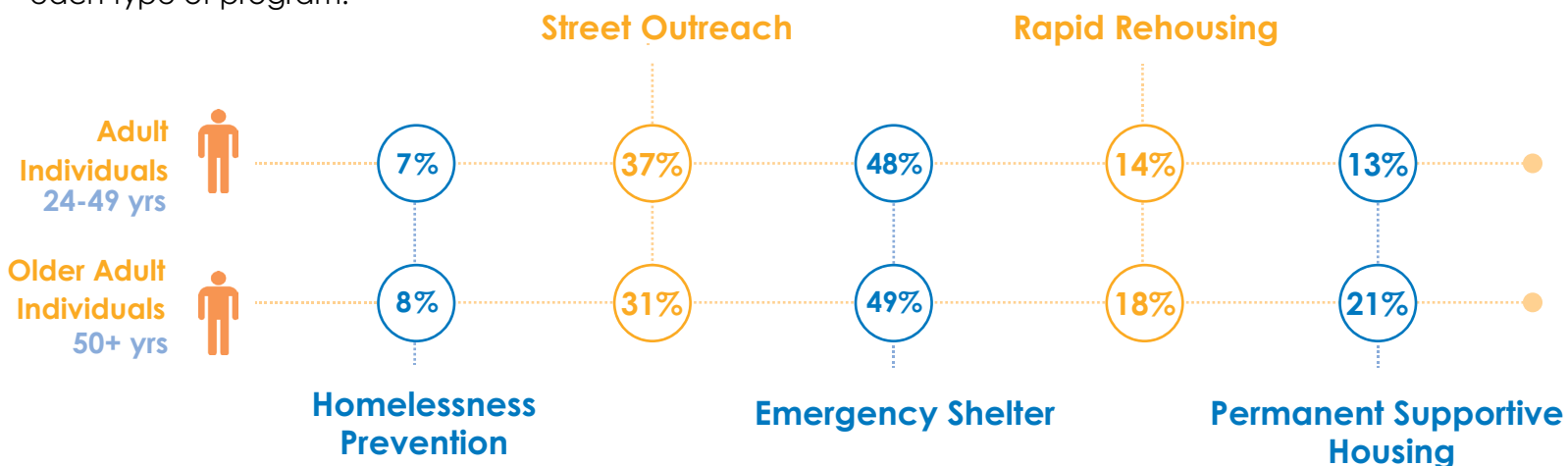


Of older adult individuals identified as male

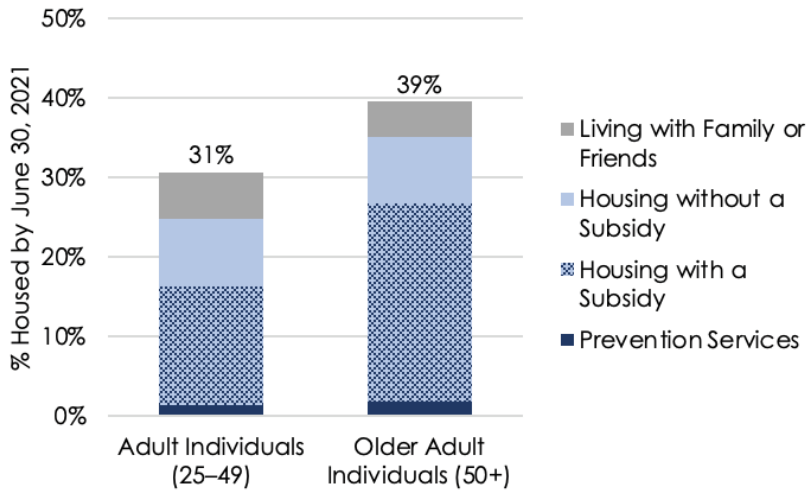
43% of older adult individuals identified as White, Non-Hispanic / Non-Latinx, 29% identified as Black, African American, or African, and 18% identified as White, Hispanic/Latinx

Types of Homelessness Programs Serving Older Adults

The percentages of older adult individuals (aged 50 and older) and adult individuals (aged 25-49) served by each type of program.



Outcomes for Older Adults Served by Homelessness Programs



- **39%** of older adult individuals were recorded as being housed by the end of the study period, including 25% who were living in subsidized housing.
- Many of those who were not recorded as housed were still receiving homelessness services, such as staying in an interim housing program.



Of the nearly 56,000 older adult individuals with chronic patterns of homelessness lived in permanent supportive housing during the study period.



Many Continuums of Care prioritize older adults with disabilities and chronic patterns of homelessness for housing programs.

Older adult individuals (aged 50+) experienced chronic patterns of homelessness 1.3 times more often than adult individuals (aged 25-49).

Conclusion

- Adults aged 50 and older who are experiencing homelessness have disabilities and health conditions similar to adults 20–30 years older in the general population, and they frequently die at younger ages.
- Older adults are often prioritized with homelessness and housing interventions with higher levels of health and supportive services, like permanent supportive housing. However, the availability of permanent supportive housing was lower than the number of older adults with chronic patterns of homelessness served during the study period.
- The state's [Master Plan for Aging](#), released by the California Department of Aging (CDA) in 2021, aims to end homelessness among older adults. The plan calls for more affordable housing options—including production, preservation, and protection of affordable housing specifically for older adults—and social and health supports to help older adults remain in their homes.

This series is a collaboration between the California Interagency Council on Homelessness; the Terner Center for Housing Innovation at the University of California, Berkeley; the Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative at the University of California, San Francisco; and Abt Associates.