

UNDERSTANDING UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS IN SISTERS AREA



Homelessness can be solved – but it takes a community effort, from a wide array of partners and a continuum of services.

Despite stereotypes that oversimplify the nature of homelessness, the true causes of homelessness are complex and nuanced. Rather than stemming from any single cause, homelessness is typically the result of several compounding and interrelated factors that vary from person-to-person. Homelessness in Sisters area looks different than other cities in Central Oregon. Whether it is the desire to be more isolated, wanting to stay in ones own community, or just passing through, those living unsheltered in Sisters have their own unique story with one common thread: the lack of affordable housing for the working class.

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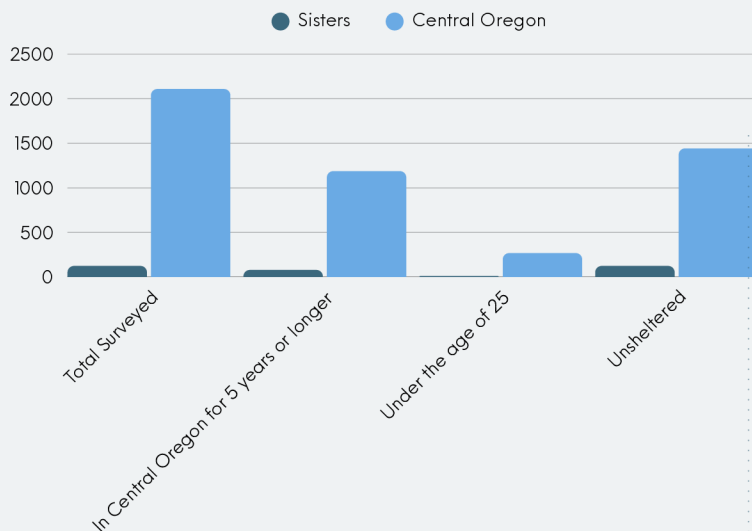
I was renting a house for 26 years but then landlord sold property. I have been in Sisters 30+ years. Can't afford rent anywhere but luckily I am working as ranch hand to make ends meet.

CoC Data from 2025 PIT

The annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count was conducted on January 27th, 2025. Surveys were conducted between January 27th and February 3rd asking where individuals slept for the night of January 27th.

124 individuals were surveyed in Sisters

2108 individuals were surveyed in Central Oregon



For more information
check out



cohomeless.org

Local Context and Challenges

Shelter Limitations

Sisters has historically had difficulty securing a permanent location for shelters, leading to increased reliance on street outreach and “band aid” fixes

Extreme Weather Events

Community Outreach, Resources, and Emergency Shelter (CORE) has played a crucial role in establishing and coordinating services to our unhoused neighbors during both winter and summer months when extreme weather events have taken place

Partnership Success

Strong collaboration between the DNFS, DCSO and DCBH have created a comprehensive and collaborative approach to outreach to meet the most vulnerable in the Sisters area

How can you help?

Volunteer with one of the amazing local nonprofits, educate yourself on what is happening regionally to address homelessness, lead with curiosity and compassion

GLOSSARY: 10 TERMS TO KNOW

Literally Homeless

Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

1. Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; or
2. 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
3. Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Chronic Homelessness

The status of being homeless for at least a year – or on at least four separate occasions in the past three years – while experiencing a disabling condition, such as a physical disability, serious mental illness, or substance use disorder.

Unsheltered Homelessness

HUD considers a person “unsheltered” if they are sleeping in a place not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation. Examples of unsheltered sleeping situations include tents, train stations, structures like sheds or garages, vehicles, sidewalks, or other locations unfit for human habitation.

Sheltered Homelessness

Living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter that provides temporary living arrangements. These can be hotels and motels, “congregate” (group) shelters, and transitional housing.

Continuum of Care (CoC)

A group organized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to carry out the homelessness response system in a specific geography. Local CoC also known as the Homeless Leadership Coalition (HLC)

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count

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 which impacts allocated funding to a region

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent housing in which housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services are provided to assist households with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability in achieving housing stability

Coordinated Entry System (CES)

A streamlined process that connects people experiencing homelessness to housing and other resources by completing a universal assessment tool to determine prioritization

Safe Parking Program

A designated area where people experiencing homelessness can park their vehicles and stay overnight safely. Offers case management support to help people transition from living in their vehicles to more stable housing

Street Outreach

Activities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness in unsheltered locations by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care. Component services generally consist of engagement, case management, emergency health and mental health services, and transportation.