

Key Findings: 2009 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey (South County)

Homelessness in Santa Clara County's Southern areas (South County), which include the Cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill, the unincorporated community of San Martin, and other unincorporated areas south of the City of San Jose, clearly reflects the nexus of many housing, health care, and employment issues. Based on major data components from the homeless census and the results of 128 homeless surveys conducted in Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Martin, ASR generated detailed demographic and lifestyle profiles of the homeless population in South County. Based on a point-in-time estimate of 1,063 homeless persons, with a randomized survey sampling process, the 128 valid surveys represent a confidence interval of +/- 8% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the survey results to the estimated homeless population in South County.

- ✓ **The 2009 *point-in-time* homeless count identified a total of 1,063 homeless persons in South County, which is a considerably large increase (28%) from 2007.**
 - 51% of the enumerated homeless population were unsheltered, while 49% were sheltered. While the number of homeless persons in the City of Gilroy decreased between 2007 and 2009, increases were seen in the City of Morgan Hill and in unincorporated areas of South County.
- ✓ **The 2009 count estimated 1,144 unique persons in South County who experienced homelessness over the course of the last year, indicating a prevalence of homeless persons with long or multiple episodes of homelessness.**
- ✓ **62% of the homeless survey population were male and 38% were female.**
- ✓ **61% were Hispanic/Latino, 26% were White/Caucasian, 6% were Black/African American, and 1% were Asian. This is compared to 33% of the overall countywide homeless population who were Hispanic/Latino, 33% who were White/Caucasian, and 20% who were Black/African American.**
- ✓ **29% cited the loss of employment as the primary cause of their homelessness.**
- ✓ **53% had been homeless for a year or more, compared to 46% countywide.**
- ✓ **77% were living in Santa Clara County when they became homeless.**
- ✓ **41% received no government assistance of any kind, compared to 49% countywide.**
- ✓ **65% had one or more disabling condition.**
- ✓ **45% claimed that they had at least one mental health issue (mental illness, depression, and/or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder).**

Homeless Point-in-Time Enumeration Findings, 2007-2009 Comparison

Census Components	2007	2009	Net Change	Percent Change
Street enumeration	319	537	218	68.3%
Shelter enumeration	515	526	11	2.1%
Total Count	834	1,063	229	27.5%

Additional Key Findings, 2007-2009 Comparison

2007	2009	
84	227	A 170% increase in the point-in-time estimate of <i>chronically</i> homeless persons (those with many or long homeless episodes, and a disabling condition), indicating a growing number of homeless persons in need of significant help and outreach. This increase is consistent with increases in the chronically homeless population in other counties as well.
NA¹	2%	Loss of home through foreclosure as the primary cause of homelessness was not significant.
1%	6%	A small increase in the percentage of respondents who were homeless veterans.
37%	38%	The percentage of local homeless who reported experiencing a substance abuse problem (alcohol and/or drugs) stayed relatively the same.

Note: All 2007 South County surveys (N=86) were conducted in the City of Gilroy, whereas some of 2009 South County surveys (N=128) were conducted in San Martin and the City of Morgan Hill, in addition to the City of Gilroy. Therefore, caution should be used when interpreting and comparing these data.

¹ This was not a response option in 2007.