

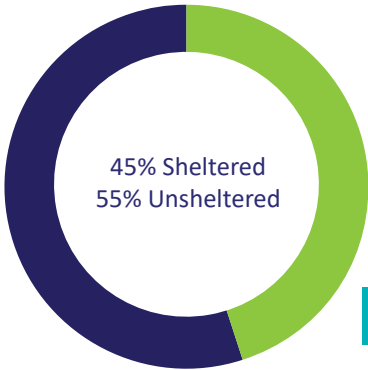
Merritt - 2023 Homeless Count

Point-in-Time (PiT) homeless counts provide a snapshot of people who are experiencing homelessness in a 24-hour period, their demographic characteristics, service use and other information.

67 People were identified as experiencing homelessness compared to 43 in 2020.

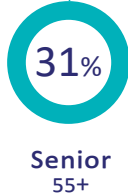
Where did individuals stay the night of the count?

Of Unsheltered Respondents*



- 32% Someone Else's Place
- 22% Outside
- 14% Makeshift Shelter or Tent

AGE BREAKDOWN



GENDER



55%

Experienced homelessness for the first time as a youth

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

14% of respondents identified as 2SLGBTQIA+

TRANS EXPERIENCE

4% of respondents identified as having trans experience

INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

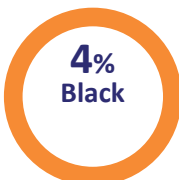
64% of respondents identified as Indigenous

Compared with 20% of the Census population

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

76% of Indigenous-identifying respondents reported having lived or generational experience with residential school

RACIAL IDENTITY



For the purpose of this count, an individual **was defined as experiencing homelessness if they did not have a place of their own where they paid rent and could expect to stay for at least 30 days.** This included people who:

- Stayed overnight on the night of the count in homeless shelters, including transition houses for women fleeing violence and youth safe houses, people with no fixed address (NFA) staying temporarily in hospitals, jails or detox facilities (defined as “sheltered”); and,
- Stayed outside in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles or were staying temporarily at someone else’s place (couch surfing) and/or using homelessness services (defined as “unsheltered”).

The 2023 PiT Count took place in Merritt on the evening of March 14 and the daytime of March 15.

In the 2020 PiT Count, 33% of respondents reported experiencing homelessness for the first time as a youth, and 4% of respondents were youth at the time of the survey. It is important to consider that youth are one of several population groups often underreported in this methodology.

In the 2020 PiT Count, 74% of respondents identified as Indigenous.

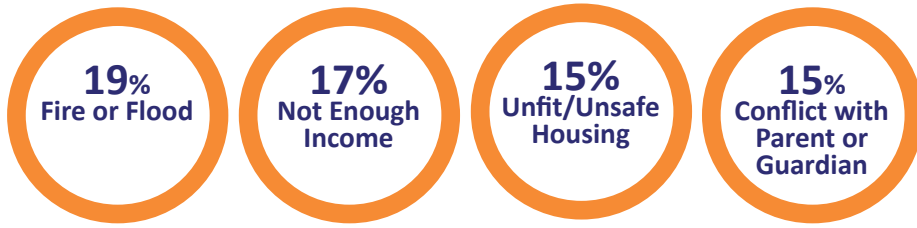
This year, the PiT Survey asked respondents if they, a parent, or grandparent attended residential school. The Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee and the Indian Residential School Survivors Society were instrumental in helping create this question and provide resources for respondents and interviewers to stay safe.



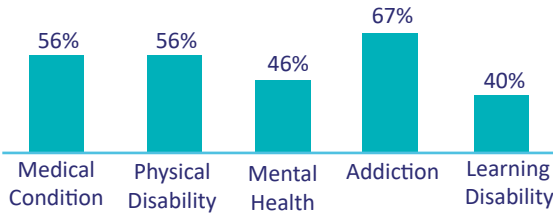
BC HOUSING
RESEARCH CENTRE

* Top responses highlighted

REASONS FOR HOUSING LOSS*



HEALTH CONCERNS

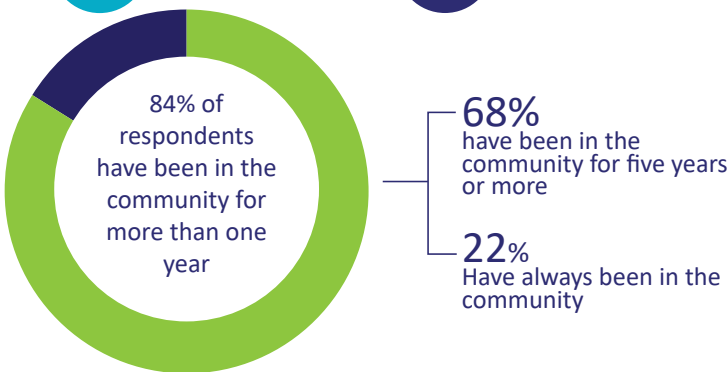


48% Reported an acquired brain injury

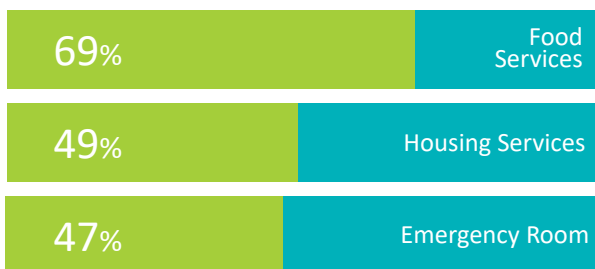
73% Reported two or more health concerns

LENGTH OF TIME EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

12% Under six months 78% One year or more



SERVICES ACCESSED*



OVERNIGHT LOCATIONS IN LAST YEAR*



* Top responses highlighted

PiT counts are an undercount and represent only those individuals identified during a 24-hour period.

- While PiT Counts are an accepted methodological tool, the numbers are understood to be the minimum number of people who are experiencing homelessness on a given day in that community.
- Percentages are based on the number of respondents to each question, not the total population experiencing homelessness.

The number of respondents indicating they are living with an acquired brain injury increased from 23% in 2020.

The number of respondents identifying as having a physical disability increased from 2020, as did the number of respondents reporting two or more health concerns, up slightly from 70%.

In 2020, 35% of respondents had experienced homelessness for under six months.

Compared to 2020, fewer respondents have been in the community for less than six months, suggesting many people experiencing homelessness in Merritt were in Merritt the last time they were housed.

92% of respondents reported having an income source. The most common income sources were income assistance and disability benefit. Around 14% reported a full or part-time job.

New for the 2023 PiT Count, the survey asked respondents to check all the locations they had stayed in the past year from a list, rather than only asking if they had stayed in a shelter.