



# Community Services Initiatives

Basic and Emergency Needs · Behavioral Health · Child and Youth Development · Stop Abuse

## Homelessness in Lincoln 2009 Data Report

Community Services Initiatives mission is to provide an integrated process for ongoing planning and implementation for human services in our community.

Sponsored by the Lincoln/Lancaster County Joint Budget Committee and the United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County in partnership with the Human Services Federation and University of Nebraska - Lincoln Center on Children, Families, and the Law



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## 2009 Homeless Data Report

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## Introduction

Community Services Initiatives (CSI) Homeless Data Report examines homelessness in Lincoln, Nebraska over the two-year period from July 2006 through June 2008. Homelessness was identified by Community Services Initiatives as one of three focus areas for the community's 2008 - 2009 human services planning process. The CSI Homeless Data Report is the first step in this planning process and will be followed by a CSI Homeless Community Report to address community generated solutions to homelessness in Lincoln.

The CSI Homeless Data Report is composed of four sections. The first section presents data on the number of homeless persons identified in our community during the time frame, demographic information on the population, the identified causes of homelessness, and frequency and duration of homelessness. The second section focuses on services received by the homeless population and how these relate to frequency and duration. The third section examines the geographic distribution of the homeless population in Lincoln in terms of last permanent residence and current living location. The fourth section evaluates the highest utilizers of emergency and homeless services in the community and the resources currently devoted to this population.

The CSI Homeless Data report provides the Lincoln community with the most complete and comprehensive examination of the homeless population the community has had to date. This report is generated in order to provide homeless service providers and community human service policy and planning entities with the basic information required to make grounded and meaningful planning decisions for the City of Lincoln related to the homeless population

The ability to generate a data report such as this is a tribute to the human services community in our city. The forward thinking commitment and dedication by all participants in the process are required to generate the amount and depth of information presented here.

Commitment by human services agencies to allocate financial and human resources to comprehensive, systematic data collection and trust within the community to share their data across service agencies and with the community as a whole, speak tremendously well for the human services providers Lincoln is fortunate to have them serving the city.

Lincoln is also fortunate to have the commitment by human service funding entities that recognize the value and need to have data systematically and comprehensively collected on human services; without which a meaningful and impactful community planning process is not possible.

However, the greatest commitment required is by the frontline human services providers who offer the services and the help people need, yet can still manage to find the time to record the information presented here.

## Methodology

### *Defining Homelessness*

Accurately answering a simple question such as “How many people are homeless?” can be difficult because definitions of what makes a person homeless vary.

Many agree that someone who sleeps in public (on the street, in a park or in a stairwell of a parking structure for instance) is homeless but does it matter if that is by choice or because of circumstances beyond the persons control? What about people living in local shelter who have a bed to sleep in but not a permanent place to live? What if someone is moving from couch to couch at the homes of friends and families? How about people in a jail or hospital or mental health facility who have no place waiting for when they leave those temporary settings? Even people who are currently living somewhere but facing imminent eviction might be counted as “near homeless.”

How homelessness is defined will generally have a significant impact on the number of homeless persons identified. Further complicating the question of the number of homelessness is the often temporary nature of homelessness. This temporal element also significantly impacts the number of homeless persons counted depending upon the data collection methodology used.

The Point in Time Counts, required by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development, contain two very significant temporal elements. First, the Point in Time Count is conducted on a specific day and counts only those persons that are homeless on that particular day; because of the often short term nature of homelessness a not insignificant number of persons homeless today may not be tomorrow and some that were not homeless yesterday may be homeless today. The second temporal limitation in Point in Time Counts is that they are conducted during one time of the year, generally in January, and to the extent the homeless population varies by season in a particular location the numbers counted may be impacted.

For this report CSI has used multiple methods in an effort to partially address both the definitional issue of homelessness and the temporal elements.

*Homeless persons in this report are those that either self-identify as homeless (being without a fixed, regular, night-time residence) or persons that are seeking homeless services. These services are wide ranging from an emergency shelter service to a transitional housing service.*

This definition allows for inclusion of homeless persons from those that are sleeping on the street through those that would be without a fixed, regular night-time residence without the service assistance provided. The importance of using a homeless definition derived in part from the service received is important as the data indicate that those persons receiving transitional housing services, and even in some cases shelter services frequently do not identify themselves as homeless, even though they would in most cases be on the street without the service. Additional subtypes of homeless persons that may not consider themselves homeless, although they meet the criteria of not having a fixed, regular, night-time residence, include those staying with friends or relatives.

## *Data Collection*

Data in this report are compiled from two primary sources in the Lincoln community, the Community Services Management Information System (CS-MIS) which serves the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County as the federally mandated Homeless Management Information (HMIS) and the Lincoln Homeless Coalition's annual Point in Time (PIT) Count.

*The Community Services Management Information System (CS-MIS)* is the agency-shared, web-based, case management, and tracking system using Service Point software that is used by the majority of service agencies in the community serving the homeless population. Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS.

CS-MIS/HMIS data are collected by forty-nine (49) programs in sixteen (16) service agencies in Lincoln and entered by the one-hundred and thirty-seven (137) licensed users when a person in the community receives a service.<sup>1</sup> Basic information on clients receiving services is collected by service agencies at intake and entered into the system; subsequent agency specific services provided to the client are then entered. Thirteen data fields are required of every individual entered into the CS-MIS system, one of these fields is: "Is person homeless?"

CS-MIS provides a means for ensuring that basic identifying information on clients is not entered multiple times. This capability extends to all agencies entering information and therefore provides the agencies and the community with unduplicated counts of persons across the community.

*The Point in Time Count (PIT)* data is also entered into the CS-MIS. The PIT incorporates a 30 question survey that is administered to sheltered and unsheltered self-identified homeless persons or persons that are receiving homeless services in the community during a specified time during the year. The survey captures information on homeless persons that may not typically be captured by all agencies in the provision of services. The PIT survey is typically conducted during the fourth week in January.

Data from CS-MIS were reviewed for the time period July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2008 for all persons identified as being homeless. This data set includes those persons that received a service for homelessness as well as those that took part in a Lincoln Homeless Coalition Point in Time Counts during the time period.

To address the temporal nature of homelessness and to be able to more fully answer the question of how many people are homeless in Lincoln our methodology combines data collected from three PIT counts with CS-MIS service provision data drawn over the two year period from July 2006 through June 2008. By combining both the service data from CS-MIS and the Point in Time Counts we are better able to identify both those persons that receive a service that quickly alleviates their homelessness and people who are homeless who have not received services.

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<sup>1</sup> Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS/HMIS due to restrictions mandated by federal regulation. D.V. shelters do participate in the Lincoln Point in Time Counts with aggregate data but the information provided is not unduplicated with other counts.

Additional data from the *domestic violence shelter* in Lincoln is reported separately. These data are not recorded in the Community Services Management Information System and can not be unduplicated with that data. These data are unduplicated counts within the domestic violence shelter. An unknown percentage of the domestic violence shelter persons are also included in the CS-MIS data.

This method of data collection provides Lincoln with the most accurate, unduplicated count of homeless persons yet available to the community combining both PIT counts with period prevalence counts. However there remain limitations in the extent of the coverage. Specifically there are homeless persons accessing services at providers that do not participate in the CS-MIS and if these persons do not access a service at another CS-MIS participating agency or are not found during or choose not to respond to a Point in Time count they are not be counted in these numbers.

For the fourth section of this report, looking at high utilizers of emergency services, CS-MIS data was cross referenced with data from Cornhusker Place, ED Connections and the Lincoln Police Department in addition to using the above data sources.

# Homelessness in Lincoln

## Lincoln Homeless Count and Demographics

From July 2006 through June 2008, four thousand seven-hundred and forty-nine (4,749) unduplicated persons in Lincoln and Lancaster County were identified as being homeless for some period of time. The 4,749 homeless persons composed three thousand and sixty-three (3,063) unique households. The average household size was 1.55 persons per household.

There were 2,780 (58.5%) men and 1,959 (41.3%) women homeless (Table 2). Sixty-six percent (66%) of homeless households were single persons with forty-four (44%) of those single persons being female.

The average age of the homeless person in Lincoln was thirty-two (32) years with twenty-five percent of homeless persons 19 years of age or younger and another twenty-five percent, forty-five (45) years or older (Table 1)

Nine-hundred and fifty-seven (957 / 20.2%) of the homeless persons identified were children under the age of 18; five-hundred and eighty-two (582 /12.3%) were children under the age of 13; and seventy-six homeless persons (76 / 1.6%) were infants 12 months of age and younger.

Racial minorities are disproportionately homeless in Lincoln compared to overall racial makeup of the city, with Black/African Americans making up 22.5% (1,070 persons) of the homeless and American Indians composing 5.5% (263 persons) of the homeless in comparison to their overall representation in the Lincoln population of 2.7% and .4% respectively (Lancaster County, Nebraska ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates: 2007).

Hispanics are also disproportionately represented among the homeless population in Lincoln at 10.3% (487 persons) in comparison to 4.6% of the population (Lancaster County, Nebraska ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates: 2007).

U.S. Military Veterans make up nearly 6.5% (307 persons) of the homeless population. This number is significantly lower than national estimates of the homeless veteran population. Some national estimates indicating nearly 40% of the homeless men are veterans, while in Lincoln 10.2% of homeless men identified were veterans (Table 5).

Nine hundred and twenty (920) homeless persons indicated they were victims of domestic violence.<sup>2</sup> Thirty-five percent (35% / 486 persons) of homeless women, 18 years of age and older in Lincoln indicated they were victims of domestic violence (Table 6). Thirty percent (30.3%, 290 persons) of homeless children were in households where the adult was a victim of domestic violence. Twenty-five percent (25%) of homeless persons (1,097 persons) reported they had a disability which impacted their ability to escape from homelessness. The most frequently identified disabilities were mental illness (27% of those with a disability), physical/medical (16.3% of those with a disability), alcohol/drug abuse (12.9% of those with a disability), and physical mobility (9.6% of those with a disability).

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<sup>2</sup> These persons are self-identified to CS-MIS service providers. Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS/HMIS due to restrictions mandated by federal regulation.

Tables 1 through 7 present the two-year data on the basic demographics of homeless persons in Lincoln.

**Table 1 - Age of Homeless Persons**

	<b>Persons</b>	<b>4,749</b>
	<b>Missing</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Mean</b>		<b>31.98</b>
<b>Median</b>		<b>32.00</b>
<b>Minimum</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Maximum</b>		<b>92</b>
<b>Percentiles</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19.00</b>
	<b>50</b>	<b>32.00</b>
	<b>75</b>	<b>45.00</b>

**Table 2 - Gender of Homeless Persons**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Missing Data</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>.1</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>1,959</b>	<b>41.3</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>2,780</b>	<b>58.5</b>
<b>Transgender</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>.0</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,749</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3 - Primary Race of Homeless Persons**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Missing Data</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>.6</b>
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native (HUD)</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Asian (HUD)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>.6</b>
<b>Black or African American (HUD)</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>22.5</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (HUD)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>.1</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Other Multi-Racial</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>2.4</b>
<b>White (HUD)</b>	<b>3,035</b>	<b>63.9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,749</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4 - Hispanic Ethnicity of Homeless Population**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Missing Data</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>10.3</b>
<b>Other (Non-Hispanic/Latino)</b>	<b>4,199</b>	<b>88.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,749</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Table 5 - Homeless Persons that are U.S. Military Veterans**

	Frequency	Percent
Missing Data	293	6.2
Don't Know (HUD)	17	.4
No (HUD)	4,130	87.0
Refused (HUD)	2	.0
Yes (HUD)	307	6.5
Total	4,749	100.0

**Table 6 - Homeless Children in Households with Domestic Violence**

	Frequency	Percent
Missing Data	56	5.9
No	611	63.8
Yes	290	30.3
Total	957	100.0

**Table 7 - Homeless Women 18 and over who experienced Domestic Violence**

	Frequency	Percent
Missing Data	65	4.7
No	829	60.1
Yes	486	35.2
Total	1,380	100.0

### Homeless in Domestic Violence Shelter

During the period from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2008, a single organization sheltered 970 unduplicated individuals in a domestic violence shelter. Of these, 403 were adults, 567 were children and all were victims of domestic violence. These data are unduplicated within the organization but are not unduplicated with CS-MIS / HMIS data.

All adults were female (403). Of the children, 273 (48.1%) were female and 294 (51.9%) were male.

Minority populations, as with the larger homeless population, were disproportionately represented in the domestic violence shelter in comparison to the overall community representation, 37% African American / Black and 10% Native American. Persons of Hispanic ethnicity were also disproportionately represented in the domestic violence shelter, 17.5% were of Hispanic ethnicity.

## Frequency and Duration of Homelessness in Lincoln

This section of the report examines homelessness in Lincoln longitudinally for the two-year period (July 2006-June 2008), looking at the change in the number of homeless persons over time, the length of time persons are homeless and the degree to which the homeless condition is long-term and reoccurring.

Data for this section of the report excluded three hundred and eighty-one homeless persons identified in the combined HMIS / PIT count data described above. These persons are excluded from this section as there was insufficient data. The homeless population examined here is therefore 4,358 persons.<sup>3</sup>

The 4,358 persons, with sufficient data for a period prevalence analysis, that were homeless during the two year period were not all homeless at the same time or for the same length of time. Table 8 below displays the distribution of homeless persons by six-month time periods.

Since July 2006 there has been a steady increase in the number of homeless persons identified in the City of Lincoln from 1,656 in the second half of 2006 to 2,087 for the first half of 2008. As subsequent data will show the persons counted in each six month period are not continuously homeless, that is, the numbers for each six month period are not simply the same persons initially identified being counted again in subsequent time periods.

**Table 8**  
**Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons by Six Month Period**

<b>6 Month Period</b>	<b>Persons</b>
<b>07/2006 - 12/2006</b>	<b>1,656</b>
<b>01/2007 - 06/2007</b>	<b>1,833</b>
<b>07/2007 - 12/2007</b>	<b>2,008</b>
<b>01/2008 - 06/2008</b>	<b>2,087</b>

The increase in the number of identified persons that are homeless over this time period, in particular from the first to the second six-month time frame, is to an undetermined extent the results of wider implementation of the CS-MIS/HMIS system among homeless service providers. As the CS-MIS breadth of coverage increases the likelihood of identifying unduplicated persons that are homeless receiving services also increases.

These data bring to the fore the very different numbers that counts of the homeless population can create using differing methods. During the same time frame the Lincoln Point in Time Counts (count on a single day) were able to count the homeless population in a range from 678 to 1,075 homeless persons.

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<sup>3</sup> The three hundred and eighty-one persons not examined were identified only in the Point in Time Counts and since PIT counts were not conducted during two of the specific time periods examined below they can not be included as part of a period prevalence analysis. The homeless persons excluded do differ somewhat from the larger population in terms of gender and age, being slightly older than 35 years and more frequently male.

The temporal nature of homelessness and the degree to which homelessness is a temporary condition for a large segment of the population that become homeless is highlighted in Table 9.

Over the two year time frame, 1,656 persons in Lincoln were homeless during the first six-month period from July 2006 through December 2006. Thirty-six percent (36% / 600 persons) were not identified as homeless in any subsequent time frame and nearly sixty percent (58.7% / 973 persons) of those identified as homeless over the first 12 months were no longer identified as homeless in the following 12 months

**Table 9**  
**Homeless Persons during First Six Month Period and in Subsequent Periods**

		Frequency	Percent
	<b>Homeless 1st Period Only</b>	<i>600</i>	<i>36.2</i>
	<b>Homeless 1st and 2nd Period</b>	<i>373</i>	<i>22.5</i>
	<b>Homeless 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Period</b>	<i>300</i>	<i>18.1</i>
	<b>Homeless All periods</b>	<i>383</i>	<i>23.1</i>
	<b>Total</b>	<i>1656</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Three hundred and eighty-three (383) persons or 23% of the homeless in June 2006 through December 2006 were identified as homeless in four consecutive six-month periods (Table 9). This subset of the homeless population is referred to as the long-term homeless in this report; that is they are homeless continuously for long periods of time.

Youth and children that are homeless during this time period do not follow the same trend as the homeless population overall as shown in Table 10. A greater percentage of youth and children that were identified as homeless in the first time period (290 persons) continued to be identified as homeless in subsequent time periods. Only 20% of the 290 youth and children identified in the first time period as homeless were not subsequently identified in a later time period, compared to 39.5% of adults (Table 10). Youth and children identified as homeless during the first six-month time frame were most often homeless for three six-month periods (25.9%). This trend is also found for children twelve years of age or younger. These data suggest that homelessness for children in Lincoln is more frequently an ongoing condition than it is for adults that are homeless.

**Table 10**  
**Persons and Children Homeless during First Six Month Period and in Subsequent Periods**

		Adults	Youth /Children	Total
<b>Homeless 1<sup>st</sup> Period Only</b>	<b>Count</b>	<i>540</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>600</i>
	<b>%</b>	<i>39.5%</i>	<i>20.7%</i>	<i>36.2%</i>
<b>Homeless 1st and 2nd Period</b>	<b>Count</b>	<i>292</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>373</i>
	<b>%</b>	<i>21.4%</i>	<i>27.9%</i>	<i>22.5%</i>
<b>Homeless 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Period</b>	<b>Count</b>	<i>225</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>300</i>
	<b>%</b>	<i>16.5%</i>	<i>25.9%</i>	<i>18.1%</i>
<b>Homeless All periods</b>	<b>Count</b>	<i>309</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>383</i>
	<b>%</b>	<i>22.6%</i>	<i>25.5%</i>	<i>23.1%</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Count Homeless 1<sup>st</sup> Period</b>	<i>1366</i>	<i>290</i>	<i>1656</i>

Along with the temporal nature of homelessness in which some persons are homeless for a relatively short time period (no period of homelessness is short in real terms but relative to others' homelessness) there is also an intermittent element to homelessness. Some persons identified as homeless at one time and not in subsequent time periods may at a later interval be found to be homeless again.

The intermittent element of homelessness is in large measure due to the often tenuous degree to which persons escape their initial homelessness. This is the most compelling reason to extend the definition and measurement of homelessness to the "near-homeless," people who are currently housed, but that are a single minor financial, medical, family or other crisis away from losing their ability to maintain their housing.

Table 11 displays, over time from the initial six-month time period, the number of unduplicated persons who are identified as homeless in each subsequent six-month time period. For the 1,656 homeless persons identified in June 2006 through December 2006, 36% (603 persons) were also identified as homeless eighteen months later. From Table 9 above, we know that 383 of these persons were homeless for each time period and are long-term homeless persons; the remaining 220 persons appear to have temporarily escaped homelessness during some portion of the time period only to return to a homeless condition at a later time.

Reinforcing the temporary nature of homelessness we can see from Table 11 that for any single six-month time period, approximately 50% of the homeless population is not identified as homeless in the six-month time period prior or in the immediate following six-month time period. For example in the column labeled "Homeless 1-07 to 6-07", of the 1,833 persons identified as homeless, 852 of these persons (46.5%) were homeless in the period prior (6-06 to 12-06) and 906 of these persons (49.4%) were also identified as homeless in the six-month period following (7-07 to 12-07). This again suggests that for a large percent of the homeless population in Lincoln, homelessness is a relatively temporary, although potentially intermittent, condition over longer periods of time.

**Table 11**  
**Longitudinal Display of Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons by Six Month Period**

Homeless By 6 Month Period		Homeless 6-06 to 12-06		Homeless 1-07 to 6-07		Homeless 7-07 to 12-07		Homeless 1-08 to 6-08	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Homeless 6-06 to 12-06	1,656	100.0%	852	46.5%	667	33.2%	603	28.9%	
Homeless 1-07 to 6-07	852	51.4%	1,833	100.0%	906	45.1%	756	36.2%	
Homeless 7-07 to 12-07	667	40.3%	906	49.4%	2,008	100.0%	1,107	53.0%	
Homeless 1-08 to 6-08	603	36.4%	756	41.2%	1,107	55.1%	2,087	100.0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,656</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,833</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,008</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,087</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

## Identified Reasons for Homelessness in Lincoln

This section of the CSI Homeless report examines the reasons homeless persons in Lincoln identify as the primary factor contributing to their homeless condition.

The reasons persons become homeless are often complex and seldom is homelessness the result of a single factor in their lives. As pointed out by the National Coalition for Homelessness<sup>4</sup> many conditions or circumstances that contribute to homelessness can and often are overcome by persons that are not precariously positioned otherwise in terms of income, access to affordable housing or other crisis conditions. When a crisis condition (for instance a medical issue, job loss, or an addiction) confronts a person on the margins, then the ability to maintain housing becomes more precarious than for others in the community.

The data reported here (Table 12) is self-reported and provides insight into the factor that persons who are homeless indicate was the most significant factor in their homelessness. These identified reasons may be the “tipping” factors that moved persons into a homeless condition.

Economic issues, related to either income or employment, were identified by twenty-eight percent (28.1%) of homeless persons as the primary reason for their homelessness. Housing issues related to affordability and availability comprised a total of twelve percent of the primary reasons (12.2%). Therefore, of those identifying a specific primary reason for their homelessness, over forty percent (40.3%) identified issues associated with poverty.

The most often identified specific reasons for homelessness in Lincoln were addiction /substance abuse issues (12.7%), asked to leave their residence (8.5%), unemployment (8.3%), domestic violence<sup>5</sup> (6.8%), loss of job (6.5%) and underemployment/low income (6.4%). When combining loss of job and underemployment/low income into a single response it becomes the most identified reason (13.1%). Table 12 below presents the complete list of reasons for homelessness. Additionally, 9.7% of homeless persons indicated an unspecified reason for their homeless.

The most frequently identified primary reasons by homeless households with youth and children in Lincoln differ substantially from the overall population. The single most frequently identified reason for this population is a domestic violence situation (16.1%)<sup>6</sup>. The largest category of reasons identified for their homelessness are reasons involving being removed / thrown out / evicted or asked to leave their permanent residence (27.4%). Reasons offered by unaccompanied youth are also somewhat different; asked to leave, a dual diagnosis, and substance abuse are the most frequently identified reasons.

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<sup>4</sup> National Coalition for Homelessness, NCH Fact Sheet #1, June 2007 “Why are People Homeless?”

<sup>5</sup> These persons are self-identified to CS-MIS service providers. Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS/HMIS due to restrictions mandated by federal regulation.

<sup>6</sup> These persons are self-identified to CS-MIS service providers. Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS/HMIS due to restrictions mandated by federal regulation.

Table 12  
Primary Reason for Homelessness - All Persons

		Count	Column N %
Homelessness Primary Reason	Addiction /Substance Abuse	506	12.7%
	Other Unspecified Reason	386	9.7%
	Asked or Told to Leave Residence	340	8.5%
	Unemployment	330	8.3%
	Domestic Violence Victim	273	6.8%
	Loss of Job	260	6.5%
	Underemployment/low income	255	6.4%
	Eviction	219	5.5%
	Criminal Activity	203	5.1%
	Moved to Seek Work	186	4.7%
	Release From Institution	129	3.2%
	Moved to be close to Family/Friends	101	2.5%
	No Affordable Housing	100	2.5%
	Stranded in Area	97	2.4%
	Mental Health	90	2.3%
	Removed from House/Home	78	2.0%
	Divorce	75	1.9%
	Unable to Pay Rent/Mortgage	69	1.7%
	Health/Safety	59	1.5%
	Evicted within Past Week	53	1.3%
	Medical Condition	41	1.0%
	Dual Diagnosis	29	.7%
	Disaster (fire or natural)	28	.7%
	Loss of Transportation	22	.6%
	Family/Personal Illness	18	.5%
	Substandard Housing	14	.4%
	Migrant work Ended	9	.2%
	Loss of Public Assistance	9	.2%
Leaving State/VA Hospital	8	.2%	
Utility Shutoff	6	.2%	
Loss of Child Care	4	.1%	
Retired/Fixed Income	2	.1%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,999</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Red – Economic/Employment issues / Blue Housing Affordability/Availability issues

Consistent with differences found among households with children, the primary reason for homelessness differed substantially by gender for some primary reasons. Significant areas where gender differences among adults in the primary reason for homelessness were found are identified in Table 12a.

**Table 12a**  
**Primary Reason for Homelessness by Gender (Adults – 18 and older)**

		Gender			
		Female		Male	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row N %
Homelessness Primary Reason	Addiction / Substance Abuse	144	29.6%	343	70.4%
	Unemployment	58	18.2%	259	81.4%
	Asked or Told to Leave	108	43.5%	139	56.0%
	Loss of Job	59	25.0%	177	75.0%
	Underemployment/low income	83	36.4%	144	63.2%
	Other Unspecified Reason	63	27.6%	165	72.4%
	Moved to Seek Work	41	23.8%	131	76.2%
	Criminal Activity	37	21.5%	135	78.5%
	Eviction	84	55.6%	67	44.4%
	Domestic Violence Victim <sup>7</sup>	130	90.9%	13	9.1%
	Release From Institution	24	21.1%	90	78.9%
	Stranded in Area	19	20.4%	74	79.6%
	Mental Health	33	37.5%	54	61.4%
	Moved to be close to Family/Friends	41	62.1%	25	37.9%
	Medical Condition	9	22.5%	31	77.5%
	Health/Safety	25	62.5%	15	37.5%
	Dual Diagnosis	10	35.7%	18	64.3%
	Family/Personal Illness	11	68.8%	4	25.0%

Domestic violence, eviction, moved to be close to family/friends, and health and safety issues were more likely to be identified by females than males.

<sup>7</sup> These persons are self-identified to CS-MIS service providers. Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS/HMIS due to restrictions mandated by federal regulation.



Table 13 on the following page presents the primary reasons for homelessness for those persons identified in the first six-month period (07/06 – 12/06) and the continuation of homelessness across the two year period by reason. Those individuals that were identified in each six-month period are labeled long-term.

The intention in looking at the data in this fashion is to determine to what extent, if any, particular reasons for homelessness are most often associated with being homeless long-term. As can be seen several reasons/conditions for homelessness appear to result in a more long-term condition.

Persons that identify addiction and substance abuse as reason for their homelessness make up 17% of the population in the first six month period and their percentage of the homeless that are long-term (homeless in all four time periods) increases to 21.8%. Other reasons given where this trend is also found are highlighted in red; these include unemployment and low income, and domestic violence victims.

The reason for homelessness where this is most significantly seen is when a person becomes homeless because of an eviction, which makes up 3.8% of the initial population but is 11.0% of those persons homeless across four six-month time periods.

**Table 13**  
**Primary Reason for Homeless by Number of Time Periods Homeless**  
**Persons Identified as Homeless in First Six Month Period**

Primary Reason for Homelessness	Number of Periods Homeless			
	One Six Month Period	Two Six Month Periods	Three Six Month Periods	Four Six Month Periods (Long-term)
	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %	Column N %
Addiction / Substance Abuse	17.3%	18.0%	19.0%	21.8%
Unemployment	9.0%	8.3%	7.3%	10.2%
Underemployment/Low Income	7.7%	7.5%	7.0%	8.6%
Domestic Violence Victim <sup>8</sup>	3.8%	11.0%	11.7%	6.3%
Other	8.5%	6.2%	6.7%	6.8%
Asked or Told to Leave	8.3%	7.5%	7.3%	5.0%
Loss of Job	7.8%	5.4%	5.7%	7.3%
Eviction	3.8%	3.8%	5.3%	11.0%
Moved to Seek Work	4.5%	1.9%	2.3%	2.1%
Release From Institution	3.7%	1.9%	1.7%	1.8%
No Affordable Housing	2.5%	2.1%	1.7%	2.3%
Divorce	1.3%	2.9%	4.0%	1.6%
Moved to be close to Family/Friends	2.5%	2.1%	3.0%	1.0%
Criminal Activity	2.5%	1.1%	3.7%	1.6%
Unable to Pay Rent/Mortgage	1.5%	1.9%	2.0%	2.3%
Mental Health	1.7%	1.6%	2.0%	2.1%
Stranded in Area	3.5%	.3%	1.3%	.8%
Medical Condition	1.3%	2.1%	.7%	.3%
Removed from House/Home	1.2%	.8%	1.7%	.5%
Evicted within Past Week	.7%	1.1%	.0%	1.8%
Dual Diagnosis	.3%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%
Health/Safety	1.3%	.8%	.7%	.0%
Disaster (fire or natural)	.7%	1.3%	.3%	.8%
Family/Personal Illness	.3%	.8%	1.0%	.5%
Loss of Transportation	.5%	.5%	.0%	.8%
Substandard Housing	.2%	1.3%	.0%	.0%
Utility Shutoff	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.3%
Loss of Public Assistance	.0%	.3%	.3%	.5%
Leaving State/VA Hospital	.2%	.3%	.0%	.5%
Migrant work Ended	.5%	.0%	.0%	.0%

<sup>8</sup> These persons are self-identified to CS-MIS service providers. Domestic violence shelters do not use CS-MIS/HMIS due to restrictions mandated by federal regulation.

## Services Received by People who were Homeless in Lincoln

Over the course of the two year period (July 2006-June 2008), CS-MIS/HMIS was able to record 196,471 services provided to 4,529 unduplicated homeless persons. The services recorded in HMIS are at this time an undercount of the total number of services actually provided in the community to the homeless. Service providing agencies are still in the process of fully implementing recording of services into the CS-MIS system and providers differ in the type of services they record in the system. Some services are uniformly entered, others intermittently, and some are not entered at all. These data should therefore be viewed as a partial count of the type and number of services provided to homeless persons in the community.

As shown in Table 14, fifty percent (50%) of the homeless population received 9 services or less during this time period. The average number of recorded services of all types to homeless persons during the two year period was 43 per person but this average is significantly influenced by the skewed distribution of services per person. Ten percent (10%) of the homeless population received over 100 services each during this time period.

**Table 14**  
**Summary of CS-MIS Recorded Services to Homeless**

<b>Persons</b>		<b>4,529</b>
<b>Average # of Services per Person</b>		<b>43.4</b>
<b>Most frequent # of Services per Person</b>		<b>1.00</b>
<b>Minimum # per Person</b>		<b>1.00</b>
<b>Maximum # per Person</b>		<b>1,130</b>
<b>Total Services</b>		<b>196,471</b>
<b>Percentiles</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>50%</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>75%</b>	<b>40</b>

This summary includes all service types being provided in the community to homeless persons. During this time frame one-hundred and sixty-four (164) different types of services, ranging from emergency shelter and family shelter to employment preparation, legal counseling, vision screening, meals, and clothing were provided by forty-nine (49) different programs in sixteen (16) community agencies.

Fifty-nine percent (59.2%) of homeless persons identified in the community utilized homeless shelter and an additional 13.1% were served by an emergency shelter.

Table 15 displays the most frequently used services by number of homeless persons accessing those services from July 2006 through June 2008.

**Table 15**  
**Most Frequently Received Services by Homeless Persons 07/2006 - 06/2008**

<b>Service Received</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>% of Homeless Persons</b>
Homeless Shelter	2,591	59.2%
Case/Care Management	1,992	44.0%
Meals	1,476	32.6%
Clothing	1,267	28.0%
Information and Referral	1,190	26.3%
Local Transportation	1,044	23.1%
Congregate Meals/Nutrition Sites	1,000	22.1%
Life Skills Education	960	21.2%
Community Meals	890	19.7%
Temporary Mailing Address	782	17.3%
Basic Needs	769	17.0%
Telephone Facilities	754	16.6%
Household Goods	744	16.4%
Individual Advocacy	702	15.5%
Laundry Facilities	696	15.4%
Sack Lunches/Dinners	693	15.3%
Food Pantries	646	14.3%
Emergency Shelter	571	12.6%
Hygiene	538	11.9%
Records/Licenses/Permits	433	9.6%
Educational Support Services	425	9.4%
Supportive Housing Referral / Placement	410	9.0%
Personal Care	407	9.0%
Housing Search and Information	396	8.7%
General Medical Care	389	8.6%

Table 16 examines the number of services provided to the homeless of those persons identified as homeless in the first six-month period and the number of services received by this cohort over the two-year time frame.

**Table 16**  
**Homeless Services Received by Persons Identified as Homeless 06/2006 - 12/2006**  
**By Number of Periods Homeless**

		Persons	Average # of Services	Total Services
Duration	Six-Month Period	600	9.62	5,772
	Twelve-Month Period	373	19.91	7,427
	Eighteen-Month Period	300	44.59	13,376
	Twenty-Four Month Period	383	110.63	42,372
	Total	1,656	41.66	68,947

The types of services utilized most frequently by the 383 long-term homeless persons are presented in Table 17. Long-term homeless again defined as persons who were homeless during all four time periods of the two years.

**Table 17**  
**Most Frequently Received Services by Long-Term Homeless Persons 06/2006 - 12/2006**

Services	Homeless Persons	N %
Clothing	257	67.1%
Case/Care Management	219	57.2%
Homeless Shelter	205	53.5%
Information and Referral	198	51.7%
Household Goods	184	48.0%
Meals	173	45.2%
Telephone Facilities	159	41.5%
Temporary Mailing Address	157	41.0%
Personal Care	146	38.1%
Congregate Meals/Nutrition Sites	146	38.1%
Local Transportation	142	37.1%
Food Pantries	138	36.0%
Community Meals	134	35.0%
Basic Needs	128	33.4%
Sack Lunches/Dinners	119	31.1%
Life Skills Education	103	26.9%

Direct shelter and housing service provided to homeless persons during the two year time frame are presented in Table 18 below.

Seven-thousand seven-hundred and seventy-three (7,773) homeless shelter services were provided (this is not the total number of shelter nights provided but the number of times a person received a service of homeless shelter which may, and often does, include multiple nights of stay in a shelter). One hundred sixty-four thousand one hundred and thirty-two (164,132) shelter bed-nights were provided at People's City Mission in their men's and family shelter, the largest provider of shelter services in Lincoln, during this two-year time frame. Men's shelter bed capacity increased during this time period from 80 to 101 beds however the average shelter bed night usage still exceeds capacity. The average men's shelter bed-night usage prior to the increase in beds in January of 2008 was at 138% of capacity and during the first six months of 2008 the average shelter bed-night usage was 102% of capacity.

Average family shelter bed-night use and percent of capacity was at 96% prior to the increase in beds in January of 2008 and remains very high at 74% of capacity. Family shelter bed capacity is a more difficult measure to pinpoint as family shelter beds are grouped by room, that is, a family sheltered is provided bed space in a single room. When a family of 4 needs shelter the only room available at the time may include 6 beds – when the family occupies that room – 2 family shelter beds become unavailable. The family shelter does maintain a waiting list for families. The waiting list over the course of a year has ranged from 15 to 50 families.

One-thousand one-hundred and sixteen (1,116) transitional housing services were provided.

Two-thousand seven hundred and sixty-three (2,763) unduplicated persons accessed one or more of the shelter/housing services listed in Table 18.

Friendship Home has 50 shelter beds in the emergency shelter program and has been at capacity every night of the year during the past two years.

In 2008, the number of women and children in the pre-shelter program waiting for shelter space averaged 52 a day during the year with a high of 95 in October 2008.

**Table 18**  
**Shelter / Housing Services Provided to Homeless Persons - 07/2006 to 06/2008**

		Homeless Shelter	Emergency Shelter	Single Room Occupancy	Supportive Housing Referral / Placement	Transitional Housing
<b>Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons receiving Shelter or Housing services 2,763</b>	<b>Homeless Persons Receiving Service</b>	<i>2,591</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>410</i>	<i>258</i>
<b>Average # per person</b>		<i>3</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>4.3</i>
<b>Median (50% of persons received this number or fewer services)</b>		<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>
<b>Minimum # of services by a person</b>		<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>Maximum # of services by a person</b>		<i>80</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>21</i>
<b>Total Number of Service Type Provided (not shelter nights)</b>		<i>7,773</i>	<i>271</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>737</i>	<i>1,116</i>

**Table Caption** 9,980 housing / shelter services provided to 2,763 unduplicated homeless persons (Average Housing/Shelter Service per Person 3.6)

Table 19 shows the distribution of the different types of food services provided, the number of total services by type and summary statistics on those services. The most frequent service provided to the homeless in Lincoln during this time period was a food service. Forty-five percent (45%) of all services (75,403 services) provided to the homeless population were in the form of food assistance.

Congregate Meals/Nutrition Services are services provided to sheltered persons at the shelter location. Sack Lunch and Dinners are meals provided to persons at the shelter for meals when they are away from the shelter working or otherwise not able to receive a congregate meal.

Food pantries and occasional emergency food assistance are distribution services provided to persons and families. These services provide varying amounts of complete meals for a family over a specific time period, e.g. one per month or one every two months.

Food vouchers are provided to persons to use at grocery stores for the purchase of food items.

**Table 19**  
**Food Services Provided to Homeless Persons - 07/2006 to 06/2008**

		Congregate Meals /Nutrition Sites	Sack Lunch / Dinner - Food	Food Pantries	Occasional Emergency Food Assistance	Food Voucher
<b>Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons receiving any type of food services 2,229</b>	<b>Homeless Persons Receiving Service</b>	<i>1,596</i>	<i>762</i>	<i>646</i>	<i>133</i>	<i>165</i>
<b>Average # per person</b>		<i>42</i>	<i>7.9</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>5.8</i>
<b>Median (50% of persons received this number or fewer services)</b>		<i>13</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>Maximum # of services by a person</b>		<i>836</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>84</i>
<b>Total Number of Services Provided</b>		<i>67,093</i>	<i>6,037</i>	<i>1,054</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>958</i>

**Table Caption** 75,403 total food services were provided to 2,229 unduplicated persons (Average Food Service per Person 32.9)

Tables 20 through 22, group together other types of services provided to the homeless population in Lincoln over this two year time period.

One-thousand and forty-four (1,044) unduplicated homeless persons received a health related service (Table 20). These services do not include inpatient or outpatient medical services. Prescription medication services are generally the allocation and control of prescription medications while sheltered and health support assistance is typically assistance with scheduling and physician appointments, health care referrals, and health insurance assistance.

**Table 20**  
**Health Services**

		Hygiene Items Supplied	Prescription Medication Services	Health Support Assistance	Mobile Health Care	Podiatry / Foot Care
<b>Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons receiving any type of health services 1,044</b>	<b>Homeless Persons Receiving Service</b>	<i>538</i>	<i>389</i>	<i>215</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>225</i>
<b>Average # per Person</b>		<i>1.90</i>	<i>2.70</i>	<i>4.90</i>	<i>1.60</i>	<i>1.10</i>
<b>Maximum # of Service per Person</b>		<i>49</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>
<b>Total # of Services Provided</b>		<i>4,553</i>	<i>2,124</i>	<i>724</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>281</i>



One-thousand five-hundred and thirty-seven (1,537) unduplicated homeless persons received transportation services. Local transportation is a transport service within Lincoln.

**Table 21  
Transportation Services**

		Discount Transit Passes	Free Transit Passes	Local Transport	Non-local Transport
Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons receiving any type of transportation Service 1,537	Homeless Persons Receiving Service	297	145	1,180	292
Average # per Person		4.60	1.1	2.92	5.80
Maximum # of Service per Person		53	2	44	49
Total # of Services Provided		1,356	156	3,447	1,698

Five hundred and seventy-seven (577) unduplicated homeless persons received rent and utility assistance at some time during the two-year time period.

**Table 22  
Rent and Utility Assistance Services**

		Rent Payment Assistance	Rent Deposit Assistance	Utility Bill Payment
Unduplicated Count of Homeless Persons Receiving Any Type of Rent / Utility Service 577	Homeless Persons Receiving Service	364	143	414
Average # per Person		13.8	.69	9.0
Maximum # of Service per Person		301	15	130
Total # of Services		7,935	399	3,708

Three additional services provided are listed in Tables 23 through 25.

**Table 23**  
**Legal Counseling**

	<b>Persons Receiving Service</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Average # per Person</b>		<b>1.45</b>
<b>Maximum # of Service per Person</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Total # of Services Provided</b>		<b>136</b>

**Table 24**  
**Case / Care Management**

	<b>Persons Receiving Service</b>	<b>1,992</b>
<b>Average # per Person</b>		<b>8.23</b>
<b>Maximum # of Service per Person</b>		<b>254</b>
<b>Total # of Services Provided</b>		<b>16,394</b>

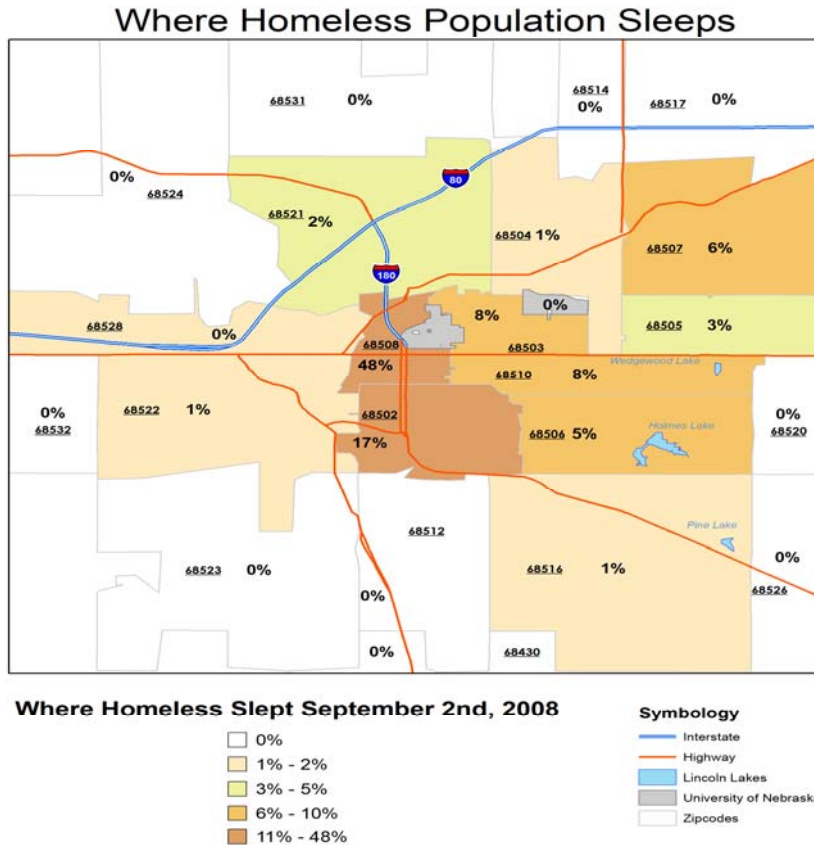
**Table 25**  
**Housing Search and Information**

	<b>Persons Receiving Service</b>	<b>396</b>
<b>Average # per Person</b>		<b>2.94</b>
<b>Maximum # of Service per Person</b>		<b>30</b>
<b>Total # of Services</b>		<b>1,163</b>

## Geographic Distribution of Homelessness in Lincoln

Map 1 looks at the distribution of homeless persons in Lincoln by the zip code area where they spent the night on the evening prior to the most recent Point in Time Count September 3, 2008. The map includes all types of living situations, including transitional housing, a shelter, and sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation.

**Map 1**



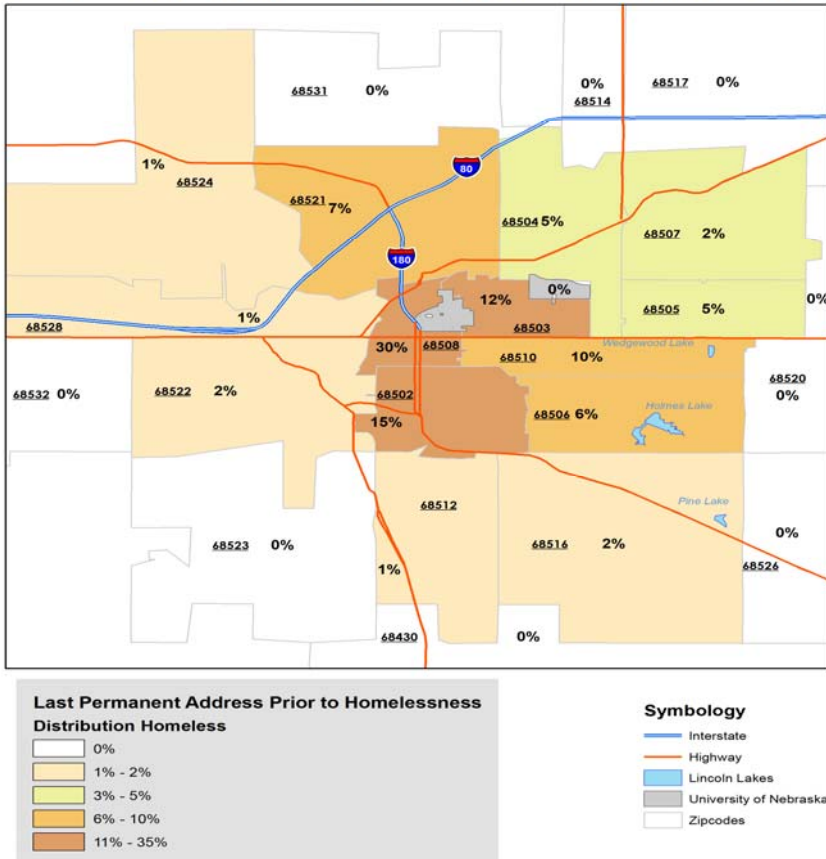
Forty-eight percent (48%) of identified homeless persons spent the night of September 2, 2008 in the 68508 zip code. The majority of those in a shelter or emergency shelter and the next largest percentage spent the night with friends or family. The 68508 zip code also had the highest percentage of the 10 persons identified sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation that evening, 70% (9 persons) slept somewhere in the 68508 zip code area.

Eleven homeless persons slept the night of September 2, 2008 in the South Capitol neighborhood, none of which slept in a place not meant for human habitation. These eleven persons were in transitional housing or staying with family / friends on that evening.

Map 2 displays the distribution within the City of Lincoln, of where homeless persons held their last permanent residence prior to becoming homeless. Thirty-percent (30%) of the homeless identified during the September 2008 Point in Time Count last held a permanent residence in the 68508 zip code area; Fifteen percent (15%) were last permanently housed in 68502; and twelve percent (12%) in 68503. Ten percent (10%) of Point in Time Count identified homeless persons' last permanent housing was in the South Capitol neighborhood.

**Map 2**

**Last Permanent Address Prior to Homelessness**



## High Utilizers of Emergency and Homeless Services in Lincoln

CSI in cooperation with members of Lincoln’s Homeless Coalition replicated a 2006 research project that examined the cost of the top utilizers of emergency services in Lincoln, NE. The CSI study reported here examined data for the 2007 calendar year. The purpose of the study was to determine amount of emergency resources devoted to homeless high utilizers in Lincoln.

Lincoln Homeless Coalition representatives from Bryan Hospital, the ambulance service, CS-MIS/HMIS, Lincoln Police Department, and Cornhusker Place Detox provided unduplicated data. Personal identification was coded so names were not revealed. The top 20 utilizers had continuous or repeated episodes of street homelessness in Lincoln.

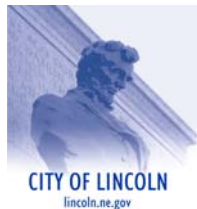
Three-thousand and fourteen (3,014) emergency services were utilized by 20 persons in calendar year 2007 for a total service cost of \$732,465 based upon actual or average service costs provided by providers (see source notes below).<sup>9</sup>

**Emergency Services Received by 20 Highest Homeless Utilizers and Total Cost**

		# of Top 20 Users w/service	Services	Average # of Services per User	Total Cost of Services
	<b>Hospital Visits</b>	<i>20</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>6.6</i>	<i>\$421,067</i>
	<b>Lincoln Fire and Rescue Transports</b>	<i>20</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>5.9</i>	<i>\$196,583</i>
	<b>Cornhusker Place Detox</b>	<i>7</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>22.1</i>	<i>\$24,480</i>
	<b>Booking / Jail - LPD</b>	<i>4</i>	<i>37 bookings</i> <i>396 jail days</i>	<i>9.25</i> <i>99</i>	<i>\$35,120</i>
	<b>Homeless Shelter Service (shelter nights)</b>	<i>13</i>	<i>2,013</i>	<i>154.8</i>	<i>\$50,325</i>
	<b>Other Homeless Services</b>	<i>16</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>10.2</i>	<i>\$4,890</i>
	<b>Total Services</b>	<i>20</i>	<i>3,014</i>	<i>152.4</i>	<i>\$732,465</i>

<sup>9</sup> High Utilizer Data

1. Cornhusker Detox costs were provided by Cornhusker Place and are actual costs incurred by top utilizers for the time period.
2. Actual costs used \$702.50 per advanced life support transport and \$587.50 for basic support transport.
3. Booking / Jail costs are based on \$200.00 per booking and daily care of \$70.00 per day.
4. Hospital costs were provided by Bryan/LGH and are actual costs incurred by top utilizers for the time period.
5. Homeless Shelter Services costs are based on average of \$25.00 per night (People’s City Mission).
6. Other Homeless Service costs are based \$30.00 per service provided – this is an average cost – some services provided greatly exceed this average.



## Human Services Federation

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