

# Homeless adults and their children in Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota

*Regional survey of persons  
without permanent shelter*

AUGUST 2007

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**Prepared by:**

Wilder Research  
1295 Bandana Boulevard North, Suite 210  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55108  
651-647-4600  
[www.wilder.org](http://www.wilder.org)

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# Project staff

## **Greg Owen, *Project Director***

Greg, a Consulting Scientist at Wilder Research, has over 30 years experience in applied social research and has directed six Minnesota statewide surveys of homeless adults and children. He was responsible for overall project design and oversight.

## **June Heineman, *Research Associate***

June coordinated Wilder's work with the Fargo and Moorhead communities. In addition, June was responsible for the data preparation, data analysis, table preparation, and report writing.

## **Ellen Shelton, *Policy Analyst***

Ellen contributed to the study design, analysis, report writing, and was responsible for examining the policy implications of study findings.

## **Mark Anton, *Research Analyst***

Mark conducted data analysis for the study, including table preparation, statistical summaries, and sample weighting.

## **Nancy Hartzler, *Communications Manager***

Nancy assisted in preparing and disseminating study materials, including reports and web site content.

## **Marilyn Conrad, *Administrative Services Manager***

Marilyn supervised report production and coordinated mailings, survey distribution, and honoraria to participants. She also developed the web-based data tables of survey results.

## **Karen Ulstad, *Survey Research Coordinator***

Karen coordinated Wilder's recruitment of the volunteer interviewers in Fargo and Moorhead. Karen also was involved in preparing the surveys for data entry.

## **Ron Mortenson, *Research Assistant***

Ron conducted interviews with shelter providers. Ron also was involved in collecting the shelter counts from the providers, preparing the surveys for data entry, and editing reports.

## **Brian Pittman, *Research Associate***

Brian assisted in the data analysis and report writing.

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Erin Dahl  
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Claire Danielson  
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Martha DiCicco  
Becki Doty  
Kim Duenow  
Candace Ell  
Claudia English  
Bill Erickson  
Jon Evert  
Deann Fealy  
Mary Feist  
Ronald Fenno  
Doyle Fevig  
Sara Ford  
Janet Fossen  
Stanley Franek  
Mary M. Geller  
Ed Glass  
Abby Gold  
Anise Graftaas  
Winnie Grams  
Judy Green

Gary Groberg  
Heather Gruenhagen  
Amanda Gustafson  
Peggy Gustoff  
Ella Haglund  
Anne Hahne  
Susan Halvorson  
Dan Hammer  
Ronda Harrison  
Melissas Hatle  
Jamillia Hatton  
Tegan Henke  
Anne Hoefgen  
Hilary Horob  
Cassie Huesman  
Barbara Sue Hurst  
Linda Johansen  
Courtney Johnson  
Gina Kautz  
Sara Kearns  
Sarah Kennedy  
Sharon Kleeman  
Jackie Kling  
Cary Knudson  
Jessica Koch  
Pat Kovark  
Debra Krupich  
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Tyson Kuznia  
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Evan Lopez  
Dan Mahli  
Jennifer Martin  
Melissa Masar  
Lori Mattison  
Julie Max  
Paula Mehmel  
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Connie Molsharger  
Denise Mullen  
Barry Nelson  
Bev Nelson  
Clayton Nelson  
Stacy Nicholson  
William Niehaus

Lydia Nygren  
Chrisina Olson  
Katie Onofreychuk  
Joe Pederson  
Kelly Perez  
Rosalie Peterson  
Rob Quanbeck  
Teresa Rivera  
Dale Rollie  
Ruth Ruch  
Jeanette Salu  
Sarah Sandland  
Linda Scheet  
Ann Schellack  
Carolyn Schiebelhut  
Candace Schutz  
Linda Scott  
Jennifer Severn  
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Kevin Smith  
Carrie Snyder  
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Tamara Spry  
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Bob Stewart  
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Andrew Theis  
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Ann Tiegs  
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*An attempt was made to make this list all inclusive. Our apologies to anyone who may have been missed.*

# Summary

This study gives a snapshot of the people experiencing homelessness in Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota on a single day in October 2006. The findings reported here are based on interviews with 251 men and 142 women in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, transitional housing programs, and in non-shelter locations on Thursday October 26, 2006. This includes 105 interviews with men and 46 interviews with women in Moorhead, Minnesota and 146 interviews with men and 96 interviews with women in Fargo, North Dakota.

## *Key findings*

### **Numbers of homeless**

- On October 26, 2006, there were 342 people (161 men, 99 women, and 82 children) residing in temporary housing programs including emergency shelters and transitional housing programs in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Temporary housing programs in Fargo housed 95 men, 62 women, and 40 children. Temporary housing programs in Moorhead housed 66 men, 37 women, and 42 children.
- Additionally, the October 2006 survey identified 245 persons in informal and unsheltered locations, including 32 children who were not interviewed (93 men, 41 women, and 20 children in Fargo and 59 men, 20 women, and 12 children in Moorhead).
- The total homeless population identified in the Fargo-Moorhead area on October 26, 2006 was 587 persons (351 in Fargo and 236 in Moorhead).
- The number of homeless in 2006 is 49 percent higher than the number found in 2003.

### **Who is homeless?**

- In 2006, men made up the majority of homeless adults in the Fargo-Moorhead area (64% in Fargo and 71% in Moorhead). The average age of homeless men was 44.2 in Fargo and 40.5 in Moorhead. The average age of homeless women was 34.6 in Fargo and 37.7 in Moorhead. Over half of those interviewed have never married (55% in both Fargo and Moorhead).
- Of homeless persons interviewed in Fargo on the night of the survey, 38 percent lived in North Dakota for two years or less. Of those recent residents, 39 percent came to North Dakota from Minnesota, and 33 percent had lived in North Dakota before. Of homeless persons interviewed in Moorhead on the night of the survey, 42 percent

lived in Minnesota for two years or less. Of those recent residents, 53 percent came to Minnesota from North Dakota, and 54 percent had lived in Minnesota before.

- Of the women interviewed in Fargo, one-third (32%) had at least one child with them at the time of the survey. In Moorhead, 29 percent of women interviewed had at least one child with them on the night of the survey.
- The homeless population contains a disproportionate number of persons of color, particularly American Indian (26% for Fargo and 28% for Moorhead). While less than 10 percent of Minnesota's and 8 percent of North Dakota's overall population is made up of persons of color, about two-fifths of Fargo-Moorhead homeless adults are persons of color (39% in Fargo and 47% in Moorhead).
- American Indian women make up more than one-third of the homeless women's population in Fargo (36%) and in Moorhead (38%).
- Over one-third of those interviewed in informal or unsheltered locations were American Indian (Fargo, 34% and Moorhead, 38%).
- Persons interviewed in informal or unsheltered locations were predominantly male in both Fargo and Moorhead (70% and 78% respectively) and over one-third met the federal definition of chronic homeless (36% in Fargo and 43% in Moorhead).
- On the date of the survey, military veterans made up one-quarter (25%) of all homeless persons in Fargo and about one-fifth (19%) in Moorhead. Veterans were 36 percent of homeless males in Fargo and 27 percent of homeless males in Moorhead.

### **Parents and children**

- In Fargo, 32 homeless parents had children with them. Eight parents (24%) reported having a child with an emotional or behavioral problem. Of the 17 parents with school-age children, seven (39%) reported that at least one of their school-age children has some type of learning or school-related problem, and three parents (21%) reported having a child that had to repeat a grade in school.

In Moorhead, 17 homeless parents had children with them. Four parents (19%) reported having a child with an emotional or behavioral problem. Of the 13 parents with school-age children, two (17%) reported that at least one of their school-age children has some type of learning or school-related problem and one parent (9%) reported having a child that had to repeat a grade in school.

- In Fargo, 15 (47%) of the homeless parents reported they were unable to obtain needed child care. In Moorhead, eight (36%) of the homeless parents reported they were unable to obtain needed child care.
- Four (13%) parents in Fargo and three (15%) in Moorhead reported their children had to skip meals in the last month because there was not enough money to buy food.
- One (3%) homeless parent in Fargo and one homeless parent (5%) in Moorhead reported they were unable to obtain needed health care for their children in the last 12 months. Two (7%) homeless parents in Fargo and five (24%) homeless parents in Moorhead reported they have been unable to obtain needed dental care for their children in the last 12 months. In both cities, no homeless parents reported being unable to obtain needed mental health care for their children.

### **Education, employment, and income**

- About three-quarters of homeless persons had completed at least high school or obtained a GED (80% in Fargo and 67% in Moorhead). About one-quarter (25%) of those interviewed had attended at least some college (30% in Fargo and 18% in Moorhead). About one-quarter of the homeless persons interviewed had received special education services while in school (19% in Fargo and 31% in Moorhead).
- In Fargo, 41 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported having a job, and 15 percent reported working full time. In Moorhead, 31 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported having a job, with 13 percent working full-time.
- For those in Fargo who were not working, the most common barriers were transportation (40%), physical health problems (33%), the lack of housing (27%), mental health problems (19%), criminal history (15%), lack of job experience or history (15%), and lack of resources needed to look for work (15%). For those in Moorhead who were not working, the most common barriers were the lack of housing (38%), transportation (36%), physical health problems (23%), mental health problems (22%), criminal history (16%), lack of job experience or history (15%), lack of resources needed to look for work (15%) and lack of education (15%).
- Sixteen percent of homeless persons interviewed in Fargo and 19 percent in Moorhead reported having no income sources in October. The main source of income for homeless person in both Fargo and Moorhead was day labor (27% in Fargo and 26% in Moorhead) and steady employment (26% in Fargo and 13% in Moorhead).
- The average amount of income that homeless persons interviewed received in October was \$461 (\$449 in Fargo and \$481 in Moorhead) and the median income was \$360 (\$400 in Fargo and \$300 in Moorhead.)

- The average amount that homeless persons interviewed in Fargo could pay each month for their own place to live, including rent and utilities, was \$235, and in Moorhead, the average amount was \$241. About one-quarter of the homeless persons interviewed reported they could not pay anything for their own place to live (22% in Fargo and 25% in Moorhead). The percent of homeless persons who reported they could pay something for rent but not more than \$300 a month was 44 percent in Fargo and 40 percent in Moorhead.

### **Public assistance and service use**

- Ten percent (in both Fargo and Moorhead) of the homeless adults interviewed received family welfare benefits from either TANF (North Dakota's family welfare program) or MFIP (Minnesota's family welfare assistance). Six percent (5% in Fargo and 7% in Moorhead) of the homeless adults interviewed reported that TANF or MFIP was their main source of income in October.
- One-third (33%) of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo reported having some type of medical coverage in October. In Moorhead, closer to half (45%) reported having medical coverage in October.
- About one-fifth (19% in Fargo and 20%) in Moorhead of homeless adults interviewed reported the loss of one or more public assistance benefits during the previous 12 months. Of those reporting a loss of benefits, the benefits most frequently mentioned were Food Stamps (72% in Fargo and 67% in Moorhead) and public medical benefits (39% in Fargo and 52% in Moorhead.).
- When asked about which services they used in October, the services most frequently mentioned by homeless persons interviewed in Fargo were: hot meal programs (57%), clothing shelves (53%), food shelves (39%), free medical clinics (31%), Food Stamps (27%), drop-in centers (25%), and transportation assistance (24%). The services most frequently mentioned by those interviewed in Moorhead were: hot meal programs (52%), clothing shelves (49%), food shelves (37%), Food Stamps (35%), transportation assistance (30%), drop-in centers (28%), and free medical clinics (26%).

### **Health and well-being**

- One common reason for women to seek temporary shelter is to flee an abusive partner. About one-quarter of homeless women interviewed in Fargo (26%) and in Moorhead (24%) indicated that one of the main reasons for leaving their last housing was to flee abuse.

- Close to two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults in Fargo and Moorhead reported physical mistreatment as children (33% of men and 49% of women). Likewise, about one-fifth (19%) reported that they were sexually mistreated as children (7% of men and 42% of women).
- Mental illness is a significant problem among those who are homeless in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Over 40 percent of homeless adults (44% in Fargo and 43% in Moorhead) were told by a doctor or nurse within the last two years that they have schizophrenia, manic-depression or bipolar disorder, some type of delusional disorder, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post traumatic distress disorder.
- Forty-three percent of the homeless in Fargo and 50 percent in Moorhead reported that they consider themselves to be alcoholic or chemically dependent. Thirty-one percent of the homeless in Fargo and 46 percent of the homeless in Moorhead reported they have been told by a professional within the last two years that they have a chemical dependency problem. Nineteen percent of homeless persons in Fargo and 25 percent of homeless persons in Moorhead reported receiving inpatient alcohol or drug treatment within the last two years. Twenty-three percent of homeless persons in Fargo and 32 percent of homeless persons in Moorhead reported receiving outpatient alcohol or drug treatment in the last two years.
- Twenty-two percent of homeless persons in Fargo and 29 percent of homeless persons in Moorhead reported having both a mental illness and a chemical dependency problem. This is based on the percent of persons who reported being told by a doctor or nurse within the last two years that they have a major mental illness (schizophrenia, paranoia, manic-depression or bipolar disorder, major depression, anti-social personality or post traumatic stress disorder) and alcohol or drug abuse disorder.

### **Serious or chronic disability**

- Many homeless adults in Fargo and Moorhead reported serious or chronic disabilities in addition to the mental illnesses, substance abuse problems, and chronic health problems already mentioned. These include physical, mental, or other health conditions that limit the kind or amount of work they can do (38% in Fargo and 40% in Moorhead) or that limit their daily activities (14% in Fargo and 11% in Moorhead), as well as conditions that interfere with memory or daily decision-making (30% in Fargo and 24% in Moorhead).
- When mental illness, substance abuse disorders, chronic physical health problems, and the above disabilities are pooled, three-quarters (77%) of homeless persons in Fargo and in Moorhead have at least one serious or chronic disability. In addition, 34 percent of homeless adults in Fargo, and 30 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead, have a history that suggests likely traumatic brain injury.

## **Homeless youth and young adults**

- As part of the October 26, 2006 study, 15 male and 9 female youth, ages 13 through 17, and 18 male and 15 female young adults, ages 18 through 20, were interviewed in the Fargo-Moorhead area. This section is based on their responses.
- For homeless youth and young adults interviewed, their average age the first time they left home to be on their own was 16.2 years old.
- Over half (55%) of homeless youth and young adults had left their home less than six months prior to the survey date.
- The main reasons given for leaving home were: not willing to live by parents rules (62%), delinquent activities by the youth or young adult (62%), frequent fighting with parents or guardians (60%), and drug or alcohol use by the youth or young adult (49%).
- More than four-fifths (85%) of homeless youth or young adults feel they could return home if they wanted to do so, although only about half (51%) think they will ever live with their family again.
- Two-fifths (39%) of homeless youth and young adults reported having a high school diploma or GED. Of those who did not have a high school diploma or GED, over half (54%) were enrolled in a school or in an educational program.
- Over half (52%) reported having attended a program that offers training in life skills or independent living skills.
- Nearly half (45%) of female homeless youth and young adults reported having been pregnant, and over one fourth (27%) of male homeless youth and young adults reported having fathered a child.
- Nearly one-third (32%) of female homeless youth and young adults reported having been approached to work in the sex industry.
- Over three-quarters (78%) of homeless youth and young adults reported having an adult in their life that they trust and have regular contact with.

# Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a current snapshot of people experiencing homelessness in Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota. The information is intended as a resource for planners, policy-makers, service providers, and others who are interested in addressing the problems associated with homelessness.

The information presented in this report comes from three main sources:

- Population counts (census) of all persons residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities on the night of October 26, 2006.
- A survey of a sample (numbering 180) of homeless persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities on October 26, 2006.
- A survey of homeless adults found in informal or unsheltered locations on October 26, 2006.

## ***Background***<sup>1</sup>

The Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons began in 1989, when a few individuals representing four emergency shelters and other homeless service providers gathered to brainstorm ideas, share frustrations, and support each other in matters affecting homeless men, women, and children in the Fargo-Moorhead area. From those initial gatherings, the Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons (hereafter referred to as the Coalition) has evolved into an organization of over 30 members, representing a broad array of public and nonprofit agencies and organizations directly or indirectly serving homeless and low-income individuals and families in the Fargo-Moorhead area. The mission of the organization is to increase access to services for people facing homelessness and to provide homeless awareness, education, and advocacy to facilitate the elimination of homelessness.

Beginning in the mid-1990's, members of the Coalition had a vision of conducting a research study that would clearly describe the extent and nature of homelessness in Moorhead, Minnesota and Fargo, North Dakota. Initial work directed toward turning that vision into reality began in January of 1997, when a Research Advisory Committee chaired by Marcia Paulson (then with the YWCA of Fargo-Moorhead) was formed and began meeting. The 10-member committee included: Marcia Paulson (Chair), Cheryl (Schrenk) Bergian, Ranae Bickett, Greg Feigum, Shawn Gruenberg, Cassandra Hancock,

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<sup>1</sup> The authors thank Barbara Sipson (Chair, Wilder Report Committee Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons) for providing the information for this section.

Heidi Ray, Linda Scheet, Barbara Sipson and Dave Williams. Consultant Cher Hersrud was instrumental in developing the initial proposal, along with Susan E. Humphers-Ginther, Ph.D. and Shawn Ginther, Ph.D., who also initiated preliminary work on conducting the research study. However, the first proposal did not materialize, due to lack of funding.

The research project concept was revived in March 2000 by a second Coalition Committee, chaired by Cassandra Hancock (then with Churches United for the Homeless). Committee members included: Todd Barber, Karen Bratten, Craig Canales, Sally Dandurand, Dara Lee, Carla Odegaard, Barbara Sipson, and Bob Stewart.

After reviewing research options, it was decided that the most effective and efficient way to achieve the group's vision was to collaborate with the Wilder Research's Minnesota survey of persons without permanent shelter. Coalition members had experience working with the Wilder survey in 1997 when several served as volunteer interviewers.

The Wilder Research's survey work with the homeless is the result of a commission by the Minnesota Interagency Task Force on Homelessness to develop a profile of the homeless in the state of Minnesota. Every three years, since 1991 Wilder Research has conducted a statewide study which includes interviews with homeless individuals, as well as a survey of all programs serving the homeless. Information gathered in these surveys is compiled by regions, so information gathered relating to homelessness in Moorhead (Clay County) was combined with information describing homelessness in all nine counties in the West Central Minnesota region.

The Coalition Research Committee proposed a research project that would expand the work of the Wilder homelessness study into Fargo, North Dakota and would result in detailed reports for both the communities (Moorhead and Fargo), as well as an aggregate report for the area. The project was timed to coincide with Wilder Research's 2000 statewide survey of persons without permanent shelter.

Funds for Wilder Research's work with the expanded project were provided by the Coalition and the cities of Fargo and Moorhead through their Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

On the evening of October 26, 2000, 59 trained volunteer interviewers conducted 184 surveys with adults and unaccompanied youth who were experiencing homelessness in the Fargo-Moorhead area. The data from the interviews were compiled and analyzed by Wilder Research staff members. The resulting report, *Homeless adults and their children in Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN*, included detailed tables and descriptive summaries of persons without permanent shelter in the two communities. Greg Owen, Ph.D., the

principal investigator on homeless-related issues for Wilder Research, presented a report on the survey results to the Fargo-Moorhead community in a public luncheon meeting.

The information in the 2000 report helped Fargo and Moorhead organizations working with the homeless move aggressively forward toward their ultimate goals of homes and self-sufficiency for all those with whom they work. The report became a valuable resource in helping document the needs of the area's homeless and in helping to secure funding to meet those needs. Regional Continuum of Care planning committees, the cities of Fargo and Moorhead, and innumerable local agencies used the information in the report for planning purposes and for successful grant applications.

Because of the success of the initial collaboration with Wilder Research, Coalition members in the fall of 2003, decided to again work with Wilder on an expanded version of the 2003 tri-annual study of persons without permanent shelter in Minnesota. A total of 87 community members volunteered to work with the Coalition and Wilder Research to organize and conduct interviews. As a result of their efforts, a total of 212 homeless individuals were interviewed at 19 sites throughout the Fargo and Moorhead communities.

The 2003 study was made possible as a result of funds and support provided by the City of Fargo, the City of Moorhead, the Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons, the YWCA of Fargo-Moorhead, the Clay-Wilkin Prevention Assistance Program (which is a program of Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership Inc.) and Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota. Several other groups provided financial support for a community report session by Dr. Owen that was attended by nearly 140 individuals.

The work relating to the 2003 survey and report was organized and directed by a committee of the Coalition. Members were Barbara Sipson (Chair), Darrell Burkland, Karen Carlson, Karla Essig, Gary Groberg, Lynn Holzer, Lynn Kotrba, Dara Lee, Dale Rollie, Tammie Tvedt, and Jane Wiedewitsch.

Because the Fargo and Moorhead communities have come to depend on the tri-annual report focusing on persons without permanent shelter in the two communities, Coalition members in the spring of 2006 decided to again conduct the two-city survey, and to contract again with Wilder Research to develop the report. During the summer a total of 144 community members volunteered to help in various capacities ranging from planning to conducting interviews.

## ***Methods***

The project coincided with Wilder Research Center's 2006 statewide survey of persons without permanent shelter. Agency and community volunteers were trained in social science research interview methods through a professionally produced DVD. The DVD also provided detailed instruction in how to conduct the approximate 30-minute face-to-face interview with individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

On Thursday, October 26, 2006, trained volunteer interviewers conducted 393 surveys with adults and unaccompanied youth who were experiencing homelessness in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Surveys were conducted at 13 shelters and transitional housing programs, as well as at 13 drop-in centers, feeding sites, and other locations frequented by persons experiencing homelessness in the Fargo-Moorhead area. The Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons enlisted the help of homeless individuals to assist in locating homeless individuals not in shelters. A \$5.00 honorarium was given to each survey participant.

### ***How many homeless?***

This study defines homelessness with the same criteria used by the United States Congress in allocating resources through the McKinney Act (P.L. 100-77, sec 103(2)(1), 101 stat. 485 [1987]).

The term "homeless" or "homeless individual" includes an individual who (1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) has a primary nighttime residence that is (a) a supervised, publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), (b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or (c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

The following table shows the total count of homeless persons in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, and transitional housing facilities in the Fargo area and Moorhead area on the night of October 26, 2006.<sup>2</sup> This is not the number who were interviewed, but the number who were counted by shelter providers.

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<sup>2</sup> Persons receiving vouchers for temporary shelters in a motel or other location are counted with the emergency shelter totals. Persons interviewed in non-shelter locations are not included in this table.

Number of persons in temporary housing programs

	Adults age 22+		Young adults age 18-21		Unaccompanied youth age <18		Children with parent(s)	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
<b>Fargo area</b>								
Emergency shelters	71	33	3	3	6	2	21	139
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	9	19	6	5	-	-	19	58
<b>Moorhead area</b>								
Emergency shelters	40	20	2	1	7	2	32	104
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	16	9	1	5			10	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>342</b>

The next table shows the number of homeless persons surveyed in *informal or unsheltered locations* in the Fargo area and Moorhead area on October 26, 2006.

Number of persons interviewed in informal or unsheltered locations

	Males	Females	Children with parent(s) <sup>a</sup>	Total
Fargo area	93	41	20	134
Moorhead area	59	20	12	79
<b>Total number interviewed in informal or unsheltered locations</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>213</b>

<sup>a</sup> This number represents the number of children parents reported were with them on the night of the survey. Children were not interviewed.

The information presented in the preceding tables show that on October 26, 2006 in the Fargo-Moorhead area, 342 persons were living in temporary shelters or transitional programs and 245 homeless persons were identified in non-shelter locations, (including 32 children who were not interviewed). The total of 587 identified homeless people represents an increase of 49 percent over the 393 homeless persons identified in October 2003 and an increase of 88 percent over the 312 homeless persons identified in October 2000. However, an unknown number of homeless persons are not represented in these counts, including many persons doubled up with other individuals or families on the night of the survey.

### ***Why these counts underestimate homelessness***

Our counts reflect the number of persons using shelters and transitional programs in the Fargo-Moorhead area as reported by homeless service providers. Nonetheless, this represents an undercount of this area's total population of those who are homeless or precariously housed.

Our survey shows that approximately two-thirds of all homeless persons in shelters occasionally stay with friends. This population of homeless persons "doubled-up" with friends or relatives was briefly investigated by the Saint Paul Overnight Shelter Board in 1990. By asking Saint Paul school children about persons living in their homes on a temporary basis, they found that there were as many people living in these circumstances as there were people in Saint Paul shelters.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. General Accounting Office found in 1989 that the number of children and youth who were "doubled-up" in precarious housing situations was 2.7 times the number of children and youth in emergency shelters.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Wilder Research Center. (1990). *St. Paul overnight shelter board report*. Saint Paul, MN: Author.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office. (1989). *Children and youths: About 68,000 homeless and 186,000 in shared housing at any given time*. Washington, DC: Author.

If we combine the above estimates and use the same methods, we show the following result.

Estimates of homeless and precariously housed persons in the Fargo-Moorhead area on an October night in 2000, 2003, and 2006

### Fargo Estimate

Count or estimate		2000	2003	2006
Count	Persons in shelters or transitional housing programs	139	167	197
Count	Persons in the non-sheltered locations on night of survey	58	61	134
Estimate <sup>a</sup>	“Doubled-up” children and youth (2.7 times sheltered youth and children)	119	100	130
Estimate <sup>b</sup>	“Doubled-up” adults	95	130	149
<b>Total</b>		<b>411</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>610</b>

### Moorhead Estimate

Count	Persons in shelters or transitional housing programs	61	125	145
Count	Persons in the non-sheltered locations on night of survey	47	40	79
Estimate <sup>a</sup>	“Doubled-up” children and youth (2.7 times sheltered youth and children)	35	121	138
Estimate <sup>b</sup>	“Doubled-up” adults	48	77	94
<b>Total</b>		<b>191</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>456</b>

### Fargo-Moorhead Area Estimate

Count	Persons in shelters or transitional housing programs	200	292	342
Count	Persons in the non-sheltered locations on night of survey	105	101	213
Estimate <sup>a</sup>	“Doubled-up” children and youth (2.7 times sheltered youth and children)	154	221	268
Estimate <sup>b</sup>	“Doubled-up” adults	143	207	243
<b>Total</b>		<b>602</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>1066</b>

Methods for calculating these estimates:

- a) Estimate of children and youth who are “doubled-up” = Total number of sheltered children and youth x (2.7)

Based on the U.S. General Accounting Office 1989 study that found 2.7 times as many children and youth in doubled-up situations as in emergency shelters.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fargo</b>	<b>Moorhead</b>	<b>Fargo-Moorhead</b>
October 2000	(44) x (2.7) = 119	(13) x (2.7) = 35	(57) x (2.7) = 154
October 2003	(37) x (2.7) = 100	(45) x (2.7) = 121	(82) x (2.7) = 221
October 2006	(48) x (2.7) = 130	(51) x (2.7) = 138	(99) x (2.7) = 268

- b) Estimate of the number of adults “doubled-up” = Total number of sheltered adults

(Based on Saint Paul Overnight Shelter Board 1990 study, which found as many people living in “doubled-up” circumstances as living in shelters.)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fargo</b>	<b>Moorhead</b>	<b>Fargo-Moorhead</b>
October 2000	95	48	143
October 2003	130	77	207
October 2006	149	94	243

## Survey interviews

The number of interviews conducted with adults and youth in temporary housing programs is shown below. In the Fargo-Moorhead area, eight persons approached for an interview refused to participate (five in Fargo and three in Moorhead). The overall response rate (including informal and unsheltered locations) was 98 percent (in both cities)

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### Number interviewed in temporary housing programs

	Males interviewed	Females interviewed	Total interviewed	Number of adults and unaccompanied youth in temporary housing	Percent of total population interviewed
<b>Fargo area</b>					
Emergency shelters	38	31	69	118	58%
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	15	24	39	39	100%
<b>Moorhead area</b>					
Emergency shelters	31	16	47	72	65%
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	15	10	25	31	81%
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>69%</b>

**Note:** \*The figures for temporary housing include adults, young adults, and unaccompanied youth.

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### Number of persons interviewed in informal or unsheltered locations

	Males	Females	Total
Fargo area	93	41	134
Moorhead area	59	20	79
<b>Total interviewed in non-shelter locations</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>213</b>

# Survey results

This report presents study results in two ways:

- Descriptive overview of the characteristics of those who were homeless on Thursday, October 26, 2006.
- Detailed data tables that allow readers to examine specific survey questions broken down by locale (Fargo vs. Moorhead), gender, and shelter or non-shelter locations.

# General descriptive profile

On Thursday, October 26, 2006, the population count of all persons residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities in the Fargo-Moorhead area found 17 unaccompanied youth, 26 young adults, 217 adults, and 82 children accompanied by adults in temporary housing programs. Additionally, 245 persons (132 men, 61 women, and 32 children) were found in informal or unsheltered locations. That is a total of 587 homeless individuals who were identified as homeless in the Fargo-Moorhead area on October 26, 2006.

Interviews were completed with 242 homeless persons in Fargo and 151 homeless persons in Moorhead. This section presents a general profile of homeless persons in each city. In the table section of the report, each individual question is represented by the shelter type, totals for Fargo and totals for Moorhead, as well as totals for both cities combined.

## *Background characteristics*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, men made up 64 percent of homeless persons interviewed. The average age for men was 44.2 and for women was 34.6.

In Fargo, survey results indicate that 61 percent of the homeless persons interviewed were Caucasian, 26 percent were American Indian, 6 percent were African American, 2 percent were of a mixed racial background and 1 percent were Native African. Eleven percent identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin.

Of those who identified themselves as American Indian, 83 percent were officially enrolled with a tribe, 15 percent were a descendent of a tribal member but not enrolled, and 2 percent were not enrolled with a tribe.

In Fargo, over half of surveyed homeless persons (55%) had never married. Another 29 percent were divorced, 8 percent were separated, 4 percent were widowed, and 5 percent were currently married.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, men made up 71 percent of homeless persons interviewed. The average age for men was 40.5 and for women was 37.7.

In Moorhead, survey results indicate that 53 percent of the homeless persons interviewed were Caucasian, 28 percent were American Indian, 9 percent were African American, 2 percent were of a mixed racial background, and 1 percent were Native African. Twelve percent identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin.

Of those who identified themselves as American Indian, 93 percent were officially enrolled with a tribe, 3 percent were a descendent of a tribal member but not enrolled, and 5 percent were not enrolled with a tribe.

In Moorhead, over half of surveyed homeless persons (55%) had never married. Another 28 percent were divorced, 9 were separated, 3 percent were widowed, and 6 percent were currently married.

## Fargo

In Fargo, four-fifths of homeless persons interviewed (80%) had either graduated from high school, completed a GED, or had some type of post-secondary education. Nineteen percent of homeless persons interviewed reported receiving special education services while in school.

Over half (53%) of homeless persons interviewed in Fargo had lived in North Dakota for more than five years. Two-fifths (39%) of those living in North Dakota for two years or less came from Minnesota and one-third (33%) lived in North Dakota previously. Over half (56%) of those surveyed in Fargo grew up in another state or country, including 14 percent who grew up in Minnesota.

In Fargo, 25 percent of the homeless persons surveyed were military veterans (36% of the men and 5% of women). This compares with 13 percent of North Dakota's adult population (26% of the male population age 18 and older) who are military veterans.<sup>5</sup>

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, two-thirds of homeless persons interviewed (67%) had either graduated from high school, completed a GED, or had some type of post-secondary education. Close to one-third (31%) of homeless persons interviewed reported receiving special education services while in school.

About half (48%) of homeless persons interviewed in Moorhead had lived in Minnesota for more than five years. Over half (53%) of those living in Minnesota for two years or less came from North Dakota and over half (54%) lived in Minnesota previously. The majority (77%) of those surveyed in Moorhead grew up in another state or country, including 25 percent who grew up in North Dakota.

In Moorhead, 19 percent of the homeless persons surveyed were military veterans (27% of the men and no women). This compares with 13 percent of Minnesota's adult population (25% of the male population age 18 and older) who are military veterans.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. *2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing* [statistics from data file]. Retrieved July 17, 2007, from <http://www.census.gov/census2000/states/nd/html>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. *2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing* [statistics from data file]. Retrieved July 17, 2007, from <http://www.lmic.state.mn.us./datanetweb/php/census2000/SocReport.php>

## *Service use*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, the services used most often in October were hot meal programs (57%), clothing shelves (53%), food shelves (39%), free medical clinics (31%), Food Stamps (27%), drop-in centers (25%), and transportation assistance (24%).

In Fargo, 10 percent of homeless persons interviewed (24% of women) reported receiving TANF (North Dakota's family welfare plan) in the last 12 months. Over half (53%) of those who reported receiving TANF had exited the program in the last 12 months.

In Fargo, one-third (33%) of homeless persons interviewed had some kind of medical coverage in October. Over one-third (34%) reported using an emergency room in the previous six months.

In Fargo, almost one-fifth (19%) lost or became unable to afford some form of public benefits or assistance during the 12 months preceding the study. The benefits mentioned most frequently were Food Stamps (72 % of those who lost benefits) and public medical benefits (39%).

In Fargo, 27 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported needing help applying for or reapplying for services, particularly Food Stamps (60% of those needing help with applications), public medical benefits (53%), and housing assistance (18%).

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, the services used most often in October were hot meal programs (52%), clothing shelves (49%), food shelves (37%), Food Stamps (35%), transportation assistance (30%), drop-in centers (28%), and free medical clinics (26%).

In Moorhead, 10 percent of homeless persons interviewed (29% of women) reported receiving MFIP (Minnesota's family welfare plan) in the last 12 months. One-quarter (25%) of those who reported receiving MFIP had exited the program in the last 12 months.

In Moorhead, 45 percent of homeless persons interviewed had some kind of medical coverage in October. Over one-quarter (26%) reported using an emergency room in the previous six months.

In Moorhead, one-fifth (20%) lost or became unable to afford some form of public benefits or assistance during the 12 months preceding the study. The benefits mentioned most frequently were Food Stamps (67 % of those who lost benefits) and public medical benefits (52%).

In Moorhead, 32 percent of the homeless persons interviewed reported needing help applying for or reapplying for services, particularly for Food Stamps (59% of those needing help with applications), public medical benefits (44%), and housing assistance (16%).

## *Income*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, homeless persons interviewed reported their main source of income in October as: day or temporary labor (27%), steady employment (26%), Supplemental Security Income (8%), TANF (5%), Social Security (5%), and Social Security Income (5%).

In Fargo, when asked about their total income for the month of October, 14 percent reported some income but less than \$100, 15 percent reported an income between \$101 and \$300, 19 percent reported an income between \$301 and \$500, 14 percent reported an income between \$501 and \$700, 11 percent reported an income between \$701 and \$900, and 12 percent reported an income over \$900. Sixteen percent reported no income in the month of October.

In Fargo, homeless men reported a higher average monthly income than homeless women (\$490 vs. \$373). The median income for homeless men (\$400) is nearly identical to that of homeless women (\$388.)

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, homeless persons interviewed reported their main source of income in October as: day or temporary labor (26%), steady employment (13%), General Assistance (9%), Supplemental Security Income (10%), asking for money on the streets (8%), and MFIP (7%).

In Moorhead, when asked about their total income for the month of October, 11 percent reported some income but less than \$100, 24 percent reported an income between \$101 and \$300, 9 percent reported an income between \$301 and \$500, 17 percent reported an income between \$501 and \$700, 7 percent reported an income between \$701 and \$900, and 14 percent reported an income of over \$900. Nineteen percent reported no income in the month of October.

In Moorhead, homeless women reported a higher average monthly income than homeless men (\$546 vs. \$453). The median income for homeless women (\$480) is twice that of homeless men (\$240.)

## *History of homelessness and shelter use*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, this was the first time of being homeless for 43 percent of homeless persons surveyed. Sixteen percent of those surveyed reported two episodes of homelessness in the past three years, 9 percent reported three episodes of being homeless, and 32 percent reported being homeless four or more times.

In Fargo, 12 percent of homeless persons surveyed reported they have been without a regular or permanent place to stay for less than one month, 44 percent for at least one month but less than one year, and 45 percent for one year or more. The average age at which those interviewed became homeless for the first time was 28 (30 for men and 26 for women).

An individual meets the **Minnesota definition of long-term homeless** if their current episode of homelessness has lasted 12 months or more or if they have been homeless four or more times in the last three years. Over half (52%) of the homeless persons surveyed in Fargo would meet Minnesota's definition of long-term homeless.

An individual meets the **federal definition of chronic homelessness** if their current episode of homelessness has lasted 12 months or more or if they have been homeless four or more times in the last three years; *and* they are staying alone (not accompanied by a spouse, partner, or children) *and* have at least one serious, chronic disability. Over one-third (37%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Fargo would meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, this was the first time being homeless for 41 percent of homeless persons surveyed. Fourteen percent of those surveyed reported two episodes of homelessness in the past three years, 13 percent reported being homeless three times, and 33 percent reported being homeless four or more times.

In Moorhead, 10 percent of homeless adults surveyed reported they have been without a regular or permanent place to stay for less than one month, 50 percent for at least one month but less than one year, and 40 percent for one year or more. The average age at which those interviewed became homeless for the first time was 27 (28 for men and 25 for women).

An individual meets the **Minnesota definition of long-term homeless** if their current episode of homelessness has lasted 12 months or more or if they have been homeless four or more times in the last three years. Almost half (49%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Moorhead would meet Minnesota's definition of long-term homeless.

An individual meets the **federal definition of chronic homelessness** if their current episode of homelessness has lasted 12 months or more or if they have been homeless four or more times in the last three years; *and* they are staying alone (not accompanied by a spouse, partner, or children) *and* have at least one serious, chronic disability. Close to one-third (32%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Moorhead would meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness.

## Fargo

In Fargo, 85 percent of homeless adults reported having lived in temporary/supportive shelter facilities (emergency or battered women's shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing with supportive services – 9% as a child and 78% in the previous two years).

In Fargo, 69 percent of homeless persons have lived in their *current* temporary housing arrangement for less than one month and 5 percent for more than one year. The median number of days they have been in their current arrangement is 20 days.

In Fargo, 17 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported being unable to obtain shelter at least once in the last three months because of a lack of available bed space. According to those unable to obtain shelter, the last time shelter beds were unavailable, most slept outdoors (24%), with friends or family (21%), in a car or abandoned building (21%), or in a motel with a voucher (15%).

In Fargo, 42 percent of homeless persons interviewed slept at least one night during October outdoors or in a place not meant for housing.

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, 85 percent of homeless reported having lived in temporary/supportive shelter facilities (emergency or battered women's shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing with supportive services – 10% as a child and 78% in the previous two years).

In Moorhead, 74 percent of homeless persons have lived in their *current* temporary housing arrangement for less than one month and 2 percent for more than one year. The median number of days they have been in their current arrangement is 15 days.

In Moorhead, 27 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported being unable to obtain shelter at least once in the last three months because of a lack of available bed space. According to those unable to obtain shelter, the last time shelter beds were unavailable, most slept outdoors (33%), stayed in another shelter (21%), with friends or family (17%), or in a car or abandoned building (11%).

In Moorhead, 46 percent of homeless persons interviewed slept at least one night during October outdoors or in a place not meant for housing.

## *Living in other residential programs*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, with respect to prior residential placements, 69 percent of homeless persons surveyed reported having lived in at least one type of residential facility or program, not including correctional facilities. Men and women were equally likely to have lived in some type of non-family setting (69% vs. 68%).

Overall, homeless persons in Fargo reported having lived in drug or alcohol treatment facilities (41%), half way houses (26%), foster care (25%), mental health facilities (24%), and group homes (16%).

Nine percent reported having lived in an adoptive home or 8 percent in an Indian school. A smaller proportion reported having lived in a residence for persons with physical disabilities (3%) or an orphanage (2%).

In Fargo, with respect to prior correctional placements, 57 percent of homeless persons surveyed reported having been held in at least one type of correctional facility.

Homeless men and women differed in the type of placements. Men were more likely than women to have been in a correctional facility (64% vs. 44%). Women were more likely than men to have been in a foster home (35% vs. 20%), a mental health facility (30% vs. 20%) or a group home (23% vs. 13%).

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, with respect to prior residential placements, 71 percent of homeless persons surveyed reported having lived in at least one type of residential facility or program, not including correctional facilities. Men were more likely than women to have lived in some type of non-family setting (76% vs. 61%).

Overall, homeless adults in Moorhead reported having lived in drug or alcohol treatment facilities (54%), halfway houses (32%), foster care (25%), mental health facilities (23%), and group homes (16%).

Eight percent reported having lived in an Indian school, 6 percent in an orphanage, or 5 percent in an adoptive home. A very small proportion reported having lived in a residence for persons with physical disabilities (2%).

In Moorhead, with respect to prior correctional placements, 59 percent of homeless persons surveyed reported having been held in at least one type of correctional facility.

Homeless men and women differed in the type of placements. Men were more likely than women to have been in a correctional facility (67% vs. 39%), a drug or alcohol treatment facility (62% vs. 35%), a mental health facility (28% vs. 12%), or a halfway house (36% vs. 23%).

The table below shows residential and correctional placements reported by homeless persons surveyed in the Fargo and Moorhead.

	Fargo			Moorhead		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Foster care	19.5%	35.0%	24.9%	25.5%	24.9%	25.3%
Drug or alcohol treatment	40.0%	43.4%	41.2%	62.2%	35.4%	54.2%
Residence for persons with physical disabilities	3.0%	2.0%	2.6%	1.7%	4.0%	2.4%
Halfway house	27.2%	23.7%	25.9%	35.9%	23.3%	32.1%
Mental health hospital	20.9%	29.8%	24.0%	27.9%	12.3%	23.3%
Orphanage	2.4%	1.0%	1.9%	6.6%	4.0%	8.9%
Group home	12.7%	23.2%	16.4%	17.3%	13.5%	16.2%
Indian school	7.7%	7.3%	7.6%	8.2%	8.2%	8.2%
Adoptive home	10.2%	6.6%	8.9%	4.7%	6.5%	5.2%
Any of above residential/ treatment placements	68.8%	68.3%	68.7%	75.9%	60.7%	71.4%
Juvenile detention center or other juvenile facility or camp	23.4%	22.2%	23.0%	18.5%	10.8%	16.2%
County jail or workhouse	57.2%	35.0%	49.3%	62.8%	29.0%	52.7%
State or federal prison	24.3%	13.0%	20.3%	32.2%	11.2%	25.9%
Any of above correctional facilities	64.1%	44.2%	57.0%	67.1%	39.0%	58.8%

## *Migration to Fargo-Moorhead*

### **Fargo**

Twenty-nine percent of the homeless persons interviewed had lived in North Dakota for less than one year, 9 percent for one to two years, and 62 percent longer than two years. Thirty-nine percent of recent residents (two years or less) had lived in Minnesota just prior to coming to North Dakota. One-third (33%) of recent residents indicated that they have previously lived in North Dakota.

Of recent residents (the 98 living in North Dakota for two years or less), almost half (49%) came from West North Central states. Twelve percent came from Mountain states, 12 percent came from West South Central States, 7 percent came from Pacific states, 6 percent from East North Central states, 4 percent from South Atlantic states, 3 percent from Middle Atlantic states, 2 percent from East South Central states, and 1 percent from New England states. Data were missing on three (3%) persons. No recent residents came from countries outside of the United States. (See maps on the next three pages.)

Recent residents reported their main reasons for moving to North Dakota are: wanting to improve their quality of life (69%), interpersonal reasons (to be with family or friends) (36%), and personal reasons (to get a new and/or better start in life) (23%).

### **Moorhead**

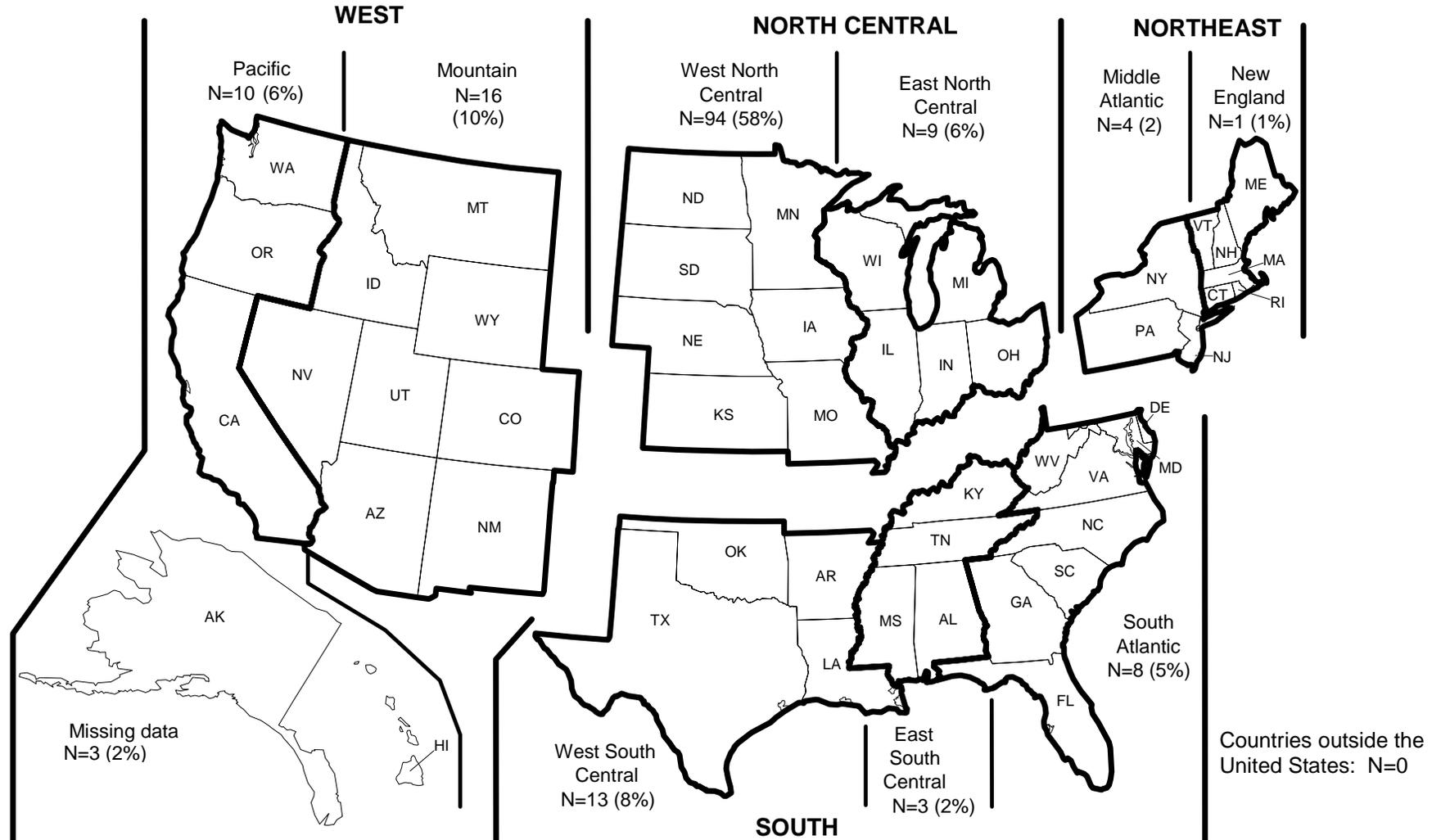
Thirty-four percent of the homeless persons interviewed had lived in Minnesota for less than one year, 7 percent for one to two years, and 59 percent longer than two years. Over half (53%) of recent residents (two years or less) had lived in North Dakota just prior to coming to Minnesota. Over half (54%) of recent residents indicated that they have previously lived in Minnesota.

Of recent residents (the 63 living in Minnesota for two years or less), almost three-fourths (73%) came from West North Central states. Six percent came from Mountain states, 6 percent from South Atlantic states, 5 percent from Pacific states, 5 percent from East North Central states, 2 percent from East South Central states, 2 percent from West South Central states, and 2 percent from Middle Atlantic states. No recent residents came from countries outside of the United States. (See maps on the next three pages.)

Recent residents reported their main reasons for moving to Minnesota are: wanting to improve their quality of life (66%), interpersonal reasons (to be with family or friends) (41%), and personal reasons (to get a new and/or better start in life) (19%).

Respondents living in North Dakota\* or Minnesota\* two years or less  
 "Where did you live before coming to North Dakota\* or Minnesota\*?" N=161

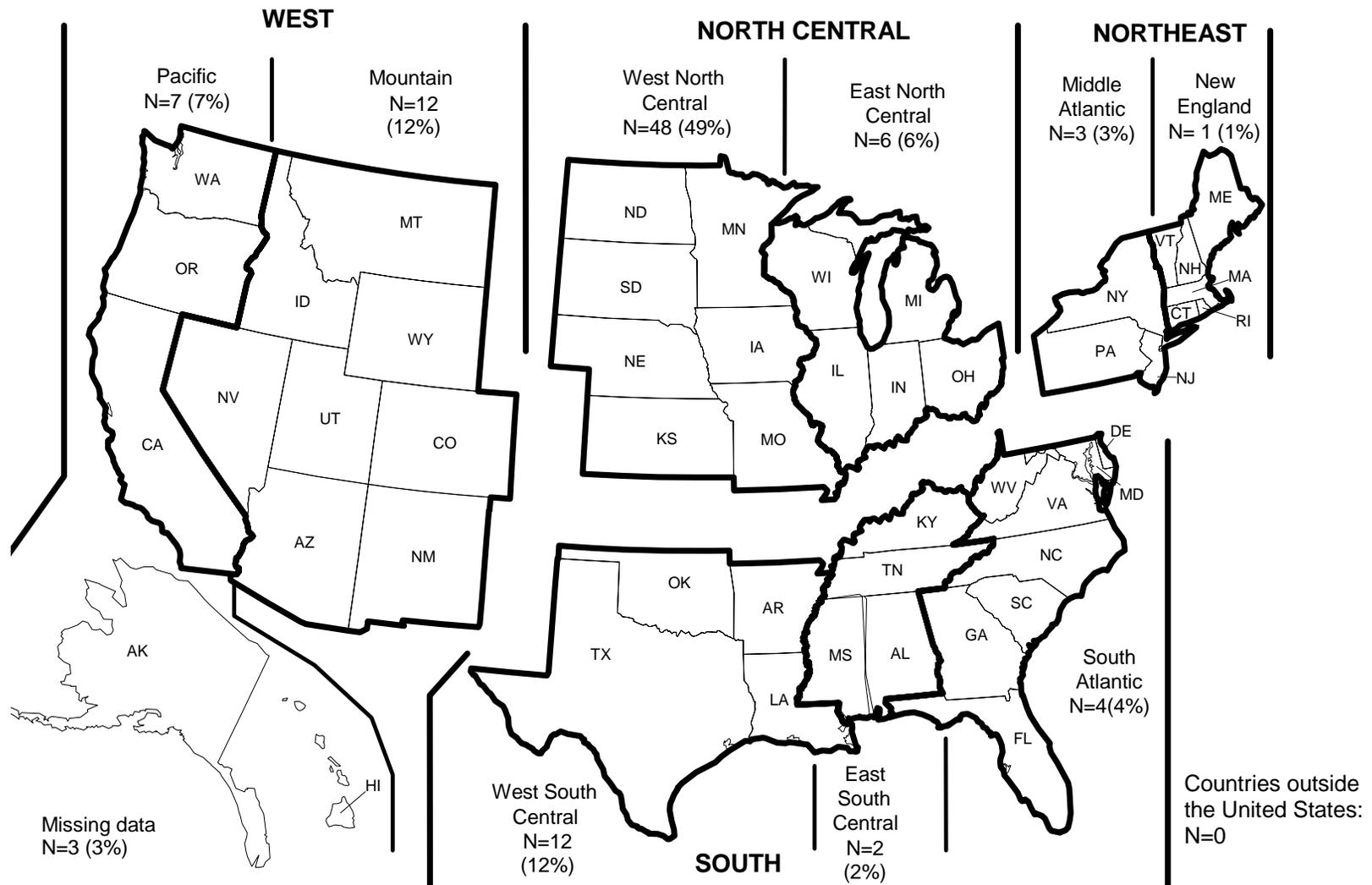
US Census Bureau geographic regions



\* Respondents interviewed in Fargo were asked about the length of residency in North Dakota and those interviewed in Moorhead were asked about the length of residency in Minnesota.

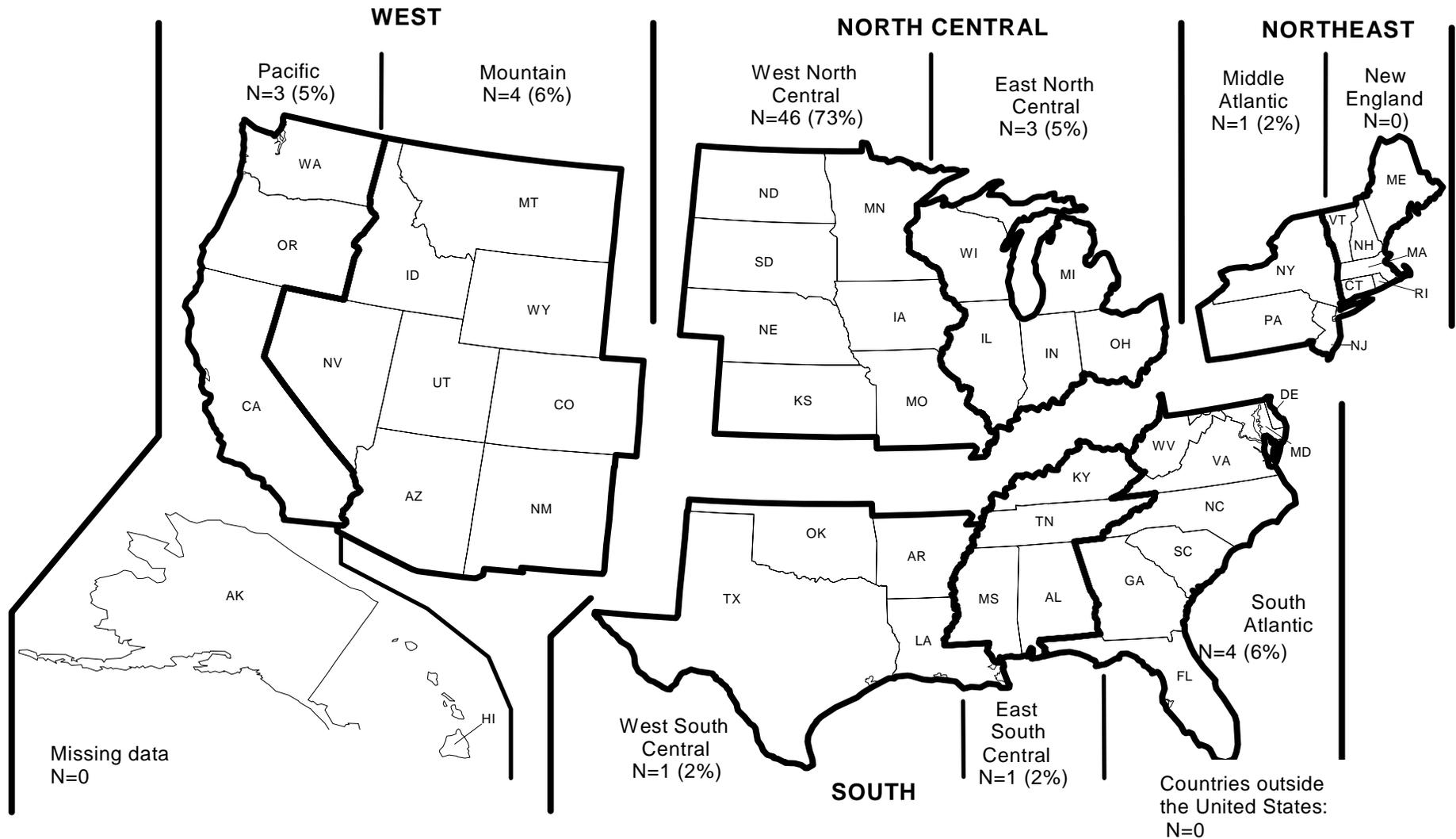
"Where did you live before coming to North Dakota?" N=98

US Census Bureau geographic regions



Respondents living in Minnesota two years or less  
 "Where did you live before coming to Minnesota?" N=63

US Census Bureau geographic regions



## *Housing resources*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 45 percent of homeless adults surveyed (54% of men and 28% of women) reported having been without housing for more than a year. One-quarter (25%) were on a waiting list for Section 8 or subsidized housing. The average length of time on the waiting list was 3.6 months.

Fourteen percent reported having received a Section 8 voucher that they lost or could not use. Of those who had a Section 8 voucher, the main reasons given for losing or being unable to use it were a program violation (53%), moved from the area (20%), or could not find a place that would accept it (8%).

Eight percent of those interviewed reported having lived in project or public housing but were evicted. Of those who were evicted, the main reasons included a program violation (46%), unauthorized guests (31%), or increased income (10%).

The majority of the homeless men (92%) stated that they needed only an efficiency or one-bedroom apartment, while 49 percent of the women required two or more bedrooms

In Fargo, 22 percent of homeless persons interviewed indicated that they were not able to pay any amount for rent. Twelve percent reported they could pay between \$1 and \$100 a month for rent, 15 percent said \$101 to \$200, 18 percent said \$201 to \$300, 20 percent said \$301 to \$400, 9 percent said \$401 to \$500, and 6 percent said over \$500 per month.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 40 percent of homeless adults surveyed (45% of men and 29% of women) reported having been without housing for more than a year. Over one-quarter (28%) were on a waiting list for Section 8 or subsidized housing. The average length of time on the waiting list was 5.1 months.

Thirteen percent reported having received a Section 8 voucher that they lost or could not use. Of those who had a Section 8 voucher, the main reasons given for losing or being unable to use it were program violation (46%), moved from the area (21%), or could not find a place that would accept the voucher (12%).

Eleven percent of those interviewed reported having lived in project or public housing but were evicted. Of those who were evicted, the main reasons included a program violation (46%), unauthorized guests (29%), or increased income (13%).

The majority of the homeless men (95%) stated that they needed only an efficiency or one-bedroom apartment, while 55 percent of the women required two or more bedrooms.

In Moorhead, 25 percent of homeless (33% of men and 5% of women) indicated that they were not able to pay any amount for rent. Fourteen percent reported they could pay between \$1 and \$100 a month for rent, 9 percent said \$101 to \$200, 17 percent said \$201 to \$300, 20 percent said \$301 to \$400, 8 percent said \$401 to \$500, and 9 percent said over \$500 per month.

**Housing needs of homeless individuals, what they could pay,  
and what apartments cost: Fargo**

Size of apartment needed	Homeless adults needing this size apartment	Amount individual could pay per month	Fair market rent, 2006 *	People who report they could afford fair market rent	
	Percent of N=214	Average (median)		N	%
0 (efficiency)	64%	\$200	\$373	29	21%
1 bedroom	13%	\$300	\$443	4	14%
2 bedrooms	16%	\$250	\$563	4	11%
3 bedrooms	6%	\$350	\$812	0	0%
4 bedrooms	<1%	\$350	\$939	0	0%

**Housing needs of homeless individuals, what they could pay,  
and what apartments cost: Moorhead**

Size of apartment needed	Homeless adults needing this size apartment	Amount individual could pay per month	Fair market rent, 2006*	People who report they could afford fair market rent	
	Percent of N=129	Average (median)		N	%
0 (efficiency)	60%	\$200	\$373	19	25%
1 bedroom	19%	\$286	\$443	1	6%
2 bedrooms	12%	\$265	\$563	0	0%
3 bedrooms	9%	\$400	\$812	0	0%
4 bedrooms	2%	\$400	\$939	0	0%

**Sources:** Homeless data, Wilder Research Center, 2006. Fair market rents, Wilder calculations using data from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Note:**\* Fair market rent is the amount determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to represent the amount at or below which 40 percent of the local units are renting (the rent that makes 40% of local units accessible). It is the amount typically covered by a Housing Choice voucher (previously known as Section 8 housing voucher).

## Fargo

In Fargo, 30 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported their last regular or permanent housing was in Fargo, 8 percent in Moorhead, 5 percent in Cass County North Dakota or Clay County Minnesota (not Fargo-Moorhead), 23 percent in North Dakota (outside of Cass County), 8 percent in Minnesota (outside of Clay County), and 26 percent in another state (not North Dakota or Minnesota.)

Respondents were asked about the reasons they left their last housing. In Fargo, the main reasons **men** cited included: they couldn't afford the rent (45%), lost job or had hours cut (39%), eviction (32%), their own drinking or drug problems (28%), and breakup with spouse or partner (21%).

The main reasons **women** cited included: eviction (35%), couldn't afford rent (35%), their own drinking or drug problem (30%), another person's drinking or drug problem (29%), entered jail or treatment (27%), to flee an abusive relationship (26%), lost job or had hours cut (24%), break-up with spouse or partner (22%), and relationship problems (21%).

In Fargo, the main reasons homeless persons interviewed said they could not get housing now included: the lack of a job or income (31%), no housing they could afford (23%), a criminal background (18%), and credit problems (12%).

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, 30 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported their last regular or permanent housing was in Clay County, Minnesota, 25 percent in Minnesota (not Clay County), 18 percent in North Dakota, and 26 percent from another state (not North Dakota or Minnesota.) Minnesota respondents were not asked about previous residence in Fargo or Moorhead.

Respondents were asked about the reasons they left their last housing. In Moorhead, the main reasons **men** cited included: their own drinking or drug problems (41%), couldn't afford rent (35%), lost job or had hours cut (34%), eviction (31%), entered jail or treatment (27%), and breakup with spouse or partner (26%).

The main reasons **women** cited included: eviction (42%), couldn't afford the rent (39%), lost job or had hours cut (30%), their own drinking or drug problem (24%), to flee an abusive relationship (24%), substandard or unsafe housing (23%), and a breakup with spouse or partner (21%).

In Moorhead, the main reasons homeless persons said they could not get housing now included: lack of a job or income (34%), credit problems (25%), no housing they could afford (20%), and criminal background (18%).

## *Veteran status*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 36 percent of homeless men and 5 percent of homeless women had served in the U.S. military. This represents 25 percent of the total homeless population. Of veterans, 44 percent served in the Army, 33 percent in the Navy, 11 percent in the Marines, 8 percent in the Air Force, 3 percent served in the Reserves, and 1 percent served in the National Guard.

In Fargo, the majority (64%) of homeless veterans reported having begun their military service between August 1964 and September 1980. Over half (53%) of homeless veterans reported that the length of their military service was over two years. The majority received an honorable (71%) or medical discharge (16%).

Close to one-third (31%) reported serving in a combat zone. Eighteen percent of the homeless military veterans served in a combat zone in Vietnam, 7 percent in Korea, and 6 percent in the first Gulf war.

Over one-quarter (28%) of homeless veterans reported service-related health problems, primarily mental health problems, chemical dependency, nervous conditions, back, and heart problems.

In Fargo, eight homeless women and one homeless man reported being the spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran. Over two-fifths (46%) of military veterans and those who were a spouse, widow, or widower of a military veteran had contact with a County Veterans Service Officer during the past 12 months.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 27 percent of homeless men and no homeless women had served in the U.S. military. This represents 19 percent of the total homeless population. Of veterans, 28 percent served in the Marines, 27 percent served in the Army, 19 percent served in the Navy, 17 percent served in the Air Force, 5 percent served in the National Guard, and 3 percent served in the Reserves.

In Moorhead, the majority (83%) of homeless veterans reported having begun their military service between August 1964 and September 1980. Over half (52%) of homeless veterans reported that the length of their military service was over two years. The vast majority (95%) received an honorable discharge.

About one-fifth (18%) reported serving in a combat zone (all in Vietnam).

One-fifth (19%) of homeless veterans reported having service-related health problems, primarily mental health problems, back, and ankle problems.

In Moorhead, three homeless women and two homeless men reported being the spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran. Half (51%) of military veterans and those who were a spouse, widow, or widower of a military veteran had contact with a County Veterans Service Officer during the past 12 months.

## **Fargo**

Thirty percent of homeless military veterans or a spouse, widow, or widower of a military veteran had used veterans' benefits in the past 12 months. Of those who were *currently* using military veterans' benefits, 37 percent were using Veterans Administration Medical Center services, 8 percent were receiving service connected compensation, 7 percent were receiving a non-service connected (NSC) veterans' pension.

## **Moorhead**

Over half (53%) homeless military veterans or a spouse, widow, or widower of a military veteran had used veterans' benefits in the past 12 months. Of those who were *currently* using military veterans' benefits, 58 percent were using Veterans Administration Medical Center benefits and 13 percent were receiving a non-service connected (NSC) veterans' pension.

## ***Children of homeless parents***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 61 percent of homeless women and 18 percent of homeless men reported *having* children under the age of 18. Thirty-two homeless persons had at least one child with them on the night of the survey, (32% of homeless women and 2% of homeless men.)

In Fargo, four-fifths (80%) of homeless parents interviewed (97% of male parents and 72% of female parents) reported that at least one of their children was not currently living with them. These parents reported that their children were currently living with another parent, stepparent, or some other relative (89%), or in foster care (11%), or in adoptive care (8%).

In Fargo, over half (52%) of homeless parents reported having a court order to receive child support. Of those with court-ordered child support, 62 percent reported support was being provided for all children eligible.

In Fargo, 13 homeless parents (14%) reported having an open child protection order for at least one of their children.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 67 percent of homeless women and 39 percent of homeless men reported *having* children under the age of 18. Seventeen homeless persons had at least one child with them on the night of the survey, (29% of homeless women and 3% of homeless men.)

In Moorhead, three-fourths (74%) of homeless parents interviewed (98% of male parents and 41% of female parents) reported that at least one of their children was not currently living with them. These parents reported that their children were currently living with another parent, stepparent, or some other relative (88%), or in adoptive care (6%) or in foster care (4%).

In Moorhead, about one-third (31%) of homeless parents reported having a court order to receive child support. Of those with court-ordered child support, 47 percent reported support was being provided for all children eligible.

In Moorhead, 10 homeless parents (14%) reported having an open child protection order for at least one of their children.

## Fargo

In Fargo, 19 parents (42%), with children under the age of five, reported having a child enrolled in Head Start or an early childhood program.

In Fargo, the average number of children who were currently living with their homeless parents was 1.7. The average age of children living with homeless parents was 5.5 years.

In Fargo, three parents (10%) reported that at least one child living with them had a chronic or severe physical health problem. Eight parents (24%) reported having at least one child with emotional or behavioral problems.

One parent (3%) reported not being able to get the needed physical health care and two parents (7%) were not able to get needed dental health care for their children.

Four parents (13%) reported that their children had to skip meals in the previous month because there wasn't enough money to buy food. Fifteen parents (47%) reported they had not been able to get needed child care.

In Fargo, 17 parents had school-age children with them. Seven parents (39%) reported having a child with learning or school problems. Three parents (21%) reported having a child that repeated a grade in school.

Fifteen parents (87%) reported their children attended school on the day of the survey, and only three parents (17%) reported that their children were having trouble going to school due to housing problems.

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, 17 parents (56%), with children under the age of five, reported having a child enrolled in Head Start or an early childhood program.

In Moorhead, the average number of children who were currently living with their homeless parents was 2.1. The average age of children living with homeless parents was 6.6 years.

In Moorhead, seven parents (31%) reported that at least one child living with them had a chronic or severe physical health problem. Four parents (19%) reported having at least one child with emotional or behavioral problems.

One parent (5%) reported not being able to get needed physical health care and five parents (24%) were not able to get needed dental health care for their children.

Three parents (15%) reported that their children had to skip meals in the previous month because there wasn't enough money to buy food. Eight parents (36%) reported they had not been able to get needed child care.

In Moorhead, 13 parents had school-age children with them. Two parents (17%) reported having a child with learning or school problems. One parent (9%) reported having a child that repeated a grade in school.

Twelve parents (91%) reported their children attended school on the day of the survey, and only one parent (8%) reported that their children were having trouble going to school due to housing problems.

## **Fargo**

Fifteen parents (87%) reported their children were attending different schools than before they came here. Parents reported that their children changed schools because they moved (79%), their new grade required a new school (15%), and one because the student quit school (7%).

## **Moorhead**

Seven parents (58%) reported their children were attending different schools than before they came here. All seven parents reported their children changed schools because their new grade required a new school.

## ***Employment***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, two-fifths of homeless adults (41%) were employed (15% had full-time jobs). Of those employed, 40 percent reported their job had lasted at least three months. The majority of jobs (57%) paid less than \$8 per hour.

Two (1%) homeless persons interviewed in Fargo had never been employed.

Over two-fifths (45%) of unemployed homeless persons reported it had been less than six months since they last held a job.

About one-quarter (24%) of unemployed homeless persons had last had a job between six months and one year ago, 3 percent had a job two to three years ago, 4 percent had a job three to four years ago, and 22 percent reported their last job was more than four years ago.

About three-fifths (58%) of unemployed homeless persons reported that they were currently looking for work.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, about one-third of homeless persons interviewed (31%) were employed (13% had full-time jobs). Of those employed, 34 percent reported their job has lasted at least three months. The vast majority of jobs (72%) paid less than \$8 per hour.

One (4%) homeless person interviewed in Moorhead had never been employed.

Almost half (49%) of unemployed homeless persons reported it had been less than six months since they last held a job.

Sixteen percent of unemployed homeless persons had last had a job between six months and one year ago, 3 percent had a job one to two years ago, 8 percent had a job two to three years ago, 4 percent had a job three to four years ago, and 19 percent reported their last job was more than four years ago.

Close to two-thirds (63%) of unemployed homeless persons reported that they were currently looking for work.

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, the most frequently mentioned barriers to employment included: transportation (40%), physical health problems (33%), lack of housing (27%), mental health problems (19%), criminal background (15%), lack of work experience (15%), and resources needed to look for work (15%). Child care was a more significant barrier for women than for men (21% for women vs. 0% for men).

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, the most frequently mentioned barriers to employment included: lack of housing (38%), transportation (36%), physical health problems (23%), mental health problems (22%), criminal history (16%), lack of work experience (15%), lack of education (15%), and lack of resources needed to look for work (15%). Child care was a more significant barrier for women than for men (32% for women vs. 1% for men).

## ***Physical health***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 47 percent of homeless adults had a chronic medical condition (high blood pressure, asthma, other lung or respiratory problems, diabetes, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and/or tuberculosis). Of those people, 61 percent reported receiving care for each of their reported problems in the previous 12 months.

In Fargo, half (50%) of homeless persons interviewed said they currently needed to see a dentist about tooth or gum problems, 41 percent said they currently needed to see a doctor for a physical health problem, and 31 percent said they currently needed to see a doctor about a mental or emotional health problem.

In Fargo, one-third (34%) of homeless persons received care in an emergency room during the previous six months. One-third (33%) of homeless adults surveyed reported having some form of medical benefits in October.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 38 percent of homeless adults had a chronic medical condition (high blood pressure, asthma, other lung or respiratory problems, diabetes, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and/or tuberculosis). Of those people, 64 percent reported receiving care for each of their reported problems in the previous 12 months.

In Moorhead, half (50%) of homeless persons interviewed said they currently needed to see a dentist about tooth or gum problems, 41 percent said they currently needed to see a doctor for a physical health problem, and 35 percent said they currently needed to see a doctor about a mental or emotional health problem.

In Moorhead, one-quarter (26%) of homeless persons received care in an emergency room in the previous six months. Over two-fifths (45%) of homeless adults surveyed reported having some form of medical benefits in October.

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, two-fifths (40%) of homeless persons interviewed reported being unable to get needed health care (mainly due to a lack of money or insurance) and 20 percent of homeless adults reported not taking prescribed medication.

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, over one-third (36%) of homeless persons interviewed reported being unable to get needed health care (mainly due to a lack of insurance or money) and 20 percent of homeless adults reported not taking prescribed medication.

## ***Chemical dependency***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, over two-fifths (43%) of homeless persons interviewed (42% of men and 43% of women) reported that they consider themselves an alcoholic or chemically dependent. Thirty-one percent of homeless persons reported being told by a doctor or nurse, in the previous two years that they have an alcohol or drug abuse disorder.

In Fargo, two-fifths (41%) of homeless persons interviewed (50% of men and 25% of women) had been admitted to a detox center at least once.

Forty percent of men and 43 percent of women reported that at some time in their life they had lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility. Fourteen percent of homeless men and 27 percent of homeless women reported living in residential alcohol or drug treatment within the previous two years.

Forty-two percent of homeless men and 44 percent of homeless women had received outpatient drug or alcohol treatment at some time in their life. Of those who received outpatient treatment, 47 percent of men and 65 percent of women received the drug or alcohol treatment in the previous two years.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, half (50%) of homeless persons interviewed (60% of men and 25% of women) reported that they consider themselves an alcoholic or chemically dependent. Forty-six percent of homeless persons reported being told by a doctor or nurse, in the previous two years that they have an alcohol or drug abuse disorder.

In Moorhead, close to half (46%) of homeless persons interviewed (57% of men and 18% of women) had been admitted to a detox center at least once.

Sixty-two percent of men and 35 percent of the women reported that at some time in their life they had lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility. Twenty-six percent of the men and 23 percent of the women had been in residential alcohol or drug treatment programs within the previous two years.

Sixty-two percent of men and 39 percent of women have received outpatient drug or alcohol treatment at some time in their life. Of those who received outpatient treatment, 55 percent of men and 71 percent of women received the drug or alcohol treatment in the previous two years.

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, over one-third (34%) of homeless persons interviewed (36% of men and 31% of women) reported current problems with alcohol (diagnosed with alcohol abuse disorder and/ or admitted to detox in the previous two years).

In Fargo, 20 percent of homeless persons interviewed (18% of men and 23% of women) reported that they currently needed to see a professional about an alcohol or drug problem.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, almost half (49%) of homeless persons interviewed (55% of men and 35% of women) reported current problems with alcohol (diagnosed with alcohol abuse disorder and/or admitted to detox in the previous two years).

In Moorhead, 20 percent of homeless adults (21% of men and 19% of women) reported that they currently needed to see a professional about an alcohol or drug problem.

## ***Mental health***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, over two-fifths (44%) of homeless persons interviewed reported being told by a doctor or nurse (within the previous two years) that they have schizophrenia, manic-depression or bipolar disorder, some other type of delusional disorder, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Close to two-fifths (38%) of homeless persons interviewed reported they had received outpatient mental health services in the previous two years and 11 percent had lived in a facility for persons with mental health problems within the previous two years.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, over two-fifths (43%) of homeless persons interviewed reported being told by a doctor or nurse (within the previous two years) that they have schizophrenia, manic-depression or bipolar disorder, some other type of delusional disorder, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Over one-third (36%) of homeless persons interviewed reported they had received outpatient mental health services in the previous two years and 12 percent had lived in a facility for persons with mental health problems within the previous two years.

Over two-fifths of homeless persons interviewed who were homeless were also experiencing severe mental illness. That is, they had been diagnosed within the previous two years with one of six serious and persistent mental disorders, or had received inpatient or outpatient treatment for mental illness in the previous two years. By comparison, community surveys of the general population show that at any given time,

approximately 20 percent of U.S. adults are experiencing some form of mental illness.<sup>7</sup> According to a recent national survey, 8 percent of the general population of North Dakota and 8 percent of the general population of Minnesota are diagnosed with serious mental illness.<sup>8</sup>

The next table shows the percentage of respondents in each type of temporary housing arrangement who reported a specific mental health diagnosis.

**Mental health characteristics of homeless adults in Fargo**

	FARGO			MOORHEAD		
	Emergency/ Transitional (N=147)	Informal/ Unsheltered (N=131)	Total (N=281)	Emergency/ Transitional (N=93)	Informal/ Unsheltered (N=74)	Total (N=167)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Schizophrenia	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	1.5%	4.2%	2.7%
Paranoid or delusional disorder, other than schizophrenia	8.5%	6.9%	7.7%	3.4%	5.6%	4.4%
Manic episodes or manic depression, also called bipolar disorder	15.4%	14.0%	14.7%	15.3%	23.6%	18.9%
Major depression	32.7%	27.7%	30.3%	35.2%	36.1%	35.6%
Anti-social personality, obsessive- compulsive personality, or any other severe emotional disorder	13.7%	13.7%	13.7%	8.0%	14.1%	10.6%
Post-traumatic stress disorder	15.0%	16.0%	15.5%	16.0%	12.9%	14.6%
<b>Any of the above</b>	<b>45.1%</b>	<b>42.4%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>43.4%</b>	<b>43.2%</b>	<b>43.3%</b>
Alcohol abuse disorder	24.8%	24.4%	24.6%	40.7%	41.7%	41.1%
Drug abuse disorder	22.0%	18.3%	20.3%	28.0%	16.7%	23.1%
<b>Any chemical dependency disorder</b>	<b>32.2%</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>46.9%</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>
Dual diagnosis (chemical dependency and mental illness)	21.1%	22.0%	21.5%	28.7%	28.4%	28.6%

<sup>7</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1989). *Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General – Executive summary*. Rockville, MD: Author.

<sup>8</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2004-2005). *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse – state estimates*. Retrieved July 9, 2007, from [www.oas.samhsa.gov/nhsda/2k1State/vol2/appd.htm#tabd.17](http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nhsda/2k1State/vol2/appd.htm#tabd.17)

## *Serious or chronic disability*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, as described previously, 44 percent of homeless persons interviewed had serious mental health problems (indicated by diagnosis), 31 percent had an alcohol or drug abuse disorder, and 47 percent had chronic medical illness.

According to many homeless persons interviewed in Fargo, physical, mental, or other health conditions limited the amount or kind of work they could do (38%), limited their daily activities (14%), or interfered with memory or daily decision-making (30%).

Pooling all of the above, 77 percent of homeless persons in Fargo reported having at least one serious or chronic disability (mental illness, substance abuse disorder, chronic medical condition, cognitive impairment, or other condition that limits work or activities of daily living).

In addition, 34 percent of homeless persons in Fargo had a history that suggests likely traumatic brain injury. (They received a serious head injury followed by the development of problems with headaches, concentration or memory, understand, excessive worry, sleeping, or getting along with people.) The average age at which they had a serious head injury was age 23.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, as described previously, 43 percent of homeless persons interviewed had serious mental health problems (indicated by diagnosis), 46 percent had an alcohol or drug abuse disorder, and 38 percent had chronic medical illness.

According to many homeless persons interviewed in Moorhead, physical, mental, or other health conditions limited the amount or kind of work they could do (40%), limited their daily activities (11%), or interfered with memory or daily decision-making (24%).

Pooling all of the above, 77 percent of homeless persons in Moorhead reported having at least one serious or chronic disability (mental illness, substance abuse disorder, chronic medical condition, cognitive impairment, or other condition that limits work or activities of daily living).

In addition, 30 percent of homeless persons in Moorhead had a history that suggests likely traumatic brain injury. (They received a serious head injury followed by the development of problems with headaches, concentration or memory, understand, excessive worry, sleeping, or getting along with people.) The average age at which they had a serious head injury was age 27.

## *Abuse and victimization*

### **Fargo**

A history of physical and sexual mistreatment is not uncommon for homeless persons interviewed in Fargo. Thirty-one percent of men and 56 percent of women said they were physically mistreated as children, 6 percent of men and 48 percent of women were sexually mistreated as children, 17 percent of men and 41 percent of women reported their parents neglected to provide food, shelter, or medical care, or left them unsupervised for long periods of time when they were too young to be on their own.

Overall, 31 percent of homeless men and 64 percent of homeless women in Fargo were either physically or sexually mistreated as children. If individuals reporting neglect are added, 32 percent of men and 70 percent of women reported mistreatment as children.

In Fargo, 13 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported being sexual with someone only for the purpose of getting shelter, clothing, food, or other things. Twenty-six percent (15% of men and 46% of women) reported staying in an abusive relationship because they did not have other housing options. In the previous year, 10 percent of men and 42 percent of women reported being in a relationship with someone who hit them, slapped them, pushed them around, or threatened to do so.

In Fargo, one-quarter (26%) of homeless women reported they left their last housing or moved to North Dakota because of domestic abuse.

### **Moorhead**

A history of physical and sexual mistreatment is not uncommon for homeless persons interviewed in Moorhead. Thirty-six percent of men and 34 percent of women said they were physically mistreated as children, 9 percent of men and 29 percent of women were sexually mistreated as children, 27 percent of men and 33 percent of women reported their parents neglected to provide food, shelter, or medical care, or left them unsupervised for long periods of time when they were too young to be on their own.

Overall, 38 percent of homeless men and 40 percent of homeless women in Moorhead were either physically or sexually mistreated as children. If individuals reporting neglect are added, 43 percent of men and 49 percent of women reported mistreatment as children.

In Moorhead, 13 percent of homeless persons interviewed reported being sexual with someone only for the purpose of getting shelter, clothing, food, or other things. Twenty-eight percent (24% of men and 37% of women) reported staying in an abusive relationship because they did not have other housing options. In the previous year, 10 percent of men and 32 percent of women reported being in a relationship with someone who hit them, slapped them, pushed them around, or threatened to do so.

In Moorhead, one-quarter (24%) of homeless women reported they left their last housing or moved to Minnesota because of domestic abuse.

## **Fargo**

The overall experience of homelessness can be a risky one, especially for women. Nineteen percent of homeless persons interviewed (12% of men and 32% of women) reported being physically or sexually attacked or beaten since they became homeless. Twelve percent of homeless persons (10% of men and 16% of women) reported seeking health care due to an injury or illness caused by violence.

## **Moorhead**

The overall experience of being homeless can be a risky one, especially for women. Twelve percent of homeless persons (11% of men and 14% of women) reported being physically or sexually attacked or beaten since they became homeless. Eight percent of homeless adults (6% of men and 11% of women) reported seeking health care due to an injury or illness caused by violence.

## ***Youth Supplement Summary***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, seven males and three females, age 13 through 17; and 10 males and 11 females age 18 through 20, were interviewed as part of this study. This summary is based on their responses.

About two-thirds (68%) of homeless youth and young adults in Fargo lived with their biological parents while growing up.

In Fargo, half (50%) of the homeless youth and young adults had not lived at home for six months or less. Over two-fifths (42%) had not lived at home for more than one year. The average age given for leaving home was 16.6 years.

In Fargo, the main reasons given by homeless youth and young adults for leaving home included: frequent fighting with parents or guardians (74%), not willing to live by parents' rules (70%), delinquent behaviors (63%), there was someone in the home that you could not stand to be around (56%), their use of drugs or alcohol (50%), and being told to leave or locked out (48%).

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, eight males and six females, age 13 through 17; and 8 males and four females age 18 through 20, were interviewed as part of this study. This summary is based on their responses.

About two-thirds (65%) of homeless youth and young adults in Moorhead lived with their biological parents while growing up.

In Moorhead, three-fifths (61%) of the homeless youth and young adults had not lived at home for six months or less. Seventeen percent had not lived at home for more than one year. The average age given for leaving home was 15.9 years.

In Moorhead, the main reasons given by homeless youth and young adults for leaving home included: delinquent behaviors (61%), not willing to live by parents' rules (52%), their use of drugs or alcohol (48%), frequent fighting with parents or guardians (44%), neglect by parents (30%), and drug and alcohol use of parents or other household members (30%).

## Fargo

In Fargo, four-fifths (81%) of homeless youth or young adults reported that, if they wanted to return home, their parents, guardians, or caregivers would allow them to do so. However, only 38 percent think they will ever live with their family again.

In Fargo, almost half (48%) of homeless youth and young adults reported they had run away from foster care, a group home, treatment center, or other placements. Only one person reported having had to leave a placement because of being too old to stay there.

In Fargo, close to half (48%) of homeless youth and young adults reported they had their high school diploma or GED. Of those without a high school diploma or GED, four-fifths (80%) had attended school in the 2005-2006 school year. The vast majority (89%) had attended only one school.

In Fargo, homeless youth and young adults who had attended school in the 2005-2006 school year reported having the following types of problems: truancy or skipping school (58%), suspensions or expulsions (42%), poor or failing grades (42%), and trouble getting to school because of housing or transportation issues (42%).

In Fargo, of homeless youth and young adults without a high school diploma or GED, over two-fifths (41%) were currently enrolled in school. Half of those enrolled in school attended school on the day of the survey.

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, nine of ten (91%) of homeless youth or young adults reported that, if they wanted to return home, their parents, guardians, or caregivers would allow them to do so. Over two-thirds (68%) think they will live with their family again.

In Moorhead, one-third (33%) of homeless youth and young adults reported they had run away from foster care, a group home, treatment center, or other placements. Only one person reported having had to leave a placement because of being too old to stay there.

In Moorhead, one-quarter (26%) of homeless youth and young adults reported they had their high school diploma or GED. Of those without a high school diploma or GED, 88 percent had attended school in the 2005-2006 school year. Three-fourths (77%) had attended only one school.

In Moorhead, homeless youth and young adults who had attended school in the 2005-2006 school year reported having the following types of problems: truancy or skipping school (53%), poor or failing grades (40%), suspensions or expulsions (27%), and trouble getting to school because of housing or transportation issues (27%).

In Moorhead, of homeless youth and young adults without a high school diploma or GED, over two-thirds (70%) were currently enrolled in school. Ninety-three percent of those enrolled in school attended school on the day of the survey.

## Fargo

In Fargo, 70 percent of homeless youth and young adults had attended a program that offers life skills training or independent living skills.

In Fargo, half (50%) of the female homeless youth and young adults had been pregnant, and 15 percent of the males had made someone pregnant.

Half (50%) of the female homeless youth and young adults and over one-quarter of the male homeless youth and young adults (27%) reported they use or need birth control. Of those, 70 percent said they are able to get the form of birth control they can use.

In Fargo, over one-quarter (28%) of homeless youth and young adults (46% for females and 13% for males) had been approached to work in the sex industry.

In Fargo, over two-thirds (68%) of homeless youth and young adults reported they had an adult in their life that they could trust and had regular contact with.

In Fargo, homeless youth and young adults reported receiving help in finding services from a friend (74%), a relative (57%), a parent (54%), a shelter staff person (54%), a social worker (50%), a youth worker (46%), partner (43%), and an outreach worker (25%).

All seven homeless youth age 17 or younger said if they were given a choice, they would prefer to stay in a foster home they like rather than where they are now.

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, about one-quarter (26%) of homeless youth and young adults had attended a program that offers life skills training or independent living skills.

In Moorhead, about two-fifths (38%) of the female homeless youth and young adults had been pregnant, and 39 percent of the males had made someone pregnant.

Over half (56%) of the female homeless youth and young adults and 8 percent of the male homeless youth and young adults reported they use or need birth control. Of those, 83 percent said they are able to get the form of birth control they can use.

In Moorhead, 4 percent of homeless youth and young adults (11% of females and 0% for males) had been approached to work in the sex industry.

In Moorhead, 91 percent of homeless youth and young adults reported they had an adult in their life that they could trust and had regular contact with.

In Moorhead, homeless youth and young adults reported receiving help in finding services from a relative (61%), a parent (61%), a friend (57%), a social worker (57%), a youth worker (35%), partner (26%), a shelter staff person (17%), and an outreach worker (4%).

Five (56%) of the nine homeless youth age 17 or younger said if they were given a choice, they would prefer to stay in a foster home they like and the other four (44%) would prefer where they are living now.

# Changes in the face of homelessness from 2000 to 2006

As part of this year's analysis Wilder Research compared survey information collected in 2000, 2003, and 2006 in order to identify trends and changes in the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness in the Fargo - Moorhead area as well as differences observed between the two cities. The trend analysis is based on changes observed from 2000-2006. Single data point comparisons between cities are for 2006 only. The analysis shows the following:

- Fargo showed an increase in the percent of people employed (35% to 41%); Moorhead showed a decline (35% to 31%).
- Fargo showed a significant decline in the percent of people who have been unemployed for 12 months or longer (51% to 29). In Moorhead that figure increased (24% to 34%).
- Average income for women in Fargo is trending downward (\$420 to \$373). In Moorhead the trend is upward (\$457 to \$546).
- Average income for men in 2006 is similar in both Fargo and Moorhead (\$490 and \$450 respectively) and has changed little over the three study periods.
- Women with children in Fargo, North Dakota are much less likely to report that their main income is derived from family welfare benefits (5%) than women in Moorhead, Minnesota (21%).
- No one in Fargo reports that General Assistance is a main source of income compared to 9 percent in Moorhead who report General Assistance as a main source of income.
- 26% of adults in Fargo report that their main source of income is from a steady job compared to 13 percent of Minnesota respondents.
- A higher percentage of Fargo men who are homeless (36%) report that they are military veterans compared to 27 percent in Moorhead.
- Thirty-eight percent of the homeless adults in Fargo and 41% of those in Moorhead report that they have lived in their respective states for two years or less. While this figure is much higher than in Minnesota as a whole (23%), much of it is explained by the fluid border between Minnesota and North Dakota where many report that they have simply moved across the river.

- The percent of people who have been homeless longer than a year is up in both cities (34% to 45% in Fargo and 31 to 40% in Moorhead).
- While Fargo shows a decline in the percentage of women who are homeless because of abuse (37% to 26%); Moorhead shows a slight increase (21% to 24%).
- Nearly a quarter of the adults in both cities report that they have no income that they could use for rent (Fargo 22%, Moorhead 25%).
- The use of hot meals programs is up in Fargo (41% to 57%) but down in Moorhead (68% to 52%).
- While about half of the population of adults in both cities report that they are chemically dependent (50% in Moorhead, 43% in Fargo) a declining percentage in both cities report that they have been through a residential treatment program for substance abuse (Fargo 45 to 41%, Moorhead 60% to 54%).
- The percent of people who have been incarcerated within the last two years who are among the homeless population is up in both cities (Fargo 20% to 34%, Moorhead 27% to 33%).
- The percentage of persons reporting serious or persistent mental health problems is up in both cities (Fargo 38% to 44%, Moorhead 35% to 43%).
- About one quarter of all adults in both cities have been hospitalized because of mental illness (Fargo 24%, Moorhead 23%).

The trends described above show an increasing concentration of stress and disability in both cities particularly in areas of incarceration, mental health, and income available for housing. Combined with the fact that the percent of individuals who have been homeless for a year or longer is up in both cities, the data suggests that the identification of permanent housing solutions for those who are homeless today may be more difficult than in previous years. Detailed multi-year comparisons are shown below.

## ***Comparison of 2000, 2003, and 2006 survey results***

**Gender:** In all three study periods, men made up about two-thirds of the adult homeless population.

**Age of adults:** In Fargo, the average age of homeless men increased, from 42.7 in 2000 to 44.2 in 2006, and the average age of homeless women decreased slightly, from 35.4 in 2000 to 34.6 in 2006. In Moorhead, the average age of homeless men increased slightly, from 39.6 in 2000 to 40.5 in 2006, and the average age of homeless women increased, from 29.2 in 2000 to 37.7 in 2006.

**Race/ethnicity:** In Fargo, the percentage of persons of color has varied across the three study periods, from 35 percent in 2000, down to 28 percent in 2003, and back up to 39 percent in 2006. In Moorhead, the percentage of persons of color was about the same in 2000 and 2003, decreasing slightly in 2006 (44% in 2000, 43% on 2003, to 40% in 2006).

**Marital status:** In both Fargo and Moorhead, the percentage of homeless person who never married has increased over the last three study periods (in Fargo, from 42% in 2000 to 55% in 2006, and in Moorhead, from 46% in 2000 to 55% in 2006.)

**Homeless families:** The number of homeless families (defined as one or more adults with one or more children) more than doubled in both Fargo and Moorhead from 2000 to 2006 (in Fargo, 15 families in 2000, 11 families in 2003, and 32 families in 2006 and in Moorhead, 8 families in 2000, 20 families in 2003, and 17 families in 2006).

**Adults' education:** In 2006, 80 percent of homeless adults in Fargo had completed high school or had received a GED, similar to both 2000 (77%) and 2003 (79%). In 2006, 67 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead had completed high school or had received a GED, the same as in 2000 (67%), but a slight decreased from 2003 (73%).

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who had attended at least some college remained about the same (28% in 2000, 27% in 2003, and 30% in 2006). In Moorhead, however, the percentage of homeless persons who had attended at least some college decreased in 2006 to 18 percent, down from 2003 (27%), which had been an increased from 2000 (21%).

**Employment:** In Fargo in 2006, the percentage of employed homeless adults was the same as in 2003 (41%), both a slight increase over 2000 (35%). However, at the same time, the percentage of homeless adults employed full-time decreased, from 19 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2006. In Moorhead in 2006, the percentage of employed homeless adults was the about the same as in 2003 (31% vs.29%), a slight decrease from 2000

(35%). However, the percentage of homeless adults employed full-time decreased from 19 percent in 2000 to 13 percent in 2006.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults unemployed for 12 months or longer also decreased, from 51 percent in 2000 to 29 percent in 2006. In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults first increased, from 24 percent in 2000 to 43 percent in 2003, and then decreased to 34 percent in 2006.

In Fargo, steady employment as the main source of income in 2006 was similar to 2000 (26% vs. 27%), both higher than 2003 (20%). In Moorhead, steady employment as the main source of income decreased, from 26 percent in 2000, to 16 percent in 2003, and 13 percent in 2006.

**Other income and assistance:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who report no income nearly tripled from 2000 to 2006 (6% in 2000, to 16% in both 2003 and 2006). In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who report no income increased by more than half from 2000 and 2003 to 2006 (12% in 2000 and 2003, to 19% in 2006).

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons receiving family welfare benefits (TANF) remained steady, at 5 percent, from 2000 to 2006. In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons receiving family welfare benefits (MFIP) has fluctuated from 1 percent in 2000, to 9 percent in 2003, to 7 percent in 2006.

In Fargo, Food Stamp use has remained relatively the same across the three studies (27% in 2000, 24% in 2003, and 27% in 2006). In Moorhead, Food Stamp use fluctuated, from 32 percent in 2000, to 39 percent in 2003, to 35 percent in 2006.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who reported having some type of medical coverage in the previous month dropped, from 39 percent in 2003 to 33 percent in 2006. In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who reported having some type of medical coverage in the previous month dropped, from 51 percent in 2003 to 45 percent in 2006.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who received care in an emergency room in the six months prior to the survey was about the same in all three studies (33% in 2000, 30% in 2003, and 34% in 2006). In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who received care in an emergency room in the six months prior to the survey showed more fluctuation across the three studies (30% in 2000, 43% in 2003, and 26% in 2006).

**Veterans:** In Fargo in 2006, military veterans made up 36 percent of homeless adult males, a slight decrease from 38 percent in 2000 and an increase from 29 percent in 2003.

In Moorhead in 2006, military veterans made up 27 percent of homeless adult males, a decrease from both 33 percent in 2000 and 32 percent in 2003.

**Length of residence:** The percent of newcomers to North Dakota (two years or less) was about the same in 2000 (40%) and 2006 (38%), both lower than the percentage in 2003 (54%). In all three study years, the largest percent of homeless newcomers previously lived in Minnesota.

The percent of newcomers to Minnesota (two years or less) decreased, from 53 percent in 2003 to 41 percent in 2006. In all three study years, the largest percent of homeless newcomers to Minnesota previously lived in North Dakota.

**Length of current homeless episode:** In Fargo, the percentage of persons who report being homeless for less than one month dropped from 19 percent in 2003 to 12 percent in 2006. Persons who were homeless for more than one year increased from 34 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2003 and 45 percent in 2006.

In Moorhead, the percentage of persons who report being homeless for less than one month dropped from 16 percent in 2000 to 10 percent in both 2003 and 2006. Persons who were homeless for more than one year increased from 31 percent in 2000, to 37 percent in 2003, and 40 percent in 2006.

An individual meets the **federal definition of chronic homelessness** if their current episode of homelessness has lasted 12 months or more or if they have been homeless four or more times in the last three years; *and* they are staying alone (not accompanied by a spouse, partner, or children) *and* they have at least one serious, chronic disability.

In 2006, over one-third (37%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Fargo would meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness, which is a slight increase over 2003 (34%).

In 2006, nearly one-third (32%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Moorhead would meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness, which is about the same as 2003 (31%).

**Fleeing abuse:** In Fargo, women who left their last housing to flee an abusive partner dropped, from 37 percent in 2000 to 21 percent in 2003, and back up to 26 percent in 2006. In Moorhead, women who left their last housing to flee an abusive partner remained about the same from 2000 to 2006 (21% in both 2000 and 2003, and 24% in 2006).

**Ability to pay rent:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who could not pay anything for rent has remained relatively the same over the three study years (21% in

2000, 24% in 2003, 22% in 2006). However, the percentage of homeless persons who could afford to pay something for rent but less than \$200 a month has decreased from 35 percent in 2000, to 27 percent in both 2003 and 2006.

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who could not pay anything for rent increased, from 18 percent in 2000, to 29 percent in 2003, then decreased, to 25 percent in 2006. However, the percentage of homeless persons who could afford to pay something for rent but less than \$200 a month decreased from 42 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2003, then increased, to 23 percent in 2006.

**Clothing and food shelves, drop-in centers:** In Fargo, the use of free clothing shelves increased from 43 percent in 2000 to 53 percent in 2006. The use of hot meal programs increased from 41 percent in 2000 to 57 percent in 2006. The use of drop-in centers increased from 19 percent in 2003 to 25 percent in 2006.

In Moorhead, the use of free clothing shelves was the same in 2000 as in 2006 (49%), while 39 percent had reported using free clothing shelves in 2003. The use of hot meal programs decreased, from 68 percent in 2000 to 52 percent in 2006, while 38 percent reported using hot meals programs in 2003. The use of drop-in centers increased slightly, from 25 percent in 2000, to 26 percent in 2003, and to 28 percent in 2006.

**History of childhood abuse:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported physical mistreatment as a child decreased from 45 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2003, and increasing to 40 percent in 2006. Likewise, homeless adults who reported being sexually mistreated as children decreased from 27 percent in 2000 to 20 percent in 2003, and remaining steady at 21 percent in 2006.

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported physical mistreatment as a child remained about the same over all three study years (36% in 2000, 38% in 2003, 36% in 2006). The percentage of homeless adults who reported being sexually mistreated as children increased, from 15 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in 2003, and then decreased back to 15 percent in 2006.

**History of foster care:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who reported having lived in a foster home has remained relatively the same from 2000 to 2006 (22% in 2000, 23% in 2003, 25% in 2006).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who reported having lived in foster care dropped from 2000 to 2006 (32% in 2000, 22% in 2003, 25% in 2006).

**Chemical dependency:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who considered themselves to be chemically dependent increased from 2000 (46%) to 2003 (50%) and

then decreased in 2006 (43%). The percentage of homeless persons who have been admitted to a detox center was about the same in 2000 and 2003 (47% and 49%, respectively) and then dropped to 41 percent in 2006. The percentage of homeless persons who reported ever living in an alcohol or drug treatment facility increased from 45 percent in 2000 to 52 percent in 2003, then decreased to 41 percent in 2006. The percentage who reported living in an alcohol or drug treatment facility within the previous two years dropped from 28 percent in both 2000 and 2003 to 19 percent in 2006.

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who considered themselves to be chemically dependent decreased from 2000 (52%) to 2003 (41%), then increased in 2006 (50%). The percentage of homeless persons who reported being admitted to a detox center were about the same in 2000 and 2006 (47% and 46%, respectively) and having decreased to 35 percent in 2003. The percentage of homeless persons who reported ever living in an alcohol or drug treatment facility decreased from 60 percent in 2000 to 47 percent in 2003, then increased to 54 percent in 2006. The percentage who reported living in an alcohol or drug treatment facility within the previous two years decreased from 29 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in both 2003 and 2006.

**Recent incarceration:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who reported being incarcerated within the previous two years has increased from 2000 to 2003 and decreased in 2006 (20% in 2000, 27% in 2003, and 21% in 2006).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who reported being incarcerated within the previous two years has increased from 2000 to 2006 (27% in 2000, 26% in 2003, and 31% in 2006).

**Mental health:** A significant mental health problem was defined as being told by a doctor or nurse in the previous two years that they have schizophrenia, paranoia or other delusional disorder, manic-depression, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who report significant mental health problems increased steadily from 2000 to 2006 (38% in 2000, 41% in 2003, 44% in 2006). The percentage who report having lived in a mental health facility has remained relatively the same from 2000 to 2006 (25% in 2000, 20% in 2003, 24% in 2006).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who report significant mental health problems fluctuated from 2000 to 2006 (35% in 2000, 51% in 2003, and 43% in 2006). The percentage who report having lived in a mental health facility has remained relatively the same from 2000 to 2006 (20% in 2000, 22% in 2003, 23% in 2006).

**Physical health:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless persons who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind of work they can do was the same in 2003 and 2006 (38%). The percentage of homeless persons who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities has increased slightly from 2003 to 2006 (11% to 14%). The percentage of homeless persons who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily-decision making increased from 2003 to 2006 (22% to 30%). The percentage of person who reported a history that suggests likely brain injury also increased, from 23 percent in 2003 to 34 percent in 2006.

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless persons who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind of work they can do decreased from 2003 to 2006 (61% to 40%). The percentage of homeless persons who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities decreased from 2003 to 2006 (19% to 11%). The percentage of homeless persons who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily-decision making also decreased from 2003 to 2006 (36% to 24%). The percentage of homeless persons who reported a history that suggests likely brain injury has remained about the same (32% in 2003 and 30% in 2006).

**Key comparisons:** The following table provides comparisons on key measures over the three survey periods.

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Fargo, from 2000, 2003, and 2006 homelessness surveys**

	<b>2000 (N=106)</b>	<b>2003 (N=179)</b>	<b>2006 (N=281)</b>
Men	64%	65%	64%
Women	36%	35%	36%
Average age in years (men)	42.7	42.1	44.2
Average age in years (women)	35.4	33.6	34.6
Persons of color	35%	28%	39%
Never married	42%	51%	55%
Women who have children with them	39%	16%	32%
Men who have children with them	0%	1%	2%
Completed high school diploma or GED	77%	79%	80%
Attended some college	28%	27%	30%
Employed (full-time or part-time)	35%	41%	41%
Employed full-time	19%	18%	15%
Unemployed for more than 12 months (of those who are unemployed)	51%	32%	29%
No source of income	6%	16%	16%
Average monthly income (males)	\$532	\$324	\$490
Average monthly income (females)	\$420	\$466	\$373
Main source of income is TANF (family welfare)	5%	5%	5%
Main source of income is TANF (family welfare), (women only)	15%	11%	5%
Main source of income is General Assistance	4%	8%	0%
Main source of income is a steady job	27%	20%	26%
Main source of income is day labor	28%	37%	27%
Used Food Stamps in previous month	27%	24%	27%
Have medical coverage in previous month	Not asked	39%	33%
Received care in an emergency room in previous six months	33%	30%	34%
Military veterans	25%	19%	25%
Military veterans, (men only)	39%	29%	36%
Lived in North Dakota for two years or less	40%	54%	38%
Last lived in Minnesota (of those living in North Dakota two years or less)	42%	52%	39%

**Note:** Percentages are weighted to reflect statewide shelter population on the date of the survey.

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Fargo, from 2000, 2003, and 2006 statewide surveys (continued)**

	<b>2000 (N=106)</b>	<b>2003 (N=179)</b>	<b>2006 (N=281)</b>
Homeless for less than one month	13%	19%	12%
Homeless for at least one year	34%	42%	45%
Meets the federal definition of chronic homelessness	Not asked	34%	37%
Left last housing to flee abuse (women only)	37%	21%	26%
Could not pay anything for rent	21%	24%	22%
Could pay something but less than \$200 a month for rent	35%	27%	27%
Used free clothing shelves in previous month	43%	40%	53%
Used hot meal programs in previous month	41%	42%	57%
Used drop-in centers in previous month	22%	19%	25%
Physically mistreated as a child	45%	30%	40%
Sexually mistreated as a child	27%	20%	21%
Ever in foster care	22%	23%	25%
Chemically dependent (self-report)	46%	50%	43%
Ever admitted to detox center	47%	49%	41%
Ever lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility	45%	52%	41%
Lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility in previous two years	28%	28%	19%
Incarcerated within the last two years	20%	27%	34%
Reported significant mental illness	38%	41%	44%
Ever in hospital for persons with mental health problems	25%	20%	24%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind work they can do	Not asked	38%	38%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities	Not asked	11%	14%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily-decision making	Not asked	22%	30%
Has a history that suggests likely brain injury	Not asked	23%	34%

**Notes:** Percentages are weighted to reflect statewide shelter population on the date of the survey.

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Moorhead, from 2000, 2003, and 2006 statewide surveys**

	<b>2000 (N=78)</b>	<b>2003 (N=118)</b>	<b>2006 (N=167)</b>
Men	69%	67%	71%
Women	31%	33%	29%
Average age in years (men)	39.6	45.5	40.5
Average age in years (women)	29.2	36.4	37.7
Persons of color	44%	43%	40%
Never married	46%	46%	55%
Women who have children with them	25%	26%	29%
Men who have children with them	4%	1%	3%
Completed high school diploma or GED	67%	73%	67%
Attended some college	21%	27%	16%
Employed (full-time or part-time)	35%	29%	31%
Employed full-time	19%	12%	13%
Unemployed for more than 12 months (of those who are unemployed)	24%	43%	34%
No source of income	12%	12%	19%
Average monthly income (males)	\$449	\$494	\$453
Average monthly income (females)	\$457	\$440	\$546
Main source of income is MFIP (family welfare)	1%	9%	7%
Main source of income is MFIP (family welfare), (women only)	0%	26%	21%
Main source of income is General Assistance	11%	12%	9%
Main source of income is a steady job	26%	16%	13%
Main source of income is day labor	31%	32%	26%
Used Food Stamps in previous month	32%	39%	35%
Have medical coverage in previous month	Not asked	51%	45%
Received care in an emergency room in previous six months	30%	43%	26%
Military veterans	24%	21%	19%
Military veterans, (men only)	33%	32%	27%
Lived in Minnesota for two years or less	37%	53%	41%
Last lived in North Dakota (of those living in Minnesota two years or less)	39%	34%	53%

**Note:** Percentages are weighted to reflect statewide shelter population on the date of the survey.

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Moorhead, from 2000, 2003, and 2006 statewide surveys (continued)**

	<b>2000 (N=78)</b>	<b>2003 (N=118)</b>	<b>2006 (N=167)</b>
Homeless for less than one month	16%	10%	10%
Homeless for at least one year	31%	37%	40%
Meets the federal definition of chronic homelessness	Not available	31%	32%
Left last housing to flee abuse (women only)	21%	21%	24%
Could not pay anything for rent	18%	29%	25%
Could pay something but less than \$200 a month for rent	42%	15%	23%
Used free clothing shelves in previous month	49%	39%	49%
Used hot meal programs in previous month	68%	38%	52%
Used drop-in centers in previous month	25%	26%	28%
Physically mistreated as a child	36%	38%	36%
Sexually mistreated as a child	15%	25%	15%
Ever in foster care	32%	22%	25%
Chemically dependent (self-report)	52%	41%	50%
Ever admitted to detox center	47%	35%	46%
Ever lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility	60%	47%	54%
Lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility in previous two years	29%	25%	25%
Incarcerated within the last two years	27%	26%	33%
Reported significant mental illness	35%	54%	43%
Ever in hospital for persons with mental health problems	20%	22%	23%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind work they can do	Not asked	61%	40%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities	Not asked	19%	11%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily-decision making	Not asked	36%	24%
Has a history that suggests likely brain injury	Not asked	32%	30%

**Notes:** Percentages are weighted to reflect statewide shelter population on the date of the survey.

# Homeless adults and their children in Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota data tables

Tables in the next section report frequency distributions for all questions included in the survey, with breakdowns by geographic area (Fargo area vs. Moorhead area), by gender (male vs. female), and by type of shelter arrangement (emergency shelter, transitional housing programs, informal shelter, and unsheltered locations).<sup>9</sup>

The tables are organized by question. Within each question, the data tables display the responses for the Fargo area, then the Moorhead area, and then the totals for Fargo, Moorhead, and the combined total of both Fargo and Moorhead.

Note that some tables are conditional. For example, Table 179 reports the number of respondents who have considered suicide. This question was asked of everyone. Table 180 reports information about suicide attempts, but this question was only asked of those who had considered suicide. Thus, the percentages reported in Table 180 total 100 percent of those who have considered suicide, not 100 percent of the entire sample.

## *Notes for interpreting the data tables*

**The tables contain weighted estimates.** This means that the survey results have been statistically adjusted to reflect the actual populations residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs on the day of the survey. (We interviewed a sample, not every person in each shelter.)

**For informal and unsheltered locations, the data are not weighted.** We do not adjust the numbers to reflect the actual population, because we do not know the actual numbers of men, women, and children who were on the streets or in other non-shelter locations on the day of the survey.

**You should use the percentages, not the frequencies, when interpreting these tables.** Sample weighting, such as we have performed with these data, uses calculations that can result in "fractional" persons. When we use computer rounding to adjust for this, the numbers do not always add up exactly to the total for each category.

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<sup>9</sup> Unsheltered arrangements include outside, abandoned buildings, vehicles, temporary paid, or exchange arrangements.

**The total number of responses is different for each question**, based on the number of valid responses to that question. Missing data (cases when a respondent did not answer a question) are not reported or included in the percentages.

### ***Weighting techniques***

The 2006 survey data were weighted to reflect the actual number of homeless persons as indicated by specific site counts of people in shelters in Fargo and Moorhead on Thursday October 26, 2006. Only sites from which there were completed interviews were used in the weighting. The actual number of homeless persons in non-sheltered locations cannot be accurately estimated, so these cases were given a weight of 1.0.

The weightings were calculated by a sample-balancing program available in the Princeton Statistical Program (P-Stat). This technique uses an iterative approximation to the least square adjustment of W.E. Deming (*Statistical Adjustment of Data*, New York: Wiley, 1943). This weighting procedure uses marginals (totals of control variables) to compute individual case weights. In order to obtain the highest possible accuracy, 5 sets of marginals were used.

These were:

- Individual sites.
- Gender (male, female).
- Region (Fargo/Cass County, North Dakota; Moorhead/Clay County, Minnesota).
- Shelter type (emergency, transitional).

Shelter type within region by gender (all combinations of items 2, 3, and 4 above).

Weightings were used to estimate the characteristics of homeless persons in Fargo and Moorhead temporary housing programs on the night of the survey based on the sample of 180 interviews with adults in such programs. Statistical weightings could not be computed if interviews were not completed in a specific weighting category (e.g., region, shelter type, and gender). The actual number of adults and unaccompanied youth in temporary housing programs on the night of the survey was 260. When this is combined with the results of the 213 interviews completed with adults in non-shelter locations, the total sample for which estimates are available is 448.