A photograph of a person reading a book, with the text 'Wilder Research' overlaid in white.

**Wilder  
Research**

A photograph of an elderly woman with glasses, smiling, with an orange tint.

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

A photograph of a young child looking to the side, with a green tint.

*Regional survey of persons  
without permanent shelter*

**N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 0**



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

*Regional survey of persons without permanent shelter*

**November 2010**

**Prepared by:**

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# Summary

This study gives a snapshot of the people experiencing homelessness in Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota on a single day in October 2009. The findings reported here are based on interviews with 292 men and 163 women in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, transitional housing programs, and in non-shelter locations on Thursday October 22, 2009. This includes 110 interviews with men and 53 interviews with women in Moorhead, and 182 interviews with men and 110 interviews with women in Fargo. In addition, interviews were conducted with 12 unaccompanied minors (one male minor in Fargo, four male minors, and seven female minors in Moorhead). Information on these unaccompanied minors is presented in a separate section of this report.

## *Key findings*

### **Numbers of homeless**

- On October 22, 2009, there were 443 people (236 adult men, 96 adult women, no unaccompanied minors, and 111 children with parents) residing in temporary housing programs including emergency shelters and transitional housing programs in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Temporary housing programs in Fargo housed 178 men, 64 women, no unaccompanied minors, and 77 children. Temporary housing programs in Moorhead housed 58 men, 32 women, no unaccompanied minors, and 34 children.
- Additionally, the October 2009 survey identified 320 persons in informal and unsheltered locations, including 9 partners of persons interviewed and 35 children who were not interviewed (109 men, 57 women, 1 unaccompanied male minor, and 22 children in Fargo and 76 men, 31 women, 4 unaccompanied male minors, 7 unaccompanied female minors, and 13 children in Moorhead).
- The total homeless population identified in the Fargo-Moorhead area on October 22, 2009 was 763 persons (508 in Fargo and 255 in Moorhead).
- The number of homeless in 2009 is 29 percent higher than the number found in 2006 (587) and double the number found in 2003 (393).

### **Who is homeless?**

- In 2009, men made up the majority of homeless adults in the Fargo-Moorhead area (70% in Fargo and 67% in Moorhead). The average age of homeless men was 46.0 in Fargo and 40.1 in Moorhead. The average age of homeless women was 32.2 in Fargo and 38.2 in Moorhead. Over half of those interviewed have never married (55% in Fargo and 56% in Moorhead).

- Of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo on the night of the survey, 45 percent lived in North Dakota for two years or less. Of those recent residents, 45 percent came to North Dakota from Minnesota, and 46 percent had lived in North Dakota before. Of homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead on the night of the survey, 36 percent lived in Minnesota for two years or less. Of those recent residents, 43 percent came to Minnesota from North Dakota, and 36 percent had lived in Minnesota before.
- Of the women interviewed in Fargo, more than one-third (36%) had at least one child with them at the time of the survey. In Moorhead, 31 percent of women interviewed had at least one child with them on the night of the survey.
- The homeless adult population contains a disproportionate number of persons of color, particularly American Indian (26% for Fargo and 21% 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 (38% in both Fargo and Moorhead).
- American Indian women make up about one-third of the homeless women's population in Fargo (37%) and in Moorhead (31%).
- One-third (33%) of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo, and one-quarter (24%) of homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead in informal or unsheltered locations, were American Indian.
- Homeless adults interviewed in informal or unsheltered locations were predominantly male in both Fargo and Moorhead (66% and 71% respectively) and over two-fifths of all adults interviewed met the federal definition of chronic homeless (46% in Fargo and 44% in Moorhead).
- On the date of the survey, military veterans made up one-third (34%) of all homeless adults in Fargo and one-seventh (14%) in Moorhead. Veterans were 47 percent of homeless males in Fargo and 19 percent of homeless males in Moorhead.

### **Parents and children**

- In Fargo, 44 homeless parents had children with them. Six parents reported having a child with an emotional or behavioral problem. Of the 17 parents with school-age children, nine reported that at least one of their school-age children has some type of learning or school-related problem, and eight parents reported having a child that had to repeat a grade in school.

In Moorhead, 20 homeless parents had children with them. Six parents reported having a child with an emotional or behavioral problem. Of the 16 parents with

school-age children, 5 reported that at least one of their school-age children has some type of learning or school-related problem, and 2 parents reported having a child that had to repeat a grade in school.

- In Fargo, 18 of the homeless parents reported they were unable to obtain needed child care. In Moorhead, eight of the homeless parents reported they were unable to obtain needed child care.
- Three parents in Fargo and two parents in Moorhead reported their children had to skip meals in the last month because there was not enough money to buy food.
- Four homeless parents in Fargo and four homeless parents in Moorhead reported they were unable to obtain needed health care for their children in the last 12 months. Four homeless parents in Fargo and four homeless parents in Moorhead reported they have been unable to obtain needed dental care for their children in the last 12 months. Three homeless parents in Fargo and no homeless parents in Moorhead reported being unable to obtain needed mental health care for their children.

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

- About three-quarters of homeless adults had completed at least high school or obtained a GED (82% in Fargo and 72% in Moorhead). About one-third of those interviewed had attended at least some college (34% in Fargo and 28% in Moorhead). About one-quarter of the homeless adults interviewed had received special education services while in school (22% in Fargo and 27% in Moorhead).
- In Fargo, 32 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported having a job, and 13 percent reported working full time. In Moorhead, 29 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported having a job, with 5 percent working full-time.
- For those in Fargo who were not working, the most common barriers were transportation (26%), physical health problems (26%), personal reasons (18%), the lack of employment opportunities (16%), lack of resources needed to look for work (15%) and mental health problems (12%). For those in Moorhead who were not working, the most common barriers were physical health problems (26%), transportation (23%), mental health problems (17%), criminal history (16%), the lack of job experience or history (16%), personal reasons (12%), lack of employment opportunities (11%) and the lack of housing (10%).
- Twenty percent of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo, and 17 percent in Moorhead reported having no income in October. The main source of income for homeless adults in both Fargo and Moorhead was day labor (29% in Fargo and 15% in Moorhead) and steady employment (12% in Fargo and 19% in Moorhead).

- The average amount of income that homeless adults interviewed received in October was \$399 (\$415 in Fargo and \$369 in Moorhead). The median income was \$203 (\$203 in Fargo and \$203 in Moorhead).
- The average amount that homeless adults interviewed in Fargo could pay each month for their own place to live, including rent and utilities, was \$205, and in Moorhead, the average amount was \$215. About two-fifths of homeless adults interviewed reported they could not pay anything for their own place to live (39% in Fargo and 35% in Moorhead). The percent of homeless adults who reported they could pay something for rent but not more than \$300 a month was 35 percent in Fargo and 34 percent in Moorhead.

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

- Less than 10 percent (5% in Fargo and 9 % in 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). Three percent in Fargo and 6 percent in Moorhead of homeless adults interviewed reported that TANF or MFIP was their main source of income in October.
- Almost two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo reported having some type of medical coverage in October. In Moorhead, closer to three-quarters (71%) reported having medical coverage in October.
- Fourteen percent of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo, and 24 percent in Moorhead 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 (56% in Fargo and 58% in Moorhead), public medical benefits (16% in Fargo and 40% in Moorhead), unemployment benefits (16% in Fargo and 4% in Moorhead), and family welfare benefits (18% in Fargo and 9% in Moorhead).
- When asked about which services they used in October, the services most frequently mentioned by homeless adults interviewed in Fargo were: hot meal programs (49%), clothing shelves (44%), food shelves (37%), free medical clinics (31%), food stamps (24%), transportation assistance (24%), drop-in centers (23%), and emergency room (22%). The services most frequently mentioned by those interviewed in Moorhead were: food stamps (44%), transportation assistance (40%), clothing shelves (37%), hot meal programs (34%), help finding a job (22%), free medical clinics (20%), help getting financial assistance (19%), food shelves (18%), and drop-in centers (10%).
- Twenty-seven percent of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo, and 18 percent in Moorhead have attended a Project Homeless Connect event in the previous 12 months.

## **Health and well-being**

- One common reason for women to seek temporary shelter is to flee an abusive partner. Thirty-eight percent of homeless women interviewed in Fargo and 18 percent in Moorhead, indicated that one of the main reasons for leaving their last housing was to flee abuse.
- More than one-third (34%) of homeless adults in Fargo (27% of men and 52% of women), and 37 percent in Moorhead (34% of men and 43% of women), reported physical mistreatment as children. Likewise, in Fargo, about one-fifth (20%) reported that they were sexually mistreated as children (11% of men and 41% of women). In Moorhead, about one-fifth (22%) reported that they were sexually mistreated as children (16% of men and 35% of women).
- Mental illness is a significant problem among those who are homeless in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Over 40 percent of homeless adults (43% in Fargo and 47% 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 stress disorder.
- Forty-three percent of the homeless in Fargo, and 49 percent in Moorhead, reported that they consider themselves to be alcoholic or chemically dependent. Thirty-two 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 adults in Fargo, and 43 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead, reported receiving inpatient alcohol or drug treatment within the last two years. Twenty-two percent of homeless adults in Fargo, and 40 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead, reported receiving outpatient alcohol or drug treatment in the last two years.
- Twenty-one percent of homeless adults in Fargo and 27 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead reported having both a mental illness and a chemical dependency problem. This is based on the percent of adults 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 both Fargo and Moorhead) or that limit their daily activities (9% in both Fargo and Moorhead), as well as conditions that interfere with memory or daily decision-making (21% in Fargo and 27% in Moorhead).

- When mental illness, substance abuse disorders, chronic physical health problems, and the above disabilities are pooled, three-quarters (75%) of homeless adults in Fargo and 80 percent in Moorhead have at least one serious or chronic disability. In addition, 32 percent of homeless adults in Fargo, and 37 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead, have a history that suggests likely traumatic brain injury.

### **Homeless unaccompanied minors**

This section provides selected descriptive information from interviews conducted with the 12 unaccompanied minors interviewed as part of the October 22, 2009 study in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, five were male and seven were female. Two were 15 years old, five were 16 years old, and five were 17 years old. Six were white, four were American Indian, one was African American, and one was of mixed racial background.
- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, six grew up in greater Minnesota, three grew up in North Dakota, one grew up in Cass or Clay counties but not in Fargo or Moorhead, one grew up in Minneapolis, and one grew up in Michigan.
- Only the one unaccompanied minor had lived in Minnesota or North Dakota for two years or less.
- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, 11 (92%) had lived in foster care, a group home, a drug or alcohol treatment facility, a residence for people with physical disabilities, a half-way house, a facility for persons with mental health problems, or an adoptive home.
- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, 9 (75%) had been held for more than a week in a juvenile detention center.
- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, in the previous two years, two-thirds had received a diagnosis of a severe mental health problem and one-third received a diagnosis of a drug or alcohol dependency problem. One-third of these unaccompanied minors had received a dual diagnosis of both a mental health and chemical dependency problem.
- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, two-fifths (42%) had been physically mistreated, one-quarter (25%) had been sexually mistreated, and half (50%) had been either physically or sexually mistreated.

- Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, 92 percent had been a victim of child abuse, had been a parent before age 18, or had lived a foster home, detention facility, or some other institutional placement.

### **Homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults**

This section is based on the responses of the five male and seven female unaccompanied minors, ages 15 through 17, and the 19 male and 25 female young adults, ages 18 through 21 interviewed in the Fargo-Moorhead area on October 22, 2009.

- For homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults interviewed, the average age at which they left home for the first time to be on their own was 15.7 years old.
- Over three-fifths (61%) of homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults had left their home more than six months prior to the survey date.
- The main reasons given for leaving home were: there was someone in the home that they couldn't stand to be around (57%); frequent fighting with parents or guardians (55%); not willing to live by parents rules (47%); were asked to leave (42%); delinquent activities by the unaccompanied minor or young adult (32%); drug or alcohol use by the unaccompanied minor or young adult (36%); and didn't feel safe because of violence in the home (27%).
- Seventy percent of homeless unaccompanied minors or young adults felt they could return home if they wanted to do so, although only slightly more than one-third (37%) thought they would ever live with their family again.
- Slightly over one-third (35%) of homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having a high school diploma or GED. Of those who did not have a high school diploma or GED, two-fifths (41%) were enrolled in a school or in an educational program.
- Nearly half (49%) of female homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having been pregnant, and over one-third (34%) of male homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having fathered a child.
- One-fifth (20%) of female homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having been approached to work in the sex industry.
- Over nine in ten (91%) of homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having an adult in their life that they trusted and had 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 22, 2009.
- A survey of a sample (numbering 191) of homeless adults living in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities on October 22, 2009.
- A survey of homeless adults (numbering 276) and unaccompanied youth (numbering 12) found in informal or unsheltered locations on October 22, 2009.

## *Background*

The Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons (FMCHP) began in 1989 when a group of individuals, representing four emergency shelters and other homeless service providers, gathered to brainstorm ideas and support each other in matters affecting homeless men, women, and children in the Fargo-Moorhead community. From those initial gatherings, the FMCHP has evolved into a coalition of over 50 members. The membership represents both concerned citizens and a broad array of public and nonprofit agencies and organizations serving homeless and at-risk individuals and families in the Fargo-Moorhead area. The mission of the FMCHP is to work in partnership to achieve permanent solutions to prevent, reduce and end homelessness.

In the mid-1990's, the FMCHP 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. A study advisory committee was formed in 1997 to begin seeking funds to support a preliminary study. Unfortunately, the first proposal did not materialize, due to a lack of funding.

A study advisory committee was revived in March 2000. Contracting with Wilder Research was determined as the most effective and efficient way to complete a local study. Every three years, since 1991 Wilder Research has conducted a statewide study of homelessness in Minnesota. However, the information gathered in the statewide survey is compiled

only by regions, so Moorhead (Clay County) data was grouped in with the nine county West Central Minnesota regional report, and Fargo data was not collected.

The Study 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.

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, the FMCHP decided to again work with Wilder in the fall of 2003, 2006, and 2009 on an expanded version of the tri-annual study of persons without permanent shelter in Minnesota.

## ***Methods***

The project coincided with Wilder Research Center's 2009 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 22, 2009, trained volunteer interviewers conducted 467 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 12 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]).

In the definition used for this research, a homeless person is anyone who 1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; 2) has a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised, publicly- or privately-operated temporary living accommodation, including emergency shelters, transitional housing, and battered women’s shelters; or 3) has a nighttime residence in any place not meant for human habitation, such as under bridges or in cars. This is based on the definition established by the U.S. Congress. A parent not meeting any of these criteria may be included if they have a child with them, and have a significant history of residential instability, and have a barrier (or have a child with a barrier) that interferes with housing or employment.

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 22, 2009.<sup>1</sup> This is not the number who were interviewed, but the number who were counted by shelter providers.

#### **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	94	30	1	3	-	-	53	181
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	79	23	4	8	-	-	24	138
<b>Moorhead area</b>								
Emergency shelters	45	14	1	-	-	-	14	74
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	12	16	1	1	-	-	20	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>443</b>

<sup>1</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.

The next table shows the number of homeless persons found in *informal or unsheltered locations* in the Fargo area and Moorhead area on October 22, 2009.

### Number of persons in informal and unsheltered locations

	Adults age 22+		Young adults age 18-21		Unaccompanied youth age <18		Total interviewed	Partners <sup>a</sup> not interviewed	Children <sup>b</sup> with parent(s) not interviewed
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
<b>Fargo area</b>									
Informal shelter	55	33	5	12	1	-	106	9	22
Unsheltered	41	8	1	2	-	-	52	-	-
<b>Moorhead area</b>									
Informal shelter	59	26	10	3	4	7	109	-	13
Unsheltered	7	2	-	-	-	-	9	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>35</b>

<sup>a</sup> This number represents the number of partners reported by those interviewed on the night of the survey. Partners were not interviewed.

<sup>b</sup> This number represents the number of children that 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 22, 2009 in the Fargo-Moorhead area, 443 persons were living in temporary shelters or transitional programs, and 320 homeless persons were identified in non-shelter locations (including 9 partners of those surveyed and 32 children who were not interviewed). The total of 763 identified homeless persons represents an increase of 29 percent over the 587 homeless persons identified in October 2006, double the number of homeless persons identified in October 2003 (393) and about one and a half times the number of homeless persons identified in October 2000 (312). 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 (64%) 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>2</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>3</sup>

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

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**Estimates of homeless and precariously housed persons in the Fargo-Moorhead area on an October night in 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009**

**Fargo Estimate**

Count or estimate		2000	2003	2006	2009
Count	Persons in shelters or transitional housing programs	139	167	197	319
Count	Persons in the non-sheltered locations on night of survey	58	61	134	189
Estimate <sup>a</sup>	“Doubled-up” children and youth (2.7 times sheltered youth and children)	119	100	130	270
Estimate <sup>b</sup>	“Doubled-up” adults	95	130	149	242
<b>Total</b>		<b>411</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>1,020</b>

**Moorhead Estimate**

Count	Persons in shelters or transitional housing programs	61	125	145	124
Count	Persons in the non-sheltered locations on night of survey	47	40	79	131
Estimate <sup>a</sup>	“Doubled-up” children and youth (2.7 times sheltered youth and children)	35	121	138	157
Estimate <sup>b</sup>	“Doubled-up” adults	48	77	94	90
<b>Total</b>		<b>191</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>502</b>

**Fargo-Moorhead Area Estimate**

Count	Persons in shelters or transitional housing programs	200	292	342	443
Count	Persons in the non-sheltered locations on night of survey	105	101	213	320
Estimate <sup>a</sup>	“Doubled-up” children and youth (2.7 times sheltered youth and children)	154	221	268	427
Estimate <sup>b</sup>	“Doubled-up” adults	143	207	243	332
<b>Total</b>		<b>602</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>1,066</b>	<b>1,522</b>

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<sup>2</sup> Wilder Research Center (1990). *St. Paul overnight shelter board report*. Saint Paul, MN: Author.

<sup>3</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.

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, which found there were 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
October 2009	(100) x (2.7) = 270	(58) x (2.7) = 157	(158) x (2.7) = 427

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

(Based on the Saint Paul Overnight Shelter Board 1990 study, which found as many people living in “doubled-up” circumstances as those 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
October 2009	242	90	332

## Survey interviews

The number of interviews conducted with adults and youth in temporary housing programs is shown below. In the Fargo-Moorhead area, six persons approached for an interview refused to participate (four in Fargo and two in Moorhead). The overall response rate (including informal and unsheltered locations) was 99 percent (in both cities).

### Number interviewed in temporary housing programs

	Males interviewed	Females interviewed	Total interviewed	Number of adults in temporary housing	Percent of total population interviewed
<b>Fargo area</b>					
Emergency shelters	29	30	59	128	46%
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	44	23	67	114	59%
<b>Moorhead area</b>					
Emergency shelters	28	10	38	60	63%
Battered women's shelters	-	-	-	-	-
Transitional housing	6	12	18	30	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>55%</b>

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

### Number interviewed in non-shelter locations

	Adults age 22+		Young adults age 18-21		Unaccompanied youth age <18		Total interviewed
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<b>Fargo area</b>							
Informal shelter	62	35	5	12	1	-	115
Unsheltered	41	8	1	2	-	-	52
<b>Moorhead area</b>							
Informal shelter	59	26	10	3	4	7	109
Unsheltered	7	2	-	-	-	-	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>285</b>

# Survey results

This report presents study results in two ways:

- Descriptive overview of the characteristics of those who were homeless on Thursday, October 22, 2009.
- 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 22, 2009, the population count of all homeless persons residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities in the Fargo-Moorhead area found 332 adults and 111 children accompanied by adults in temporary housing programs. Additionally, 320 persons (11 unaccompanied minors, 274 adults, and 35 children accompanied by adults) were found in informal or unsheltered locations. That is a total of 763 homeless individuals who were identified as homeless in the Fargo-Moorhead area on October 22, 2009.

Interviews were completed with 292 homeless adults and one unaccompanied minor in Fargo and 163 homeless adults and 11 unaccompanied minors in Moorhead. This section presents a general profile of homeless adults 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.

Descriptive information on homeless unaccompanied minors (age 17 or younger) that were interviewed is presented separately in the general descriptive profile. Survey questions asked only of homeless individuals age 21 or younger are also presented in this section. In the table section of the report, each of these individual questions from the youth supplement is represented by the shelter type, totals for Fargo and totals for Moorhead, and totals for both cities combined for those persons, age 21 or younger that were interviewed.

## *Background characteristics of homeless adults*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, men made up 70 percent of homeless adults interviewed. The average age for men was 46.0 and for women was 32.2.

In Fargo, survey results indicate that 59 percent of the homeless adults 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. Seven percent identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, men made up 71 percent of homeless adults interviewed. The average age for men was 40.1 and for women was 38.2.

In Moorhead, survey results indicate that 55 percent of the homeless adults interviewed were Caucasian, 21 percent were American Indian, 16 percent were African American, 1 percent were of a mixed racial background, and 7 percent did not identify a racial background. Seven percent identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin.

## Fargo

Of those who identified themselves as American Indian, 85 percent were officially enrolled with a tribe, 12 percent were a descendent of a tribal member but not enrolled, and 4 percent were not enrolled with a tribe.

In Fargo, over half of surveyed homeless adults (47%) had never married. Another 37 percent were divorced, 10 percent were separated, 4 percent were currently married, and 3 percent were widowed.

In Fargo, four-fifths of homeless adults interviewed (82%) had either graduated from high school, completed a GED, or had some type of post-secondary education. Twenty-two percent of homeless adults interviewed reported receiving special education services while in school.

Over half (56%) of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo had lived in North Dakota for more than two years. More than two-fifths (45%) of those living in North Dakota for two years or less came from Minnesota and over two-fifths (46%) lived in North Dakota previously. Three-fifths (59%) of those surveyed in Fargo grew up in another state or country, including 26 percent who grew up in Minnesota.

In Fargo, 34 percent of the homeless adults surveyed were military veterans (47% of men and 3% of women). This compares with 11 percent of North Dakota's adult population (21% of the male population and 2% of the female population age 18 and older) who are military veterans.<sup>4</sup>

## Moorhead

Of those who identified themselves as American Indian, 84 percent were officially enrolled with a tribe, 14 percent were a descendent of a tribal member but not enrolled, and 2 percent were not enrolled with a tribe.

In Moorhead, over half of surveyed homeless adults (56%) had never married. Another 27 percent were divorced, 9 were separated, 2 percent were widowed, and 7 percent were currently married.

In Moorhead, almost three-quarters of homeless adults interviewed (72%) had either graduated from high school, completed a GED, or had some type of post-secondary education. More than one-quarter (27%) of homeless adults interviewed reported receiving special education services while in school.

About two-thirds (64%) of homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead had lived in Minnesota for more than two years. Two-fifths (43%) of those living in Minnesota for two years or less came from North Dakota and over one-third (36%) lived in Minnesota previously. The majority (61%) of those surveyed in Moorhead grew up in another state or country, including 11 percent who grew up in North Dakota.

In Moorhead, 14 percent of the homeless adults surveyed were military veterans (19% of men and 2% of women). This compares with 10 percent of Minnesota's adult population (19% of the male population and 1% of the female population age 18 and older) who are military veterans.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. *2008 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates* [statistics from data file]. Retrieved June 16, 2010, from <http://www.census.gov/factfinder.census.gov>

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

## *Service use*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, the services used most often in October were hot meal programs (49%), clothing shelves (44%), food stamps (37%), free medical clinics (31%), food shelves (24%), transportation assistance (24%), drop-in centers (23%), and emergency room (22%).

In Fargo, 5 percent of homeless adults interviewed (14% of women) reported receiving TANF (North Dakota's family welfare plan) in the last 12 months.

In Fargo, nearly two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults interviewed had some kind of medical coverage in October. Close to two-fifths (38%) reported using an emergency room in the previous six months.

In Fargo, almost one-sixth (14%) 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 (56% of those who lost benefits), family welfare benefits (17%), public medical benefits (16%), and unemployment benefits (16%).

In Fargo, 20 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported needing help applying for or reapplying for services, particularly food stamps (46% of those needing help with applications), public medical benefits (27%), and housing assistance (20%). Over one-quarter (27%) attended a Project Homeless Connect event in the previous 12 months.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, the services used most often in October were food stamps (44%), transportation assistance (40%), clothing shelves (37%), hot meal programs (34%), help finding a job (22%), free medical clinics (20%), and help getting financial or public benefits (19%) and food shelves (18%).

In Moorhead, 9 percent of homeless adults interviewed (22% of women) reported receiving MFIP (Minnesota's family welfare plan) in the last 12 months.

In Moorhead, 71 percent of homeless adults interviewed had some kind of medical coverage in October. One-third (33%) reported using an emergency room in the previous six months.

In Moorhead, one-quarter (24%) 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 (58% of those who lost benefits) and public medical benefits (40%).

In Moorhead, 24 percent of the adults interviewed reported needing help applying for or reapplying for services, particularly for food stamps (48% of those needing help with applications), public medical benefits (47%), and housing assistance (23%). Eighteen percent attended a Project Homeless Connect event in the previous 12 months.

## *Income*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, homeless adults interviewed reported their main source of income in October as: day or temporary labor (29%), steady employment (12%), friends or relatives (7%), sale of personal belongings (7%), and asking for money on the streets (6%).

In Fargo, when asked about their total income for the month of October, 16 percent reported some income but less than \$100, 23 percent reported an income between \$101 and \$300, 13 percent reported an income between \$301 and \$500, 10 percent reported an income between \$501 and \$700, 6 percent reported an income between \$701 and \$900, and 13 percent reported an income over \$900. Twenty percent reported no income in the month of October.

In Fargo, homeless women reported a higher average monthly income than homeless men (\$424 vs. \$411). The median income for homeless women (\$256) is more than that of homeless men (\$203.)

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, homeless adults interviewed reported their main source of income in October as: day or temporary labor (15%), steady employment (19%), General Assistance (17%), Supplemental Security Income (13%), SSDI (7%), friends or relatives (6%), and MFIP (6%).

In Moorhead, when asked about their total income for the month of October, 18 percent reported some income but less than \$100, 24 percent reported an income between \$101 and \$300, 13 percent reported an income between \$301 and \$500, 11 percent reported an income between \$501 and \$700, 8 percent reported an income between \$701 and \$900, and 9 percent reported an income of over \$900. Seventeen percent reported no income in the month of October.

In Moorhead, homeless women reported a higher average monthly income than homeless men (\$406 vs. \$351). The median income for homeless women (\$318) is more than that of homeless men (\$200.)

## *History of homelessness and shelter use*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 40 percent of those surveyed have been homeless only once in the previous three years. Sixteen percent of those surveyed reported two episodes of homelessness in the past three years, 14 percent reported three episodes of being homeless, and 30 percent reported being homeless four or more times.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 36 percent of those surveyed have been homeless only once in the previous three years. Twenty-one percent reported two episodes of homelessness in the past three years, 14 percent reported being homeless three times, and 29 percent reported being homeless four or more times.

## Fargo

In Fargo, 9 percent of homeless adults surveyed reported they have been without a regular or permanent place to stay for less than one month, 45 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 30 (33 for men and 24 for women).

An individual meets the **Minnesota definition of long-term 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. Over half (55%) of the homeless adults 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 two-fifths (46%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Fargo would meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness.

In Fargo, 90 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 – 8% as a child and 78% in the previous two years).

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, 11 percent of homeless adults surveyed reported they have been without a regular or permanent place to stay for less than one month, 47 percent for at least one month but less than one year, and 42 percent for one year or more. The average age at which those interviewed became homeless for the first time was 28 (28 for men and 27 for women).

An individual meets the **Minnesota definition of long-term 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. Over half (52%) 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. More than two-fifths (42%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Moorhead would meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness.

In Moorhead, 87 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 – 6% as a child and 75% in the previous two years).

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, 48 percent of homeless adults 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 30 days.

In Fargo, one-quarter (25%) of homeless adults 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 with friends or family (38%), outdoors (19%), in a car or abandoned building (12%), or in another shelter (16%).

In Fargo, 37 percent of homeless adults interviewed slept, at least one night during October, outdoors or in a place not meant for housing.

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 46 percent of homeless adults have lived in their *current* temporary housing arrangement for less than one month and 8 percent for more than one year. The median number of days they have been in their current arrangement is 30 days.

In Moorhead, one-quarter (25%) of homeless adults 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 with friends or family (31%), stayed in another shelter (23%), outdoors (15%), received voucher for motel (13%), or in a car or abandoned building (10%).

In Moorhead, 18 percent of homeless adults 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, 67 percent of homeless adults surveyed reported having lived in at least one type of residential facility or program, not including correctional facilities. Men and women were about equally likely to have lived in some type of non-family setting (69% vs. 62%).

Overall, homeless adults in Fargo reported having lived in drug or alcohol treatment facilities (38%), half way houses (26%), foster care (29%), mental health facilities (22%), and group homes (19%).

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, with respect to prior residential placements, 76 percent of homeless adults 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 (79% vs. 70%).

Overall, homeless adults in Moorhead reported having lived in drug or alcohol treatment facilities (58%), halfway houses (40%), foster care (25%), mental health facilities (33%), and group homes (22%).

## Fargo

A smaller proportion reported having lived in an adoptive home (10%) or in a residence for persons with physical disabilities (6%).

In Fargo, with respect to prior correctional placements, 55 percent of homeless adults 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 (61% vs. 41%), drug or alcohol treatment facility (42% vs. 28%), a halfway house (29% vs. 18%), and an adoptive home (12% vs. 8%). Women were more likely than men to have been in a foster home (42% vs. 24%), or a group home (23% vs. 18%).

## Moorhead

A small proportion reported having lived in a residence for persons with physical disabilities (8%) or in an adoptive home (4%).

In Moorhead, with respect to prior correctional placements, 63 percent of homeless adults 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 (70% vs. 48%), a drug or alcohol treatment facility (64% vs. 46%), a halfway house (48% vs. 26%), a mental health facility (35% vs. 29%), or a residence for people with physical disabilities (10% vs. 4%). Women were more likely than men to have been in foster care (30% vs. 23%).

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

	Fargo			Moorhead		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Foster care	24.0%	42.2%	29.4%	22.9%	30.2%	25.3%
Drug or alcohol treatment	41.8%	28.4%	37.9%	63.5%	45.5%	57.6%
Residence for persons with physical disabilities	7.5%	2.0%	5.9%	9.8%	3.9%	7.8%
Halfway house	28.5%	18.0%	25.5%	47.6%	25.9%	40.3%
Mental health hospital	22.3%	21.3%	22.0%	34.5%	29.0%	32.7%
Group home	17.9%	23.0%	19.4%	24.6%	17.1%	22.2%
Adoptive home	11.5%	7.7%	10.4%	4.7%	2.4%	4.0%
Any of above residential/ treatment placements	69.3%	62.0%	67.1%	79.3%	70.2%	76.3%
Juvenile detention center or other juvenile facility or camp	20.5%	26.1%	22.1%	30.0%	18.8%	26.5%
County jail or workhouse	56.0%	28.8%	48.1%	64.6%	35.1%	55.0%
State or federal prison	31.5%	11.1%	25.5%	28.4%	12.4%	23.0%
Any of above correctional facilities	60.6%	40.9%	54.8%	69.7%	48.0%	62.6%

## *Migration to Fargo-Moorhead*

### **Fargo**

About one-third (35%) of homeless adults interviewed in Fargo had lived in North Dakota for less than one year, 10 percent for one to two years, and 56 percent longer than two years. Forty-five percent of recent residents (two years or less) had lived in Minnesota just prior to coming to North Dakota. Forty-six percent of recent residents indicated that they have previously lived in North Dakota.

Of recent residents (the 159 living in North Dakota for two years or less), three-fifths (60%) came from West North Central states. Thirteen percent came from West South Central states, 9 percent from Mountain states, 7 percent from Pacific states, 4 percent from East North Central states, 4 percent from South Atlantic states, and 2 percent from East South Central states. Three recent residents (2%) came from countries outside of the United States. (See maps on the next three pages.)

In Fargo, 5 percent of the homeless adults interviewed were born outside of the United States. Of the 20 respondents born in another county, 13 entered the United States with official refugee status. Three of the 13 respondents entered the United States prior to the year 2000.

### **Moorhead**

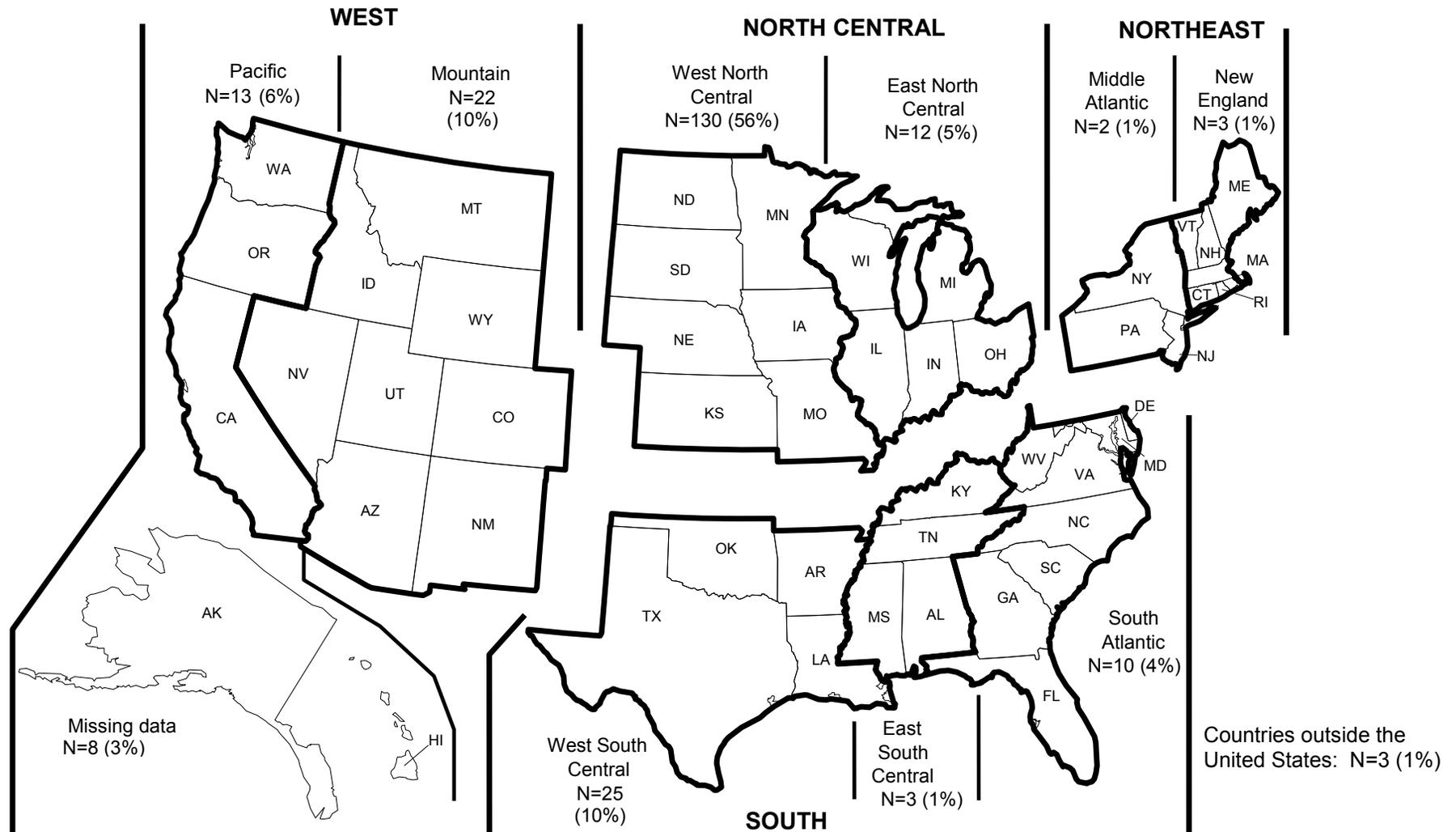
One-quarter (25%) of the homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead had lived in Minnesota for less than one year, 11 percent for one to two years, and 64 percent longer than two years. Over two-fifths (43%) of recent residents (two years or less) had lived in North Dakota just prior to coming to Minnesota. Over one-third (36%) of recent residents indicated that they have previously lived in Minnesota.

Of recent residents (the 72 living in Moorhead for two years or less), almost half (49%) came from West North Central states. Eleven percent came from Mountain states, 8 percent from East North Central states, 7 percent from West South Central states, 4 percent from New England states, 4 percent from South Atlantic states, 3 percent from Pacific states, and 3 percent from Middle Atlantic states. Data were missing on eight (11%) adults. No recent residents came from countries outside of the United States. (See maps on the next three pages.)

In Moorhead, 7 percent of the homeless adults interviewed were born outside of the United States. Of the 13 respondents born in another county, five entered the United States with official refugee status. Four of the five respondents entered the United States prior to the year 2000.

Respondents living in North Dakota\* or Minnesota\* two years or less  
 "Where did you live before coming to Fargo, North Dakota\* or Moorhead, Minnesota\*?"  
 N=231

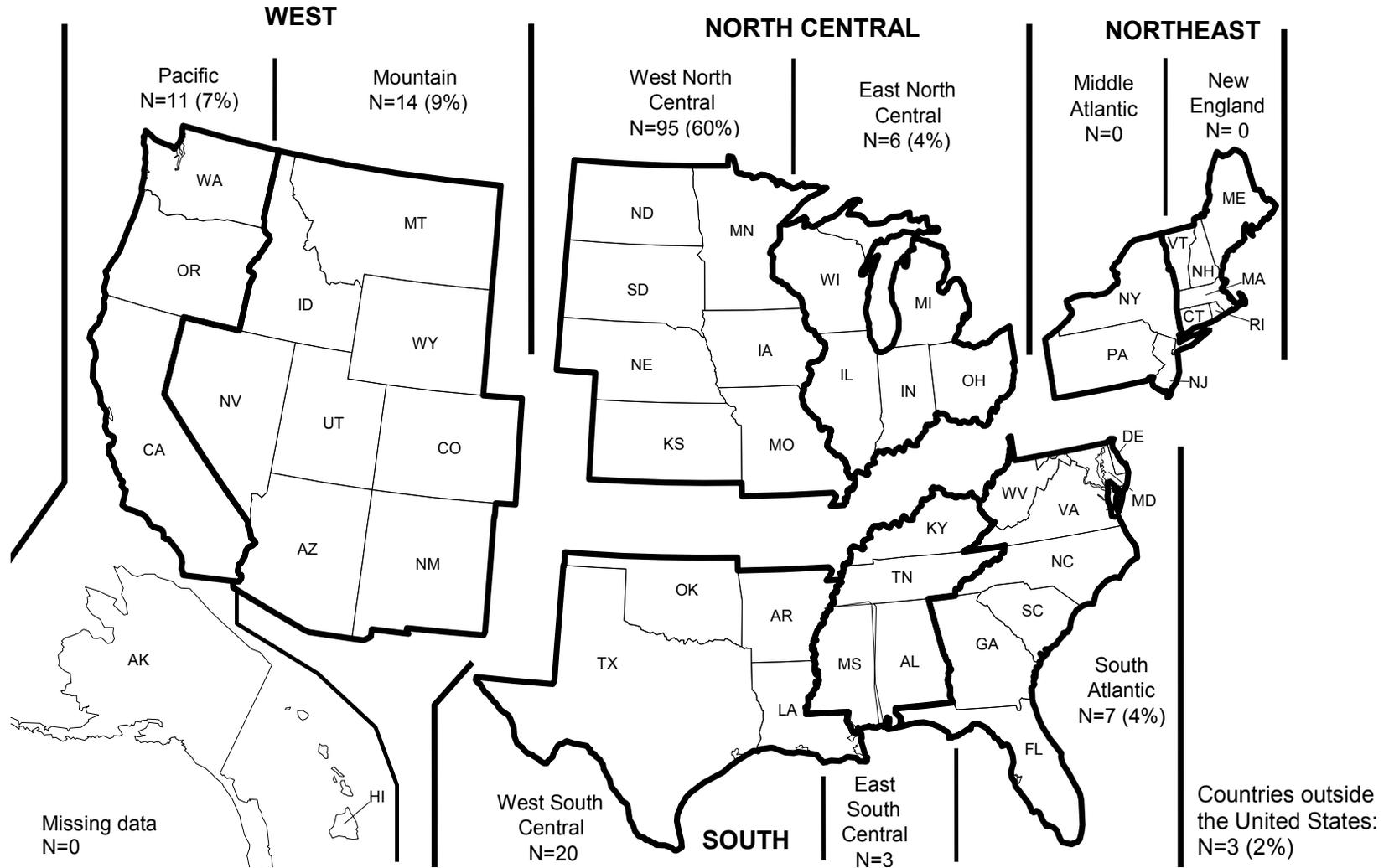
US Census Bureau geographic regions



\* 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.

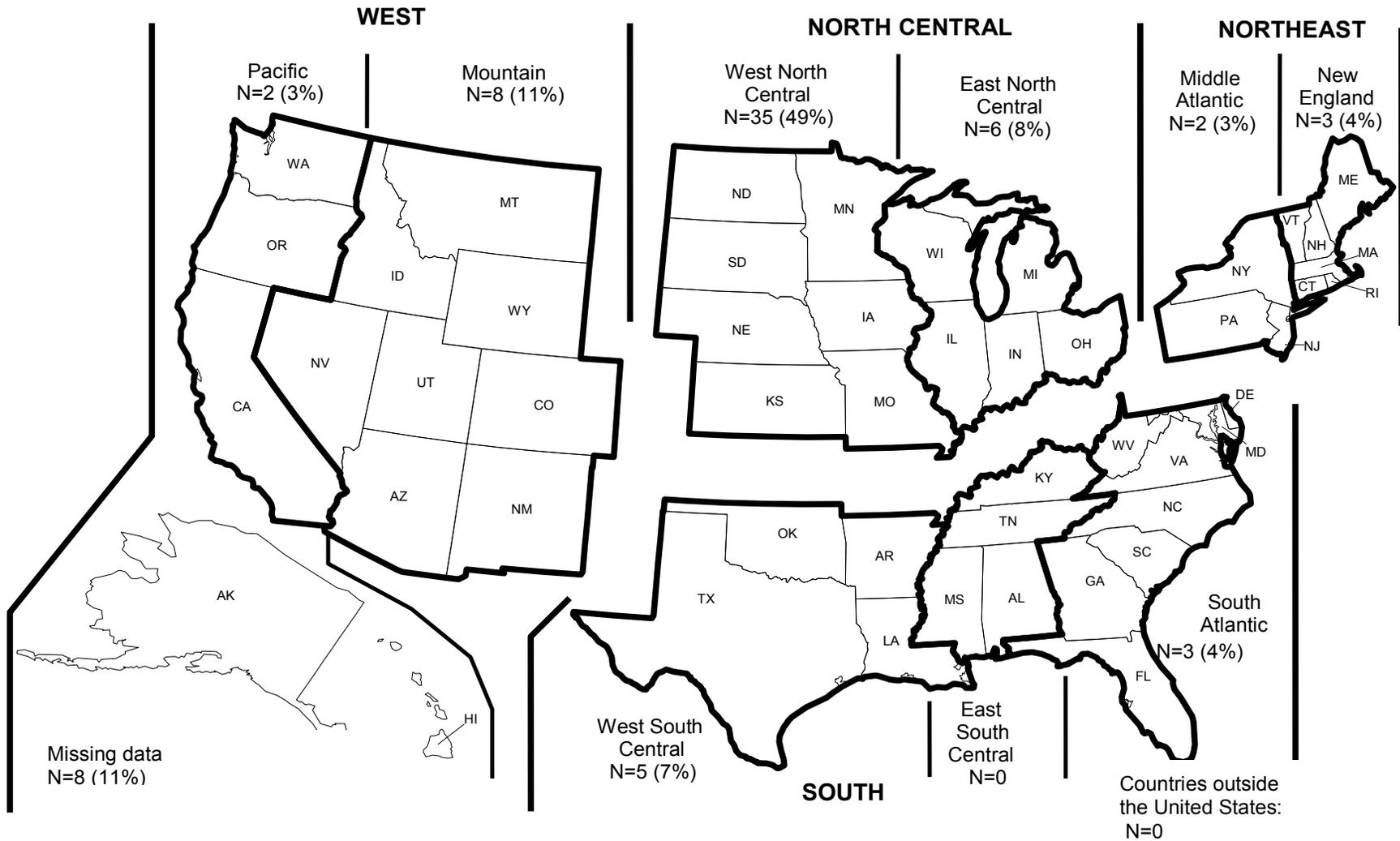
Respondents living in North Dakota two years or less  
 "Where did you live before coming to North Dakota?" N=159

US Census Bureau geographic regions



Respondents living in Minnesota two years or less  
 "Where did you live before coming to Minnesota?" N=72

US Census Bureau geographic regions



## *Housing resources*

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 45 percent of homeless adults surveyed (48% of men and 39% of women) reported having been without housing for more than a year. Over one-third (35%) were on a waiting list for Section 8 or subsidized housing. The average length of time on the waiting list was 5.6 months.

Five percent reported having received a Section 8 voucher that they could not use because they could not find a place that would accept the voucher.

The majority of the homeless men (85%) stated that they needed only an efficiency or one-bedroom apartment, while 44 percent of the women required two or more bedrooms.

In Fargo, 39 percent of homeless adults interviewed indicated that they were not able to pay any amount for rent. Seven percent reported they could pay between \$1 and \$100 a month for rent, 14 percent said \$101 to \$200, 15 percent said \$201 to \$300, 11 percent said \$301 to \$400, 6 percent said \$401 to \$500, and 9 percent said over \$500 per month.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 42 percent of homeless adults surveyed (41% of men and 44% of women) reported having been without housing for more than a year. Nearly half (46%) were on a waiting list for Section 8 or subsidized housing. The average length of time on the waiting list was 6.4 months.

Four percent reported having received a Section 8 voucher that they could not use because they could not find a place that would accept the voucher.

The majority of the homeless men (85%) stated that they needed only an efficiency or one-bedroom apartment, while 46 percent of the women required two or more bedrooms.

In Moorhead, 35 percent of homeless (40% of men and 24% of women) indicated that they were not able to pay any amount for rent. Nine percent reported they could pay between \$1 and \$100 a month for rent, 13 percent said \$101 to \$200, 12 percent said \$201 to \$300, 12 percent said \$301 to \$400, 11 percent said \$401 to \$500, and 7 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, 2009 *	People who report they could afford fair market rent	
	Percent of N=386	Average (median)		N	%
0 (efficiency)	60%	\$100	\$410	15	9%
1 bedroom	17%	\$300	\$487	9	22%
2 bedrooms	17%	\$275	\$620	0	0%
3 bedrooms	5%	\$60	\$895	0	0%
4 bedrooms	1%	\$400	\$1,034	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 <sup>a</sup>	People who report they could afford fair market rent	
	Percent of N=195	Average (median)		N	%
0 (efficiency)	62%	\$95	\$373	17	18%
1 bedroom	13%	\$120	\$443	4	17
2 bedrooms	17%	\$325	\$563	5	19%
3 bedrooms	7%	\$375	\$812	0	0%
4 bedrooms	2%	\$250	\$939	0	0%

**Sources:** Homeless data, Wilder Research Center, 2009. Fair market rents, Wilder calculations using data from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

<sup>a</sup> 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, 39 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported their last regular or permanent housing was in Fargo, 7 percent in Moorhead, 11 percent in Cass County North Dakota or Clay County Minnesota (not Fargo-Moorhead), 15 percent in North Dakota (outside of Cass County), 6 percent in Minnesota (outside of Clay County), and 21 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 (55%), job lost or had hours cut (53%), eviction (36%), their own drinking or drug problems (30%), break-up with spouse or partner (18%), and entered jail or treatment (17%).

The main reasons **women** cited included: to flee an abusive relationship (38%), couldn't afford rent (35%), break-up with spouse or partner (34%), eviction (33%), job lost or had hours cut (31%), another person's drinking or drug problem (26%), relationship problems (22%), their own drinking or drug problem (19%), and entered jail or treatment (17%).

In Fargo, homeless adults reported that the first place they stayed when they lost their last housing was with friend or family (37%), in an emergency shelter (34%), outside (10%), and in a car, van, lobby, or other public place (8%).

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, 18 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported their last regular or permanent housing was in Clay County, Minnesota, 45 percent in Minnesota (not Clay County), 13 percent in North Dakota, and 24 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 (47%), couldn't afford rent (42%), job lost or had hours cut (40%), entered jail or treatment (35%), eviction (26%), problems getting along with people you live with (22%), and breakup with spouse or partner (18%).

The main reasons **women** cited included: couldn't afford the rent (51%), job lost or had hours cut (48%), eviction (38%), their own drinking or drug problem (34%), entered jail or treatment (27%), to flee an abusive relationship (18%), substandard or unsafe housing (17%), a breakup with spouse or partner (17%), a drinking problem of someone else in the household (17%), and a behavior problem of a guest or visitor (17%).

In Moorhead, homeless adults reported that the first place they stayed when they lost their last housing was with friend or family (41%), in an emergency shelter (22%), in a treatment facility (11%), in a car, van, lobby, or other public place (6%) and outside (6%).

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, the main reasons homeless adults interviewed said they could not get housing now included: the lack of a job or income (38%), credit problems (19%), no housing they could afford (17%), and a criminal background (16%).

## ***Veteran status***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, 47 percent of homeless men and 3 percent of homeless women had served in the U.S. military. This represents 34 percent of the total homeless adult population. Of veterans, 47 percent served in the Army, 16 percent in the Air Force, 15 percent in the Navy, 15 percent in the Marines, 5 percent served in the National Guard, and 2 percent served in the Reserves.

In Fargo, the majority (62%) of homeless veterans reported having begun their military service between August 1964 and September 1980. Two-thirds (68%) of homeless veterans reported that the length of their military service was over two years. The majority received an honorable (68%), general (16%), or medical discharge (8%).

Over one-quarter (27%) of homeless veterans reported serving in a combat zone. Thirteen percent of the homeless military veterans served in a combat zone in Vietnam and 6 percent in the first Gulf war.

Two-fifths (40%) of homeless veterans reported service-related health problems, primarily mental health problems, exposure to chemicals, ear conditions, and back problems. Fifteen (11%) homeless veterans reported being diagnosed with a service-related head injury.

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, the main reasons homeless adults said they could not get housing now included: lack of a job or income (27%), credit problems (22%), criminal background (19%), no housing they could afford (10%), and alcohol or chemical use (9%).

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 19 percent of homeless men and 2 percent of homeless women had served in the U.S. military. This represents 14 percent of the total homeless adult population. Of veterans, 57 percent served in the Army, 18 percent served in the Navy, 11 percent served in the Marines, 10 percent served in the National Guard, and 4 percent served in the Reserves.

In Moorhead, three-quarters (76%) 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 (73%) received an honorable discharge.

Over one-quarter (28%) of homeless veterans reported serving in a combat zone. Eighteen percent of the homeless military veterans served in a combat zone in Vietnam, 8 percent in the first Gulf war, 6 percent in the current Gulf war, and 4 percent in other conflicts.

More than one-quarter (29%) of homeless veterans reported having service-related health problems, primarily problems affecting the ears, back, and mental health problems. No homeless veterans reported being diagnosed with a service-related head injury.

## Fargo

In Fargo, over two-fifths (44%) of homeless veterans reported they attended a Veterans Stand Down event in the previous 12 months. Over two-fifths (45%) of military veterans had contact with a County Veterans Service Officer during the previous 12 months.

Of those *currently* using military veterans' benefits, 55 percent were using Veterans Administration Medical Center services, 17 percent were receiving service connected compensation, 10 percent were receiving other federal veterans' benefits, 5 percent were receiving a non-service connected (NSC) veterans' pension, 5 percent were receiving State Veterans Home benefits, and 5 percent were receiving other state veterans' benefits. One homeless veteran reported receiving benefits in the previous 12 months that they are not currently receiving.

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, about one-quarter (23%) of homeless veterans reported that they attended a Veterans Stand Down event in the previous 12 months. Close to half (45%) of military veterans had contact with a County Veterans Service Officer during the previous 12 months.

Of those who were *currently* using military veterans' benefits, 21 percent were using Veterans Administration Medical Center benefits, 7 percent were receiving a non-service connected (NSC) veterans' pension, and 4 percent are receiving some type of state veterans' benefits. No one reported receiving other benefits in the previous 12 months that they are not currently receiving.

## *Children of homeless parents*

### Fargo

In Fargo, 58 percent of homeless women and 26 percent of homeless men reported *having* children under the age of 18. Forty-four homeless adults had at least one child with them on the night of the survey (39 homeless women and 5 homeless men).

In Fargo, three-fifths (59%) of homeless parents interviewed (88% of male parents and 40% of female parents) reported that at least one of their children was not currently living with them.

Twenty-nine percent of homeless adults interviewed (29% of men and 29% of women) who reported that their children were not living with them, said it was because of shelter or facility restrictions.

### Moorhead

In Moorhead, 55 percent of homeless women and 34 percent of homeless men reported *having* children under the age of 18. Twenty homeless adults had at least one child with them on the night of the survey (15 homeless women and 5 homeless men).

In Moorhead, over three-fourths (78%) of homeless parents interviewed (91% of male parents and 62% of female parents) reported that at least one of their children was not currently living with them.

Twenty-two percent of homeless adults interviewed (29% of men and 29% of women) who reported that their children were not living with them, said it was because of shelter or facility restrictions.

## Fargo

In Fargo, over half (52%) of homeless parents reported having a court order to receive child support. Of those with court-ordered child support, 73 percent reported support was being provided for all children eligible.

In Fargo, 8 homeless parents (6%) reported having an open child protection order for at least one of their children.

In Fargo, 29 parents (46%), 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 2.1. The average age of children living with homeless parents was 5.7 years, and the median age is 4.0.

In Fargo, six parents (15%) reported that at least one child living with them had a chronic or severe physical health problem. Nine parents (22%) reported having at least one child with emotional or behavioral problems.

Four parents (10%) reported not being able to get the needed physical health care and four parents (10%) were not able to get needed dental health care for their children.

Three parents (7%) reported their children had to skip meals in the previous month because there wasn't enough money to buy food. Eighteen parents (45%) reported they had not been able to get needed childcare.

In Fargo, 20 parents had school-age children with them. Nine parents (42%) reported having a child with learning or school problems. Eight parents (37%) reported having a child that repeated a grade in school.

## Moorhead

In Moorhead, nearly half (46%) of homeless parents reported having a court order to receive child support. Of those with court-ordered child support, 40 percent reported support was being provided for all children eligible.

In Moorhead, 11 homeless parents (14%) reported having an open child protection order for at least one of their children.

In Moorhead, 16 parents (42%), 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 1.8. The average age of children living with homeless parents was 6.0 years, and the median age is 4.5.

In Moorhead, two parents (9%) reported that at least one child living with them had a chronic or severe physical health problem. Six parents (22%) reported having at least one child with emotional or behavioral problems.

Four parents (14%) reported not being able to get needed physical health care and four parents (15%) were not able to get needed dental health care for their children.

Two parents (8%) reported that their children had to skip meals in the previous month because there wasn't enough money to buy food. Eight parents (31%) reported they had not been able to get needed child care.

In Moorhead, 16 parents had school-age children with them. Five parents (32%) reported having a child with learning or school problems. Two parents (16%) reported having a child that repeated a grade in school.

## **Fargo**

Ten parents (49%) reported their children attended school on the day of the survey, and only three parents (16%) reported that their children were having trouble going to school due to housing problems.

## **Moorhead**

Eleven parents (73%) reported their children attended school on the day of the survey, and only one parent (6%) reported that their children were having trouble going to school due to housing problems.

## ***Employment***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, one-third of homeless adults (32%) were employed (13% had full-time jobs). Of those employed, 29 percent reported their job had lasted at least three months. The vast majority of jobs (84%) paid less than \$10 per hour (29% paid less than \$8 per hour).

In Fargo, of those not employed, 23 percent had been laid off, terminated, or had their job eliminated in the previous six months.

Four (2%) homeless adults interviewed in Fargo had never been employed.

About one-third (34%) of unemployed homeless adults reported it had been less than six months since they last held a job.

About one-quarter (24%) of unemployed homeless adults had last had a job between six months and one year ago, 16 percent had a job one to two years ago, 4 percent had a job two to three years ago, 3 percent had a job three to four years ago, and 19 percent reported their last job was more than four years ago.

Three-fifths (60%) of unemployed homeless adults reported that they were currently looking for work.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, over one-quarter of homeless adults interviewed (29%) were employed (5% had full-time jobs). Of those employed, 32 percent reported their job has lasted at least three months. The vast majority of jobs (73%) paid less than \$10 per hour (37% paid less than \$8 per hour).

In Moorhead, of those not employed, 16 percent had been laid off, terminated, or had their job eliminated in the previous six months.

Five (4%) unemployed homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead had never been employed.

About one-third (32%) of unemployed homeless adults reported it had been less than six months since they last held a job.

Eighteen percent of unemployed homeless adults had last had a job between six months and one year ago, 16 percent had a job one to two years ago, 10 percent had a job two to three years ago, 1 percent had a job three to four years ago, and 20 percent reported their last job was more than four years ago.

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

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, the most frequently mentioned barriers to employment included: physical health problems (26%), transportation (26%), personal reasons (18%), employment opportunities (16%), and resources needed to look for work (15%).

Some barriers were more significant for women than for men: child care (11% vs. 0%), resources needed to look for work (20% vs. 12%), lack of education (15% vs. 8%), and job history (11% vs. 5%).

Some barriers were more significant for men: physical health (31% vs. 15%), age (13% vs. 3%), and employment opportunities (18% vs. 13%).

## ***Physical health***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, over half (52%) 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, 67 percent reported receiving care for each of their reported problems in the previous 12 months.

In Fargo, over half (52%) of homeless adults said they currently needed to see a dentist about tooth or gum problems, 34 percent said they currently needed to see a doctor for a physical health problem, and 23 percent said they currently needed to see a doctor about a mental or emotional health problem.

Nearly two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults surveyed reported having some form of medical benefits in October.

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, the most frequently mentioned barriers to employment included: physical health problems (26%), transportation (23%), mental health problems (17%), criminal history (16%), and lack of work experience (16%).

Some barriers were more significant for women than for men: mental health (27% vs. 12%), transportation (27% vs. 20%), age (13% vs. 7%), child care (6% vs. 1%), and education (10% vs. 5%).

Some barriers were more significant for men: criminal history (20% vs. 8%), resources needed to look for work (12% vs. 2%), and employment opportunities (13% vs. 8%).

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 43 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, 81 percent reported receiving care for each of their reported problems in the previous 12 months.

In Moorhead, half (49%) of homeless adults said they currently needed to see a dentist about tooth or gum problems, 30 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.

Almost three-quarters (71%) of homeless adults surveyed reported having some form of medical benefits in October.

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, two-thirds (63%) of homeless adults interviewed reported that they have a regular place where they go for medical care. Of those, 31 percent use the Veterans Administration Medical Center, 30 percent use a free clinic, and 21 percent use a clinic that requires fees.

In Fargo, two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults received care in an emergency room during the previous six months.

In Fargo, two-fifths (40%) of homeless adults interviewed reported being unable to get needed health care (mainly due to a lack of money or insurance), and 13 percent of homeless adults reported not taking prescribed medication.

## ***Chemical dependency***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, over two-fifths (43%) of homeless adults interviewed (47% of men and 31% of women) consider themselves an alcoholic or chemically dependent. Thirty-two percent 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 (39%) of homeless adults interviewed (44% of men and 24% of women) had been admitted to a detox center at least once.

Forty-two percent of men and 28 percent of women reported that at some time in their life they had lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility. Twenty-one percent of men and 16 percent of women reported living in residential alcohol or drug treatment within the previous two years.

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, two-thirds (66%) of homeless adults interviewed reported that they have a regular place where they go for medical care. Of those, the vast majority (62%) identified a clinic that requires fees. About one in five (19%) use a free clinic and 4 percent go to the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

In Moorhead, one-third (33%) of homeless adults received care in an emergency room in the previous six months.

In Moorhead, about one-quarter (22%) of homeless adults interviewed reported being unable to get needed health care (mainly due to a lack of insurance or money), and 9 percent of homeless adults reported not taking prescribed medication.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, half (49%) of homeless adults interviewed (52% of men and 41% of women) consider themselves an alcoholic or chemically dependent. Forty-six percent reported being told by a doctor or nurse, in the previous two years that they have an alcohol or drug abuse disorder.

In Moorhead, about two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults interviewed (39% of men and 34% of women) had been admitted to a detox center at least once.

Sixty-four percent of men and 46 percent of the women reported that at some time in their life they had lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility. Forty-nine percent of the men and 30 percent of the women had been in residential alcohol or drug treatment programs within the previous two years.

## **Fargo**

Forty-seven percent of homeless men and 28 percent of homeless women had received outpatient drug or alcohol treatment at some time in their life. Of those who received outpatient treatment, 51 percent of men and 65 percent of women received the drug or alcohol treatment in the previous two years.

In Fargo, nearly two-fifths (38%) of homeless adults interviewed (42% of men and 28% of women) reported current problems with alcohol (diagnosed with alcohol abuse disorder and/or admitted to detox in the previous two years).

In Fargo, 16 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported that they currently needed to see a professional about an alcohol or drug problem.

## ***Mental health***

### **Fargo**

In Fargo, over two-fifths (43%) of homeless adults 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.

One-third (33%) of homeless adults reported they had received outpatient mental health services in the previous two years, 11 percent had lived in a facility for persons with mental health problems within the previous two years, and 23 percent reported that they currently need to see a professional about a mental health problem.

## **Moorhead**

Sixty percent of men and half (50%) of women have received outpatient drug or alcohol treatment at some time in their life. Of those who received outpatient treatment, 74 percent of men and 64 percent of women received the drug or alcohol treatment in the previous two years.

In Moorhead, over two-fifths (43%) of homeless adults interviewed (51% of men and 26% of women) reported current problems with alcohol (diagnosed with alcohol abuse disorder and/or admitted to detox in the previous two years).

In Moorhead, one-quarter (25%) of homeless adults interviewed reported that they currently needed to see a professional about an alcohol or drug problem.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, almost half (47%) of homeless adults 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 two-fifths (46%) of homeless adults interviewed reported they had received outpatient mental health services in the previous two years, 23 percent had lived in a facility for persons with mental health problems within the previous two years, and 31 percent reported they currently need to see a professional about a mental health problem.

Over two-fifths of homeless adults 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 25 percent of U.S. adults are experiencing some form of mental illness.<sup>6</sup> According to a recent national survey, 6 percent of the U.S. adult population is diagnosed with serious mental illness.<sup>7</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=242)	Informal/ Unsheltered (N=166)	Total (N=408)	Emergency/ Transitional (N=89)	Informal/ Unsheltered (N=107)	Total (N=196)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Schizophrenia	7.9%	3.6%	6.2%	7.9%	3.7%	5.6%
Paranoid or delusional disorder, other than schizophrenia	7.9%	3.6%	6.3%	3.4%	7.5%	5.6%
Manic episodes or manic depression, also called bipolar disorder	12.8%	16.9%	14.6%	18.0%	17.8%	17.9%
Major depression	30.2%	25.3%	28.5%	38.2%	35.5%	36.7%
Anti-social personality, obsessive- compulsive personality, or any other severe emotional disorder	15.3%	13.9%	15.0%	23.6%	19.6%	21.4%
Post-traumatic stress disorder	19.4%	25.3%	22.5%	27.0%	15.9%	20.9%
<b>Any of the above</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>41.6%</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>47.2%</b>	<b>46.7%</b>	<b>46.9%</b>
Alcohol abuse disorder	20.7%	36.7%	27.9%	24.7%	49.5%	38.3%
Drug abuse disorder	12.8%	23.5%	17.7%	14.6%	37.4%	27.0%
<b>Any chemical dependency disorder</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>41.6%</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>61.7%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>
Dual diagnosis (chemical dependency and mental illness)	19.8%	21.7%	20.7%	19.1%	33.6%	27.0%

<sup>6</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>7</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 10, 2010, 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, 43 percent of homeless adults interviewed had serious mental health problems (indicated by diagnosis), 32 percent had an alcohol or drug abuse disorder, and 52 percent had chronic medical illness.

According to many homeless adults interviewed in Fargo, physical, mental, or other health conditions limited the amount or kind of work they could do (38%), limited their daily activities (9%), or interfered with memory or daily decision-making (21%).

Pooling all of the above, 75 percent of homeless adults 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, 32 percent of homeless adults 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, understanding, excessive worrying, sleeping, or getting along with people.) The average age at which they had a serious head injury was age 22.

### **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, as described previously, 47 percent of homeless adults interviewed had serious mental health problems (indicated by diagnosis), 46 percent had an alcohol or drug abuse disorder, and 43 percent had chronic medical illness.

According to many homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead, physical, mental, or other health conditions limited the amount or kind of work they could do (38%), limited their daily activities (9%), or interfered with memory or daily decision-making (27%).

Pooling all of the above, 80 percent of homeless adults 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, 37 percent of homeless adults 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, understanding, excessive worrying, sleeping, or getting along with people.) The average age at which they had a serious head injury was age 23.

## *Abuse and victimization*

### **Fargo**

A history of physical and sexual mistreatment is not uncommon for homeless adults interviewed in Fargo. Twenty-seven percent of men and 52 percent of women said they were physically mistreated as children, 11 percent of men and 41 percent of women were sexually mistreated as children, 19 percent of men and 30 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, 28 percent of homeless men and 56 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 60 percent of women reported mistreatment as children.

In Fargo, 13 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported being sexual with someone only for the purpose of getting shelter, clothing, food, or other things. Twenty-nine percent (19% of men and 55% of women) reported staying in an abusive relationship because they did not have other housing options. In the previous year, 11 percent of men and 49 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, two-fifths (38%) of homeless women reported they left their last housing because of domestic abuse.

### **Moorhead**

A history of physical and sexual mistreatment is not uncommon for homeless adults interviewed in Moorhead. Thirty-four percent of men and 43 percent of women said they were physically mistreated as children, 16 percent of men and 35 percent of women were sexually mistreated as children, 27 percent of men and 30 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, 36 percent of homeless men and 50 percent of homeless women in Moorhead were either physically or sexually mistreated as children. If individuals reporting neglect are added, 41 percent of men and 56 percent of women reported mistreatment as children.

In Moorhead, 17 percent of homeless adults interviewed reported being sexual with someone only for the purpose of getting shelter, clothing, food, or other things. Thirty percent (18% of men and 53% of women) reported staying in an abusive relationship because they did not have other housing options. In the previous year, 12 percent of men and 29 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-fifth (18%) of homeless women reported they left their last housing because of domestic abuse.

## **Fargo**

In Fargo, 12 percent of homeless adults interviewed (9% of men and 19% of women) reported being asked to make money in the sex trade. The median age they were approached was 19 for women and 23 for men.

The overall experience of homelessness can be a risky one, especially for women. Seventeen percent of homeless adults interviewed (12% of men and 30% of women) reported being physically or sexually attacked or beaten since they became homeless.

Eleven percent of homeless adults (7% of men and 20% of women) reported seeking health care due to an injury or illness caused by violence.

## **Moorhead**

In Moorhead, 9 percent of homeless adults interviewed (5% of men and 20% of women) reported being asked to make money in the sex trade. The median age they were approached was 18 for women and 19 for men.

The overall experience of being homeless can be a risky one, especially for women.

Twenty percent of homeless adults (16% of men and 31% of women) reported being physically or sexually attacked or beaten since they became homeless.

Nine percent of homeless adults (6% of men and 13% of women) reported seeking health care due to an injury or illness caused by violence.

## ***Homeless unaccompanied minors***

This section provides selected descriptive information from interviews conducted with the 12 unaccompanied minors interviewed as part of the October 22, 2009 study in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, five were male and seven were female. Two were 15 years old, five were 16 years old, and five were 17 years old. Six were white, four were American Indian, one was African American, and one was of mixed racial background.

Six unaccompanied minors grew up in greater Minnesota, three grew up in North Dakota, one grew up in Cass or Clay counties but not in Fargo or Moorhead, one grew up in Minneapolis, and one grew up in Michigan. Only the one unaccompanied minor had lived in Minnesota or North Dakota for two years or less.

Eleven unaccompanied minors (92%) had lived in foster care, a group home, a drug or alcohol treatment facility, a residence for people with physical disabilities, a half-way house, a facility for persons with mental health problems, or an adoptive home.

Nine unaccompanied minors (75%) had been held for more than a week in a juvenile detention center.

Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, in the previous two years, two-thirds had received a diagnosis of a severe mental health problem and one-third received a diagnosis of a drug or alcohol dependency problem. One-third of these unaccompanied minors had received a dual diagnosis of both a mental health and chemical dependency problem.

Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, two-fifths (42%) had been physically mistreated, one-quarter (25%) had been sexually mistreated, and half (50%) had been either physically or sexually mistreated.

Of the 12 unaccompanied minors, 92 percent had been a victim of child abuse, had been a parent before age 18, or had lived a foster home, detention facility, or some other institutional placement.

### ***Youth Supplement Summary***

This section is based on the responses of the five male and seven female unaccompanied minors, ages 15 through 17, and the 23 male and 28 female young adults, ages 18 through 21 interviewed in the Fargo-Moorhead area on October 22, 2009.

Of the 63 homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults, two-thirds (66%) grew up with their biological parents, 15 percent grew up in a blended family, 7 percent grew up in foster care, 6 percent grew up with a grandparent or other relative, and one person (2%) grew up in another type of arrangement.

For homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults interviewed, the average age that they left home for the first time to be on their own was 15.7 years old.

Over three-fifths (61%) of homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults had left their home more than six months prior to the survey date; 39 percent left more than a year ago. Twelve percent left home within the last 30 days and 27 percent left home more than one month ago but less than six months ago.

The main reasons given for leaving home were: there was someone in the home that they couldn't stand to be around (57%); frequent fighting with parents or guardians (55%); not willing to live by parents rules (47%); were asked to leave (42%); delinquent activities by the unaccompanied minor or young adult (32%); drug or alcohol use by the unaccompanied minor or young adult (36%); and didn't feel safe because of violence in the home (27%).

Other reasons for leaving home included: leaving a foster home or other placement (25%); their parents' use of drugs or alcohol (24%); their family lost their housing (23%); the home was too small for everyone to live there (20%); a parent or guardian had mental

health problems (20%); physical or sexual abuse by someone in the household (15%); parents neglect of their basic needs (19%); criminal activity by someone in the household (12%); became pregnant or made someone pregnant (9%); and the lack of tolerance of their sexual orientation or gender identity (4%).

Seventy percent of homeless unaccompanied minors or young adults felt they could return home if they wanted to do so, although only slightly more than one-third (37%) thought they would ever live with their family again.

Twenty (31%) homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported that they had run away from foster care, a group home, treatment center, or other placement. Five (8%) reported that they had to leave foster care, a group home, treatment center, or other placement because they were too old to stay there.

Slightly over one-third (35%) of homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having a high school diploma or GED.

Of the 36 homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults with no high school diploma/GED, 25 (68%) reported attending school in the 2008-2009 school year. They reported the following issues: problems with truancy (59%), poor or failing grades (47%), problems with transportation getting to school (35%), being suspended or expelled (29%), and not feeling safe at school (16%). In the 2008-2009 school year, half (51%) of the students attended only one school, 37 percent attended two schools, and 12 percent attend four or more schools.

Of the 36 homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults with no high school diploma/GED, 23 (41%) were currently enrolled in a school or in an educational program.

Of the 23 homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults with no high school diploma/GED and enrolled in an educational program, 60 percent had attended school on the day of the survey. Reasons given by those enrolled in an educational program who did not attend school on the day of the survey included: caring for a sick child (13%), no classes (13%), lack of motivation to go to school (9%), overslept (4%), and the location of the shelter made it hard to get to school (4%).

Of the homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults with no diploma/GED, 32 reported that they are **not** currently enrolled in school. Their reasons included: dealing with other issues (59%); have to work (31%); no permanent address (22%); not interested in attending school (19%); dropped out (19%); no money for school (9%); and being pregnant (3%).

Nearly half (49%) of female homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having been pregnant, and over one-third (34%) of male homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having fathered a child.

Thirty-four percent reported that they used or needed birth control. Of those, 95 percent reported that they were able to get a form of birth control that they could use.

One-fifth (20%) of female homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having been approached to work in the sex industry.

Homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported receiving help to find services from a friend (64%), parent (56%), social worker (48%), another relative (47%), shelter staff (37%), youth worker (35%), partner or significant other (34%), outreach worker (17%), teacher or school staff (19%), or Guardian ad Litem or court staff (6%).

Over nine in ten (91%) of homeless unaccompanied minors and young adults reported having an adult in their life that they trusted and had regular contact with.

# Changes in the face of homelessness from 2000 to 2009

As part of this year's analysis, Wilder Research compared survey information collected in 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009 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 2000-2009. Single data-point comparisons between cities are for 2009 only. The analysis shows the following:

- Fargo and Moorhead both showed a decrease in the percentage of homeless adults employed in 2009 compared to 2000 (35% in 2000 vs. 32% in 2009); Moorhead (35% in 2000 vs. 29% in 2009).
- Fargo showed a decline in the percentage of homeless adults who had been unemployed for 12 months or longer in 2009 compared to 2000 (51% in 2000 vs. 42% in 2009). In Moorhead that figure increased (24% in 2000 vs. 47% in 2009).
- Average income for homeless women in Fargo was about the same (\$420 in 2000 vs. \$424 in 2009). In Moorhead the trend was downward (\$457 in 2000 vs. \$406 in 2009).
- Average income for homeless men decreased in both Fargo and Moorhead (in Fargo from \$532 in 2000 to \$410 in 2009 and in Moorhead from \$449 to \$351).
- In 2009, homeless women with children in Fargo were less likely to report that their main income was derived from family welfare benefits (11%) than women in Moorhead (18%).
- In 2009, homeless men in Fargo were less likely than homeless men in Moorhead to report that General Assistance was a main source of income (7% vs. 17%).
- In 2009, 12 percent homeless adults in Fargo reported that their main source of income was from a steady job and 35 percent reported income from day labor. In Moorhead, 19 percent reported their main source of income was from a steady job and 15 percent reported income from day labor.
- In 2009, a much higher percentage of homeless men in Fargo (47%) reported that they were military veterans, compared to 19 percent in Moorhead.
- In 2009, 44 percent of the homeless adults in Fargo and 36 percent in Moorhead reported that they had lived in their respective states for two years or less. While this

figure was much higher than in Minnesota as a whole (23%), much of the difference is explained by the fluid border between Minnesota and North Dakota, where many reported that they have simply moved across the river.

- The percent of adults who had been homeless longer than a year was up in both cities from 2000 to 2009 (34% in 2000 vs. 45% in 2009 in Fargo, 31% in 2000 vs. 42% in 2009 in Moorhead).
- While Fargo showed a similar percentage of women who were homeless because of abuse in 2009 as it was in 2000 (37% in 2000 to 38% in 2009), Moorhead shows a slight decrease in 2009 (21% in 2000 to 18% in 2009).
- In 2009, nearly two-fifths (39%) of homeless adults in Fargo, and more than one-third (35%) in Moorhead, reported that they could not pay anything for rent.
- The use of hot meals programs was up in Fargo (41% in 2000 to 49% in 2009), but down in Moorhead (68% in 2000 to 34% in 2009).
- In 2009, nearly half of homeless adults in both cities reported that they are chemically dependent (43% in Fargo, 49% in Moorhead). A declining percentage in both cities reported that they received residential treatment for substance abuse (Fargo 45% in 2000 to 38% in 2009, Moorhead 60% in 2000 to 58% in 2009).
- The percentage of homeless adults who had been incarcerated within the previous two years remained nearly level in both cities (Fargo, 20% in 2000 to 21% in 2009, Moorhead, 27% in 2000 to 29% in 2009).
- The percentage of homeless adults reporting serious or persistent mental health problems was up in both cities (Fargo, 38% in 2000 to 43% in 2009, Moorhead, 35% in 2000 to 47% in 2009).
- In 2009, 22 percent of homeless adults in Fargo, and one-third (33%) in Moorhead, had been hospitalized because of mental illness.

The trends described above show a continued concentration of stress and disability in both cities, particularly in areas of incarceration, mental health, and the lack of income available for housing. In addition, about two in five adults had been homeless for a year or longer in both cities. These trends, combined with today's economic climate, makes finding permanent housing solutions more challenging than in previous years. Detailed multi-year comparisons are shown in the tables that follow.

## ***Comparison of 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009 survey results***

**Gender:** In all four 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 46.0 in 2009, and the average age of homeless women decreased slightly, from 35.4 in 2000 to 32.2 in 2009. In Moorhead, the average age of homeless men was similar across three of the four studies. It was 39.6 in 2000, 40.5 in 2006, and 40.1 in 2009. In 2003, the average age of homeless men was 45.5 years. The average age of homeless women increased steadily, from 29.2 in 2000 to 38.2 in 2009.

**Race/ethnicity:** In Fargo, the percentage of persons of color has varied across the four study periods, from 35 percent in 2000, down to 28 percent in 2003, and then up to 39 percent in 2006, leveling off to 38 percent in 2009. In Moorhead, the percentage of persons of color was about the same in 2000 and 2003, decreasing slightly in 2006 and 2009 (44% in 2000, 43% in 2003, to 40% in 2006, and 39% in 2009).

**Marital status:** In both Fargo and Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who never married increased over the last four study periods (in Fargo, from 42% in 2000 to 55% in 2009; in Moorhead, from 46% in 2000 to 56% in 2009).

**Homeless families:** The number of homeless families (defined as one or more adults with one or more children) almost tripled in both Fargo and Moorhead from 2000 to 2009. In Fargo, there were 15 families in 2000, 11 families in 2003, and 32 families in 2006, and 44 in 2009). In Moorhead, there were 8 families in 2000, 20 families in 2003, 17 families in 2006, and 27 families in 2009.

**Adults' education:** In Fargo, since 2000, there has been a steady, though slight, increase in the percent of homeless adults who have completed high school or had a GED (77% in 2000, 79% in 2003, 80% in 2006, and 82% in 2009). In 2009, 72 percent of homeless adults in Moorhead had completed high school or had received a GED, the same as in 2003 (73%), but a slight increase over 2000 and 2006, when 67 percent had completed high school or received a GED.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who had attended at least some college increase to 34% in 2009, which was an increase over past studies (28% in 2000, 27% in 2003, and 30% in 2006). In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who had attended at least some college varied across the studies, from 21 percent in 2000, to 27 percent in 2003, to 18 percent in 2006, and increased again to 28 percent in 2009.

**Employment:** In Fargo in 2009, the percentage of employed homeless adults (32%) decreased to the lowest point across all four studies. In both 2003 and 2006, it was 41 percent, which was an increase over 2000 (35%). At the same time, the percentage of homeless adults employed full-time has decreased steadily from 19 percent in 2000 and 18 percent in 2003, to 15 percent in 2006, and now 13 percent in 2009. In Moorhead in 2009, the percentage of employed homeless adults was the about the same as in 2003 and 2006 (29% in 2003, 31% in 2006, and 29% in 2009), which decreased from 2000 (35%). However, the percentage of homeless adults employed full-time decreased from 19 percent in 2000 to 5 percent in 2009.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults unemployed for 12 months or longer has varied across the four studies. It decreased from 51 percent in 2000 to a low of 29 percent in 2006, but increased in 2009 to 42 percent. In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults unemployed for 12 months or longer has doubled from 2000 to 2009 (24% vs. 47%).

In Fargo, steady employment as the main source of income decreased significantly in 2009 to 12 percent. Steady employment as the main source of income was steady in 2006 and 2000 (26% vs. 27%), which was higher than in 2003 (20%). In Moorhead, steady employment as the main source of income decreased, from 26 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2009.

**Other income and assistance:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported no income more than tripled from 2000 to 2009 (6% in 2000, 16% in both 2003 and 2006, to 20% in 2009). In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported no income increased by about a half from 2000 to 2009 (12% in 2000 to 17% in 2009).

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults receiving family welfare benefits (TANF) remained steady, at 5 percent, across all four studies. In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults receiving family welfare benefits (MFIP) has fluctuated from 1 percent in 2000, to 9 percent in 2003, to 7 percent in 2006, and to 6 percent in 2009.

In Fargo, food stamp use in 2009 increased to 37 percent after having remained relatively the same across the previous three studies (27% in 2000, 24% in 2003, and 27% in 2006). In Moorhead, food stamp use has fluctuated more, from 32 percent in 2000, to 39 percent in 2003, to 35 percent in 2006, and to 44 percent in 2009.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported having some type of medical coverage in the previous month increased to 38 percent in 2009 from 33 percent in 2006 and similar to 2003 (39%). In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported having some type of medical coverage in the previous month increased steadily from 51 percent in 2003 to 71 percent in 2009.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who received care in an emergency room in the six months prior to the survey has increased slightly compared to the previous three studies (33% in 2000, 30% in 2003, 34% in 2006, and 38% in 2009). In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who received care in an emergency room in the six months prior to the survey has shown more fluctuation across the four studies (30% in 2000, 43% in 2003, 26% in 2006, and 33% in 2009).

**Veterans:** In Fargo in 2009, military veterans made up close to half (47%) of the homeless adult male population. That was a significant increase from previous studies (36% in 2006, 29% in 2003, and 38% in 2000). In Moorhead in 2009, military veterans made up one-fifth (19%) of homeless adult male population, a decrease from 27 percent in 2006, 32 percent in 2003, and 33 percent in 2000.

**Length of residence:** The percent of newcomers to North Dakota (two years or less) has varied across the four studies. It was 44 percent in 2009, which was an increase from 2006 (38%) and 2000 (40%), but less than in 2003 (54%). In all four study years, the largest percentage 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, and to 36 percent in 2009. In all four 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 adults who report being homeless for less than one month dropped from 19 percent in 2003 to 9 percent in 2009. The percentage of adults who were homeless for more than one year increased steadily from 34 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2003 and 45 percent in 2006 and 2009.

In Moorhead, the percentage of adults who report being homeless for less than one month dropped from 16 percent in 2000 to 11 percent in 2009. The percentage of adults who were homeless for more than one year has increased steadily from 31 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2009.

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 2009, nearly half (46%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Fargo met the federal definition of chronic homelessness, which was a significant increase over 2006 (37%) and 2003 (34%).

In 2009, over two-fifths (42%) of the homeless adults surveyed in Moorhead met the federal definition of chronic homelessness, which was a significant increase from 32 percent in 2006, and 31 percent in 2003.

**Fleeing abuse:** In Fargo, two-fifths (38%) of homeless women left their last housing in order to flee an abusive partner, which was similar to 2000 (37%), while the percentages were lower in 2003 (21%) and 2006 (24%). In Moorhead, women who left their last housing to flee an abusive partner remained about the same from 2000 to 2009 (21% in both 2000 and 2003, 24% in 2006, and 18% in 2009).

**Ability to pay rent:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who could not pay anything for rent has almost doubled in 2009 (39%) from the previous three studies (21% in 2000, 24% in 2003, 22% in 2006). The percentage of homeless adults 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, and to 21 percent in 2009.

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who could not pay anything for rent increased from 18 percent in 2000 to 35 percent in 2009. The percentage of homeless adults who could afford to pay something for rent but less than \$200 a month, decreased from 42 percent in 2000, to 22 percent in 2009.

**Clothing and food shelves, drop-in centers:** In Fargo, the use of free clothing shelves decreased from 53 percent in 2006 to 44 percent in 2009. The use of hot meal programs decreased from 57 percent in 2006 to 49 percent in 2009. The use of drop-in centers remain similar from 2006 (25%) to 2009 (23%).

In Moorhead, the use of free clothing shelves decreased from 49 percent in 2000 to 37 percent in 2009. The use of hot meal programs decreased from 68 percent in 2000 to 34 percent in 2009. The use of drop-in centers decreased from 25 percent in 2000 to 10 percent in 2009.

**History of childhood abuse:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported physical mistreatment as a child has varied across the four studies (45% in 2000, 30% in 2003, 40% in 2006, and 34% in 2009). The percentage of homeless adults who reported being sexually mistreated as children decreased from 27 percent in 2000, to 20 percent in 2003, remaining steady in 2006 and 2009 (21% in 2006, and 20% in 2009).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported physical mistreatment as a child remained about the same over all four study years (36% in 2000, 38% in 2003, 36% in 2006, and 37% in 2009). The percentage of homeless adults who reported being sexually mistreated as children has fluctuated from 15 percent in 2000 to 25% in 2003, then down to 15 percent in 2006, and then back up to 22 percent in 2009.

**History of foster care:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported having lived in a foster home has increased steadily 2000 to 2009 (22% in 2000, 23% in 2003, 25% in 2006, and 29% in 2009).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported having lived in foster care dropped from 2000, but remained steady in 2003, 2006, and 2009 (32% in 2000, 22% in 2003, 25% in 2006 and 2009).

**Chemical dependency:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who considered themselves to be chemically dependent increased from 2000 (46%) to 2003 (50%) and then decreased in 2006 and 2009 to 43 percent. The percentage of homeless adults 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 and 39 percent in 2009. The percentage of homeless adults 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 and 38 percent in 2009. 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 and 2009.

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who considered themselves to be chemically dependent decreased from 2000 (52%) to 2003 (41%), then returned back to half of the adult homeless population in 2006 and 2009 (50% in 2006 and 49% in 2009). The percentage of homeless adults who reported being admitted to a detox center was about the same in 2009 (38%) as in 2003 (35%). This is lower than the percentage reported in 2000 and 2006 (47% and 46%, respectively). The percentage of homeless adults who reported ever living in an alcohol or drug treatment facility in 2009 was similar to 2000 and 2006 (58% in 2009, 60% in 2000, and 54% in 2006). In 2009, the percentage who reported living in an alcohol or drug treatment facility within the previous two years roughly doubled from previous studies (54% in 2009, 25% in 2003 and 2006, and 29% in 2000).

**Recent incarceration:** In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported being incarcerated within the previous two years increased from 2000 to 2003 and then decreased in 2006 and 2009 to the 2000 level (20% in 2000, 27% in 2003, 21% in 2006, and 20% in 2009).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported being incarcerated within the previous two years has remained similar from 2000 to 2009 (27% in 2000, 26% in 2003, 31% in 2006, and 29% in 2009).

**Mental health:** For this study, 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 disorders, manic-depression, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

In Fargo, the percentage of homeless adults who reported significant mental health problems increased steadily from 2000 to 2006 (38% in 2000, 41% in 2003, 44% in 2006). In 2009, the percentage was similar to 2006 (43%). The percentage who report having lived in a mental health facility has remained relatively the same from 2000 to 2009 (25% in 2000, 20% in 2003, 24% in 2006, and 22% in 2009).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported significant mental health problems fluctuated from 2000 to 2009 (35% in 2000, 51% in 2003, 43% in 2006, and 47% in 2009). The percentage who report having lived in a mental health facility increased significantly in 2009 to 33 percent, from what had 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 adults 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, 2006, and 2009 (38%). The percentage of homeless adults who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities increased slightly from 2003 to 2006 (11% to 14%), then decreased in 2009 (9%). The percentage of homeless adults 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%), then decreased in 2009 (21%). The percentage of adults who reported a history that suggests likely brain injury also increased from 23 percent in 2003 to 34 percent in 2006, and then decreased slightly in 2009 (32%).

In Moorhead, the percentage of homeless adults who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind of work they can do decreased from 2003 to 2009 (61% to 38%). The percentage of homeless adults who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities also decreased from 2003 to 2009 (19% to 9%). The percentage of homeless adults who reported having a mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily decision-making also decreased from 2003 to 2009 (36% to 27%). The percentage of homeless adults who reported a history that suggests likely brain injury has increased from 32% in 2003 to 37 percent in 2009.

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

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Fargo, from 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009 homelessness surveys**

	<b>2000 (N=106)</b>	<b>2003 (N=179)</b>	<b>2006 (N=281)</b>	<b>2009 (N=408)</b>
Men	64%	65%	64%	70%
Women	36%	35%	36%	30%
Average age in years (men)	42.7	42.1	44.2	46.0
Average age in years (women)	35.4	33.6	34.6	32.2
Persons of color	35%	28%	39%	38%
Never married	42%	51%	55%	55%
Women who have children with them	39%	16%	32%	36%
Men who have children with them	0%	1%	2%	3%
Completed high school diploma or GED	77%	79%	80%	82%
Attended some college	28%	27%	30%	34%
Employed (full-time or part-time)	35%	41%	41%	32%
Employed full-time	19%	18%	15%	13%
Unemployed for more than 12 months (of those who are unemployed)	51%	32%	29%	42%
No source of income	6%	16%	16%	20%
Average monthly income (males)	\$532	\$324	\$490	\$410
Average monthly income (females)	\$420	\$466	\$373	\$424
Main source of income is TANF (family welfare)	5%	5%	5%	5%
Main source of income is TANF (family welfare), (women only)	15%	11%	5%	11%
Main source of income is General Assistance	4%	8%	0%	7%
Main source of income is a steady job	27%	20%	26%	12%
Main source of income is day labor	28%	37%	27%	35%
Used Food Stamps in previous month	27%	24%	27%	37%
Have medical coverage in previous month	Not asked	39%	33%	38%
Received care in an emergency room in previous six months	33%	30%	34%	38%
Military veterans	25%	19%	25%	34%
Military veterans, (men only)	39%	29%	36%	47%
Lived in North Dakota for two years or less	40%	54%	38%	44%
Last lived in Minnesota (of those living in North Dakota two years or less)	42%	52%	39%	45%

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

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Fargo, from 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009 statewide surveys (continued)**

	<b>2000 (N=106)</b>	<b>2003 (N=179)</b>	<b>2006 (N=281)</b>	<b>2009 (N=408)</b>
Homeless for less than one month	13%	19%	12%	9%
Homeless for at least one year	34%	42%	45%	45%
Meets the federal definition of chronic homelessness	Not asked	34%	37%	46%
Left last housing to flee abuse (women only)	37%	21%	26%	38%
Could not pay anything for rent	21%	24%	22%	39%
Could pay something but less than \$200 a month for rent	35%	27%	27%	21%
Used free clothing shelves in previous month	43%	40%	53%	44%
Used hot meal programs in previous month	41%	42%	57%	49%
Used drop-in centers in previous month	22%	19%	25%	23%
Physically mistreated as a child	45%	30%	40%	34%
Sexually mistreated as a child	27%	20%	21%	20%
Ever in foster care	22%	23%	25%	29%
Chemically dependent (self-report)	46%	50%	43%	43%
Ever admitted to detox center	47%	49%	41%	39%
Ever lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility	45%	52%	41%	38%
Lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility in previous two years	28%	28%	19%	19%
Incarcerated within the last two years	20%	27%	34%	21%
Reported significant mental illness	38%	41%	44%	43%
Ever in hospital for persons with mental health problems	25%	20%	24%	22%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind work they can do	Not asked	38%	38%	38%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities	Not asked	11%	14%	9%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily-decision making	Not asked	22%	30%	21%
Has a history that suggests likely brain injury	Not asked	23%	34%	32%

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

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Moorhead, from 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009 statewide surveys**

	<b>2000 (N=78)</b>	<b>2003 (N=118)</b>	<b>2006 (N=167)</b>	<b>2009 (N=196)</b>
Men	69%	67%	71%	67%
Women	31%	33%	29%	33%
Average age in years (men)	39.6	45.5	40.5	40.1
Average age in years (women)	29.2	36.4	37.7	38.2
Persons of color	44%	43%	40%	39%
Never married	46%	46%	55%	56%
Women who have children with them	25%	26%	29%	31%
Men who have children with them	4%	1%	3%	5%
Completed high school diploma or GED	67%	73%	67%	72%
Attended some college	21%	27%	16%	28%
Employed (full-time or part-time)	35%	29%	31%	29%
Employed full-time	19%	12%	13%	5%
Unemployed for more than 12 months (of those who are unemployed)	24%	43%	34%	47%
No source of income	12%	12%	19%	17%
Average monthly income (males)	\$449	\$494	\$453	\$351
Average monthly income (females)	\$457	\$440	\$546	\$406
Main source of income is MFIP (family welfare)	1%	9%	7%	6%
Main source of income is MFIP (family welfare), (women only)	0%	26%	21%	18%
Main source of income is General Assistance	11%	12%	9%	17%
Main source of income is a steady job	26%	16%	13%	19%
Main source of income is day labor	31%	32%	26%	15%
Used Food Stamps in previous month	32%	39%	35%	44%
Have medical coverage in previous month	Not asked	51%	45%	71%
Received care in an emergency room in previous six months	30%	43%	26%	33%
Military veterans	24%	21%	19%	14%
Military veterans, (men only)	33%	32%	27%	19%
Lived in Minnesota for two years or less	37%	53%	41%	36%
Last lived in North Dakota (of those living in Minnesota two years or less)	39%	34%	53%	43%

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

**Comparison of selected characteristics of homeless adults in Moorhead, from 2000, 2003, 2006, and 2009 statewide surveys (continued)**

	<b>2000 (N=78)</b>	<b>2003 (N=118)</b>	<b>2006 (N=167)</b>	<b>2009 (N=196)</b>
Homeless for less than one month	16%	10%	10%	11%
Homeless for at least one year	31%	37%	40%	42%
Meets the federal definition of chronic homelessness	Not available	31%	32%	42%
Left last housing to flee abuse (women only)	21%	21%	24%	18%
Could not pay anything for rent	18%	29%	25%	35%
Could pay something but less than \$200 a month for rent	42%	15%	23%	22%
Used free clothing shelves in previous month	49%	39%	49%	37%
Used hot meal programs in previous month	68%	38%	52%	34%
Used drop-in centers in previous month	25%	26%	28%	10%
Physically mistreated as a child	36%	38%	36%	37%
Sexually mistreated as a child	15%	25%	15%	22%
Ever in foster care	32%	22%	25%	25%
Chemically dependent (self-report)	52%	41%	50%	49%
Ever admitted to detox center	47%	35%	46%	38%
Ever lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility	60%	47%	54%	58%
Lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility in previous two years	29%	25%	25%	54%
Incarcerated within the last two years	27%	26%	33%	29%
Reported significant mental illness	35%	54%	43%	47%
Ever in hospital for persons with mental health problems	20%	22%	23%	33%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits the amount or kind work they can do	Not asked	61%	40%	38%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that limits their daily activities	Not asked	19%	11%	9%
Has serious mental, physical, or other condition that interferes with memory or daily-decision making	Not asked	36%	24%	27%
Has a history that suggests likely brain injury	Not asked	32%	30%	37%

**Notes:** Percentages are weighted to reflect 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>8</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 167 reports the number of respondents who have considered suicide. This question was asked of everyone. Table 168 reports information about suicide attempts, but this question was only asked of those who had considered suicide. Thus, the percentages reported in Table 168 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>8</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 2009 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 22, 2009. 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 182 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 in temporary housing programs on the night of the survey was 332. When this is combined with the results of the 272 interviews completed with adults in non-shelter locations, the total sample for which estimates are available is 604 adults. In addition, 12 unaccompanied minors were interviewed in non-shelter locations.

2009 data tables <http://www.wilder.org/homeless2009.0.html>