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Number of People Experiencing Homelessness up 10% since 2015

Homelessness in Minnesota has increased by 10% since 2015, according to initial findings from the 2018 Minnesota Homeless Study. The statewide study, conducted by Wilder Research every three years, counts the number of people on a single day staying in emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, and transitional housing programs; as well as people located outside, doubled up, and identified through interviews in outreach locations such as encampments, hot-meal programs, and other drop-in service sites. The study also includes information gathered in face-to-face interviews with people throughout the state who meet the federal definition of homelessness.

Minnesota's unsheltered population has spiked dangerously since 2015. **The total number of people not in a formal shelter increased 62% and the rate of unsheltered children went up 56%.** Most people who were interviewed in outreach locations had spent time staying in a variety of locations throughout the month of the study, including sleeping in encampments, in cars, or on public transportation. These numbers are considered underestimations and do not yet include data from face-to-face interviews conducted in partnership with six of Minnesota's Native American Tribes. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 63% of people experiencing homelessness identify as People of Color or Indigenous Peoples.

"Sixty-three of Minnesota's 87 counties do not have a fixed site shelter. If we maintain the status quo, this dangerous trendline will continue. Encampments will become more frequent and the number of Minnesotans sleeping outside in life threatening temperatures will continue to climb."

-- Senta Leff, Executive Director, Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless

This year, Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless is advocating for a **\$15Mil investment per biennium to the Emergency Services Program (ESP)**. ESP is the primary source for emergency shelter and services in Minnesota and is currently funded at just \$844,000 per year. Emergency Shelters are the starting point to gaining long-term stability. With lodging on a short-term basis (usually less than three months), emergency shelters provide a homeless individual or family with a clean, safe place to stay. The investment to ESP is also one of the items on the the full 2019-2020 Homes for All Legislative Agenda, which MCH fully supports and actively leads on as well.

For a deeper dive into the 2018 Homeless Study go here: www.mnhomeless.org

For more about MCH go here: www.mnhomelesscoalition.org

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This is the first in a series of reports about the 2018 Minnesota Homeless Study. Future reports will include findings from more than 4,000 face-to-face interviews conducted throughout Minnesota, as well as a separate report about interviews conducted in partnership with six of Minnesota's Native American tribes. Throughout the next year, Wilder Research staff will also publish specialized reports related to homelessness among homeless youth, Veterans, older adults, and other specific populations.