

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA



Report on Women
Experiencing Homelessness
in Santa Clara County

August 2018



County of Santa Clara Gender and Homelessness Study



County of Santa Clara
Office of Women's Policy

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

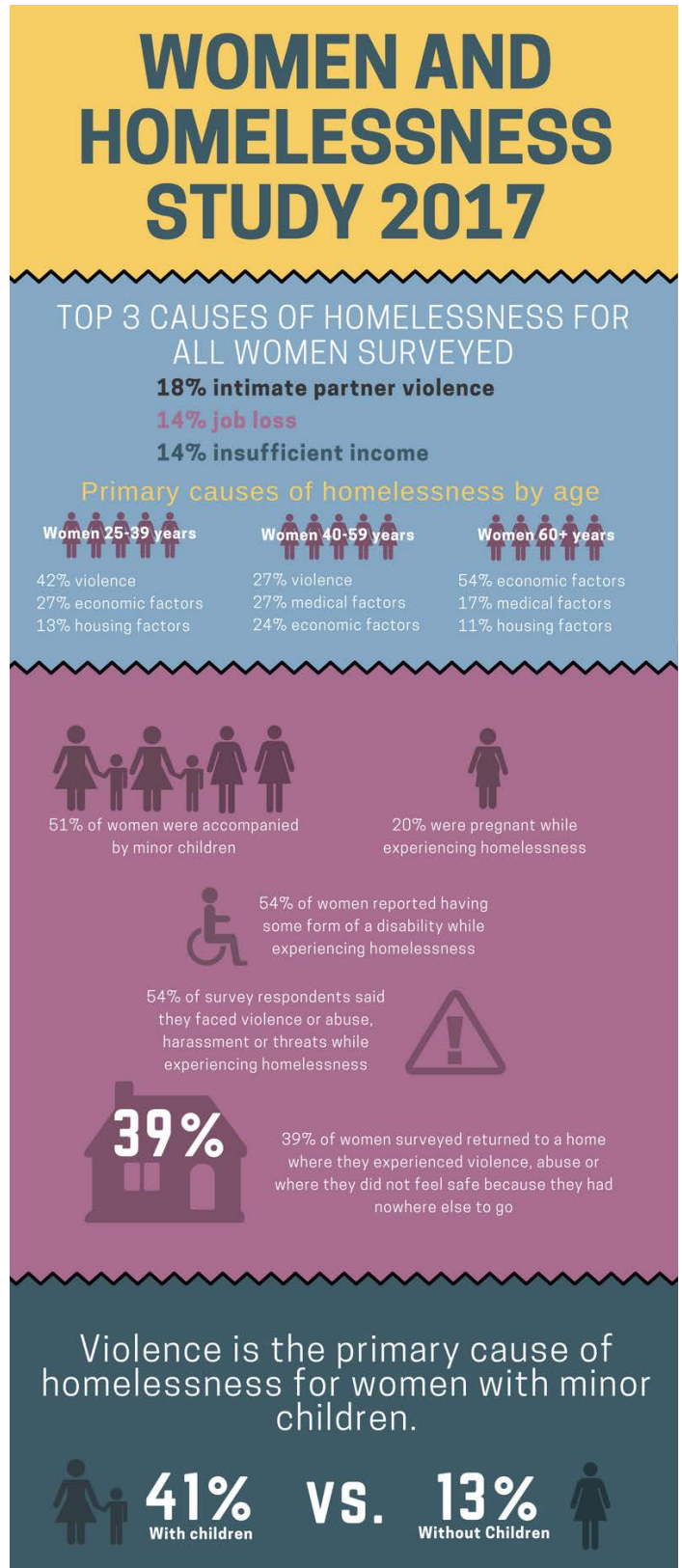
In June 2016, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved funding for a gender and human rights study on homelessness to:

1. Identify the causes and needs of homeless women; and
2. Recommend solutions for ending women's homelessness, including those fleeing gender-based violence, and women with accompanied minor children experiencing homelessness.

While there is somewhat limited research on women's homelessness, what has been shown through existing studies is that women are more likely than men to face homelessness or housing instability due to domestic violence, women are more likely than men to be accompanied by minor children and women are less likely to live openly on the streets.

Many women will go to great lengths to avoid the streets or shelter system, including staying in dangerous and unhealthy relationships or moving in with a partner, even when that situation is unsafe, rather than submit to the increased risk of violence and assault, sexual exploitation and abuse they face when homeless.

This is the first study in Santa Clara County that specifically looks at the unique pathways to homelessness and the needs of women experiencing homelessness, with targeted recommendations and solutions to address their needs.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Please see pages 39-41 for more information.

Recommendation 1: Dedicate funds for Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) to reduce the number of survivors experiencing homelessness, facing housing insecurity or staying in abusive relationships. By prioritizing this funding, the County of Santa Clara will not only decrease the number of survivors and children facing homelessness but reduce intimate partner violence.

Recommendation 2: Adopt measures that improve confidentiality, safety and physical security for women and women with children experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.

Recommendation 3: Supplement the biennial Homeless Census and Survey to ensure complete and accurate information about women experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity in the County is gathered.

Recommendation 4: Increase access to safe and affordable housing for women and those fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence.

Recommendation 5: Utilize the County of Santa Clara CEDAW Task Force to ensure a gender responsive framework is incorporated into budget and policy decisions. Develop a plan to end homelessness for women and women with minor children within five years or less. This plan may include legal assistance, child care, job training and self-sufficiency programs for women in addition to targeted housing initiatives such as Domestic Violence Housing First. Work at the community level to solve the problem of women's homelessness.

Recommendation 6: Address the root causes of homelessness for women. It's more than providing affordable housing; we must partner and collaborate to address women's poverty, violence, discrimination, mental and physical health, equal pay and fair wages. Connecting the dots and addressing the root causes will go a long way in helping end homelessness for women. We must make it simpler to give women the tools they need for getting their basic needs met for themselves and their children.

Recommendation 7: Use an intersectional approach in the creation and evaluation of housing policies and services. An intersectional approach recognizes the interaction between gender identity, race, sexual orientation, immigration status, language access, and other categories of difference that impact access to opportunity and housing services.

Recommendation 8: Increase access to public benefits, health care coverage, and victim restitution for homeless women. Ensure survivors of gender-based violence and victims of crime have access to benefits that can help them get out of poverty, and crime victim compensation for the harm they have suffered so that they are not indefinitely saddled with the debt of being abused.

Recommendation 9: Continue to prioritize and address the linkage between homelessness and intimate partner violence, including the following proposals from the 2017 Santa Clara County Intimate Partner Violence Blue Ribbon Task Force report:

Recommendation 10: The Office of Supportive Housing and the Office of Women’s Policy will work together with domestic/sexual violence and women’s housing providers to develop resources and materials, including online information, for women and women with children in Santa Clara County that are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

INTRODUCTION

Women's Homelessness

Women and children facing poverty or with limited economic resources, and survivors of domestic and sexual violence, are especially vulnerable to experiencing homelessness. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, forty-six percent of women report staying in abusive relationships because they have nowhere else to goⁱ. Prioritizing housing supports for women with children and survivors of domestic violence, such as short- and long-term housing, rental assistance, flexible funding, and mobile advocacy with landlords, would help end homelessness for women, and provide women the stability they need for themselves, and for their children if they are mothers.

Survivors of violence who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support to secure other housing meet the criteria for one of four federally-defined categories of homelessnessⁱⁱ. In Santa Clara County, nearly half of homeless families with children have reportedly experienced domestic violence, with one-fifth reporting domestic violence as the primary cause of their homelessness— second only to job lossⁱⁱⁱ.

The current supply of shelter and housing for women and survivors of violence and their families does not meet the need. In 2015, the local Domestic Violence Council identified housing for survivors and children as one of the County's most critical IPV issues, according to the County's Blue Ribbon Taskforce on Intimate Partner Violence. The County's domestic violence emergency shelter system has 59 beds and turns away over 2,000 requests annually and the non-domestic and sexual violence shelters have capacity for 65 family units (adults with children) for emergency shelters each night^{iv}.

About one-quarter of survivors who leave shelter go into another shelter because they are unable to find safe and affordable housing even though California state funding allows up to 30-day stays at emergency shelters with the possibility of a 15-day extension. This may not be enough time for victims who are getting restraining orders, accessing public financial assistance, and dealing with other legal issues - while coping with trauma - to get back on their feet. The general shelter system may be unsafe for women, children and survivors of violence, as it does not comply with state-mandated provisions that ensure safe and confidential services. Still, due to the common co-occurrence of domestic violence and homelessness and the lack of sufficient domestic violence emergency shelter beds, survivors are often sent back and forth between homeless shelters and domestic violence agencies.

In many cases, a domestic violence survivor's first choice for herself and her children is to stay in the home, as reported by Santa Clara county's Blue Ribbon Taskforce on Intimate Partner Violence. Leaving the home causes disruption for survivors and their children, including barriers to economic stability, interruptions in a child's schooling, and isolation from friends, family and community. However, the current system of housing services is predicated on the survivor leaving the home rather than being supported to remain housed and address the root cause of the homelessness, which in these cases is violence.

Despite the large number of studies throughout the U.S. on homelessness, few have specifically obtained and analyzed data on women’s experiences of homelessness.^v Studies that have focused on gender provide invaluable insight into the differences between the causes and effects of homelessness between men and women^{vi}. For example, studies that focus on gender indicate that violence is more likely to be a cause of homelessness for women than for men;^{vii} that homeless women tend to be victims of threats and violence more than homeless men;^{viii} that the residential origins of homeless women are more widespread and less concentrated in neighborhoods of high poverty than those of homeless men;^{ix} that homeless mothers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at rates that are three times that of the general female population,^x and that policies that address homelessness should take into account these gender differences.

Similarly, human rights studies on homelessness have explicitly highlighted the implications of homelessness on women.^{xi} The human rights framework describes the experience of homelessness as a condition that detrimentally affects a women’s right to live a life free from violence, to receive equal pay, have adequate access to health care, be treated as an equal under the law, have access to education, affordable child care and work opportunities, and be free from gender-based discrimination. These studies, although limited, provide a fuller picture of what the experience of homelessness entails for women.

According to the 2015 *Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley* report and the 2017 *Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey Comprehensive Report*, between one-third and one-half of homeless individuals in the County of Santa Clara are women.^{xii} Nevertheless, the County’s *Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County (2015-2020)* does not specifically mention women as a target population.^{xiii} The *Homeless Census and Survey Report* appears to undercount homeless women which fails to provide a complete picture of how and why women experience homelessness in the County.

For example, the 2017 report offered the following explanation as to why the number of people who are homeless in the County increased from 2015: “The cost of housing is too high, incomes are too low, and the lack of affordable housing units is creating the perfect storm that is pushing more residents into homelessness.”^{xiv} This statement is true for all individuals experiencing homelessness. What is missing from this explanation is that violence factors are just as much a cause of homelessness for women as are economic and housing factors.^{xv} When data is not analyzed through a gender lens, gender-specific causes and effects of homelessness are overlooked.^{xvi} Recognizing this gap in the County’s data gathering and analysis on the causes and effects of homelessness on women, the *Home Not Found* report called for further research on female homelessness.^{xvii}

Gender and Human Rights Framework

To address homelessness through a gender and human rights framework means taking into account gender-based economic and social differences between men and women when assessing the causes and effects of homelessness, as well as the intended and unintended human rights impacts and implications of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. A gender and human rights framework examines the cultural, economic, social, civil,

legal and political relations between genders, recognizing that genders may have different perceived social roles (which may be culturally specific), responsibilities, opportunities and needs, and that these differences, which permeate our society, affect how decisions and policies are made.

A gender and human rights framework helps the County identify not only the housing needs that may be unique for women, but also ascertain how homelessness affects women's enjoyment of other human rights, such as the rights to live without fear of violence, to non-discrimination and equality, to physical, mental and emotional integrity, to health, education, employment, food, and ultimately the right to life.^{xviii}

Therefore, applying a gender and human rights lens to homelessness as it affects women entails not only ensuring them the availability of permanent and affordable housing, but also addressing gender-based violence, the wage gap, and lack of affordable child care as root causes of homelessness for women. For this reason, one of the recommendations of this report is for the County Board of Supervisors to ensure the integration and implementation of relevant gender responsive principles into County operations through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Task Force.^{xix}

Study Overview

The study is divided into six main sections. This section describes in more detail women's homelessness, what it means to address homelessness through a gender lens and the methodology. The next section includes the findings from the study, the causes of women's homelessness in the County, and an analysis of the 2017 Homeless Survey data and our survey. This section also includes a comparison of the pathways to homelessness for women and men in the County as well as demographic data, the presence of children, conditions of homelessness, involvement in the criminal justice system, and income and employment disparities. Recommendations that we hope the County will consider that may address the high number of women in persistent homelessness and meet the unique housing needs of women can be found on pages 38-39. The section on Uncounted Women shows the inherent limitations through exiting efforts to determine the number of women experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County. Finally, the last section contains information captured by our survey about women's needs and their key concerns in the County.

Methodology

Over the course of a year, the International Human Rights Clinic at Santa Clara University School of Law (SCU) employed various qualitative and quantitative research methods to explore women's homelessness in Santa Clara County. SCU developed a four-pronged research strategy that involved:

1. Conducting background research on local, national, and international reports, norms, and other literature on women's homelessness;
2. Interviewing local community-based service providers and experts who have daily interactions with women experiencing homelessness;

3. Designing, distributing, and collecting a survey instrument to receive first-hand information from formerly homeless women in the County who have since found stable housing;
4. Conducting focus groups with a diverse group of women currently experiencing homelessness.^{xx}

Background Research

SCU relied on previous studies of homelessness in Santa Clara County. The *Home Not Found* report provides detailed information about homelessness based on records of more than 100,000 individuals who experienced homelessness in the County over a six-year period from 2007 to 2012.^{xxi} The *2017 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey Report* provides information based on a census count of 7,394 individuals who were homeless in the County on January 24-25, 2017, and a subsequent survey of 587 homeless individuals.^{xxii}

SCU also looked at practices, norms, and models from various jurisdictions across the United States, including local, statewide, and federal reports and efforts that address homelessness of women. International human rights treaties, jurisprudence, and soft law (normative provisions contained in non-binding texts) from the United Nations and the Organization of American States provided an additional legal framework with valuable insights on how the human right to adequate housing must be respected, protected, and guaranteed and is included in the section on the Human Rights Framework.

Interviews

To obtain a better understanding of the services provided to women experiencing homelessness in the County, SCU interviewed community-based organizations that provide services to women experiencing homelessness. SCU first interviewed staff and program directors from the following five organizations that provide services to victims of domestic violence: Asian Americans for Community Involvement, YWCA Silicon Valley, Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, Community Solutions for Children, Families, and Individuals, and Maitri. Next, SCU reached out to the following organizations that operate shelters, transitional housing programs, rapid rehousing programs, permanent supportive housing programs, or a combination of these services to women: Abode Services, Home First, Life Moves, the Bill Wilson Center, St. Joseph's Family Center, Home First, and West Valley Community Services. SCU did not carry out any interviews with organizations that provide hot meals or food pantry programs. Lastly, SCU interviewed personnel from the County's Office of Supportive Housing to better understand how rental assistance housing projects are funded and coordinated in the County.

Survey

In the spring of 2017, SCU conducted a survey of formerly homeless women in Santa Clara County. The target population for the survey was defined as follows: "Adult women currently living in Santa Clara County who were previously homeless and who: (1) are now living in permanent supportive housing; or (2) since January 1, 2015, have been placed in housing through a rapid rehousing program; or (3) since January 1, 2015, have moved from a transitional housing program into stable, independent housing, *and* are not included in the first two categories."

SCU relied primarily on a group of service providers to identify individual women included within the scope of the target population. The following ten organizations distributed surveys to women whom they had identified as individuals within the target population: Santa Clara County Housing Authority, Abode Services, New Directions, Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing, HomeFirst Services, Life Moves, YWCA Silicon Valley, Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, the Bill Wilson Center, and St. Joseph’s Family Center. In the aggregate, these ten organizations distributed surveys to 657 women, and SCU received 297 completed surveys.

The survey instrument included a total of 51 questions, divided into six parts. All 297 survey participants answered some of the questions, but most women left some questions unanswered. Part One of the survey sought basic demographic information. Part Two contained general questions about homelessness. Part Three addressed the causes of homelessness. Part Four focused on the conditions women experienced when they were homeless. Part Five addressed the transition from homelessness to stable housing. Part Six addressed employment and job training. Overall, the survey was designed to provide a clearer picture of the pathways in and out of homelessness for women in Santa Clara County.

Focus Groups

SCU collaborated with the following organizations in Santa Clara County to conduct focus group sessions with 25 adult women experiencing homelessness, most of whom were survivors of domestic violence: AACI, YWCA Silicon Valley, Community Solutions, Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence, and the Bill Wilson Center (collectively, “service providers”). The service providers recruited all focus group participants, ensured that all participants signed an informed consent form, and ensured the identity of the women remained confidential.

SCU and the service providers conducted five focus group sessions. AACI hosted one session in Chinese and one in Vietnamese and provided interpreters for those sessions. The Bill Wilson Center hosted one session in English. YWCA Silicon Valley, Community Solutions and Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence together hosted one session in English and one in Spanish.

SCU obtained approval from the Santa Clara University Institutional Review Board to conduct the above-mentioned interviews, survey, and focus groups. This report does not necessarily reflect the opinions of those we interviewed or who otherwise provided information for this report. The names of all individuals have been withheld to protect their privacy and safety.

Analytical Methodology

Parts III and IV of this report present quantitative analysis based on data obtained from the SCU survey and the PIT survey. The SCU survey compiled detailed information about 297 *formerly homeless* women. The PIT survey compiled detailed information about 375 *currently homeless* men and 199 *currently homeless* women (as of January 2017).^{xxiii} Quantitative analysis of data from the two surveys enables us to draw conclusions about the broader populations of homeless men and women in the County. In particular, we use statistical analysis to identify statistically significant differences: between homeless men and homeless women; between currently and formerly homeless women; and between various sub-groups of homeless women. Throughout the

report, a statement that a difference between two groups is “statistically significant” means that it is statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

"There appears to be an unusually high rate of persistent homelessness among female residents of the county. This should be investigated further," Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley^{xxiv}

THE CAUSES OF WOMEN'S HOMELESSNESS

One of the central focuses of this study was to identify and highlight the significant differences between the causes of homelessness for men and women. To analyze this question, we relied primarily on information from the SCU survey and from the Santa Clara County 2017 Homeless Census and Survey.^{xxv} Every two years, during the last ten days of January, Santa Clara County conducts a count of the local population experiencing homelessness. This census measures the prevalence of homelessness in the County and collects information about individuals and families residing in emergency shelters, as well as people sleeping on the streets, in cars, in abandoned properties, or in other places not meant for human habitation. Following the street count, a survey is administered to unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals, in order to profile their experience and characteristics.^{xxvi}

The SCU survey collected information from 297 *formerly homeless* women. The PIT survey collected information from 375 *currently homeless* men and 199 *currently homeless* women. This chapter draws on that data to analyze the causes of homelessness in three sections. The first section looks only at the PIT Survey data. If one focuses exclusively on the PIT Survey data, there do not appear to be any significant differences between men and women with respect to the causes of homelessness.

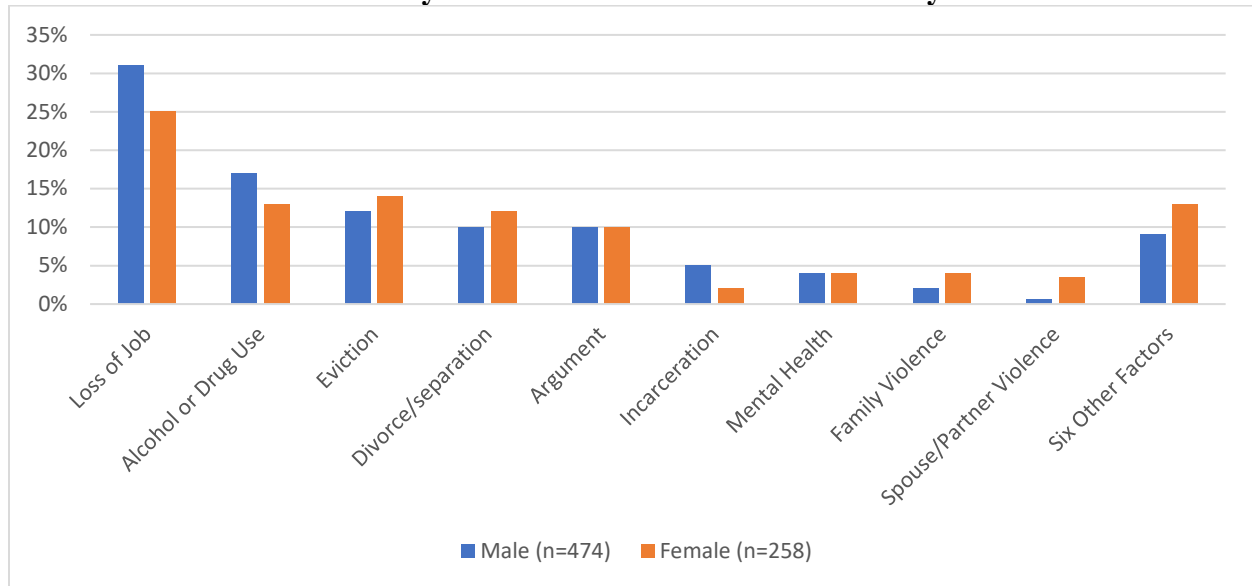
The second section incorporates data from the SCU survey. Whereas the PIT survey data suggests that gender-based violence is not a major factor contributing to either male or female homelessness, the SCU survey data demonstrates that gender-based violence is one of the leading causes of female homelessness.^{xxvii} This is a very significant discrepancy between the two survey results. The PIT also contradicts national research that violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women. We believe the female homeless population is under-represented in the 2017 Homeless Census and Survey in part because homeless women tend to remain hidden due to the high risk of violence and abuse they face while homeless, making it difficult for the census takers to find them.

The third section focuses on distinctions among different sub-groups of women. In particular, it shows that certain sub-groups of homeless women disclose gender-based violence more than other groups. Accordingly, given the County's obligation to prioritize victims of gender-based violence per the Housing and Urban Development requirements in category IV for those "fleeing, attempting to flee domestic violence," the information in this section may be helpful in identifying the most vulnerable.

Comparing Data by Gender in the Point in Time Survey

The PIT survey asked respondents: “What do you think is the primary event or condition that led to your homelessness?” The form listed 15 factors and instructed participants to select only one.^{xxviii} Despite the instruction to select only one factor, many respondents selected more than one factor. 375 men provided a total of 474 responses and 199 women provided a total of 258 responses. Figure 3.1 compares the responses received from men and women. The percentages in Figure 3.1 are weighted percentages based on the total number of responses. The weighting ensures that the percentages add up to one hundred.^{xxix}

Figure 3.1
Primary Cause of Homelessness - PIT Survey



Overall, the data in Figure 3.1 suggests that there are few, if any, significant gender differences with respect to the causes of homelessness. The two most pronounced differences are that men were more likely than women to identify incarceration as a cause of homelessness (5% versus 2%) and women were more likely than men to identify spouse/partner violence as a cause of homelessness (3.5% versus .6%). However, neither of those gender differences is statistically significant^{xxx} at a 95 percent confidence level.^{xxxi}

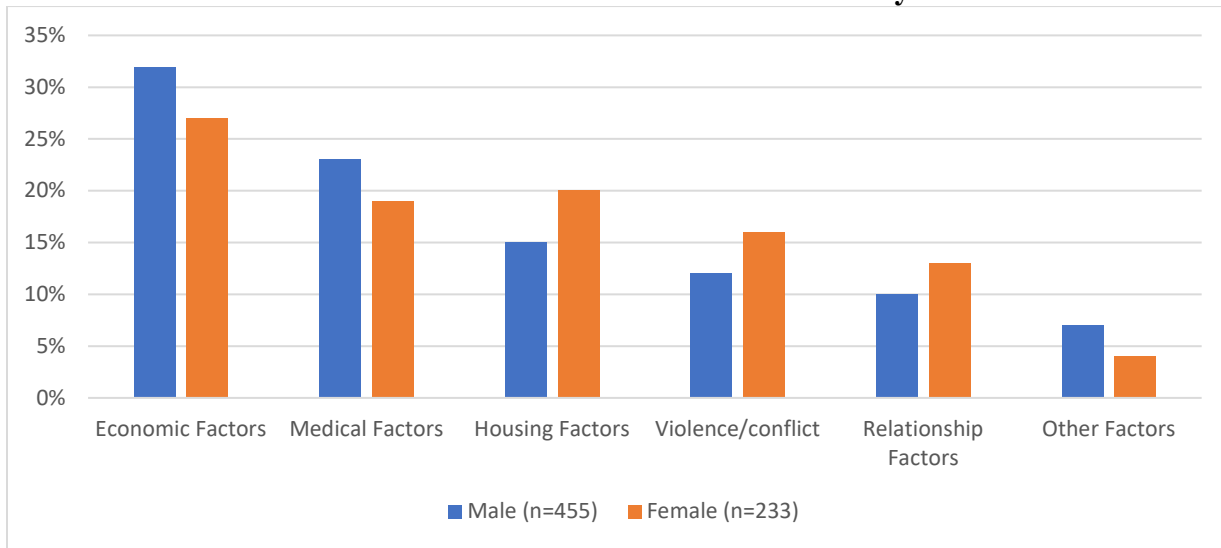
We also compared the causes of homelessness for men and women by grouping the 15 listed factors into six categories, as follows:

- Medical factors (alcohol or drug use, illness/medical problem, mental health issues, hospitalization/treatment)
- Housing factors (eviction, foreclosure, landlord raised rent)
- Violence/conflict factors (argument with family or friend, family violence, spouse/partner violence)
- Economic factors (loss of job)
- Relationship factors (divorce/separation/break-up)

- Other factors (incarceration, probation/parole restrictions, aged out of foster care)

If a survey respondent selected two factors in the same category, we counted that as one response to eliminate double-counting. For example, if one person selected both eviction and “landlord raised rent,” that counts as one affirmative response in the housing category. After eliminating double-counting within categories, the total number of male responses is 455; the total number of female responses is 233. Figure 3.2 presents the results of this analysis. Percentages are weighted based on the total number of responses so that percentages add up to one hundred.

Figure 3.2
Six Causes of Homelessness: PIT Survey



Like the data in Figure 3.1 above, the data in Figure 3.2 suggests that the causes of homelessness are generally similar for men and women. Men are more likely than women to identify economic factors (32 versus 27 percent) and medical factors (23 versus 19 percent) as causes of homelessness. In contrast, women are more likely than men to identify housing factors (20 versus 15 percent), relationship factors (13 versus 10 percent) and violence/conflict (16 versus 12 percent) as causes of homelessness. However, none of these gender differences are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

In sum, the PIT survey data creates an impression that the causes of homelessness are broadly similar for both men and women. However, the following sections explain why the PIT survey data is misleading in this respect.

Summary of SCU Survey Results

Whereas the PIT survey asked respondents a single question about the causes of homelessness, the SCU survey divided the topic into two questions. The first question said: “Please identify the factors that caused you to become homeless.” The form specifically instructed women to “check ALL that apply.” The form listed sixteen factors. 297 survey participants selected a total of 948 factors that caused them to become homeless: about 3.2 factors per person. 74 percent of the

women identified multiple factors. This fact reinforces the point that homelessness is rarely attributable to a single cause; it is usually the result of several inter-related factors.

The SCU survey also asked respondents: “What was the primary factor that caused you to become homeless?” For this question, the form left a blank space in which to write. Some women did not answer the question. Others specifically identified one of the sixteen factors from the previous question. A few women wrote lengthier answers from which we could infer a single, primary factor. Finally, some wrote lengthy answers that could not reasonably be interpreted to identify a primary factor. In total, 234 women provided answers that specifically identified or could reasonably be construed to identify a single primary factor.

Figure 3.3
Causes of Homelessness: SCU Survey

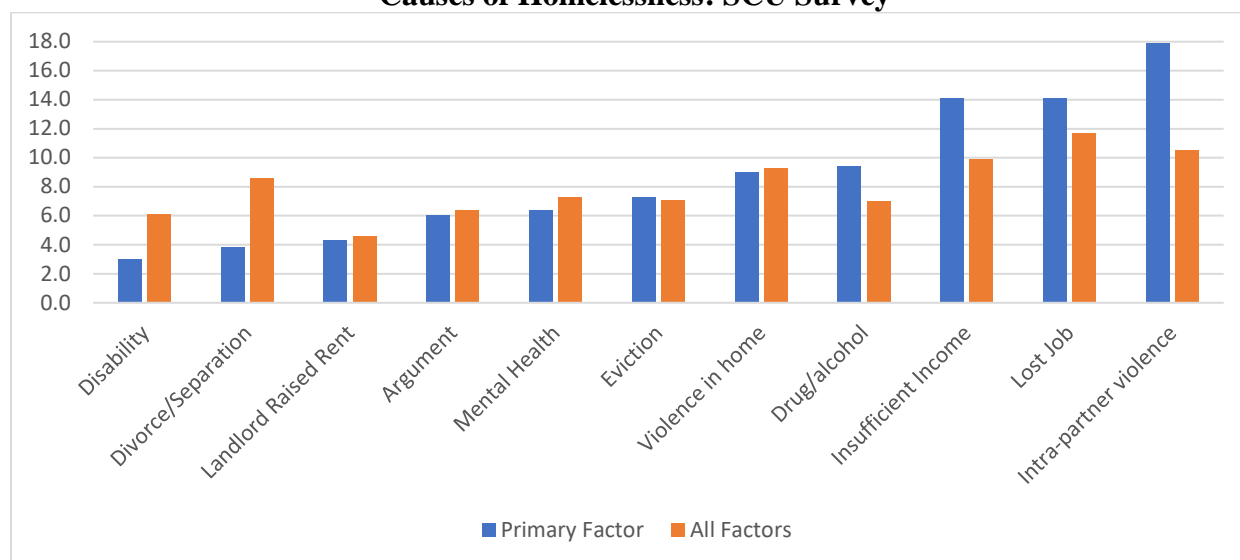


Figure 3.3 summarizes the responses to both questions. Each blue bar shows the actual percentage of survey respondents (out of 234) who identified a factor as the primary factor that caused them to become homeless. Each orange bar depicts a weighted percentage based on women’s responses to the “check all that apply” prompt. For those weighted percentages, the denominator is 948 (the total number of factors selected by all women) and the numerator is the number of women who selected a factor. The weighted percentage measures the degree to which women identified a specific factor as one among several factors contributing to homelessness.^{xxxii}

Regardless of how the question is framed—in terms of “all factors” or the “primary factor”—the three most significant causes of female homelessness identified by the SCU survey are intra-partner violence, job loss, and insufficient income. Even so, it is instructive to compare the responses to the two questions. The weighted percentage for intra-partner violence is 10.5 percent, but 17.9 percent of women identified that factor as the primary cause of homelessness. The difference between those two numbers suggests that intra-partner violence tends to be the dominant cause in cases where it is a contributing factor. Similarly, in cases where “insufficient income” is a contributing factor it tends to be the dominant cause: the weighted percentage for insufficient income is 9.9 percent, but 14.1 percent of women identified that factor as the primary cause of

homelessness. In contrast, many women identified divorce/separation as a contributing factor (the weighted percentage is 8.6 percent), but far fewer designated it as the primary factor (3.8 percent). Many women also identified disability as a contributing factor (the weighted percentage is 6.1 percent), but fewer identified it as the primary factor (only 3 percent).

Comparing Results Between the SCU and Point in Time Surveys

To compare results from the two surveys, we use responses from the “primary factor” question in the SCU survey because that question more closely resembles the “primary event or condition” question in the PIT survey. We compare the female respondents in the SCU survey to the female respondents in the PIT survey. We group the causes of homelessness into categories—first into seven categories and then into six categories. Table 3.4 below shows the seven categories and the corresponding factors from each survey. The only difference between the six-fold division and the seven-fold division is that the six-fold division groups “argument” with the violence factors to create a “violence/conflict” category.

The lists of factors in the two surveys are similar, but not identical. Unlike the PIT survey, the SCU survey lists “insufficient income” as a separate factor in the economic category. Given known wage disparities between men and women,^{xxxiii} this factor may be especially significant for women. We recommend that the 2019 PIT survey list “insufficient income” as a separate factor. Listing it separately would help the County collect information to determine whether, and to what extent, this factor has a greater impact on women than men. Apart from this single factor, the other differences between the lists in the two surveys appear to be inconsequential.

**Table 3.4
Causes of Homelessness: Groups of Factors**

	Factors Listed in PIT Survey	Factors Listed in SCU Survey
Economic Factors	Lost job	Loss of job Income insufficient to pay rent/mortgage
Violence Factors	Spousal/partner violence Family violence	Violence/abuse from spouse/partner Violence/abuse in home
Medical Factors	Alcohol or drug use Illness/medical problem Mental health issues Hospitalization/treatment	Drug or alcohol use Medical illness/expenses Mental health issues Disability
Housing Factors	Eviction Landlord raised rent Foreclosure	Evicted from rental housing Landlord raised rent Foreclosure
Relationship Factors	Divorce/separation/break-up	Divorce/separation/break-up Death of a spouse/partner
Argument	Argument with family or friend	Argument with family or roommate
Other Factors	Incarceration Aging out of foster care	Arrest Aged out of foster care

	Probation/parole restrictions	
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Figure 3.5 compares the results of the two surveys, with the factors grouped into seven categories. Percentages from the SCU survey are the actual percentages of women (out of 234) who identified a factor as the primary cause of homelessness. Percentages for the PIT survey are weighted percentages because 199 women provided a total of 258 responses. As discussed previously regarding Figure 3.2, we eliminated double-counting when we grouped those responses into categories, so the weighted percentages from the PIT survey are based on a denominator of 238 total responses (after eliminating double-counting).

The blue bars in Figure 3.5 show the weighted percentage of female respondents in the PIT survey who designated a particular factor as the primary cause of homelessness. The orange bars show the actual percentage of respondents in the SCU survey who identified that type of factor as the primary cause of homelessness. The disparity between the two survey results is dramatic, especially with respect to violence factors. 27 percent of SCU survey respondents identified one of the two violence factors listed in Table 3.4 as the primary cause of homelessness. In contrast, only 7 percent of the female PIT survey respondents identified violence as the primary cause of homelessness. The PIT survey respondents were more likely to identify housing factors, relationship factors, and arguments with family/friends as the main cause of homelessness. Indeed, all three categories outranked violence in the PIT survey, but violence outranked all three in the SCU survey.

Figure 3.5
Causes of Homelessness: Comparison of Two Surveys

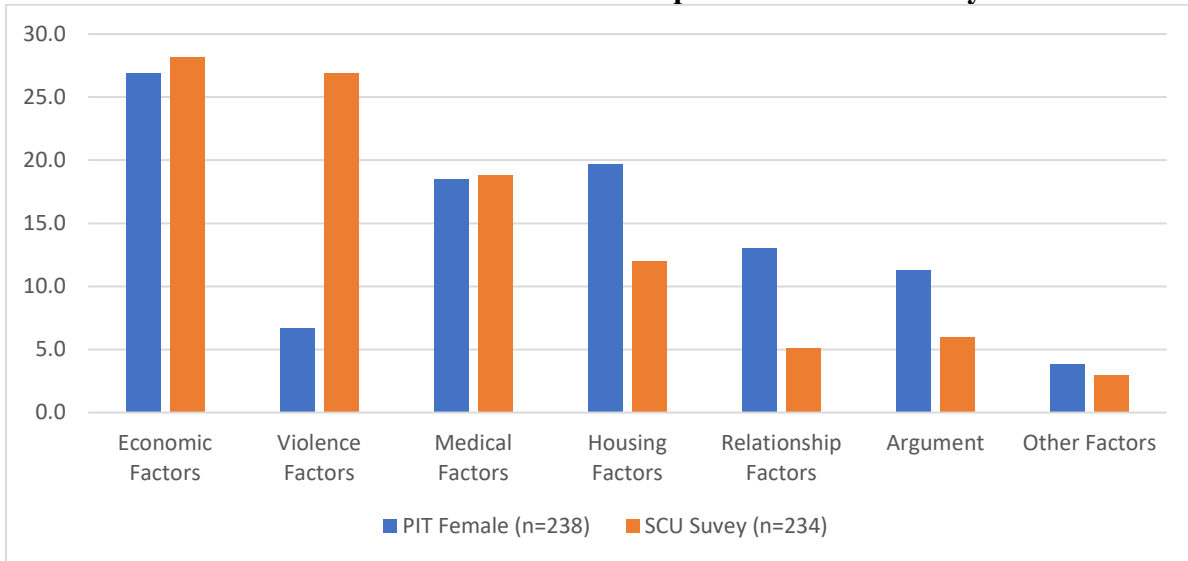
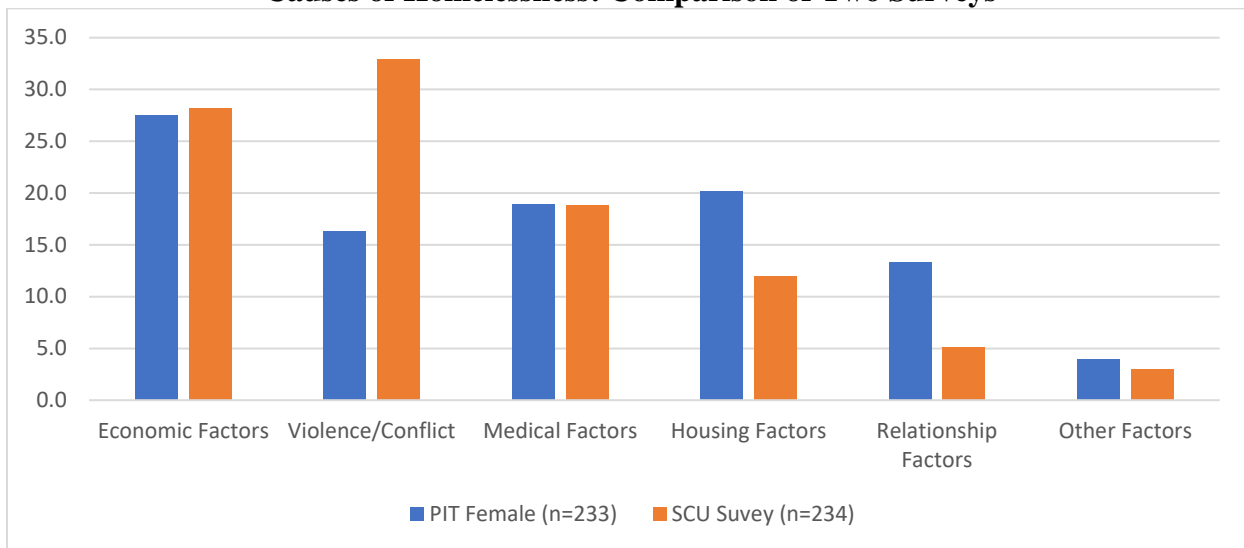


Figure 3.6 also compares the results of the two surveys, but the factors are grouped into six categories, rather than seven. In this grouping, the “argument” category is combined with the violence factors to create a “violence/conflict” category. The rationale for grouping these factors together is that both arguments and violence are manifestations of conflict between people with some type of close relationship, such as family members, sexual partners, or roommates. Moreover, some women who are victims of gender-based violence, but who are reluctant to

acknowledge that fact, might be more comfortable identifying “argument with family or friend” as the primary cause of homelessness.

When the factors are grouped in this manner, there is still a significant disparity between the two surveys in the violence/conflict category: 33 percent of SCU survey respondents identified one of the violence/conflict factors as the primary cause of homelessness, compared to 16 percent of female PIT survey respondents. However, the disparity is not as great in Figure 3.6 as it is in Figure 3.5. About 11 percent of female PIT survey respondents identified “argument with family or friend” as the primary cause of homelessness. Hence, the choice to combine “argument” with violence factors in Figure 3.6 reduces the disparity between the two surveys.

Figure 3.6
Causes of Homelessness: Comparison of Two Surveys

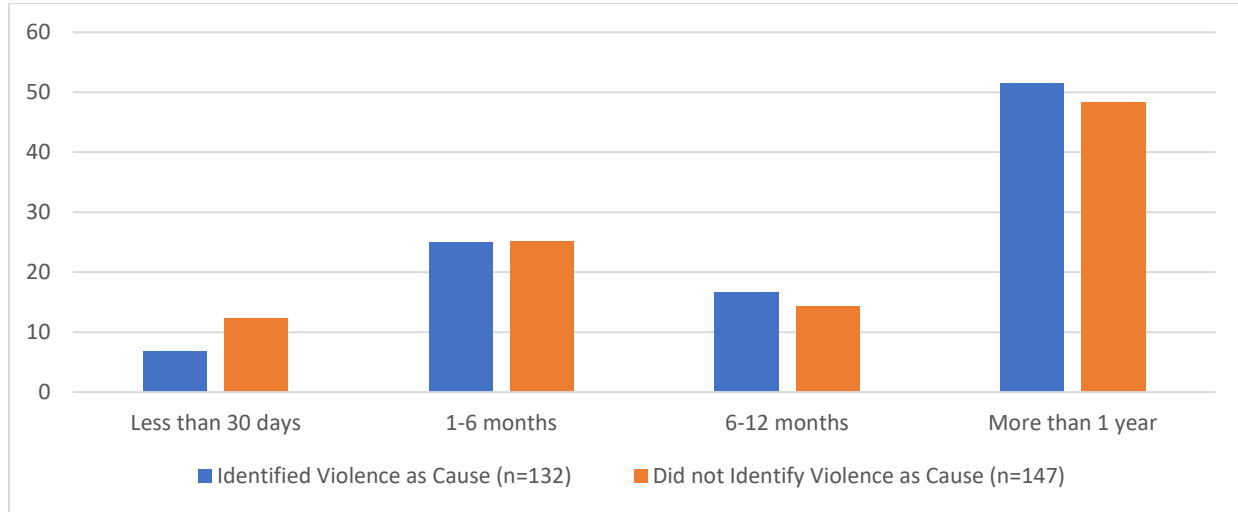


Aside from the violence/conflict category, the most significant disparity between the two surveys involves relationship factors. This category includes “divorce/separation/break-up” (in both surveys), as well as “death of a spouse/partner” (only in the SCU survey). Figure 3.6 shows that 13 percent of female PIT survey respondents identified relationship factors as the primary cause of homelessness, compared to only 5 percent of SCU survey respondents. Some of the female PIT survey respondents who are victims of intimate partner violence, but who are reluctant to acknowledge that fact, might have chosen to identify “divorce/separation/break-up” as the primary cause of homelessness.

The SCU survey asked respondents: “What was the longest period of homelessness that you experienced?” The survey gave them four options: less than 30 days, between one and six months, between six and twelve months, and more than one year. Figure 3.7 displays the survey responses and correlates those responses with women’s responses to the question that asked them to identify all factors that caused them to become homeless. All women who checked one of the violence factors in Table 3.4 are included in the category of women who identified violence as a cause. The data summarized in Figure 3.7 shows that women who identified violence as a cause of homelessness made the transition to stable housing at about the same rate as women who did not

identify violence as a cause of homelessness. Therefore, the proportion of survivors should be about the same in the formerly homeless population as it is in the currently homeless population.

Figure 3.7
Violence and Duration of Homelessness



The section in this report on Undercounted Women demonstrates that the PIT census undercounted homeless women: we estimate that about 36-48 percent of the homeless women in Santa Clara County were not counted in the census.^{xxxiv} Additionally, we estimate conservatively that at least 50-62 percent of the homeless women who are survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) were not counted in the census.^{xxxv} Since the percentage of GBV survivors who were not counted in the census probably exceeds the percentage of other women who were not counted in the census, and since the women covered in the PIT survey are a sub-set of the women counted in the PIT census, GBV survivors were probably under-represented in the group of women who took the PIT survey.

In sum, the SCU survey indicates that violence factors were the primary cause of homelessness for about 27 percent of homeless women. In contrast, the PIT survey indicates that violence factors were the primary cause of homelessness for only about 7 percent of homeless women. Neither survey methodology is perfect, but there are sound reasons to believe that the 27 percent figure from the SCU survey is a more reliable estimate. Accordingly, County officials should take account of this information when they are formulating policies to reduce the incidence of homelessness in Santa Clara County.

Comparing Sub-Groups of Women with Each Other

Of course, homeless women are not all alike. Certain sub-groups of women are more likely to be victims of gender-based violence than others. This section analyzes the SCU survey data to ascertain which sub-groups of homeless women are most likely to report gender-based violence. The analysis focuses on three factors: age, the presence of minor children, and co-habitation with a spouse or partner. The analysis indicates that the causes of homelessness vary significantly by age group. Moreover, women with minor children and women who lived with a spouse or partner

before they were homeless reported violence as the primary factor that caused them to become homeless.

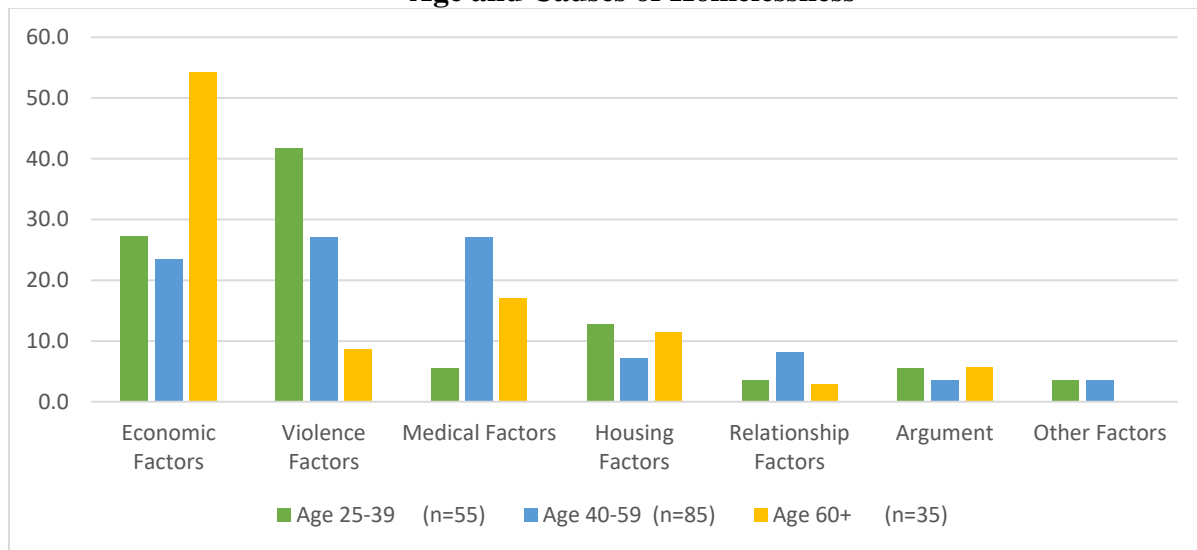
The Relationship Between Age and Primary Cause of Homelessness

The SCU survey asked all respondents to disclose their age at the time of the survey. Only 236 out of 297 women answered that question. About 12 percent were under age twenty-five, 29 percent were in the 25-39 age bracket, 42 percent were in the 40-59 age bracket, and 17 percent were age sixty or older. Figure 3.8 presents information about the causes of homelessness for women in different age brackets. We exclude the under-25 age bracket because the number of respondents in that category was too small to be useful.^{xxxvi} The causes of homelessness are grouped into the seven categories discussed previously. Data in Figure 3.8 is based on SCU survey participants' answers to the question: "What was the primary factor that caused you to become homeless?"

Figure 3.8 shows that economic factors, violence factors and medical factors are the three primary causes of women's homelessness. However, the relative importance of those three types of factors varies significantly by age. For women in the 40-59 age bracket, economic, violence and medical factors are all (roughly) equally important. Within that age group, 27 percent of women identified violence factors as the primary cause of homelessness, 27 percent identified medical factors as the primary cause, and 24 percent identified economic factors as the primary cause of homelessness.

In contrast, for women in the 25-39 age bracket, violence factors were the dominant cause of homelessness. 42 percent of women in that age group identified violence factors as the primary cause of homelessness. In contrast, only 27 percent cited economic factors and only 5 percent cited medical factors. Within the 25-39 age bracket, the difference between violence and economics is not statistically significant, but the difference between violence and all other factors is statistically significant.

Figure 3.8
Age and Causes of Homelessness



For women in the 60+ age bracket, economic factors are the dominant cause of homelessness. 54 percent of women in that age group identified economic factors as the primary cause of homelessness. Medical factors ranked a distant second at 17 percent. Within the 60+ age bracket, the difference between economic factors and all other factors is statistically significant.

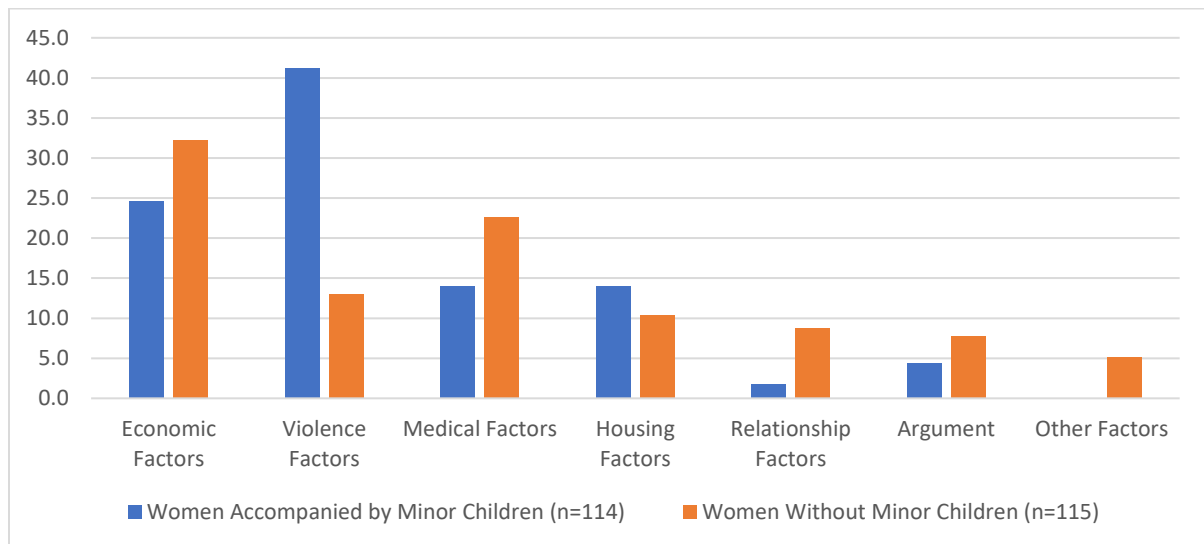
Next, comparing types of factors across age brackets, women in the 60+ age group were more likely to cite economic factors than women in the 40-59 group (54 percent versus 24 percent). Similarly, women in the 40-59 age group were more likely to cite medical factors than women in the 25-39 group (27 percent versus 5 percent). Finally, women in the 25-39 age group were more likely to cite violence factors than women in the 60+ age group (42 percent versus 9 percent). All these differences are statistically significant.

Women with or Without Minor Children and Primary Cause of Homelessness

The SCU survey asked respondents whether they were accompanied by minor children when they were homeless. 51 percent said “yes.” 49 percent said “no.”^{xxxvii} Figure 3.9 compares the causes of homelessness for women who were accompanied by minor children when they were homeless versus women without minor children. The causes of homelessness are grouped into the seven categories discussed previously. Data in Figure 3.9 is based on SCU survey participants’ answers to the question: “What was the primary factor that caused you to become homeless?”^{xxxviii}

The survey responses demonstrate that women who were accompanied by minor children when they were homeless were far more likely than women without minor children to identify violence factors as the primary cause of homelessness: 41 percent versus 13 percent. Indeed, violence was the dominant cause of homelessness for women who were accompanied by minor children when they were homeless. In contrast, women without minor children were more likely to designate economic and medical factors as the primary cause of homelessness.

Figure 3.9
Women with or Without Minor Children and Causes of Homelessness

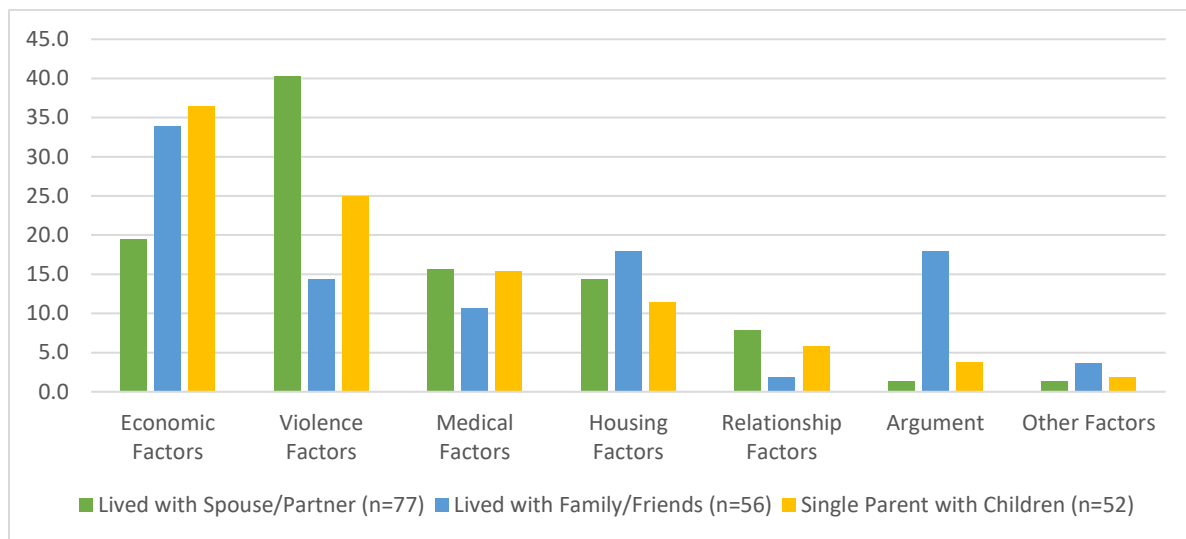


According to the Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 15.5 million children in the United States live in families in which partner violence occurred at least once in the past year, and seven million children live in families in which severe partner violence occurred.^{xxxix} The data in Figure 3.9 shows that gender-based violence is a significant factor contributing to homelessness for women with minor children in the County. Homelessness is a terrible experience for everyone, but numerous studies show that the long-term effects of homelessness on minor children are especially harmful.^{xl} Therefore, specific measures to help ensure that gender-based violence does not force women with minor children to choose between homelessness and abuse could potentially yield substantial benefits for the health and safety of both women and children.

Living Situation Before Homelessness

We analyzed the SCU survey data to see how causes of homelessness vary depending upon a woman’s living situation before she was homeless. The survey asked participants: “Which of the following best describes your living situation immediately before you became homeless?” Most of the answers fit into one of three categories: 32 percent of respondents lived with a spouse or partner; 24 percent lived with family or friends; and 22 percent lived as a single parent with her children. Figure 3.10 shows that the causes of homelessness differ significantly among these three categories of women. The data in Figure 3.10 is based upon respondents’ answers to the question about “the primary factor that caused you to become homeless.”

Figure 3.10
Prior Living Situation and Causes of Homelessness



Violence was the dominant cause of homelessness for women who lived with a spouse or partner immediately before they became homeless. About 40 percent of women in that category identified violence factors as the primary cause of homelessness. In contrast, only 25 percent of single parents with children and 14 percent of women who lived with family or friends identified violence factors as the primary cause of homelessness.^{xli} Figure 3.10 shows that economic factors tended to be more significant for single parents with children and for women who lived with friends or family

members. 37 percent of single parents with children and 34 percent of women living with family/friends identified economic factors as the primary cause of homelessness. In contrast, just 19 percent of women who lived with a spouse or partner identified economic factors as the primary cause of homelessness.

One of the most striking data points depicted in Figure 3.10 relates to arguments as a cause of homelessness. 18 percent of the women who lived with friends or family members identified “argument with family member or roommate” as the primary factor that caused them to become homeless. In contrast, the “argument” factor was insignificant for the other two groups of women: only 4 percent of single parents with children and 1 percent of women who lived with a spouse or partner identified “argument” as the primary cause of homelessness.^{xlii}

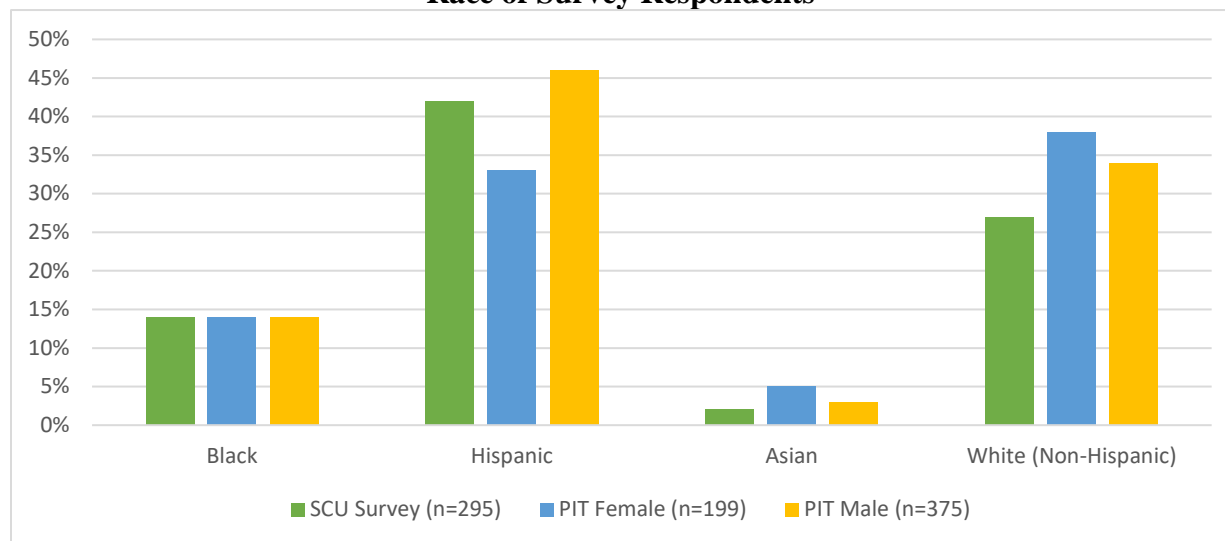
A COMPARISON OF MALE AND FEMALE HOMELESSNESS IN THE COUNTY

This section compares male and female homelessness in Santa Clara County along several dimensions. We begin with the demographic characteristic of the male and female homeless populations. Subsequent sections analyze: the extent to which homeless people are accompanied by minor children; the conditions of homelessness; prevention of homelessness; contact with the criminal justice system; and income and employment. Information about male homelessness is drawn primarily from the 2017 PIT census and survey.^{xliii} Information about female homelessness is based on data collected by SCU as well as the PIT census and survey.

Demographic Information

The racial and ethnic backgrounds of homeless men and homeless women are generally similar, but there are some differences. Figure 4.1 presents information about racial and ethnic backgrounds of three different populations: the formerly homeless women who took the SCU survey; the currently homeless women included in the PIT survey, and the currently homeless men included in the PIT survey. Comparisons between the two surveys are somewhat problematic because the SCU survey and the PIT survey framed the “race/ethnicity” questions differently.^{xliv} Regardless, if one compares the females in the two survey populations with each other, there do not appear to be any statistically significant differences. However, if one compares the men and women included in the PIT survey with each other, Hispanics comprise a larger portion of the homeless male population (46%) than the homeless female population (33%). That difference is statistically significant.

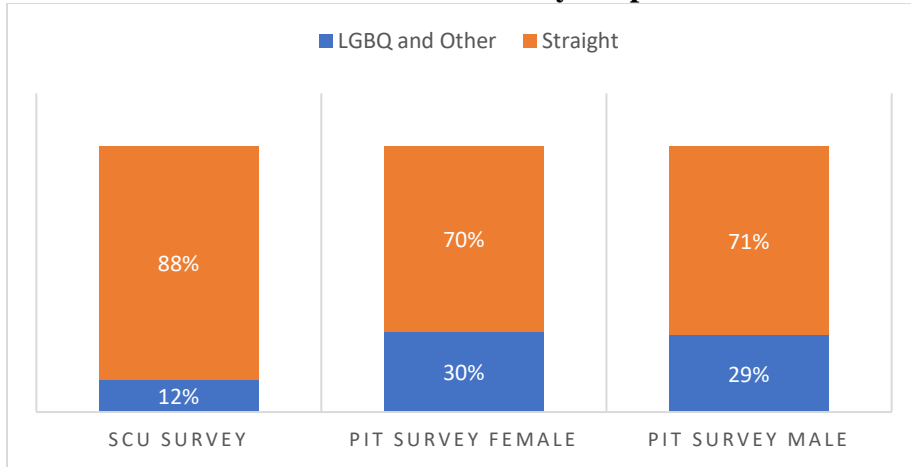
Figure 4.1
Race of Survey Respondents^{xlv}



Both Hispanics and African Americans are over-represented in the homeless population compared to the larger population. African Americans comprise 3% of the total population in Santa Clara County, but about 14% of the homeless population. Similarly, Hispanics comprise 27% of the total population in Santa Clara County, but about 33-46% of the homeless population. In contrast, Asians are under-represented in the homeless population relative to the larger population. Asians

constitute 34% of the total population in the County, but only about 2-5% of homeless people are Asian.

Figure 4.2
Sexual Orientation of Survey Respondents



The sexual orientation of SCU survey respondents differs from the sexual orientation of PIT survey respondents, but there do not appear to be significant differences between the male and female homeless populations in this respect. The PIT survey data shows that 30% of the female respondents and 29% of the male respondents identified as LGBTQ. Only 12% of SCU survey respondents identified as LGBTQ. The difference between the SCU survey population and the female PIT survey population is statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level. Since the main distinction between the two groups is that one group is formerly homeless and the other is currently homeless, the lower percentage of LGBTQ women in the SCU survey population may indicate that LGBTQ women confront especially difficult obstacles in trying to make the transition from homelessness to stable housing. This issue merits further study.

Figure 4.3
Age of Survey Respondents^{xlvi}

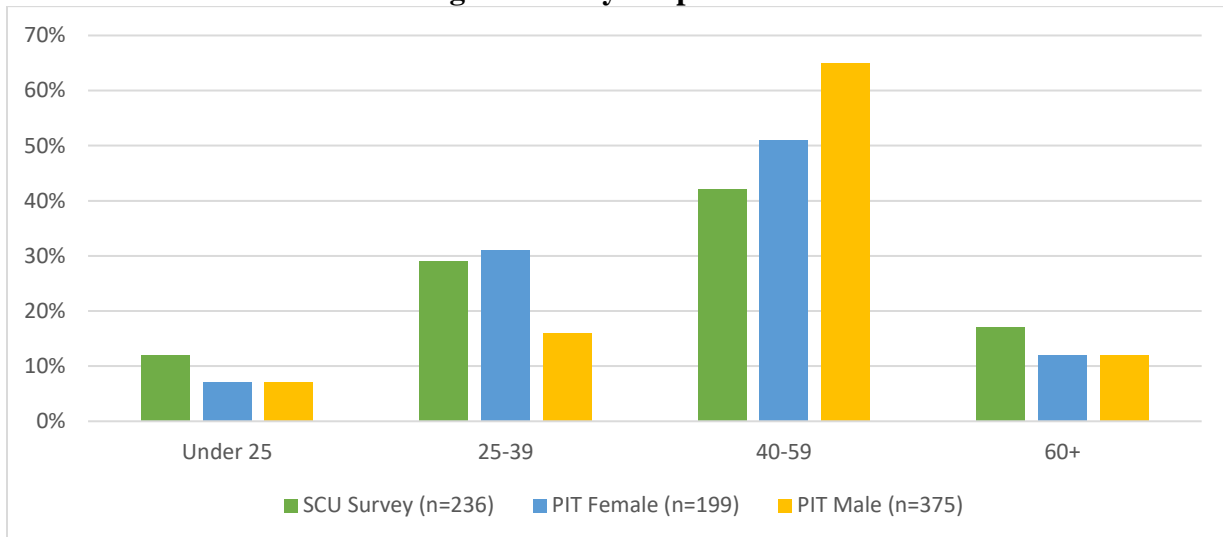


Figure 4.3 presents data about the age distribution of men and women experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County. The data indicates that most of the homeless population is in the 25-59 age range; this is true for both men and women. However, homeless men are more likely to be in the 40-59 age bracket, whereas homeless women are more likely to be in the 25-39 age bracket. These gender differences are statistically significant if one compares men in the PIT survey to women in the PIT survey, OR if one compares men in the PIT survey to women in the SCU survey. However, differences between the two groups of women are not statistically significant.

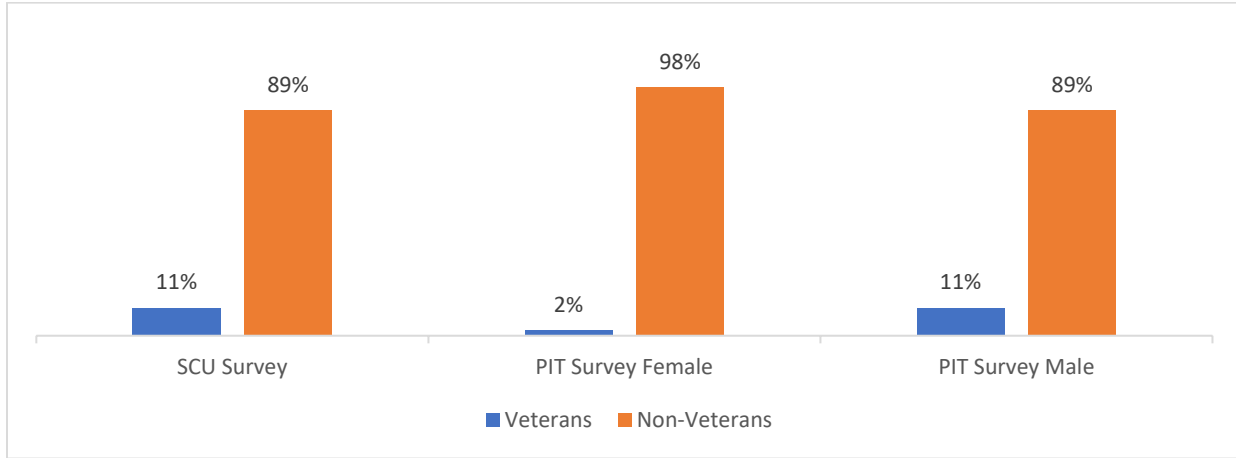
It may be true that women are more likely than men to experience homelessness before their 18th birthdays, but the data is unclear on this point. The PIT census data show that, as of January 2017, there were more homeless boys than homeless girls in Santa Clara County: 603 homeless male children versus 531 homeless female children. Nine percent of the females and six percent of the males included in the PIT survey said that they were under 18 when they first experienced homelessness. Those figures represent a statistical tie: they do not support the proposition that females are more likely than males to experience homelessness as children.

On the other hand, 14% of the women who took the SCU survey had their first experience of homelessness when they were less than 18 years of age. In contrast, only 6% of the men in the PIT survey experienced homelessness before they turned 18. That difference is statistically significant. Moreover, 22% of the women in the PIT census were under 18, but only 12% of the men in the PIT census were under 18. These facts suggest that childhood homelessness might be a bigger problem for girls than for boys, but additional research is needed to draw any firm conclusions in this regard.

Veteran Status

We asked survey respondents whether they had ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces. The PIT survey asked a similar question. Figure 4.4 presents the results. If one compares the (currently homeless) women who took the PIT survey with the (currently homeless) men who took the PIT survey, one might conclude that homeless men are much more likely to be veterans than homeless women: eleven percent versus two percent. However, 11% SCU survey respondents—who are all *formerly homeless* women—served in the armed forces. Thus, viewed in the aggregate, the data does not support a conclusion that homeless men and homeless women differ significantly in terms of veteran status.

**Figure 4.4
Service in Armed Forces**



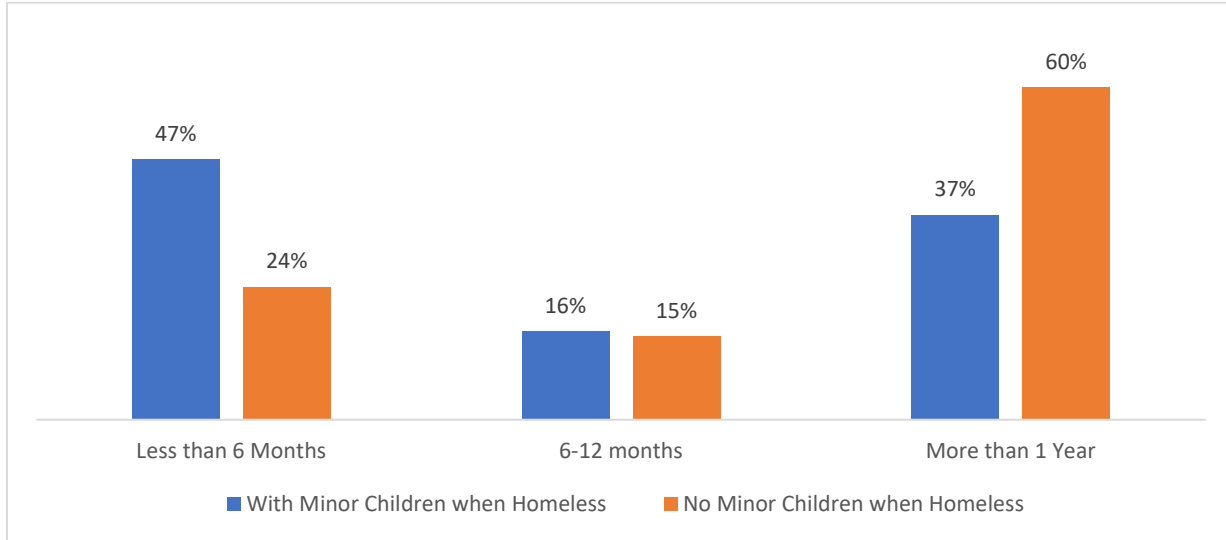
Presence of Minor Children

One of the most significant differences between homeless men and homeless women is that women are much more likely than men to be accompanied by minor children. The census data from the most recent point in time count show a total of 4,370 homeless adult males and 1,873 homeless adult females in Santa Clara County in January 2017. According to the PIT census data, sixteen percent of adult females were living in households with one or more minor children. In contrast, only 3% of adult males were living in households with one or more minor children.

Other data demonstrates that the 16% figure from the PIT census significantly understates the percentage of homeless women in Santa Clara County who are accompanied by minor children. We estimate that approximately 70-79 percent of the homeless women accompanied by minor children were not counted in the 2017 PIT census. The analysis in the section of the report on Undercounted Women explains in detail how we derived that estimate.

The SCU survey data shows that women with minor children make the transition from homelessness to stable housing more quickly than women without minor children. Figure 4.5 displays information from the SCU survey that correlates duration of homelessness with the presence of minor children. Women who were not accompanied by minor children when they were homeless were much more likely than women with minor children to remain homeless for more than one year (60% versus 37%). Similarly, women who were accompanied by minor children when they were homeless were much more likely than women without minor children to escape homelessness in less than six months (47% versus 24%). These differences are statistically significant.

**Figure 4.5
Minor Children and Duration of Homelessness**



The 2017 PIT report notes that prior point-in-time counts probably under-counted unaccompanied homeless children and transition-age youth due to the “hidden nature of youth homelessness.”^{xlvii} The County made a concerted effort in 2017 to find those hidden populations. As a result, the census numbers for unaccompanied children and transition-age youth increased significantly between 2015 and 2017. If the County makes a similar effort in 2019 to find the homeless women who are accompanied by minor children, the 2019 census will probably reveal much larger numbers of homeless women accompanied by minor children.

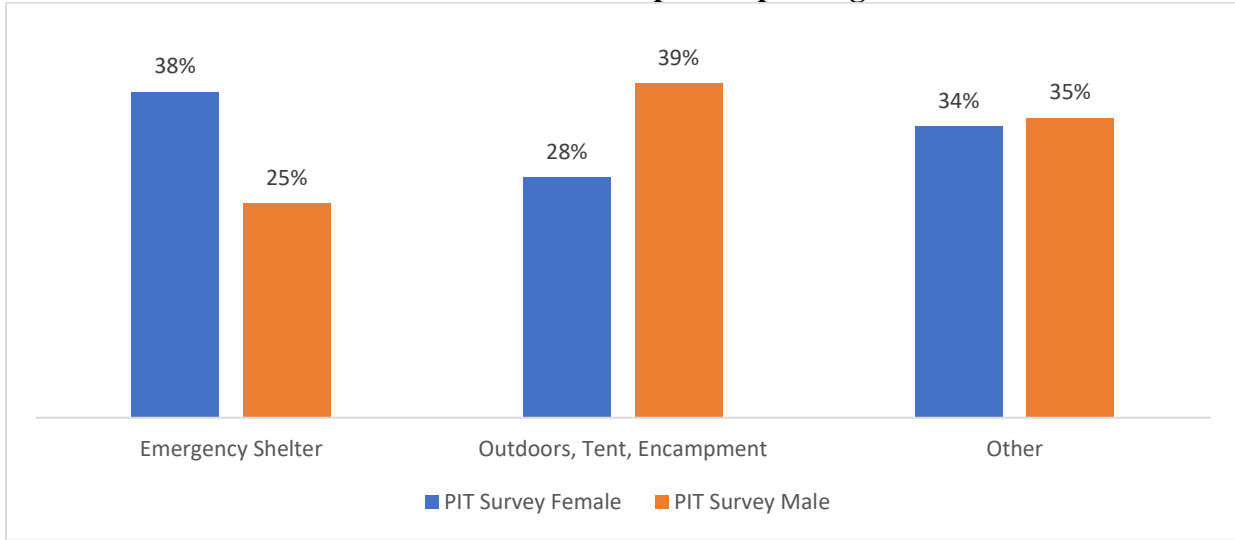
Conditions of Homelessness

The conditions that women experience while they are homeless differ in important respects from the conditions of male homelessness. This section focuses on three salient differences between male and female homelessness: 1) where they sleep at night; 2) threats to personal safety; and 3) matters related to health and hygiene.

Where People Experiencing Homelessness Sleep at Night

The PIT survey asked respondents: “Where were you staying on the night of January 24th?” Respondents were given thirteen options from which to choose. Figure 4.6 summarizes their responses. The data indicate that women are more likely than men to spend the night in an emergency shelter, at least in winter when the PIT survey was taken (38% versus 25%). That gender difference is statistically significant. In contrast, men are more likely than women to spend the night outdoors, in a tent, or in an encampment (39% versus 28%).^{xlviii} However, the observed difference regarding sleeping outdoors, in a tent, or in an encampment is not statistically significant.

Figure 4.6
Where Homeless People Sleep at Night



The SCU survey asked respondents: “When you were homeless, where did you sleep at night?” The survey instructed respondents to “check all that apply.” 290 women provided a total of 836 responses to that question. Table 4.7 summarizes their responses and compares the data from the two surveys. The column for the SCU survey includes two percentages: the first percentage uses 290 as a denominator; the one in parentheses uses 836 as a denominator. The figure in parentheses is a “weighted percentage” that accounts for the fact that many women provided multiple responses.

We estimate that approximately 36-48 percent of homeless women in the County were not counted in the PIT census. (That section explains in detail how we derived that estimate.) A comparison between the two columns in Table 4.7 helps shed light on the locations of homeless women who are under-counted in the PIT census. The SCU survey data shows that many homeless women spend nights in cars/RVs, in hotels/motels, with family or friends, or in abandoned buildings. Those women may be especially difficult for census takers to locate. For each of those categories, the weighted percentage from the SCU survey is significantly higher than the percentage derived from the PIT survey. These discrepancies indicate that the PIT census is under-counting homeless women who spend the night in cars/RVs, hotels/motels, abandoned buildings, or staying with family/friends. (Some of the women included in the family/friends category in the SCU survey – those who are “couch-surfing” – do not qualify as “homeless” for the PIT survey. However, some of the women in the family/friends category, and all the women in the other categories highlighted in this paragraph, do qualify as “homeless” for the PIT survey.)

Table 4.7
Where Homeless Women Sleep at Night

	SCU Survey (836 responses from 290 women)	PIT Survey Female (199 responses from 199 women)
Emergency Shelter	56% (19%)	38%
Outdoors/Tent/Encampment	48% (17%)	28%
Car/RV	46% (16%)	8%
Hotel/Motel	44% (15%)	9%
Family/Friends ^{xlix}	43% (15%)	9%
Transitional Housing	24% (8%)	3%
Public Facility	15% (5%)	3%
Abandoned Building	13% (4%)	0
Other	--	3%

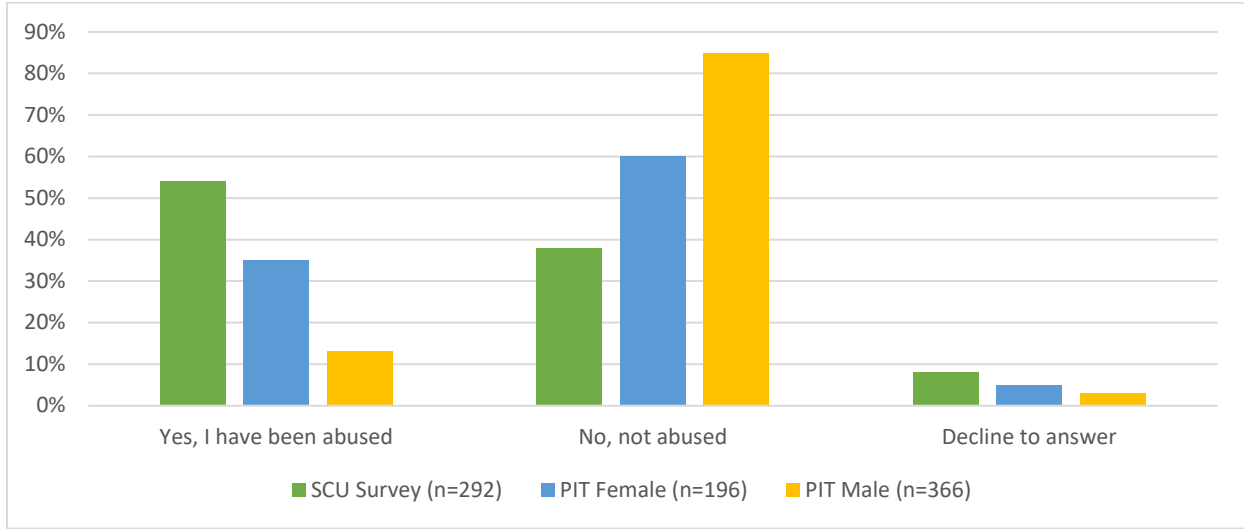
The discrepancy between the numbers in the two columns for the “transitional housing” category requires an explanation. It is unlikely that the PIT census is under-counting women in transitional housing facilities, since they are easily accessible to the census takers. However, homeless women who are sleeping in transitional housing facilities are well on their way to making a successful transition from homelessness to stable housing. Since the SCU survey focused on women who have found stable housing, we would expect that women who spent time in a transitional housing facility would be over-represented in the SCU survey population relative to other categories of homeless women.

Violence and Abuse

One of the most salient differences between homeless men and homeless women involves the extent to which they are subjected to violence and abuse. The PIT survey asked respondents: “Have you *ever* been physically, emotionally or sexually abused by a relative, or another person you have stayed with?” The question did not include any sort of time limit. 13 percent of men and 35 percent of women reported that they had been abused at some point in time. The difference between men and women is statistically significant.

The SCU survey asked: “*While you were homeless*, did you ever experience violence or abuse, harassment or threats to your personal safety?” Thus, the question focused more narrowly on the time when respondents were homeless. 54 percent of survey respondents answered “yes.” The difference between the formerly homeless women who took the SCU survey (54%) and the currently homeless women who took the PIT survey (35%) is statistically significant. Indeed, one might have expected a higher percentage of “yes” answers in the PIT survey than the SCU survey because the question in the PIT survey was not limited to the time when they were homeless.

**Figure 4.8
Violence/Abuse**



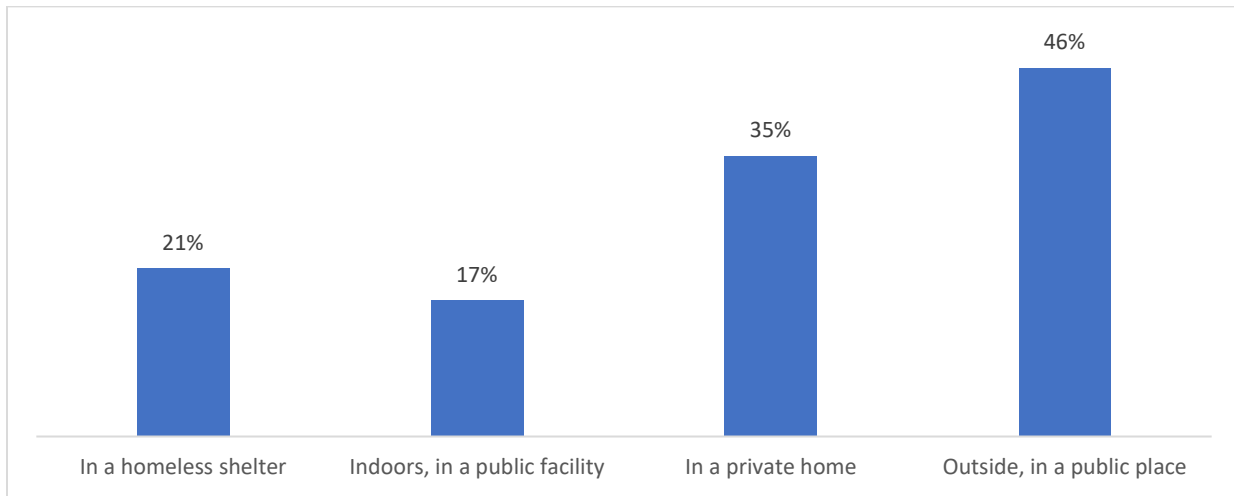
The data from the PIT survey very likely understates the prevalence of violence and abuse in the lives of homeless women. Numerous studies show that women are reluctant to speak about gender-based violence.ⁱ The SCU survey addressed that problem in two ways. First, we delivered surveys to respondents through the intermediary of trusted service providers. The relationship of trust between the service providers and the survey respondents probably encouraged them to be more forthcoming.ⁱⁱ Second, we surveyed formerly homeless women who are now in stable housing. In contrast, the PIT survey focused on currently homeless women. The fact that SCU survey respondents have found stable housing may make them less afraid to speak about their prior experiences. The combination of these factors suggests that the 54% figure from the SCU survey is probably more accurate than the 35% figure from the PIT survey. It bears emphasis, though, that the design of the PIT survey is constrained by federal requirements. For that reason, it is not possible for the PIT survey to focus on formerly homeless women. Therefore, in the future, the PIT survey will probably continue to understate the prevalence of violence and abuse in the lives of homeless women. Policy makers should take account of this problem when they are designing and implementing programs to address female homelessness.

The SCU survey asked women three other questions that are relevant to this topic. First, the survey asked: “When you were homeless, did you ever return to a home where you experienced violence or abuse or where you did not feel safe because you felt you had nowhere else to go?” 39% of the women said “yes.” The “yes” answers highlight a serious problem: the dearth of available housing options for homeless women contributes to the unacceptably high rate of gender-based violence in Santa Clara County by forcing women to choose between homelessness or returning to their abusers. By prioritizing victims of gender-based violence in the process of securing safe, stable housing for homeless people, the County could help reduce the incidence of gender-based violence and abuse.

The SCU survey also asked: “When you were homeless, did you ever decide not to go to a shelter because you felt that it was not a safe place for you to stay?” 45% of the women said “yes.” Thus, even though 56% of SCU Survey respondents said that they had spent one or more nights in an

emergency shelter when they were homeless, 45% of respondents avoided staying in emergency shelters because they did not feel safe there. These figures suggest that the County and/or service providers should take additional steps to protect the safety and security of homeless women who stay in emergency shelters, including by providing trauma informed and gender responsive policies, programs and services.

Figure 4.9
Where Abuse Occurs



Finally, the SCU survey asked: “If you were abused, where did this occur?” The survey listed four primary options and instructed women to “check all that apply.” 188 women provided a total of 223 responses. Figure 4.9 summarizes their responses.^{lii} The data shows that abuse of homeless women occurs in public spaces, in private homes, and in homeless shelters. It is not possible for the County constantly to police all the places where abuse could potentially occur. However, the County could reduce the incidence of violence and abuse by prioritizing victims of gender-based violence to move them as quickly as possible from homelessness into safe, stable housing.

Health Needs and Health Care Access

Health needs vary across gender identities, and across homeless women by age. Both surveys asked women about pregnancy during homelessness. Only 3 percent of female respondents who took the PIT survey said that they were pregnant at the time of the survey. In contrast, 20 percent of SCU survey respondents said that they were pregnant for at least some of the time when they were homeless. The difference between the two figures (3% versus 20%) may be partially explained by the fact that the PIT survey asked about pregnancy at a point in time, whereas the SCU survey asked about pregnancy during the entire period of homelessness. In any case, responses to the SCU survey suggest that pregnancy during homelessness is more common than one would infer based on responses to the PIT survey.

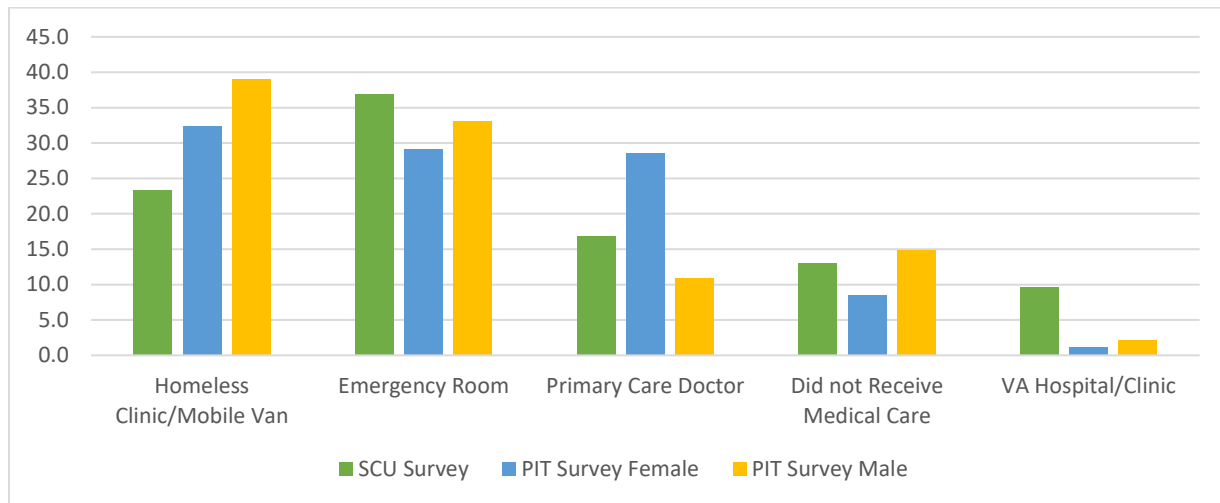
Fortunately, most of the SCU survey respondents who were pregnant when they were homeless received at least some medical care. Eighty-six percent of those who were pregnant said that they had “access to pre-natal care” during the pregnancy. Only about 9% of the women who were pregnant while homeless said that they “did not receive medical care” when they were homeless.

Information from the PIT survey related to medical care during pregnancy is not very illuminating because only six women who took the PIT survey were pregnant at the time of the survey.

The PIT survey asked respondents: “Where do you usually go for medical care?” The SCU survey asked: “When you were homeless, if you obtained medical care, how did you obtain it?” Both surveys presented a similar menu of options that respondents could choose from. Figure 4.10 lists those options and depicts the percentage of respondents in each group who selected each option.^{liii} The percentages displayed for the SCU survey are weighted to account for the fact that 258 survey respondents provided a total of 350 responses: about 1.4 responses per person. The weighting ensures that the percentages add up to 100. The percentages for the PIT survey are unweighted because PIT survey respondents each selected one choice (in response to a prompt that asked where you “usually” go).

If one compares the male PIT survey respondents with the female PIT survey respondents, homeless women are more likely than homeless men to rely on primary care doctors for their medical care: 29% versus 11%. That difference is statistically significant. Otherwise, though, the pattern of usage for different types of medical providers is similar for homeless men and homeless women.

Figure 4.10
Medical Care for Homeless People



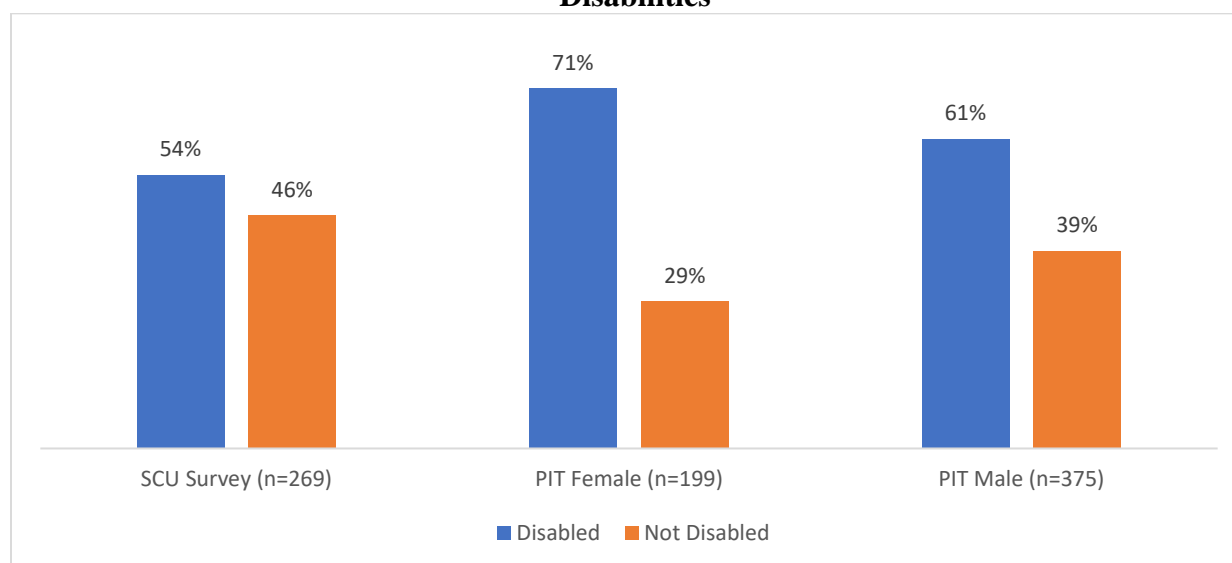
If one compares the formerly homeless women from the SCU survey with the currently homeless women from the PIT survey, two differences stand out. First, the formerly homeless women were more likely to visit a VA Hospital when they were homeless than the currently homeless women: 10% versus 1%. That result is not surprising because 11% of the SCU survey respondents are veterans, compared to 2% of the female PIT respondents. (See Figure 4.4 above.) The only other statistically significant difference between the two groups of women is that currently homeless women rely more heavily on primary care doctors than did the formerly homeless women when they were homeless. That result is somewhat surprising; additional research would be necessary to explain that result.

Additionally, the SCU survey asked women: “When you were homeless, did you ever find yourself without access to feminine hygiene products.” 40 percent of respondents said “yes.” The SCU survey also asked women: “When you were homeless, did you ever have to reuse feminine hygiene products.” 15 percent of respondents answered “yes” to that question. The PIT survey did not collect comparable information about homeless women.

Disabilities

Both the SCU survey and the PIT survey collected information about disabilities that affect homeless people. Figure 4.11 summarizes that information. Applied Survey Research (ASR), the contractor that performed the data analysis for the PIT survey, created a separate variable for disability based on its analysis of the PIT data. The PIT survey data depicted in Figure 4.11 uses the numbers from the disability variable that ASR created. SCU did its own analysis of the SCU survey data to derive an estimate of the percentage of SCU survey participants who have some disability.^{liv}

**Figure 4.11
Disabilities**

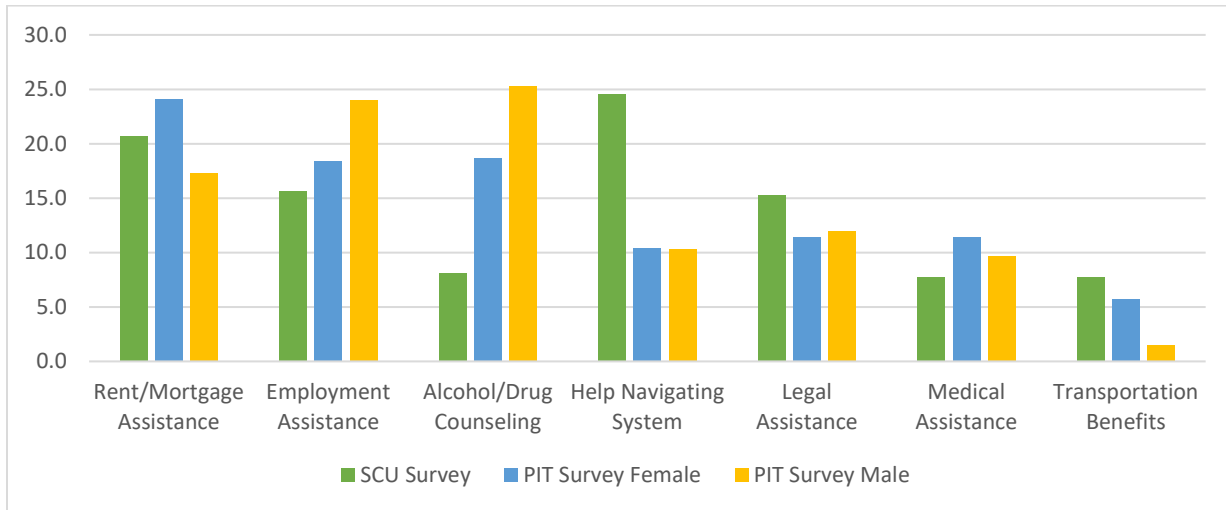


According to the PIT survey data, women experiencing homelessness are more likely to have a disability than homeless men (71 versus 61 percent), but that difference is not statistically significant. If we compare the women in the two survey populations, the (currently homeless) female PIT survey participants were much more likely to have a disability than the (formerly homeless) SCU survey participants (71 versus 54 percent); that difference is statistically significant. It is possible that women with disabilities face unique difficulties that inhibit a successful transition from homelessness to stable housing. If that were true, it would explain why the incidence of disability is much higher in the female PIT survey population than in the SCU survey population. However, the difference between the 71 percent figure for female PIT survey participants and the 54 percent figure for SCU survey participants may also be attributable to differences in the way the two surveys asked questions about disabilities. In any case, this issue merits further study.

Prevention of Homelessness

Both the SCU survey and the PIT survey asked respondents: “What might have prevented you from becoming homeless?” Both surveys instructed respondents to “check all that apply.” The PIT survey provided nine options; Figure 4.12 groups those nine options into seven categories. The SCU survey provided fourteen options; Figure 4.12 groups twelve of those options into the same seven categories. Two of the options listed on the SCU survey— “a higher wage” and “help paying for childcare”—do not fit neatly into any of the seven categories. We discuss those two issues separately after analyzing the data in Figure 4.12.^{lv}

Figure 4.12
What Could Have Prevented Homelessness?



After grouping entries into categories, we eliminated double-counting. For example, the SCU survey lists three options related to legal assistance: legal assistance for a family court matter, for a criminal matter, and for eviction proceedings. If one person checked all three boxes, we count that as one affirmative response, not three, because the three categories are combined. After eliminating double-counting, we weighted responses to account for the fact that SCU survey respondents, on average, gave 2.2 affirmative responses per person, compared to 1.6 affirmative responses per person for PIT females and 1.4 responses per person for PIT males. The data displayed in Figure 4.12 incorporates that weighting. For example, 38% of female PIT respondents said that “rent/mortgage” assistance would have been helpful, but the weighted percentage shown in Figure 4.12 is 24%. The 38% response rate is discounted by a factor of 1.6 because women in the PIT survey gave 1.6 affirmative responses per person. The weighting ensures that the total for all seven categories is “100” for each of the three survey groups.

If one analyzes gender differences within the PIT survey group, it appears that alcohol/drug counseling and employment assistance are more significant factors for men, whereas rent/mortgage assistance is a more significant factor for women. However, none of those gender differences is statistically significant. Indeed, focusing on gender comparisons within the PIT survey group, the only statistically significant gender difference is that women identified a need for transportation benefits at a higher rate than men.

Shifting, now, to a comparison between currently homeless women (in the PIT survey) and formerly homeless women (in the SCU survey), there are two statistically significant differences. First, women in the SCU survey population identified a need for “help navigating the system” at a much higher rate than women in the PIT survey group. Second, women in the PIT survey population identified a need for drug and alcohol counseling at a much higher rate than women in the SCU survey population. These results are open to different interpretations. One plausible conclusion is that formerly homeless women succeeded in finding housing because they received assistance from social workers who helped them navigate the system, whereas currently homeless women have not received that type of assistance and, perhaps, do not recognize how helpful it could be. Another plausible conclusion is that drug and alcohol addiction is a significant obstacle that makes it exceptionally difficult for addicts to make a successful transition from homelessness to stable housing.

One factor listed on the SCU survey that was not listed on the PIT survey is “a higher wage.” On a weighted percentage basis, that factor scored 19.1 on the SCU survey—less than “help navigating system” (24.6) or “rent/mortgage assistance” (20.7), but more than “employment assistance” (15.6). We know from other sources that there are wage disparities between men and women.^{lvi} However, we do not have sufficient information at this time to determine whether higher wages for women could be a significant factor in preventing homelessness. It would be helpful if the next PIT survey listed this factor under the “prevention” question to enable the County to collect information and analyze possible gender disparities.

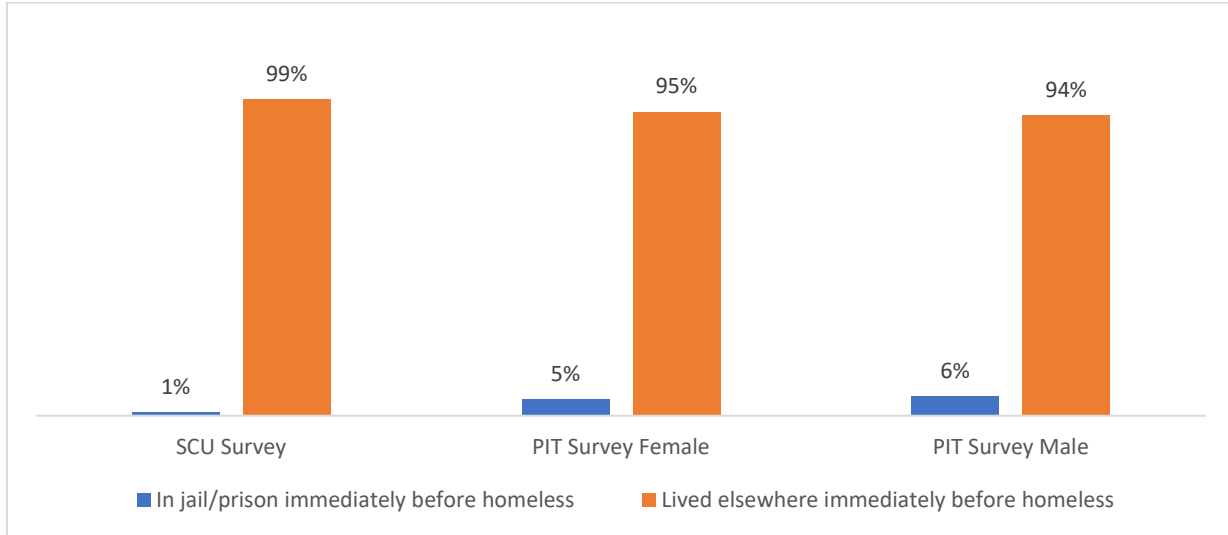
The SCU survey also listed “help paying for childcare” as a factor. Relatively few women identified help with childcare as a factor that might have prevented homelessness. On a weighted percentage basis, the childcare factor scored 7.5, compared to 7.8 for transportation benefits and 8.1 for alcohol/drug counseling. However, during focus group interviews, several women emphasized the absence of childcare as a significant factor that made it difficult for them to transition successfully from homelessness to stable housing.

Criminal Justice System

Another important gender difference is that homeless men are much more likely than homeless women to have spent time in jail or prison. The PIT survey asked respondents: “Have you spent a night in jail in the last 12 months?” 32% of the men said “yes,” compared to only 16% of the women. That difference is statistically significant.

The SCU survey did not ask respondents about jail time in the past 12 months. However, both surveys asked respondents: “Immediately before you became homeless, where were you living?” “Jail or prison” was one option they could select. Figure 4.13 summarizes the responses. The data in Figure 4.13 suggest that there is not a significant difference between men (6%) and women (5%) in this respect. Although there is a difference between the formerly homeless women included in the SCU Survey and the currently homeless women included in the PIT Survey, that difference is not statistically significant.

**Figure 4.13
From Jail or Prison to Homelessness**

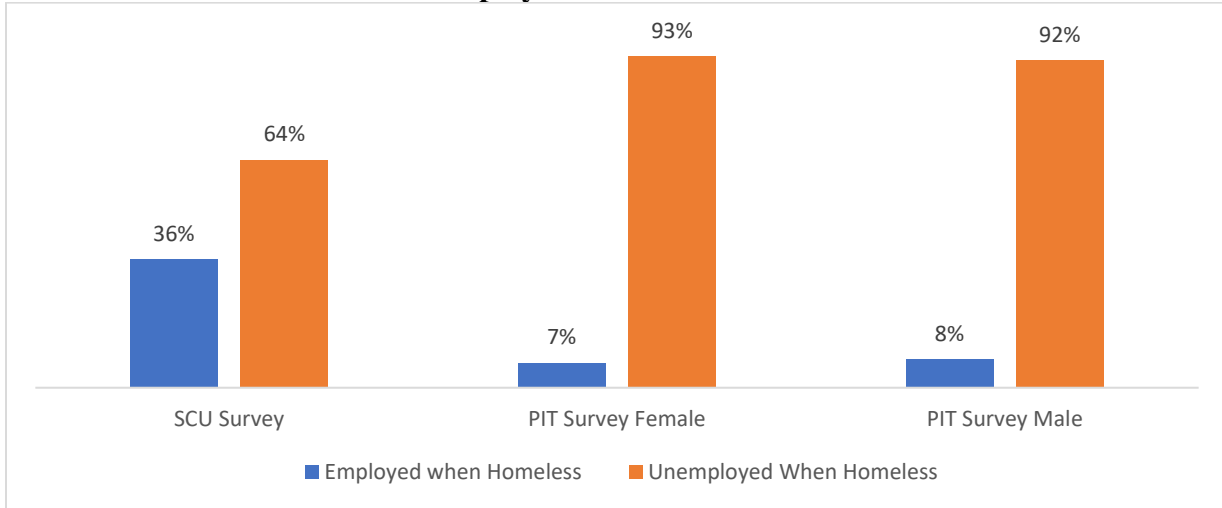


Income and Employment

There are no significant differences regarding the employment status of currently homeless men versus currently homeless women (8% versus 7%). However, the formerly homeless women in the SCU survey were employed at a much higher rate *while they were homeless* than the currently homeless women in the PIT Survey (36% versus 7%). Figure 4.14 presents the relevant data. The SCU data is based on responses to the question: “When you were homeless, were you employed?” The PIT data is based on responses to the question: “What is your current employment status?” The difference between formerly homeless and currently homeless individuals is statistically significant.

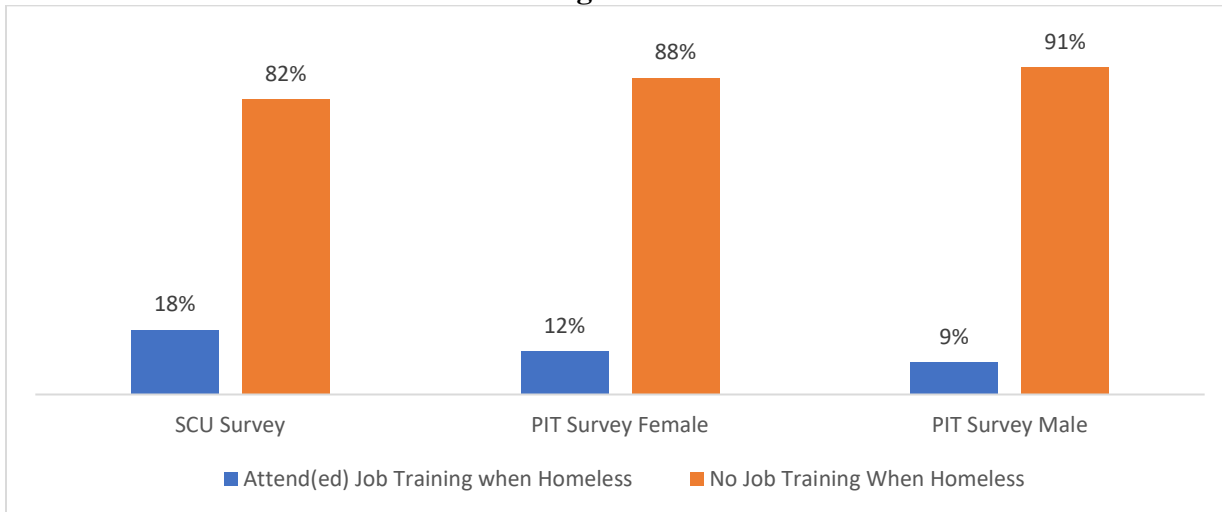
The data suggest that employment may be an important factor in facilitating a successful transition from homelessness to stable housing. Even part-time employment with a relatively low wage may be helpful. Only 9% of the women in the SCU Survey who were employed when they were homeless worked more than 40 hours per week. Only 3% earned more than \$3000 per month when they were homeless. Despite working part-time for low wages, though, the women in the SCU survey made a successful transition to stable housing.

Figure 4.14
Unemployment and Homelessness



As with employment, Figure 4.15 shows that there are no significant gender differences in the rate at which homeless men and women enroll in job training programs (9% versus 12%). Moreover, differences between formerly and currently homeless women are not statistically significant in this respect. In Figure 4.15, the SCU data is based on responses to the question: “Did you attend any type of job training program while you were homeless?” The PIT data shows the percentage of respondents who checked a box for “job training” in response to the question: “Are you currently using any of the following services/assistance?”

Figure 4.15
Job Training and Homelessness



In sum, the available data could be construed to imply that having a job while homeless is a better predictor of a person’s successful transition to stable housing than enrolling in a job training program. However, we caution against placing too much weight on this conclusion because other explanations of the data are also possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Dedicate funds for Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) to reduce the number of survivors experiencing homelessness, facing housing insecurity or staying in abusive relationships. By prioritizing this funding, the County of Santa Clara will not only decrease the number of survivors and children facing homelessness but reduce intimate partner violence.

- Similar to Housing First, DVHF focuses on getting survivors of domestic violence into stable housing as quickly as possible and then providing the necessary support as they rebuild their lives.
- DVHF is unique from Housing First in the way in which it provides support through survivor-driven advocacy, flexible financial assistance, housing stability, and community engagement. Mobile advocates meet where it is safe and convenient for survivors, accompanying them to appointments, acting as a liaison with landlords, and negotiating leases. Flexible financial assistance is determined by the survivor in whatever way will best help retain housing.
- DVHF increases safety for survivors and their children, provides housing stability, dignity, well-being, and connection.
- Survivors and their children are safe, more stable, self-sufficient, and empowered to create lives free from violence.

Recommendation 2: Adopt measures that improve confidentiality, safety and physical security for women and women with children experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.

- Implement targeted gender responsive policies and practices that promote and create safety for women and girls in shelter and housing facilities and programs.
- The Office of Women’s Policy will collaborate and partner with the Office of Supportive Housing, the Continuum of Care, domestic/sexual violence organizations and homeless/housing providers to implement policies and practices that promote and create safety for all residents who enter the system, and targeted safety and confidentiality protocols for survivors of violence.
- Provide training to programs to ensure policies and procedures are gender responsive, trauma and healing-informed, and meet the needs of women experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure women leaving jail have access to housing resources.

Recommendation 3: Supplement the biennial Homeless Census and Survey to ensure complete and accurate information about women experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity in the County is gathered.

- The Office of Women’s Policy will convene key stakeholders to identify other sources of existing data on women’s homelessness and measurements of success for ending homelessness for women. The County made a concerted effort in the 2017 census to find and count unaccompanied children and transition-age youth. The County should make a similar effort in the 2019 census to count the “hidden populations” of homeless women.

- Continue efforts to ensure the survey is gender responsive and includes questions and factors that are unique to women’s homelessness such as: lack of affordable child care, insufficient income, death of a spouse, and others that were included in the Santa Clara University survey.
- Ensure that canvassing for the census includes spaces and locations where “hidden populations” of homeless women may be living.

Recommendation 4: Increase access to safe and affordable housing for women and those fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence.

- Consider increasing the amount of federal HUD dollars that are dedicated to programs and services for women, women with minor children, and survivors of violence in Santa Clara County.
- Continue to discuss and develop a supplemental tool that can be used with the VI-SPDAT to assess for safety and risk in the coordinated entry system.

Recommendation 5: Utilize the County of Santa Clara CEDAW Task Force to ensure a gender responsive framework is incorporated into budget and policy decisions. Develop a plan to end homelessness for women and women with minor children within five years or less. This plan may include legal assistance, child care, job training and self-sufficiency programs for women in addition to targeted housing initiatives such as Domestic Violence Housing First. Work at the community level to solve the problem of women’s homelessness.

Recommendation 6: Address the root causes of homelessness for women. It’s more than providing affordable housing; we must partner and collaborate to address women’s poverty, violence, discrimination, mental and physical health, equal pay and fair wages. Connecting the dots and addressing the root causes will go a long way in helping end homelessness for women. We must make it simpler to give women the tools they need for getting their basic needs met for themselves and their children.

Recommendation 7: Use an intersectional approach in the creation and evaluation of housing policies and services. An intersectional approach recognizes the interaction between gender identity, race, sexual orientation, immigration status, language access, and other categories of difference that impact access to opportunity and housing services.

- An intersectional approach would recognize the inability of undocumented women to access the full scope of government housing resources or the higher barriers to income generation for limited English-speaking women - and would invest in programs that address these barriers.
- Collect disaggregated data that can be analyzed by key categories like gender and race; gender, race, and sexual orientation; gender, race, and immigration status; etc.
- Recognize that many immigrant women access the cash-based, informal economy. Create programs that can assist these women to achieve safe, stable housing.

Recommendation 8: Increase access to public benefits, health care coverage, and victim restitution for homeless women. Ensure survivors of gender-based violence and victims of crime have access to benefits that can help them get out of poverty, and crime victim compensation for the harm they have suffered so that they are not indefinitely saddled with the debt of being abused.

- Shelters and housing providers help homeless women and women with minor children enroll in MediCal and MediCaid, and public benefit programs such as CalFresh, WIC, general assistance, etc.
- Victim service and homeless providers can help victims of crime understand the avenues to compensation that might be open to them – such as criminal restitution and/or victims of crime funding which can be used for housing-related assistance- and provide help and resources on how to navigate those processes.

Recommendation 9: Continue to prioritize and address the linkage between homelessness and intimate partner violence, including the following proposals from the 2017 Santa Clara County Intimate Partner Violence Blue Ribbon Task Force report:

- Provide funding for innovative housing models for survivors of violence.
- Gather and analyze data and evaluate our progress in assisting survivors “fleeing/attempting to flee” domestic violence in Santa Clara County.
- Develop an educational “know your housing rights” campaign for women and women with children and for providers assisting them.
- Increase the number of financial education and economic security programs for survivors.
- The Office of Women’s Policy will convene the appropriate stakeholders to identify policies, procedures and programs that would allow survivors and children to stay in the home if it is safe to do so, through the courts and other interventions.

Recommendation 10: The Office of Supportive Housing and the Office of Women’s Policy will work together with domestic/sexual violence and women’s housing providers to develop resources and materials, including online information, for women and women with children in Santa Clara County that are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS THROUGH A HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

In 2014, the U.S. government’s Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) emphasized the importance of addressing homelessness from a human rights perspective that focuses on the diverse needs of homeless individuals, rather than on the financial burden of homelessness.^{lvii} In 2015, the County of Santa Clara Office of Human Relations and its Human Relations Commission also issued a report addressing the affordable housing crisis in the County, and recommended the incorporation of a human rights framework to address this issue. That report mentions that human rights law provides “a powerful framework for local government agencies and authorities to evaluate existing laws and policies as well as develop programs to [...] strengthen human rights in local communities.”^{lviii}

*“Increasingly viewed as a commodity,
housing is most importantly a human right.”^{lix}*

The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to housing, Leilani Farha, has observed, “If housing were approached as a human right, then homelessness [...] would necessarily be recognized as the failure of States to implement it. This shift in perspective moves us past the initial urge to blame the victim and instead focuses attention on State action or inaction.”^{lx} A rights-based approach with a gender lens would focus the County’s attention on the root causes and detrimental effects of homelessness on women.^{lxi} According to Ms. Farha, these causes include “States abandoning the responsibility for social protection in the context of unprecedented urbanization; implementing laws and policies that discriminate against homeless people; and failing to adequately regulate real-estate markets, land distribution and private actors in keeping with human rights obligations.”^{lxii}

The human rights framework recognizes that federal, state, and local governments play complementary roles in addressing homelessness.^{lxiii} According to the UN Committee on Discrimination Against Women, the women’s human rights framework

encompass[es] all areas of State action, including the legislative, executive and judicial branches, at the federal, national, sub-national, local and decentralized levels as well as privatized services. [It] require[s] the formulation of legal norms, [...] the design of public policies, programs, institutional frameworks and monitoring mechanisms, aimed at eliminating all forms of [discrimination and] gender-based violence against women, whether committed by State or non-State actors.^{lxiv}

“Housing is the basis of stability and security for an individual or family.”^{lxv}

The human rights framework can be divided into three main categories: the obligation to *respect* human rights, the obligation to *protect* human rights, and the obligation to *guarantee/fulfill* human rights.

1. *Respect:*

The obligation to respect human rights requires refraining from taking any action that would, either directly or indirectly, interfere with the enjoyment of a human right. This is known as a “negative obligation.” In the context of women and homelessness, this obligation entails, for example, the prohibition of all forms of discrimination and gender-based violence against women, the prohibition of forced evictions, denying women security of tenure, denying women housing that is accessible to facilities essential for health, education, security, and nutrition, and denying them affordable, habitable, accessible, adequately situated and culturally appropriate housing.

2. *Protect*

The obligation to protect human rights requires actively preventing private parties from interfering with the enjoyment of human rights. As it pertains to women experiencing homelessness, the human rights framework requires the adoption of positive measures to prevent all forms of discrimination and gender-based violence in purpose or effect in the private sphere.

3. *Fulfill*

The obligation to fulfill human rights requires the adoption of all necessary legislative, administrative, budgetary, judicial, or other measures to fully realize human rights, including the right to adequate housing. For example, the human rights framework requires housing policies that address and prevent the causes of homelessness for women, including discrimination and gender-based violence. Furthermore, it requires the adoption of measures aimed at ensuring that women fully enjoy other related human rights, such as the rights to health, access to justice and due process, personal integrity, and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

What is the Human Right to Adequate Housing?

“The human right to adequate housing is more than just four walls and a roof. It is the right of every woman, man, and youth and child to gain and sustain a safe and secure home and community in which to live in peace and with dignity.”^{lxvi}

The application of a gender and human rights lens to homelessness first requires an understanding of the human right to adequate housing. Probably the most common misconception associated with the human right to adequate housing is that it requires the government to build free housing for the entire population.^{lxvii} There is no such obligation. The human right to adequate housing requires governments to adopt, for example, measures to prevent homelessness, prohibit forced evictions, address discrimination and gender-based violence as causes of homelessness, focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, ensure security of tenure to all, and guarantee that housing is adequate.^{lxviii}

Relevant Human Rights Instruments

The following excerpts from seven international human rights law instruments provide the legal framework that recognizes the human right to adequate housing^{lxix}:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25:

*Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including [...] **housing** and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his [or her] control.^{lxx}*

- International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
Article 11.1 (signed^{lxxi} by the United States in 1977, but not ratified):
*The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living [...], including adequate [...] **housing**, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right [...].^{lxxii}*
- Convention on the Elimination of the Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
Article 14(2)(h) (signed by the United States in 1980):
*States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women [and ensure them the right to] enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to **housing**, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.^{lxxiii}*
- Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Article 5(e)(iii) (ratified by the United States in 1994):
*States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, color, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of [...] economic, social, and cultural rights, in particular [...] the right to **housing**.^{lxxiv}*
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
Article 27(3) (signed by the United States in 1995, but not ratified):
*States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programs, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and **housing**.^{lxxv}*
- Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
Article 43(1)(d) (the United States has not signed or ratified this treaty)
*Migrant workers shall enjoy equality of treatment with nationals of the State of employment in relation to [...] [a]ccess to **housing**, including social housing schemes, and protection against exploitation in respect of rents.^{lxxvi}*
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Article 28 (signed by the United States in 2009, but not ratified):
*States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate [...] **housing**, and to the*

*continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability, [including ensuring] access by persons with disabilities to **public housing** programs.*^{lxxvii}

The U.S. Supreme Court has declared that human rights standards can serve as persuasive authority and as sources of “evolving standards of decency.”^{lxxviii}

The Seven Elements of the Human Right to Adequate Housing

The human right to adequate housing can be better understood by dividing it into the following seven elements or criteria, developed by the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights^{lxxix}:

1. Legal security of tenure.

Notwithstanding the type of tenure (rental, owner, or other), all persons should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats. Lack of legal security of tenure is particularly problematic for women who do not have title to their homes and are therefore more vulnerable to being evicted when their relationship with the title-holder - typically a husband, partner, or father – is broken.^{lxxx} If the relationship with the title-holder is severed, for example in cases of domestic or intra-partner violence, or the death of a partner or spouse, then a woman who does not have her name on the lease or holds other legal title is at risk of being evicted and is placed in a situation of vulnerability and uncertainty. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to violence, including sexual violence, before, during and after an eviction.

2. Availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure.

An adequate house must contain certain facilities essential for health, security, comfort and nutrition. This includes access to safe drinking water, sanitation infrastructure, energy for cooking, heating, lighting, food storage, refuse disposal, and emergency services.

3. Affordability.

Adequate housing must be affordable. If the cost threatens or compromises the occupants’ enjoyment of other basic needs and human rights, then the housing is inadequate. Housing-related costs must be generally commensurate with income levels. When women do not earn equal pay for equal work when compared to men, their ability to afford adequate housing diminishes. Measures aimed at addressing the wage gap, as well as providing housing subsidies, improving women’s access to financing, and preventing unreasonable rent increases would also help protect women’s right to adequate housing.

4. Habitability.

Adequate housing must be habitable. That is, housing must provide adequate space and guarantee women’s physical safety and provide protection from the elements, threats to health, and other structural hazards.

5. *Accessibility.*

Adequate housing must be accessible. Disadvantaged and marginalized groups must be ensured some degree of priority in housing. This includes women with small children, the elderly, and those with persistent physical, mental or emotional conditions. Housing law and policy should take fully into account the special housing needs of these groups.

6. *Location.*

Adequate housing must be situated so as to allow access to employment options, healthcare services, schools, childcare centers and other social facilities. Furthermore, environmental and health risks can also affect the adequacy of housing. When women cannot afford housing in safe, accessible and environmentally healthy locations and communities, they and their children often end up being in further risk of violence, poverty, and poor educational, healthcare, and work opportunities.

7. *Cultural adequacy.*

Lastly, adequate housing must be culturally adequate, meaning it must respect and take into account the expression of cultural identity.

The human right to adequate housing “should be seen as the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity.”^{lxxxix}

The Problem of Affordability in the County

In the County of Santa Clara, the element of affordability is the most salient of these seven elements of the human right to housing. Housing is affordable when a household pays no more than 30% of its total income for housing costs.^{lxxxii} More specifically, housing costs cannot threaten or compromise the occupant’s enjoyment of other human rights.^{lxxxiii}

A 2015 study by the County of Santa Clara Office of Human Relations and its Human Relations Commission found that affordable local housing was the most significant concern for people in the County.^{lxxxiv} The County of Santa Clara and cities within the County have developed several legislative and policy measures aimed at addressing the region’s housing affordability crisis,^{lxxxv} most notably the approval of a \$950 million bond for affordable housing.^{lxxxvi} The California state legislature is also developing its own solutions.^{lxxxvii}

Nevertheless, the crisis persists. As of August 2016, the median household income in the County of Santa Clara County was \$95,300.^{lxxxviii} As of the first quarter of 2016, the median market rent in the County for a two-bedroom unit was \$2,850.^{lxxxix} Using a 30% of income standard of affordability, a household would need to earn \$114,000 per year to afford to rent a two-bedroom unit.^{xc} Therefore, the median household income in the County is insufficient to afford a two-bedroom unit.

The California Housing Partnership Corporation reported in 2015 that, “a renter household needs to earn nearly five times the local minimum wage in order to afford average asking rents in Santa

Clara County.”^{xc1} Furthermore, average rental prices exceed HUD’s (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development) fair market rate assessment of a two-bedroom rental unit by more than \$600 per month.^{xcii} Though Santa Clara County owns and operates 2,600 affordable housing units, the County needs more than 60,000 additional affordable units to meet the needs of extremely low and very low-income renters living within the County’s jurisdiction.^{xciii} The average wait for a household to receive an affordable housing voucher is 8-10 years; all waiting lists are currently closed.^{xciv} The extent of the waiting list exemplifies the desperate need for more affordable housing within the County.

This affordable housing crisis has serious implications for the enjoyment of other human rights of women in the County, as will be discussed in the next section.

How Does Homelessness Affect the Enjoyment of Women’s Human Rights?

“All human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.”^{xcv}

Using data obtained from our survey, the following is a description of some of the ways homelessness negatively affects the enjoyment women’s human rights in the County, including the rights to: (1) health; (2) access to justice and due process, (3) a life without physical, mental, and emotional violence; and (4) the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their socioeconomic status. Chapters III and IV will address in more detail some of the negative impacts homelessness has on women in the County.

Impact on the Right to Health and Access to Healthcare

The human right to health and access to healthcare is recognized in the following international human rights law instruments:^{xcvi}

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 25)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Arts. 12 and 14)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Art. 12)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (Art. 24)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Art. 5)
- Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance (Art. 7)
- Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, “Protocol Of San Salvador” (Art. 10)
- American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (Art. XI)
- Inter-American Convention Against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance (Art. 7)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 25)

Poor health is both a cause and a result of homelessness.^{xcvii} A serious injury or illness can create huge medical expenses and forces people to choose between healthcare costs and rent payments.

Almost nineteen percent (18.5%) of women surveyed reported a medical factor (either drug or alcohol use; medical illness or expenses; mental health issues, or a disability) as the primary factor that caused them to become homeless. See Figures 3.5 and 3.6.

Homelessness has a negative impact on access to nutrition, personal hygiene, reproductive and primary health care, and other health needs of women. Those who need consistent medical care for chronic conditions are often unable to obtain it because they lack regular access to a doctor. Like all women, women experiencing homelessness are at risk of sexual abuse and intimate partner violence, and may experience higher rates of violence and abuse due to a lack of safe and secure housing. Women experiencing homelessness who suffer from mental illness or substance use are at an even higher risk of sexual and intimate partner violence and abuse, and may be less likely or able to seek help.^{xcviii}

Fifty-four percent (54%) of women surveyed reported having some form of disability while they were homeless.

Women experiencing homelessness are also more likely to receive inadequate prenatal care and consequently may experience pregnancy complications – including low birth weight and early deliveries.^{xcix}

Twenty percent (20%) of survey respondents were pregnant for at least some of the time they were homeless.

Lack of access to feminine hygiene products (because of the costs involved or for other reasons) also poses serious health risks for women experiencing homelessness.

Forty percent (40%) of survey respondents lacked access to feminine hygiene products at least once when they were homeless.

Fifteen percent (15%) had to reuse feminine hygiene products.

Impact on the Right to Access to Justice and Due Process

The human right to access to justice and due process is recognized in international human rights law instruments such as:

- American Convention on Human Rights (Arts. 8 and 25)
- Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons (Arts. 4 and 24)
- Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance (Art. 10)

- Inter-American Convention Against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance (Art. 10)
- Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Art. 3)

The right to counsel is one particular aspect of the right to access to justice and due process that is especially significant for women facing eviction proceedings. In most jurisdictions in the U.S.,^c the right to counsel does not extend to eviction proceedings.^{ci} Nevertheless, studies have shown that unrepresented indigent tenants are much more likely to be evicted than those who have legal representation.^{cii} According to service providers in Santa Clara County, landlords will often evict survivors of domestic violence and then list “disturbing the peace” as the reason for eviction in an attempt to avoid violating applicable laws, and some of these women do not have the economic means to hire an eviction attorney. The result of such eviction cases often leaves indigent women homeless. Additionally, providing legal counsel in eviction proceedings could potentially save the County millions of dollars in related costs. A 2016 study on behalf of the New York City Bar Association’s Pro Bono and Legal Services Committee found that providing free legal counsel to low-income tenants facing eviction would save that city hundreds of millions of dollars.^{ciii}

Sixteen percent (16%) of respondents said legal assistance in their eviction proceedings might have prevented them from becoming homeless.

Seventeen percent (17%) said legal assistance in family law matters might have prevented them from becoming homeless.^{civ}

Impact on the Right to Live Without Physical, Mental, and Emotional Violence

The human right to personal integrity, which includes the right to live without physical, mental, and emotional violence, is recognized in the following international human rights law instruments:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 3)
- American Convention on Human Rights (Art. 5)
- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women “Convention of Belem do Para” (Art. 4)
- Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons (Arts. 4 and 12)
- Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance (Art. 4)
- Inter-American Convention Against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance (Art. 4)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Art. 5)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 17)

In general, gender-based violence against women is an obstacle to achieving equality between women and men as well as to women’s enjoyment of human rights.^{cv} Violence (including domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, harassment and other forms of gender-based violence)

is also one of the primary causes of homelessness for women in the County of Santa Clara.^{cvii} Violence is also an effect of homelessness. Studies show that the lack of shelter and privacy that is associated with inadequate housing situations leads to increased exposure to sexual abuse and other forms of violence.^{cvii} In addition, women who become homeless as a result of intimate partner violence may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety disorders; they need access to safe housing as well as trauma-informed and gender responsive services that include access to mental health services.^{cviii}

The percentage of homeless women victimized by violence is estimated to vary from 30%-90%.^{cix} Also, fear of becoming homeless and not being able to provide adequate living conditions for their children might compel women to remain in abusive relationships.^{cx} Furthermore, domestic violence contributes to repeat episodes of homelessness by decreasing a woman's chance of receiving a housing voucher, decreasing job stability, and interfering with her ability to form supportive relationships.^{cxii} According to service providers in the County, landlords often refuse to rent to women who are survivors of domestic violence because landlords are afraid the abuser will cause trouble in the apartment complex.

In addition to federal laws such as the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),^{cxiii} which in 2013 expanded housing protections to survivors of domestic violence in all federal subsidized housing programs, state and local laws in California also recognize housing rights of domestic violence survivors.^{cxiii} A recent report by the Santa Clara County Intimate Partner Violence Blue Ribbon Task Force has addressed this connection between intimate partner violence and homelessness, and recommended actions to ensure the housing rights of victims of violence.^{cxiv}

Fifty four percent (54%) of respondents said they experienced violence or abuse, harassment or threats to their personal safety, while they were homeless.

Thirty-nine percent (39%) returned to a home where they experienced violence or abuse or where they did not feel safe because they felt they had nowhere else to go.

Forty-five percent (45%) decided not to go to a shelter on at least one occasion while they were homeless because they felt that it was not a safe place to stay.

Impact on the Right to Live Free from Discrimination and Criminalization on the Basis of One's Socio-economic Status

The following international human rights instruments recognize the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of economic or social status:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Arts. 2 and 7)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Art. 26)
- International Convention on All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Art. 2)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Art. 2)
- American Convention on Human Rights (Art. 1)

- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women “Convention of Belem do Para” (Art. 9)
- Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, “Protocol Of San Salvador” (Art. 3)
- American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (Art. II)
- Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Art. 7)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (Art. 2)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Art. 1)

Additionally, international human rights law recognizes the right to dignity, freedom of movement, privacy, property, and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, all of which are related to the prohibition of the criminalization of homelessness.^{cxv}

Homeless individuals often face criminal punishment due to their socio-economic status (their lack of housing) and not their behavior. According to several studies, many jurisdictions make it a crime to camp in public, sleep in public, beg in public, loiter, sit down or lie down in public, sleep in vehicles, and share food.^{cxvi} A 2015 UC Berkeley study, for example, lists what they term “anti-homeless” laws in various cities throughout California, including several in the County of Santa Clara (San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, and Palo Alto).^{cxvii} Some of these laws may not have a direct discriminatory intent against homeless individuals, but are selectively enforced against this population, thus creating a disparate effect or impact. Studies suggest that enforcement of these laws is the most expensive and least effective way of addressing homelessness.^{cxviii} Such laws are also ineffective because they do not address the underlying causes of homelessness and instead worsen the problem by adding expenses and disrupting stability.^{cxix}

International human rights monitors have recognized criminalization of homelessness as a violation of the United States’ human rights obligations.^{cxx} The UN Human Rights Committee^{cxxi} has noted with concern that such criminalization of homelessness in states, counties, and cities across the United States “raises concerns of discrimination and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.”^{cxxii} Several other human rights monitors have expressed a similar concern after visiting the United States, including the Special Rapporteurs on the Rights to Water and Sanitation,^{cxxiii} Adequate Housing,^{cxxiv} Extreme Poverty,^{cxxv} and Racism.^{cxxvi}

In 2012, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) published a joint report agreeing with the conclusions and recommendations of these international human rights entities.^{cxxvii} Their report noted that, in addition to raising constitutional issues, criminalization of homelessness may “violate international human rights law, specifically the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,”^{cxxviii} which are two treaties the U.S. has ratified. Since then, the USICH has repeatedly addressed criminalization of homelessness as a human rights violation.^{cxxix}

These are the percentages of the 295 women surveyed by SCU who said they had been “*harassed by police, arrested or cited*” for the following acts while being homeless:

County of Santa Clara Gender and Homelessness Study

- Living in vehicle 22%
- Sleeping in public 21%
- Camping in public 12%
- Loitering 12%
- Sitting or lying down in public 9%
- Storing personal belongings in public 7%
- Begging 6%

UNCOUNTED WOMEN IN THE 2017 POINT IN TIME CENSUS

Available evidence demonstrates that the 2017 point in time (PIT) census under-counted homeless women in Santa Clara County and under-counted sub-groups of homeless women. We estimate that approximately 36-48 percent of the adult homeless women in the County were not counted in the 2017 PIT census. Additionally, we estimate that approximately 70-79 percent of the homeless women with minor children were not counted in the 2017 PIT census and that about 50-62 percent of the homeless women who are survivors of gender-based violence were not counted in the 2017 PIT census. This section summarizes the evidence and explains how we derived these estimates.

Evidence that the Census Under-Counted Homeless Women

The “Home Not Found” report concluded that the population of “Santa Clara County residents who experienced homelessness in part or all of the six years from 2007 through 2012” was about half male and half female.^{cxxx} The 2017 PIT census counted 4370 adult homeless men and 1873 adult homeless women:^{cxxxi} a ratio of 70 percent men and 30 percent women. Other evidence suggests that the 50/50 ratio from the Home Not Found Report is closer to the true figure than the 70/30 ratio from the 2017 census data.

The 2017 PIT report notes that prior census efforts under-counted unaccompanied homeless children and transition-age youth due to the “hidden nature of youth homelessness.”^{cxxxii} Homeless children and transition-age youth tend to remain hidden because they are especially vulnerable. Similarly, other studies demonstrate that homeless women tend to be more hidden than homeless men because women are more vulnerable.^{cxxxiii} Given that homeless women are more likely to remain hidden than homeless men, it makes sense that homeless women would be under-counted in the PIT census.

The researchers who prepared the Home Not Found report made great efforts to find the hidden populations of homeless women. In contrast, inherent limitations in the PIT census process—in particular, the requirement to complete the census count in two days—make it extremely difficult to find the hidden population of homeless women in the context of conducting the PIT census. Therefore, the 50/50 ratio from the Home Not Found report is probably closer to the true figure than the 70/30 ratio from the 2017 census data.

Estimating the Number of Uncounted Homeless Women

Prior studies have shown that homeless women are frequently “moving among temporary living arrangements, or living out of sight in abandoned cars, or squatter housing.”^{cxxxiv} Thus, for example, a homeless woman might spend one night on a friend’s couch, the next night in an emergency shelter, and the next night sleeping in her car. Under the HUD definition of homelessness, such a woman would be considered “homeless” when she is sleeping in her car or in an emergency shelter, but she would not be “homeless” when she is sleeping on a friend’s couch. Regardless, she would qualify as “homeless” for the Home Not Found report because she met the HUD definition of homelessness for two of those three nights. However, for the PIT census she would not qualify as “homeless” if she happened to be sleeping on a friend’s couch for the two nights when the census was conducted. Thus, although the PIT census and the Home Not Found

report both used the same formal definition of homelessness, the practical application of that definition is different in different contexts. We must account for this factor in estimating the number of homeless women who were not counted in the 2017 census.

We estimate that women comprise about 40-45 percent of the adults who qualify as “homeless” for the PIT census. This estimate is based on two key factors: 1) the Home Not Found report’s 50/50 ratio is fairly accurate because the authors of that report were very successful in finding hidden homeless populations; and 2) contextual differences between the Home Not Found report and the PIT census mean that the 50/50 ratio probably overstates the percentage of women who qualify as “homeless” for census purposes.

**Table A-1
Estimating the Number of Uncounted Homeless Women**

		Assume True M/F Ratio is 60/40	Assume True M/F Ratio is 55/45
1	Total # of Homeless Men (from census data)	4370	4370
2	Total # of Homeless Adults (estimate based on assumed ratio)	7283 (.60 x 7283=4370)	7945 (.55 x 7945 = 4370)
3	Total # of Homeless Adult Women (row 2 minus row 1)	2913	3575
4	# Adult Women Counted in Census (from census data)	1873	1873
5	# Adult Women Uncounted (row 3 minus row 4)	1040	1702
6	Percentage of Women Uncounted (row 5 divided by row 3)	36%	48%

Considering these considerations, Table A-1 presents two different estimates for the number of uncounted homeless women in the 2017 census. Both estimates assume that the census accurately counted all 4370 homeless men in Santa Clara County. (The census takers undoubtedly missed some hidden men also, but this assumption simplifies the analysis.) The two columns are based on two different assumptions about the true ratio of homeless men to homeless women. One column assumes that the true ratio is 60 percent men and 40 percent women. The other column assumes that the true ratio is 55 percent men and 45 percent women. The analysis indicates that the number of adult women who met the definition of homelessness and who were not counted in the 2017 census was probably between 1040 and 1702. In percentage terms, this means that approximately 36-48 percent of adult women in Santa Clara County who met the definition of “homelessness” at the relevant time were not counted in the 2017 PIT census.

Estimating the Number of Uncounted Women with Minor Children

Data from the Point in Time census data shows that only 16% of the homeless women who were counted in the census were accompanied by minor children. In contrast, the SCU survey data shows that 51% of formerly homeless women were accompanied by minor children while they were homeless. (See section IV.B.) Given the sample size, we can say with 95% confidence that

the actual percentage of formerly homeless women who were accompanied by minor children while they were homeless is between 45 and 57 percent (51% +/- 6%). The discrepancy between the 16% estimate from the PIT census and the 51% estimate from the SCU survey data provides compelling evidence that the census substantially under-counted the population of homeless women with minor children.

Given what we know about the census process and about hidden homeless populations, it should not be surprising that the census takers under-counted women with minor children. It is difficult for census takers to count homeless people who choose to remain hidden or who are frequently moving among temporary living arrangements. In general, the sub-groups within the homeless population who are most vulnerable to different forms of violence are the sub-groups that are most likely to remain hidden; they remain hidden to protect themselves and their children.^{cxxxv} Women with minor children are among the most vulnerable sub-groups within the broader homeless population. They are therefore more likely to remain hidden than other sub-groups.

Even so, there is reason to believe that the 51% estimate from the SCU Survey over-estimates the percentage of *currently* homeless women who are accompanied by minor children. Data summarized in Figure 4.5 (page 27) shows that women with minor children remain homeless for less time than other women and make the transition from homelessness to stable housing more quickly than other women. For that reason, if one compares *formerly* homeless women with *currently* homeless women, one would expect the percentage of women with minor children to be lower among currently homeless women (the PIT census population) than it is among formerly homeless women (the SCU survey population). Thus, the true figure for the percentage of currently homeless women who are accompanied by minor children is somewhere between the 16% figure from the PIT census and the 51% figure from the SCU survey.

It is not possible to calculate with precision the percentage of currently homeless women in Santa Clara County who are accompanied by minor children. Nevertheless, a reasonable estimate, based on all available information, is that approximately 35-40 percent of homeless women in the County are accompanied by minor children. Tables A-2 and A-3 use these figures to provide four different estimates for the percentage of homeless women accompanied by minor children who were NOT counted in the 2017 Point in Time Census.

Table A-2 assumes that women constitute 40% of the adult homeless population in Santa Clara County (that is, the male-female ratio in the homeless population is 60/40). Given that assumption, the analysis in Table A-2 suggests that between 70 and 74 percent of the homeless women accompanied by minor children were NOT counted in the Point in Time census. Table A-3 assumes that women constitute 45% of the adult homeless population in Santa Clara County (that is, the male-female ratio in the homeless population is 55/45). Given that assumption, the analysis in Table A-3 suggests that between 75 and 79 percent of the homeless women accompanied by minor children were NOT counted in the Point in Time census.

Table A-2

(Assumes a 60/40 ratio of homeless men to homeless women)

	Assume 35% of homeless women are accompanied by minor children	Assume 40% of homeless women are accompanied by minor children
Total # Adult Homeless Women (See Table A-1)	2913	2913
# Accompanied by Minor Children (estimated)	1020 (.35 x 2913)	1165 (.40 x 2913)
# Women w/ minor children counted in census	307	307
# Women with minor children who were not counted	713	858
Percentage of women with minor children who were not counted	70%	74%

Table A-3

(Assumes a 55/45 ratio of homeless men to homeless women)

	Assume 35% of homeless women are accompanied by minor children	Assume 40% of homeless women are accompanied by minor children
Total # Adult Homeless Women (See Table A-1)	3575	3575
# Accompanied by Minor Children (estimated)	1251 (.35 x 3575)	1430 (.40 x 3575)
# Women with minor children counted in census	307	307
# Women with minor children not counted in census	944	1123
Percentage of women with minor children who were not counted	75%	79%

In sum, available information suggests that approximately 70-79 percent of the homeless women accompanied by minor children were not counted in the 2017 PIT census. In other words, the census takers probably found only about 21-30 percent of the homeless women in Santa Clara County who were accompanied by minor children at the time of the census.

Estimating the Number of Uncounted Female Victims of Gender-Based Violence

The PIT census data includes actual numbers for the number of homeless women included in the census and the number of women accompanied by minor children who are included in the census. However, the census takers did not count the number of women who are victims of gender-based violence (GBV). Therefore, one must make certain assumptions to estimate the number of homeless women who are victims of gender-based violence who were not counted in the PIT census. We have made a set of conservative assumptions to derive four different estimates.

Ultimately, our estimates probably understate the proportion of homeless GBV survivors who were not counted in the census.

The SCU survey data indicates that 41 percent of homeless women accompanied by minor children are GBV survivors and 13 percent of other homeless women are GBV survivors. (See figure 3.9.) Given women’s reluctance to disclose the fact that they are GBV survivors, these estimates are probably low. Nevertheless, to be conservative, we assume that these estimates are accurate for estimating the proportion of homeless women who are GBV survivors who were not counted in the census.

We divide the female homeless population into “counted” and “uncounted” based on whether they were counted in the census. We assume that the 41 percent and 13 percent figures cited above apply equally to the counted population and the uncounted population. Again, this is a conservative assumption. Given the tendency of GBV survivors to remain hidden,^{cxvvi} it is likely that the true percentages are higher for the uncounted population than for the counted population. Even so, we adopt this conservative assumption to avoid over-estimating the proportion of homeless GBV survivors who were not counted in the census.

We provide four different estimates based on four different scenarios, as follows:

- **Scenario One:** Assume that the male/female ratio in the homeless population is 60 percent male and 40 percent female. Assume that the proportion of homeless women accompanied by minor children is 35 percent accompanied and 65 percent unaccompanied.
- **Scenario Two:** Assume that the male/female ratio in the homeless population is 60 percent male and 40 percent female. Assume that the proportion of homeless women accompanied by minor children is 40 percent accompanied and 60 percent unaccompanied.
- **Scenario Three:** Assume the male/female ratio in the homeless population is 55 percent male and 45 percent female. Assume that the proportion of homeless women accompanied by minor children is 35 percent accompanied and 65 percent unaccompanied.
- **Scenario Four:** Assume that the male/female ratio in the homeless population is 55 percent male and 45 percent female. Assume that the proportion of homeless women accompanied by minor children is 40 percent accompanied and 60 percent unaccompanied.

Table A-4 explains how we derived an estimate for Scenario One. Table A-5 then presents the results for all four scenarios. We obtained the results in Table A-5 by working through the same set of calculations that is presented in Table A-4 for Scenario One.

**Table A-4
Deriving an Estimate for Scenario One**

Step One: Record Counted Population from Census Data	Accompanied: 307 women Unaccompanied: 1566 women Total: 1873 women
Step Two: Estimate Number of GBV Survivors in Counted Population using 41% and 13% Figures from SCU survey data	Accompanied: $.41 \times 307 = 126$ Unaccompanied: $.13 \times 1566 = 204$ Total: $126 + 204 = \mathbf{330}$

Step Three: Record Total Uncounted Population from Table A-1 (based on assumption that M/F ratio is 60/40)	1040 uncounted women
Step Four: Estimate division of Uncounted Population between accompanied and unaccompanied (from Table A-2)	1040 uncounted women <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 713 Accompanied ■ 327 Unaccompanied
Step Five: Estimate Number of GBV Survivors in Uncounted Population using 41% and 13% Figures from SCU survey data	Accompanied: $.41 \times 713 = 292$ Unaccompanied: $.13 \times 327 = 43$ Total: $292 + 43 = \mathbf{335}$
Step Six: Estimate Percentage of GBV Survivors who were not Counted	Total GBV Survivors = $330 + 335 = 665$ Percent Uncounted = $335/665 = 50\%$

Table A-5
Estimated Percentage of GBV Survivors who were not Counted in Census

Scenario One <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ M/F = 60/40 ■ Accompanied/Unaccompanied = 35/65 	Total GBV Survivors = 665 Percent Uncounted = 50%
Scenario Two <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ M/F = 60/40 ■ Accompanied/Unaccompanied = 40/60 	Total GBV Survivors = 706 Percent Uncounted = 53%
Scenario Three <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ M/F = 55/45 ■ Accompanied/Unaccompanied = 35/65 	Total GBV Survivors = 816 Percent Uncounted = 60%
Scenario Four <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ M/F = 55/45 ■ Accompanied/Unaccompanied = 40/60 	Total GBV Survivors = 865 Percent Uncounted = 62%

In sum, the analysis indicates that about 50-62 percent of the homeless women in Santa Clara County who are survivors of gender-based violence were not counted in the 2017 PIT census. It bears emphasis that this is a conservative estimate, for the reasons explained at the beginning of this section. The actual percentage may well be higher than our estimate but is probably not lower than our estimate.

TESTIMONIALS AND KEY CONCERNS OF HOMELESS WOMEN

“Just because we are homeless does not mean that we are not human.”

1. Personal Safety

When asked to mention ways in which homelessness affects women differently than men, currently homeless women mentioned personal safety concerns, including sexual violence, that led to or were caused by homelessness. In one focus group, all the women said they had been raped or suffered other forms of sexual violence from either their partner, father or other family member.

- *A difference is that a homeless woman is more likely to be raped.*
- *As a woman, it seems that the first thing that happens, is that you are automatically asked for sex.*
- *A car enabled me to get away from abuser. A car keeps me and my five children safe. Having a running car means we can always escape from their father. My car is my house. There should be a county program that offers subsidized repairs just to keep our cars running.*
- *I owned a home, I had a job, and I had a car. My husband and I had a boat. And now, I am homeless and have prostituted myself to survive.*
- *I slept with men for shelter.*
- *I need a stable and safe place to live so I can start from there.*
- *I came to the U.S. because I was going to marry a guy I met over the internet. He turned out to be a sex offender. I was kidnapped until people helped me escape.*
- *(Before being homeless) I lived with my husband, but I was basically kidnapped and sequestered. I could not leave the apartment.*
- *I returned to my abuser, because I had nowhere else to go.*

2. Access to Information and Services

Recently homeless women in the County expressed frustration about not knowing where to obtain assistance and about the quantity and quality of services provided.

- *I need information. I just got here, and I don't know anything*
- *I went everywhere and was getting nowhere. I gave up and thought I'd be homeless till I die.*
- *Everywhere you go, you only get a little bit of info, but you never get the full story. It's almost like they are testing you. The process is so hard because you have to want it [the service] bad enough. You must prove yourself worthy of the information.*
- *There was more “we cannot help you” than “we can help you”.*
- *I have been living here for 10 years but I didn't know about (a particular service provider). We need more information about these organizations and the programs. Some housing programs are designed specifically for low-income people. How can we know more about these programs?*
- *Self-esteem and dignity is so important — it is essential for the homeless to feel this from their counselors, social workers, etc.*
- *It is important to know our rights. If we don't know them, then maybe we don't know we have a way out, that we don't have to live like this. We don't know who can help us*

or what my rights are. It's important to provide more information about services and opportunities.

3. Housing Affordability

One of the primary causes of homelessness for both men and women is lack of affordable housing. Service providers in the County said as much as 33% of the individuals they served are considered working poor; they have a job yet cannot afford housing in the County. In discussing concerns over not being able to afford housing due to low paying jobs, multiple women said their incomes could not support both housing costs and their children's needs. Most of the women who participated in this study's focus groups were either working, going to school, or looking for employment.

- *I work six days a week and I still can't afford to pay the rent or childcare.*
- *I work full-time, 40 hours per week for \$10 an hour, and it is not enough to pay the rent.*
- *I don't make a lot of money. I need more money to take care of my children, but I can't get a better job, and all my money goes to rent.*
- *I work at night. Three-fourths of what I earn goes to rent.*
- *We make little money. If housing is expensive, then we have nothing left to take care of our children. It is difficult to save some money for the future.*
- *Salaries are too low, and the cost of living is too high.*
- *I can't afford housing with a minimum wage job.*
- *(While homeless), I lived in:*
 - the hospital waiting room*
 - The Jungle (homeless encampment)*
 - A light rail elevator*
 - A 24-hour laundromat*
 - A hotel stairway*
 - Behind a garbage bin*

4. Children and Childcare

Several service providers identified lack of childcare support as one of the main gaps in services for homeless women. The lack of childcare is a barrier for women who want to find a steady job to improve her life and that of her children. Some women also expressed concerns for the safety of their children, including at homeless shelters. They also noted that having their children with them while they were homeless exacerbated the effects of not having access to mental health care.

- *The difference (between homeless men and women) are the children.*
- *More money is needed for childcare services.*
- *It is difficult for both men and women to be homeless, but it is worse for women. Women usually stay with their children.*
- *I won't go (to a particular shelter) because I have a small daughter and I don't know if there is going to be a child molester there.*
- *I left my abuser, but I have an older male child. Some shelters do not accept male children over a certain age. Where are we supposed to go?*

- *So far, none of the three shelters has helped me or given any priority to my kids. Quite the contrary.*
- *I'd rather be on the street where (my children) are with me all the time than in the shelter.*
- *I need a place to leave my young children each morning, so I can go find a job.*
- *The hardest thing is finding day care for my children. I can't secure a job until my children are secure. Where do I leave my children?*
- *Children get out of school early in the afternoon. Where should I leave them while I work?*
- *How am I going to look for a job if I must take care of my children?*
- *We need access to affordable daycare.*
- *How can I take care of my children if I don't have a place to live? How can I help them get a better future?*
- *If you have children, what are you going to do with your kids? Daycare? That just means you are working to pay for daycare.*
- *I did not work because I had to take care of my son on disability.*
- *We need programs that are specific for homeless women with children.*

5. Mental and Emotional Health

After experiencing the stresses of homelessness, the traumas of domestic violence, and the challenges of supporting children, focus group participants identified affordable mental health care as a necessary resource to regain stability. They also expressed concern about the need to provide adequate training so that service providers are better prepared to respond to individuals who have suffered traumatic experiences.

- *Staff are not trauma trained. For us, homelessness often involves substance abuse. We are addicts. Staff are not all trained to deal with that. Now we're frightened. We have a disease. Most places, they are not trained to deal with our problems.*
- *I want someone who knows what it's like to be homeless to give me advice on how to survive.*
- *Many service providers are not well equipped to deal with severe disabilities and/or mental health issues.*
- *Staff at shelters are not trauma-sensitive.*
- *I had a six-figure job in real estate. I was very self-sufficient. Never had issues. Then the economy changed. I lost my house, my job, etc. I started with drugs and alcohol, and lost interest in everything else. It broke me. I woke up with severe anxiety. I get afraid. I panic. I feel stuck.*
- *Being homeless, you feel like you want to die. You don't know what to do. Dying might be best.*
- *My girls were raped by their father, and now I have serious trust issues.*
- *As a homeless woman, I lack confidence and have very low self-esteem.*
- *I struggle with severe anxiety and mental illness.*
- *I wanted to kill myself, so I called a suicide hotline.*
- *Feeling unloved and unworthy made it worse.*
- *You feel sad and depressed, and that affects your children.*
- *We need help; psychological assistance for us and our children. Counselors.*

- *We all need housing, but I would also like the opportunity to see a therapist. We are traumatized. I would like to see a therapist, but it is very expensive.*

6. Personal Hygiene

One of the biggest concerns for homeless women has to do with having access to restrooms and to feminine hygiene products. Pads and tampons are expensive; women who are homeless often do not have the resources to buy them, and often need to reuse them.

- *A man doesn't have his period. He doesn't have to worry about being clean.*
- *It is difficult to go to a job interview in dirty, unkempt clothing and without a shower.*
- *Men don't always need access to bathroom facilities, but women do.*
- *I used public restrooms and used 5-gallon buckets to pee and poop in, and then dug a hole and buried it.*

7. Language Skills and Job Training

In discussing the causes of their homelessness, many focus group participants noted that a language barrier precipitated their homelessness because without knowing English, they could not obtain a job, and without a job, they could not secure housing. Most women said they needed job training to be able to secure employment.

- *We need more than housing assistance; we need more programs on job training and skills.*
- *We need English language programs. It is hard to get a job without English language skills.*
- *With English skills, we can get better jobs.*
- *We need training for jobs.*
- *Employers expect you to speak English, have a car, and experience. And they discriminate against you because you are a woman and because you have kids.*
- *(A shelter) did not accept me because I couldn't obtain proof that I was working. I work cleaning houses and don't have an employment contract. There is this perception that cleaning houses is not a formal job.*

8. Waitlists

It is common for homeless women to be on county housing waitlists for very long periods of time. Service providers turn away hundreds of women seeking emergency shelter each year. Additionally, shelters have time restrictions on a client's stay that is significantly shorter than the average waitlist time for more permanent housing. This forces women to bounce from one shelter to another, wait in line for an emergency shelter every night, or find other sleeping arrangements, such as in a car or tent.

- *I'm on a waitlist until 2025.*
- *The long waitlists make you feel hopeless.*
- *The waitlist for temporary housing, rapid rehousing, and/or permanent support housing can be up to a year, or longer.*
- *I was told that you must call every morning to see if there's a bed. I kept calling. Can't get through. Then they are full. Can't get through on phones. Can't get a space.*
- *Every night women are turned away from a place of safety.*

- *I've called shelters crying and begging for me and my children and they would just send me to other shelters or other counties, but my children go to school here. I can't just move to another place.*
- *An impending doom of a 30-day deadline hangs over my head every moment.*
- *Men have more resources, especially if the man is homeless by himself.*
- *We need help too, we sometimes need it more than the men, but so many programs just forget about us.*
- *Women and children should be first. You go to a shelter and all you see are men and then you see children sleeping in cars with their moms. This needs to stop because women and children should be helped first.*
- *Women with children should have priority on housing waitlists.*
- *While I was on a waitlist, I slept in my car. In the winter, I got double pneumonia and almost died.*

9. Immigration Status

Undocumented homeless women may face additional hardship due to the limited work opportunities available to them. Additionally, these women often do not leave their abuser for fear of deportation, and they may not seek services because they are worried about law enforcement involvement. Cultural differences and gender stereotypes also affect the ability of immigrant homeless women from obtaining employment. Women who recently immigrated to the U.S. and end up homeless also often lack a social support network.

- *I have no papers, so I can't get any assistance.*
- *Being in a foreign country, we don't know anything, we are lonely. Being homeless in this country is even worse. We don't know anyone else. What should we do?*
- *We came here, got married, and had children. We had no opportunity to get a job. Our tradition and culture often require us to stay home. My husband turned out to be an abuser. Now I don't know what to do.*
- *Women get married and come here. Men dominate and have more power. If you disobey them, you get kicked out. We become homeless because women are inferior in our culture.*

ⁱ Santa Clara County Blue Ribbon Task Force on Intimate Partner Violence, *Working Together to Promote Healthy and Safe Relationships in Santa Clara County* (June 2017), page 7, full report available at https://www.sccgov.org/sites/owp/Documents/pub/Working%20Together%20to%20Promote%20Healthy%20and%20Safe%20Relationships_FINAL.pdf

ⁱⁱ *Ibid*, Pg. 22

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid*

^{iv} Homeless housing report, City of San Jose, March 2015, full report available at: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/41925>

^v See generally, *The Experience of Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women: A Research Report* (2005), available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211976.pdf>; Rukmana Deden, *Gender Differences in the Residential Origins of the Homeless: Identification of Areas with High Risk of Homelessness*, Planning, Practice & Research, Vol. 25, No. 1, February 2010, available at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02697451003625422>; Jasinski et al, *The Experience of Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women: A Research Report* (2005), p. 6, available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211976.pdf>; Tutty, L. M., Weaver, G., & Rothery, M. A. (1999). Residents' views of the efficacy of shelter services for assaulted women. *Violence Against Women*, 5(8), 898-925; Bassuk, E.L., Weinreb, L.F., Buckner, J.C., Browne, A., Salomon, A., & Bassuk, S.S. (1996). *The characteristics and needs of sheltered homeless and low-income housed mothers*. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 276, 640-646; National Network to End Domestic Violence, *Domestic Violence, Housing, and Homelessness* (finding that domestic violence is a major cause of homelessness for women and children), available at http://nnedv.org/downloads/Policy/NNEDV_DVHousing_factsheet.pdf; National Network to End Domestic Violence, *The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Renewal passes the House and Senate and signed into law*, available at <http://nnedv.org/policy/issues/vawa.html>, and De Candia, C.J., Beach, C.A., & Clervil, R. (2013). *Closing the Gap: Integrating Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence Experiencing Homelessness*. Needham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness, p. 4, available at http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Closing%20the%20Gap_Homelessness%20and%20Domestic%20Violence%20toolkit.pdf.

^{vi} Throughout this report, the term “women” shall also include girls, except in the data analysis portion of the study because data was only obtained from adult women.

^{vii} See generally Jasinski et al, *The Experience of Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women: A Research Report* (2005), p. 6, available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211976.pdf>, and De Candia, C.J., Beach, C.A., & Clervil, R. (2013), *Closing the Gap: Integrating Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence Experiencing Homelessness*. Needham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness, p. 4, available at http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Closing%20the%20Gap_Homelessness%20and%20Domestic%20Violence%20toolkit.pdf.

^{viii} De Candia, C.J., Beach, C.A., & Clervil, R. (2013). *Closing the Gap: Integrating Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence Experiencing Homelessness*. Needham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness, p. 4, available at http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Closing%20the%20Gap_Homelessness%20and%20Domestic%20Violence%20toolkit.pdf; see also Tutty, L. M., Weaver, G., & Rothery, M. A. (1999). Residents' views of the efficacy of shelter services for assaulted women. *Violence Against Women*, 5(8), 898-925.

^{ix} See generally Rukmana Deden, *Gender Differences in the Residential Origins of the Homeless: Identification of Areas with High Risk of Homelessness*, Planning, Practice & Research, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 95–116, February 2010, available at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02697451003625422>.

^x De Candia, C.J., Beach, C.A., & Clervil, R. (2013). *Closing the Gap: Integrating Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence Experiencing Homelessness*. Needham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness, p. 4, available at http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Closing%20the%20Gap_Homelessness%20and%20Domestic%20Violence%20toolkit.pdf; see also Bassuk, E.L., Weinreb, L.F., Buckner, J.C., Browne, A., Salomon, A., & Bassuk, S.S. (1996). *The characteristics and needs of sheltered homeless and low-income housed mothers*. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 276, 640-646.

^{xi} See generally, Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to nondiscrimination in this context, Citiscope/ Habitat III, 29 February 2016, available at <http://citiscope.org/habitatIII/commentary/2016/02/homelessness-not-just-about-housing-its-human-rights-failure>; Liz Osborn, *3 Reasons to Address Homelessness as a Human Rights Issue*, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (Apr. 14, 2014), available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20160117195620/https://www.usich.gov/news/3-reasons-to-address-homelessness-as-a-human-rights-issue>; Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Adequate Housing*, Fact Sheet No. 21 (Rev. 1), p. 6, available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf; UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 4, *The Right to Adequate Housing (Article 11(1) of the ICESCR)*, E/1992/23, 13 December 1991, para. 8, available at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CESCR/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CESCR_GEC_4759_E.doc; Rep. of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Human Rights Council, Nineteenth Session, U.N. Doc A/HRC/19/53, at 11 (2011), available at http://www.ohchr.org/documents/issues/housing/A-HRC-19-53_en.pdf; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Health, Fact Sheet No. 31* <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet31.pdf>; Nat'l Law Ctr. on Homelessness & Poverty, *Simply Unacceptable: Homelessness & the Human Right to Housing in the U.S.* (2011), available at http://nlchp.org/Simply_Unacceptable; U.N. Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Raquel Rolnik, mission to the United States of America*, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/13/20/Add. 4 (Feb. 12, 2010), available at <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/HRC/13/20/Add.4&Lang=E>; U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Human Rights and Alternatives to Criminalization*, available at <http://usich.gov/issue/humanrights>; Amy Sawyer, *Criminalizing Homelessness is Costly, Ineffective, and Infringes on Human Rights*, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Blog (Apr. 15, 2014), available at <http://usich.gov/blog/criminalizinghomelessness>, and Eric Tars & Kirsten Blume, *Changing the Paradigm: Addressing the Criminalization of Homelessness in the United States through the UN Human Rights Committee Review*, Hous. Rights Watch Newsletter, Issue 6 (Oct. 2013), <http://housingrightswatch.org/sites/default/files/2013-10-16%20HRW%20newsletter%20EN%20Issue%206.pdf>.

^{xii} *Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley* (2015), p. 3, available at http://destinationhomesc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/er_homenotfound_report_6.pdf, and 2017 *Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey Comprehensive Report*, Figure 5, p. 11 (indicating the 33% of the homeless population in the County are women), available at <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/osh/ContinuumofCare/ReportsandPublications/Documents/2017%20Santa%20Clara%20County%20Homeless%20Census%20and%20Survey%20Report.pdf>.

^{xiii} *Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County (2015-2020)* (identifying three target populations: 1. chronically homeless, 2. veterans, and 3. children, youth and families), available at http://destinationhomesc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Community_Plan_to_End_Homelessness_in_Santa_Clara_County_web.pdf.

^{xiv} 2017 *Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey*, Frequently Asked Questions, available at <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/oah/coc/census/Documents/2017%20Final%20FAQ.pdf>.

^{xv} See generally, Jasinski et al, *The Experience of Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women: A Research Report* (2005), available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211976.pdf>.

^{xvi} See generally, Rukmana Deden, *Gender Differences in the Residential Origins of the Homeless: Identification of Areas with High Risk of Homelessness*, Planning, Practice & Research, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 95–116, February 2010, available at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02697451003625422>.

^{xvii} *Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley* (2015), Figure 2.1, p. 6 (indicating that the homeless population in the County is roughly half male and half female), available at http://destinationhomesc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/er_homenotfound_report_6.pdf.

^{xviii} Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, main website, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Housing/Pages/HousingIndex.aspx>.

^{xix} County of Santa Clara Office of Women's Policy, *A Look Through the Gender Lens, Summary Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on the CEDAW Initiative in Santa Clara County* (June 2007), (recommending

the adoption of a county-wide CEDAW ordinance), available at https://www.sccgov.org/sites/owp/Publications/Documents/Final_CEDAW_rprt_-_CSW.pdf.

^{xx} SCU relied upon local domestic violence and homeless service providers to identify women who would participate in this study, in accordance with each organization’s mission and client population.

^{xxi} Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley (Economic Roundtable 2015).

^{xxii} Santa Clara County 2017 Homeless Census & Survey: Comprehensive Report (Applied Survey Research 2017). Applied Survey Research shared the underlying data with SCU for the purpose of this project. Much of the information in Parts IV and V is based on that data. In this report, we will refer to the Comprehensive Report as the PIT Report. We will also make reference to the PIT census data and the PIT survey data, as appropriate.

^{xxiii} The PIT survey collected data from a total of 587 people, including 375 men, 199 women, and 13 people who identified either as transgender or “none of the above.”

^{xxiv} *Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley* (2015), Figure 2.1, p. 6 (indicating that the homeless population in the County is roughly half male and half female), available at http://destinationhomesc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/er_homenotfound_report_6.pdf.

^{xxv} See Applied Survey Research, Santa Clara County 2017 Homeless Census & Survey: Comprehensive Report. Applied Survey Research shared the underlying data with SCU for the purpose of this project. Much of the information in Parts III and IV is based on that data. In this report, we will refer to the Comprehensive Report as the Point in Time Report, or PIT Report. We will also make reference to the PIT census data and the PIT survey data, as appropriate.

^{xxvi} See Applied Survey Research, Santa Clara County 2017 Homeless Census & Survey: Comprehensive Report.

^{xxvii} Throughout this report, we use the term “gender-based violence” to refer to all forms of domestic violence and intimate partner violence.

^{xxviii} In addition to 15 specific factors, the form included boxes for “other” and “don’t know.” Affirmative answers to those questions are excluded from the data analysis here.

^{xxix} The six “other factors” not specifically listed in Figure 3.1 are foreclosure, landlord raised rent, illness/medical problem, hospitalization/treatment, aging out of foster care, and probation/parole violation. None of those factors individually elicited more than a 4% response rate from either men or women. Moreover, there were no significant gender differences between men and women with respect to any of those six categories.

^{xxx} Throughout this report, unless otherwise indicated, we use the term “statistically significant” to mean that a particular finding is statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

^{xxxi} The gender differences regarding incarceration and spouse/partner violence are both statistically significant at a 90 percent confidence level. Thus, the data provide some support for the proposition that those gender differences in the survey populations are indicative of differences in the broader homeless population, but the sample sizes are too small to support a conclusion that the differences are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level.

^{xxxii} Figure 3.3 provides information about 11 of the 16 factors listed in the SCU Survey. The other five factors are: medical illness/expenses, foreclosure, death of spouse/partner, aged out of foster care, and arrest. The data indicate that those five factors are not major causes of women’s homelessness, regardless of whether the question is framed in terms of “all factors” or the “primary factor.”

^{xxxiii} See, e.g., Natalie Kitroeff and Nina Agrawal, “Pay Gap Between Men and Women in California is Nearly \$79 Billion a Year,” Los Angeles Times (April 4, 2017), available at <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-equal-pay-day-20170404-story.html>

^{xxxiv} See [add appropriate section of the report].

^{xxxv} See [add appropriate section of the report].

^{xxxvi} Only 28 survey respondents said that they were under 25. Only 16 of those provided usable answers to the question about the primary cause of homelessness.

^{xxxvii} These figures are based on 290 answers. Seven women did not answer the question.

^{xxxviii} 234 survey respondents provided usable answers to that question. Five of those women did not answer the question about whether they were accompanied by minor children when they were homeless. Hence, the total “n” for the two groups in Figure 3.8 is 229.

^{xxxix} CL Whitfield et al., *Violent Childhood Experiences and the Risk of Intimate Partner Violence in Adults: Assessment in a Large Health Maintenance Organization*, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 18(2), 166-85 (2003).

^{xl} See, e.g., Marybeth Shinn et al., *Long-Term Associations of Homelessness with Children’s Well-Being*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 51, No. 6 (Feb. 2008); Family Housing Fund, *Homelessness and its Effects on*

Children (Dec. 1999), available at http://www.fhfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Homelessness_Effects_Children.pdf

^{xli} The difference between the 40 percent figure for women who lived with a spouse or partner and the 25 percent figure for single parents is not statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level due to the small sample size. However, the difference between the 40 percent figure for spouse/partner and the 14 percent figure for family/friends is statistically significant, despite the small sample size.

^{xlii} The difference between the 18 percent figure for women who lived with a friend/roommate and the 4 percent figure for single parents is not statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level due to the small sample size. However, the difference between the 18 percent figure for friend/roommate and the 1 percent figure for spouse/partner is statistically significant, despite the small sample size.

^{xliii} Applied Survey Research, Santa Clara County 2017 Homeless Census & Survey: Comprehensive Report.

^{xliv} The SCU survey asked respondents: “Which racial group do you identify with most?” The form listed nine options, including “White,” “Hispanic/Latina,” and “Black or African American.” The PIT survey asked two separate questions. First, “Are you Hispanic or Latino?” The possible choices were “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know.” Then, in a separate question, the PIT survey asked: “Which racial group do you identify with most?” The instructions told respondents to “shade all that apply.” The form listed six options, including “White” and “Black or African American.” Hispanic/Latino was not one of the listed options. The data in Figure 4.1 for Hispanic and White (Non-Hispanic) is derived from the answers to these questions.

^{xlv} For the PIT survey, female respondents, n=199 for the general “race” question, but n=196 for the Hispanic question. For male respondents, n=375 for the general “race” question, but n=368 for the Hispanic question.

^{xlvi} About 20% of the women who took the SCU survey did not answer the question about their age. Hence, n=236 for the SCU survey, even though 297 women took the survey.

^{xlvii} 2017 PIT Report, p. 49.

^{xlviii} The PIT survey listed “encampment” as one option and “outdoors/streets/parks/tent” as a second option. The data in Figure 4.6 combines those two categories.

^{xlix} The PIT survey did not include a “family/friends” category. Instead, it listed two options that roughly correspond to the “family/friends” category in the SCU survey: 1) “a place in a house not normally used for sleeping”; and 2) “backyard or storage structure.” The 9% figure in Table 4.7 for the PIT survey is based on those two categories. The “family/friends” category in the SCU survey is somewhat broader than the combination of those two categories from the PIT survey because the PIT survey expressly excludes couch-surfing.

¹ See Elaine J. Alpert, *Intimate Partner Violence: The Clinician’s Guide to Identification, Assessment, Intervention, and Prevention*, Massachusetts Medical Society Committee on Violence Intervention and Prevention (6th ed. 2015); Liz Wall, *The Many Facets of Shame in Intimate Partner Sexual Violence*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (January 2012), available at <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/many-facets-shame-intimate-partner-sexual-violence>

ⁱⁱ About 60% of survey respondents completed the surveys with the aid of a service provider who was present. The other 40% received a survey in the mail and sent their responses by mail. Even the women who did the mailing, though, received the mailing from an organization that can fairly be described as a trusted service provider.

^{lii} The percentages in Figure 4.9 use 188 as a denominator—the number of women who provided responses to that particular question.

^{liii} The entry for “homeless clinic/mobile van” was listed as a single entry on the PIT survey. There were two different entries on the SCU survey form: one for “homeless shelter” and one for “mobile medical unit.” The data in Figure 4.10 combines those two entries from the SCU survey. The “did not receive medical care” category in Figure 4.10 matches the language used on the SCU survey. The analogous entry on the PIT survey said “none of the above.” Aside from these differences, the menu of options on the two surveys was virtually identical.

^{liv} The SCU survey asked respondents: “If you had a disability while you were homeless, what type of disability did you have?” In response to that question, 44 percent of the women said they had “no disability” and 9 percent said that they “prefer not to answer.” A separate question asked women about the causes of homelessness and listed “disability” as one of several causes. Some women identified disability as a cause of homelessness, even though they responded to the other question by saying that they had “no disability” or “prefer not to answer.” The SCU data in Figure 4.11 includes those women in the “disabled” category.

^{lv} The categories “rent/mortgage assistance,” “transportation benefits,” and “alcohol/drug counseling” are the same in both surveys. The category “employment assistance” is similar in both, but the SCU survey calls it

“employment and job training.” The “legal assistance” category is a single entry in the PIT survey, but it combines three separate entries in the SCU survey. The “medical assistance” category combines two entries in the PIT survey (mental health services and health insurance/services) and three entries in the SCU survey (medical care for illness, help paying medical bills, and health insurance). Finally, the “help navigating system” category combines two entries in the PIT survey (help accessing benefits and case management services) and two entries in the SCU survey (help accessing benefits and advocacy/support services to maintain/find housing).

^{lvi} See, e.g., Natalie Kitroeff and Nina Agrawal, *Pay Gap Between Men and Women in California is Nearly \$79 Billion a Year*, Los Angeles Times (April 4, 2017), available at <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-equal-pay-day-20170404-story.html>

^{lvii} Liz Osborn, *3 Reasons to Address Homelessness as a Human Rights Issue*, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (Apr. 14, 2014), available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20160117195620/https://www.usich.gov/news/3-reasons-to-address-homelessness-as-a-human-rights-issue>. See also, Letter from U.S. Ambassador Pamela K. Hamamoto, Head of the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva, to Ms. Leilani Farha, Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, (Feb. 4, 2016), pp. 6-8, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Housing/Homelessness/States/USA.pdf>.

^{lviii} County of Santa Clara Office of Human Relations and Human Relations Commission, *A Tale of Two Valleys, The Price We Pay for Living in Santa Clara County* (2015), available at <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/ohr/Human%20Relations%20Commission/Documents/HR-Report.pdf>.

^{lix} Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, main website, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Housing/Pages/HousingIndex.aspx>

^{lx} Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, *Citiscopes/ Habitat III*, 29 February 2016, available at <http://citiscopes.org/habitatIII/commentary/2016/02/homelessness-not-just-about-housing-its-human-rights-failure>.

^{lxi} Although human rights law primarily applies to governments, the private sector also plays a significant role.

^{lxii} Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, *Citiscopes/ Habitat III*, 29 February 2016, available at <http://citiscopes.org/habitatIII/commentary/2016/02/homelessness-not-just-about-housing-its-human-rights-failure>.

^{lxiii} Although the federal government is the one that responds internationally on behalf of the U.S. for any alleged human rights violation, all levels of government have the duty to respect, protect, and fulfill women’s human rights. In this sense, the UN Human Rights Committee, which oversees U.S. compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has stated that “the obligations under the Covenant are binding on the [U.S.] as a whole, [including] all branches of government, and other public or governmental authorities, at every level”. UN Human Rights Committee, *Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of the United States of America (CCPR/C/USA/CO/4)*, 23 April 2014, para. 4, available at <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/235641.pdf>.

^{lxiv} UN Committee on Discrimination Against Women, *General Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19*, CEDAW/C/GC/35, 14 July 2017, para. 26, available at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_35_8267_E.pdf.

^{lxv} Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, main website, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Housing/Pages/HousingIndex.aspx>

^{lxvi} UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Adequate Housing Toolkit*, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Housing/toolkit/Pages/RighttoAdequateHousingToolkit.aspx>.

^{lxvii} Scott Leckie, Anne Gallagher, *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - A Legal Research Guide*, 512 (2006). See also Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Adequate Housing*, Fact Sheet No. 21 (Rev. 1), p. 6, available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf.

- lxviii Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Adequate Housing*, Fact Sheet No. 21 (Rev. 1), p. 6, available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf.
- lxix For more information about the human rights framework in relation to homelessness see NLCHP and NCH, *Homes Not Handcuffs: The Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities* (2009); Maria Foscarinis and Eric Tars, *Housing Rights and Wrongs: The U.S. and the Right to Housing*, in *Human Rights At Home*, edited by Cynthia Soohoo, Catherine Albisa and Martha Davis (Praeger Publishers, December 30, 2007); Maria Foscarinis, Brad Paul, Bruce Porter, and Andrew Scherer, *The Human Right to Housing: Making the Case in U.S. Advocacy*, 38 CLEARINGHOUSE REV. 97 (2004); NLCHP, *Homelessness in the United States and the Human Right to Housing* (2004).
- lxx UN Declaration of Human Rights, available at <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.
- lxxi Under international law, once the U.S. signs a treaty, it is obligated not to pass laws that would “defeat the object and purpose of [the] treaty.” See *The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties*, May 23, 1969, art. 18(a), 1155 U.N.T.S 331.
- lxxii International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>
- lxxiii Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>
- lxxiv Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx>.
- lxxv Convention on the Rights of the Child, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- lxxvi Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx>.
- lxxvii Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, available at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>.
- lxxviii *Roper v. Simmons*, 543 U.S. 551, 587 (2005) (Stevens, J., concurring).
- lxxix UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 4, *The Right to Adequate Housing (Article 11(1) of the ICESCR)*, E/1992/23, 13 December 1991, para. 8, available at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CESCR/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CESCR_GEC_4759_E.doc. See also, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Adequate Housing*, Fact Sheet No. 21 (Rev. 1), available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf.
- lxxx Rep. of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Human Rights Council, Nineteenth Session, U.N. Doc A/HRC/19/53, at 11 (2011),_ available at http://www.ohchr.org/documents/issues/housing/A-HRC-19-53_en.pdf. See also, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *The Right to Adequate Housing*, Fact Sheet No. 21 (Rev. 1), p. 17, available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf.
- lxxxi UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 4, *The Right to Adequate Housing (Article 11(1) of the ICESCR)*, E/1992/23, 13 December 1991, para. 7, available at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CESCR/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CESCR_GEC_4759_E.doc.
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