



2016

Homelessness in CBRM

During a 12 hour period on April 15th, 2016, **60** volunteers collected data from shelters, transitional housing facilities, police lock up, hospital emergency rooms and community drop in centres. The volunteers also walked the streets in Sydney, Glace Bay, New Waterford, North Sydney, Sydney Mines and asked over 500 people about their housing situation. Everyone whose circumstances fit the definition of homelessness were asked to complete a 16 question interview about their experiences. This is the first time a comprehensive look at homelessness was ever attempted in CBRM.



The results: **137 PEOPLE** were experiencing homelessness in Cape Breton Regional Municipality

ABSOLUTE HOMELESSNESS:

People who are staying outside or in places not fit for human habitation, or are using emergency homeless shelters.

Unsheltered

24 people were unsheltered, that is, staying in a public space, sleeping in a car or not knowing where they would sleep that night.



Emergency Shelters

30 people stayed in an emergency homeless shelter or a Violence Against Women shelter.



PROVISIONALLY ACCOMMODATED:

People who may be temporarily accommodated by an organization or simply staying at someone else's place - couch surfing.



Transitional Housing

17 people were staying in transitional housing as a provisional step out of homelessness.

30
Another's Home



30 people did not have their own residence to return to. Instead, they reported staying with a friend or family member.



Transitional Residential Centres and Institutions

36 people were provisionally housed in an addiction treatment centre, half-way house or hospital ER.

KEY FINDINGS

Of the 137 enumerated, **52%** participated in the full survey.

From these surveys, the following trends emerged:



There was significant variation in age, with the youngest being **3 years old** and the oldest being **70 years old**



65% self-reported a medical condition, addiction, or mental health condition.



Notably, **19%** were children and youth up to the age of 24.

There was an overrepresentation of **First Nation individuals** experiencing homelessness.

1 in **3** people were homeless for more than **6 months** in the past year.

There were slightly more Females **52%** than Males **48%** identified.

Poverty, addiction and substance use, family conflict and domestic abuse were the **MAIN CAUSES** of homelessness.

6% reported previous service in the military.

1 in **5** of the adult respondents first experienced homelessness as **children (under 18)**.