

Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness in Milwaukee County

Commission on Aging
June 28, 2024

Overview

- Over the last 18 months we've seen an increase in the number of cases responded to regarding older adults experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.
- While the increase is due to many factors, we, along with our CoC partners, recognize that formal infrastructures must be in place so that older adults/adults at risk have overnight shelter and consistent permanent housing options.
- This is particularly dire during times of inclement weather such as temperatures below freezing or extreme heat.
- As the average age of those served increases, so does the need to develop a coordinated response and service referral infrastructure that identifies emergency housing, temporary housing, and/or supportive services for elders who are facing homelessness, or fleeing situations of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation.

Milwaukee Collaborative to Improve Emergency Housing and Stabilization for Older Adults

Demographics of Population Utilizing Milwaukee County Emergency Shelter and Warming Rooms

Year	Total Served	55-64 years-old	Percentage	65+ years-old	Percentage	Total % of 55+
2022	3,316	455	14%	139	4%	18%
2023	3,597	526	15%	177	5%	20%
01/2024 - 05/15/2024	2,194	364	17%	144	7%	23%

2023 Point in Time Homeless Count - Age Demographics

All Household Types Combined

ALL HOUSEHOLDS COMBINED	PIT Total	% of Total	PIT Unsheltered	% of Unsheltered	PIT Sheltered	% of Sheltered
Under 18	198	18.8%	0	0.0%	198	20.6%
18 - 24	74	7.0%	5	5.2%	69	7.2%
25 - 34	171	16.2%	30	31.3%	141	14.7%
35 - 44	213	20.2%	29	30.2%	184	19.2%
45 - 54	153	14.5%	21	21.9%	132	13.8%
55 - 64	175	16.6%	10	10.4%	165	17.2%
65+	72	6.8%	1	1.0%	71	7.4%
Totals	1056	100%	96	100%	960	100%

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Official Annual Count and National Reporting

Changes in reporting categories for age demographics.

Prior to 2023, age data was reported as follows:	
Under 18 years-old	Children
18-24 years-old	Youth
24+ years-old	Adults

2023 Age Demographic Categories
Under 18 years-old
18 - 24 years-old
25 - 34 years-old
35 - 44 years-old
45 - 54 years-old
55 - 64 years-old
65+ years-old

- Current Strategies - (1 of 2)

- DHHS Housing Services and Continuum of Care (CoC) partners have worked diligently to fill the gap of homelessness, opening two Safe Haven programs that utilize harm reduction techniques, warming/cooling placements for inclement weather, community intervention housing, navigation services, and shelter support with community intervention support workers to develop housing solutions that support those who are homeless.
- Outreach teams work during overnight hours to identify homeless individuals in our community and offer resources including working toward permanent housing options for them.
- DHHS collaborates with the Salvation Army Emergency Lodge Medical Respite Program and an Elder Care Program at the Milwaukee Women Center run by Community Advocates to serve older adults and those with increased medical needs.

- Current Strategies - (continued)

- Despite these important resources, there are still significant deficits in housing options for the most vulnerable in our community.
- Housing Services partners with a mobile medical team run by Advocate Aurora that provides a connection to care to the homeless and aging population through health care services on-site at many shelters, warming sites, public libraries, senior centers, encampments, and food/meal distribution sites.



1384 Households
Supporting 2660 Residents

MILWAUKEE COUNTY RENT ASSISTANCE PARTICIPANTS		
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD AGE		
100+	1	0.1%
90s	3	0.2%
80s	15	1.1%
70s	65	4.7%
60s	267	19.3%
50s	333	24.1%
40s	278	20.1%
30s	303	21.9%
20s	119	8.6%

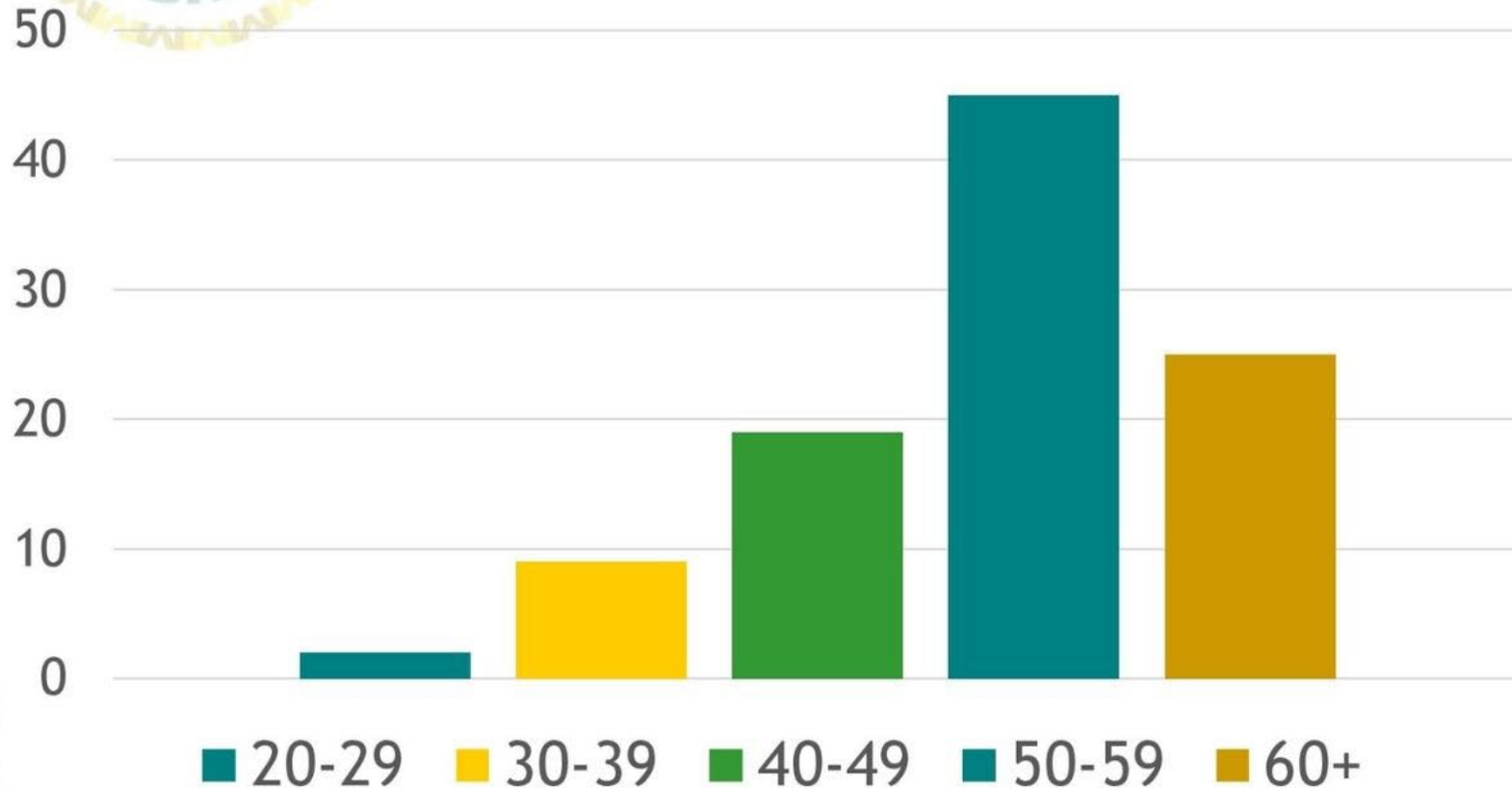
MILWAUKEE COUNTY RENT ASSISTANCE		
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD		
60+	351	25.4%
50+	684	49.4%



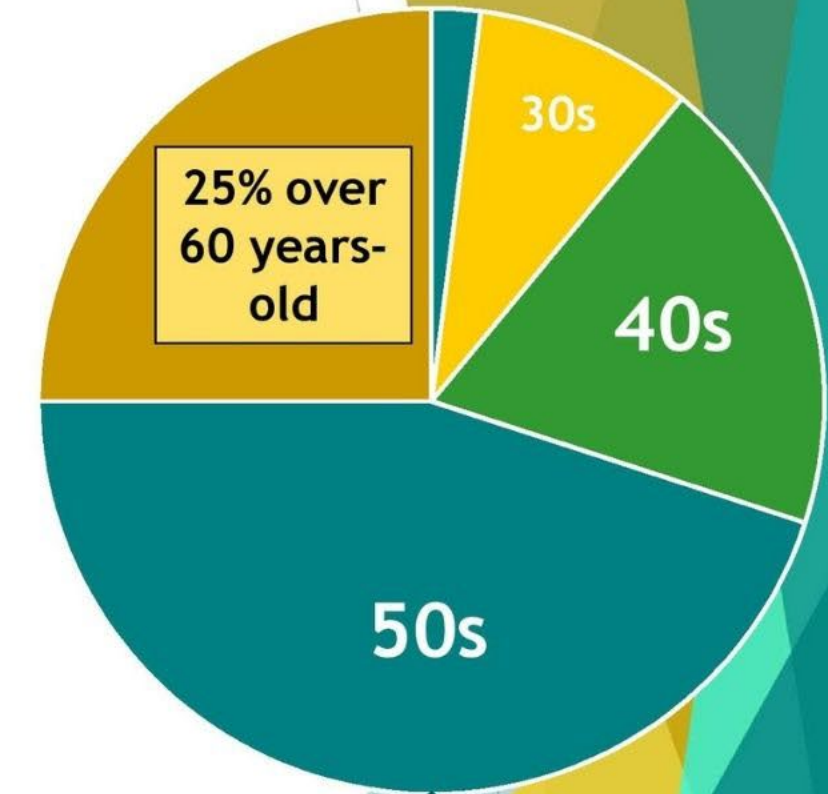


Ages of Chronically Homeless Milwaukeeans Percent Distribution

Ages of Chronically Homeless Milwaukeeans



The average age: +52 years-old
The median age: 54 years-old
89% are over 40 years-old



70% over 50 year-old

Elder Justice Innovation Grant

The Milwaukee County Department of Health & Human Services Adult Protective Services (APS) and Housing Services proposes its Milwaukee Collaborative to Improve Emergency Housing and Stabilization for Older Adults Program to increase capacity to provide appropriate and effective emergency and transitional housing and supportive services that meet the needs of our community and ensure all elders receive the needed support and services to secure and maintain housing services that include options that support their health, safety, and well-being

Milwaukee Collaborative to Improve Emergency Housing and Stabilization for Older Adults

Goal 1 (5 objectives)

Goal 1: To develop, build, and maintain the infrastructure for a coordinated response to end homelessness and housing insecurity in older adults and victims of elder abuse.

- **1:** By month 3, a needs assessment of the current system will be completed; identify gaps in service needs; review current clients receiving services, identify any disparities, and specialized cultural and linguistic needs.
- **2:** Increase collaborations and coordination with community partners, strengthening our collaboration with the coordinated entry system, and expanding the reach of our medical shelter services, community intervention Housing, Master Lease Program, older adult shelter, and supported living services.

Milwaukee Collaborative to Improve Emergency Housing and Stabilization for Older Adults

Goal 1

(5 objectives)

Goal 1: To develop, build, and maintain the infrastructure for a coordinated response to end homelessness and housing insecurity in older adults and victims of elder abuse.

- **3:** Increase the diversity of temporary housing providers to collaborate and accept client referrals that reduces the displacement of clients back into hospitals or homeless.
- **4:** Provide improved service coordination using a warm handoff approach that provides the elderly with opportunities to restore housing security, ensure ongoing safety, and reduce the trauma associated with abuse and financial exploitation as it relates to housing insecurity.
- **5:** Improve the capacity of local communities to meet the emergency shelter and supportive service needs of older adults, including those with disabilities, who have experienced abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation



Milwaukee Collaborative to Improve Emergency Housing and Stabilization for Older Adults

Goal 2

Goal 2: To support clients in obtaining and maintaining safe and permanent housing.

Objective: Increase the number of clients receiving stable and permanent housing solutions.

Our proposed project aims to:

- 1)** Strengthen our community partnerships and further develop our medical respite program capacity.
- 2)** Engage in more shelter options that support a harm reduction model.
- 3)** Develop services for at-risk elders and adults, supporting their transition into and maintaining permanent housing while offering holistic support plans to address medical care and case management needs. We will expand emergency shelter options to ensure that there are options for people who remain on the street, even during inclement weather, including diverse and inclusive permanent housing options.

Milwaukee Collaborative to Improve Emergency Housing and Stabilization for Older Adults

- Our Community Partners -

- DHHS Aging & Disability Resource Center
- DHHS Behavioral Health Services
- Aurora Mobile Medical Team
- Community Advocates
- The Salvation Army
- The Guest House
- The Shelter & Transitional Housing Task Force