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CONTACT: ((LOCAL MISSION CONTACT)) ((Phone Number))

SURVEY REVEALS MENTAL ILLNESS ON THE RISE AMONG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Citygate Network’s 33rd Annual Snapshot Survey

The face of homelessness—and the capabilities of those who provide services to people experiencing homelessness—is changing. Poverty and homelessness are extremely complex issues that extend far beyond just having somewhere to shelter, or money in the bank. The conditions from a variety of issues, including a lack of support, the absence of community, and, frequently, a combination of other factors that haven’t been unaddressed in a person’s life, resulting in a crisis point. These core issues often include addiction, family estrangement, violence, traumatic events, and mental illness.

Mental illness is, in fact, increasingly being seen as a primary factor in overall incidences of homelessness. According to a 2023 survey released by Citygate Network and ((NAME OF MISSION)), the percentage of clients and guests self-reporting mental illness at Citygate Network member missions and ministries across the U.S. continues to increase every year. This 2023 point-in-time count showed that almost half of all persons accessing services at these organizations struggled with some level of mental illness. In order to meet the changing needs, service providers continue to expand and adjust their services.

Rescue missions and similar organizations are no longer simply homeless shelters or soup kitchens that focus solely on shelter and food. While they continue to meet the crisis needs of individuals, increasingly, they also offer an extensive suite of services, including addiction recovery support, medical care, counseling, education, vocational training, and other programs needed to help people move forward in life and reach their potential.

“At ((NAME OF MISSION), we’re constantly reimagining our services to align with the changing needs reflected in our population,” said ((NAME OF MISSION LEADER)). “Our services are needed now more than ever.”

Almost 30 percent of those accessing services reported never having experienced homelessness before. But that means more than two-thirds of respondents have experienced homelessness at least once before. Single individuals continue to make up the largest percentage of those surveyed, and the 46–65-year-olds make up almost half of the respondents, representing the largest age category by far.

“It’s also important to note that the majority of people coming to us for help are your neighbors, rather than people traveling here from other areas,” said ((LAST NAME OF MISSION LEADER)). “More than ((PERCENT AREA RESIDENT)) percent are from right here in ((NAME OF AREA)).”

In all, 11,842 people responded to the 2023 survey at 75 missions and ministries across the country. This is the 33rd year that Citygate Network has conducted its *Snapshot Survey* to determine the demographic makeup of the people its member organizations serve.

Survey findings nationwide also include:

1. Ninety-one percent of those served identified as single.
2. Nineteen percent reported being victims of violence in the last 12 months.
3. Ninety-two percent said they come to the mission daily, a five percent increase from last year.
4. Eighty-one percent preferred receiving services from programs with a spiritual emphasis, a very slight one percent increase compared to the survey completed five years ago.

“Regardless of the numbers, remember that these are fellow humans in need,” said ((LAST NAME OF MISSION LEADER)). “We will stand as a place of refuge and hope in our city. For anyone looking for a place of recovery and restoration, we are here.”

((Insert local mission information here))

Further information is available on the Citygate Network website at [www.citygatenetwork.org/snapshotresults](http://www.citygatenetwork.org/snapshotresults)

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***Editor’s Note:*** *For interviews and additional national survey information, contact: ((NAME OF MISSION CONTACT)).*