

The Government of Canada's Veteran Homelessness Program

Infrastructure Canada
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Overview

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- 2. The proposed Veteran Homelessness Program**
- 3. Key Principles of the Program**
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Data on Veteran Homelessness in Canada



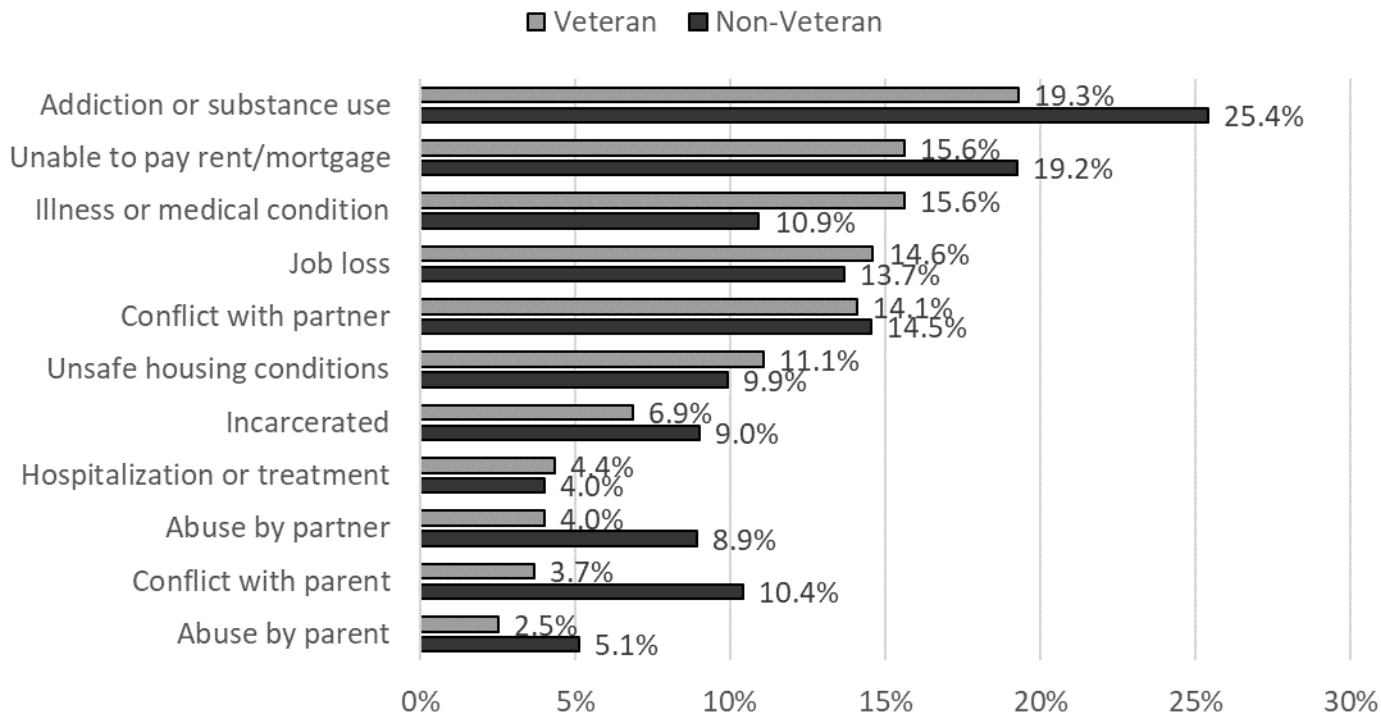
How many Veterans are experiencing homelessness in Canada?

- According to the 2021 Census, there are approximately 461,240 Canadian Veterans.
- During 2019, an estimated 1.6% of emergency shelter users were Veterans (1,905 individuals).
- This proportion has remained close to 2% since it was first collected in 2014 and is relatively consistent with the proportion of Veterans in the general Canadian population (1.7%).
- This number likely underestimates the total number of Veterans who experience homelessness, since some people who experience homelessness do not access shelters.
- For example, during the 2018 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count, 4.7% identified as Veterans, with 21% of those respondents reporting having not used an emergency shelter over the past year.

Why are these Veterans experiencing homelessness?

Reasons for homelessness

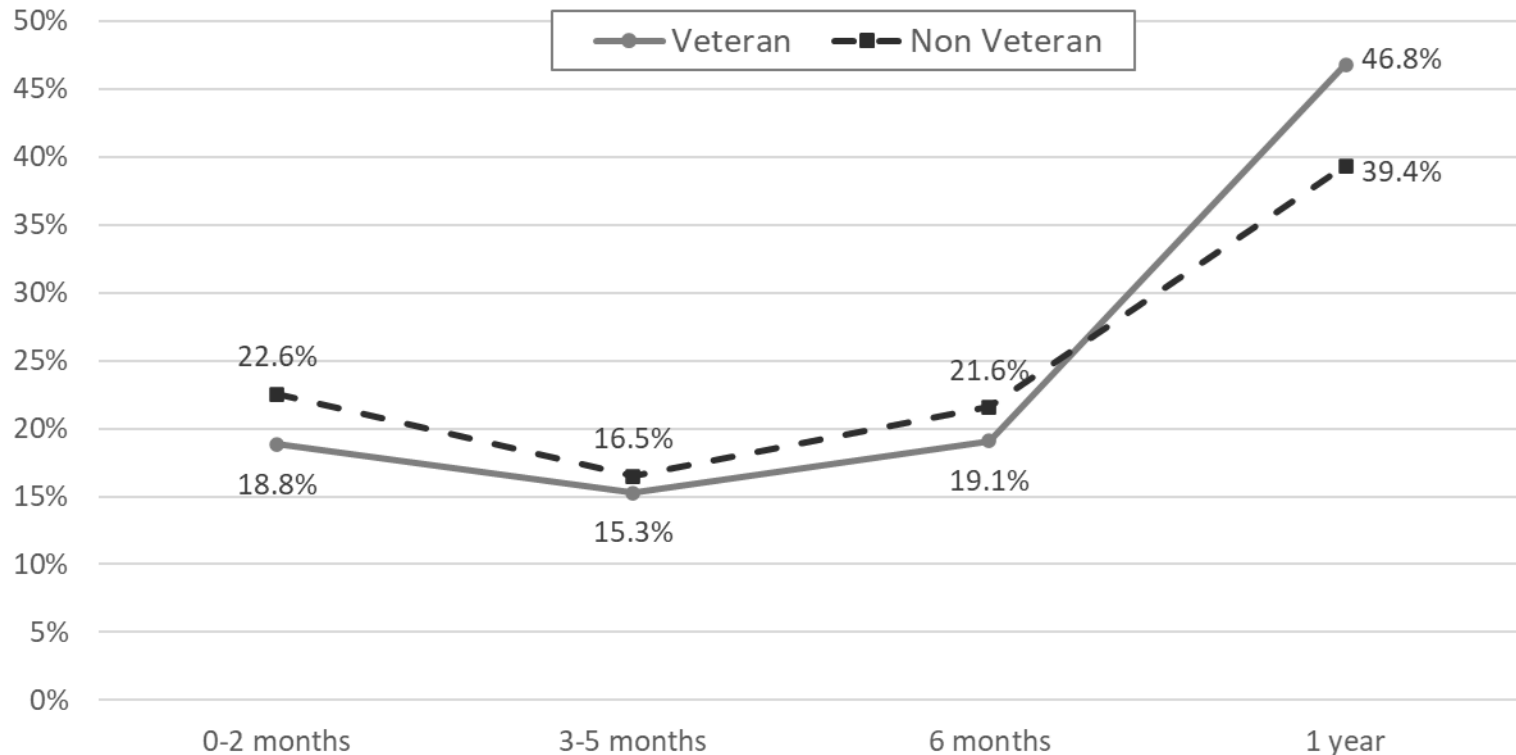
2018 PiT Count (n = 596 Veteran respondents and 12,613 non-Veteran respondents)



How long are these Veterans experiencing homelessness?

Number of Months of Homelessness Experienced Over the Past Year

2018 PiT Count (n = 786 Veteran respondents and 15,944 non-Veteran respondents)



What do we know about these Veterans?

- A demographic analysis of the national shelter data showed that:
 - Veteran shelter users were more likely than non-Veterans to be older (average age = 48.2 years compared to 38.6) and over-represented among those aged 50+ (48.7% compared to 24.7%);
 - A greater majority of Veterans than non-Veterans were male (87.6% compared to 70.1%); and,
 - Indigenous and non-Indigenous shelter users were similarly likely to identify as a Veteran (1.7%).
- The 2018 PiT Count survey found similar demographics for Veterans. Among Veteran respondents, 82.9% identified as male and 34.3% identified as First Nations, Metis or Inuit.
- Female Veterans experiencing homelessness were younger than male Veterans experiencing homelessness (72% under age 50 vs. 51% of males).

The proposed Veteran Homelessness Program



The Veteran Homelessness Program

- Budget 2021 announced \$44.6 million over two years for a pilot program aimed at reducing Veteran homelessness.
- To ensure that long-term support is in place, Budget 2022 announced the Government's intention to move directly to the launch of a new Veteran Homelessness Program and provided an additional \$62.2 million over three years.
- Total: \$106.8 million over five years (2023-24 to 2027-28).
- The Budget indicated this funding would provide rent supplements and wrap-around supports to Veterans experiencing homelessness, in partnership with community organizations.
- Officials from Infrastructure Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation are collaborating to design this program.

Key principles for addressing Veteran homelessness



Key Principles of the Program

- In March 2022, the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion and the Minister of Veterans Affairs hosted three virtual roundtables.
- Each roundtable was 1.5 hours and in total, 41 stakeholders participated in the roundtables.
- This included Veterans with lived experience, municipalities, universities and research institutes, and Veteran and homeless-serving organizations.
- Five key principles arose from this stakeholder engagement, which are informing the design of the Veteran Homelessness Program.

Key Principles of a Veteran Homelessness Program

1. **Prioritize the Veteran Population and Recognize its Diversity**

- Veterans have unique needs.
- Veterans include Indigenous peoples, women and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

2. **Employ a Whole-of-Government and Cross-Sectoral Approach**

- Collaboration and coordination is imperative across all orders of governments, and with Veteran and homeless-serving organizations.

Key Principles of the Program

3. Ensure Evidence- and Data-Informed Programming

- A program targeting Veterans should be supported by proven practices (e.g., HUD-VASH, Housing First) and data.

4. Ensure Flexibility in Housing Choice

- Veterans experiencing homelessness should have the opportunity to choose their own housing (e.g., Veteran-specific housing, or otherwise).

5. Provide Wrap-Around Supports

- Wrap-around supports (e.g., health and medical supports, peer supports, referrals, etc.) are key to addressing underlying issues.

Thank you!

