

## Characteristics of the Homeless Population

*From the Martha Burt, Urban Institute Report: Homeless Families, Singles and Others:  
Finds from the 1996 National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients.*

For all Homeless Populations: Family Status by Sex Subgroups:

**60% single men**      **15% single women**      **12% women with children**  
5% men with other men    5% women with other women  
3% men with children.

|                              | Single<br>Male | Single<br>Female | Female<br>With Children |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Only One Homeless Experience | 47%            | 60%              | 48%                     |
| Current Homeless Period      |                |                  |                         |
| 1-3 months                   | 22%            | 25%              | 61%                     |
| 6-12 months                  | 24%            | 18%              | 43%                     |
| 13-24 months                 | 19%            | 9%               | 34%                     |
| 25+ months                   | 35%            | 38%              | 5%                      |
| Current Type of Residence    |                |                  |                         |
| Emergency Shelter            | 30%            | 27%              | 37%                     |
| Transitional Housing         | 28%            | 48%              | 44%                     |
| Room or Apartment w/ Other   | 16%            | 14%              | 18%                     |
| Place not meant for housing  | 26%            | 11%              | 2%                      |
| While Homeless               |                |                  |                         |
| Subject to thief of property | 42%            | 43%              | 23%                     |
| Physically assaulted         | 24%            | 28%              | 13%                     |
| Sexually assaulted           | 4%             | 16%              | 9%                      |
| Reason Left Last Residence   |                |                  |                         |
| Could not pay rent           | 13%            | 20%              | 20%                     |
| Lost job / job ended         | 17%            | 9%               |                         |
| Abusive household violence   |                | 10%              | 16%                     |
| Drinking                     | 7%             |                  |                         |
| Drugs                        | 7%             | 13%              |                         |
| Landlord eviction            |                |                  | 8%                      |
| Types of Income              |                |                  |                         |
| AFDC / TANF                  |                |                  | 58%                     |
| General Assistance           | 10%            | 9%               | 8%                      |
| SSI                          | 8%             | 13%              | 3%                      |
| Food Stamps                  | 30%            | 40%              | 74%                     |
| Funds from Parents           | 7%             | 7%               | 15%                     |
| Funds from Friends           | 11%            | 17%              | 13%                     |
| Panhandling                  | 10%            | 6%               | 1%                      |

|  | <b>Single<br/>Male</b> | <b>Single<br/>Female</b> | <b>Female<br/>With Children</b> |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Alcohol, Drug or Abuse before 18</b>                              |                        |                          |                                 |
| First started drinking to get drunk                                  | 53%                    | 31%                      | 36%                             |
| First started using drugs regularly                                  | 29%                    | 19%                      | 14%                             |
| Abandoned by age of 18   | 12%                    | 12%                      | 12%                             |
| Physically abused by age of 18                                       | 19%                    | 30%                      | 24%                             |
| Sexually assaulted by age of 18                                      | 8%                     | 27%                      | 23%                             |
| <b>Out-of-Home Experiences</b>                                       |                        |                          |                                 |
| Placed in foster care, group home<br>or institution before age of 18 | 23%                    | 28%                      | 25%                             |
| Placed in foster care, group home<br>or institution before age of 13 | 14%                    | 18%                      | 13%                             |
| Juvenile Detention before 18   | 18%                    | 10%                      | 11%                             |
| <b>Length of time lived away from home</b>                           |                        |                          |                                 |
| 1-6 months   | 21%                    | 15%                      | 1%                              |
| 7-12 months  | 8%                     | 10%                      | 20%                             |
| One year or more   | 71%                    | 75%                      | 64%                             |
| Ran away from home before 18   | 28%                    | 34%                      | 37%                             |
| Forced to leave home before 18                                       | 20%                    | 23%                      | 29%                             |
| First time became homeless occurred<br>before the age of 18          | 19%                    | 22%                      | 29%                             |