

## SHELTER TASMANIA – HOMELESSNESS 2021: THE FACTS

### About homelessness in Tasmania

Homelessness affects people of all ages, and in all regions of Tasmania. The need to reduce and eliminate homelessness in Tasmania has never been more urgent.

People can become homeless for many reasons including loss of income or employment; the lack of affordable housing; family breakdown and domestic violence; illness transition from care or custody; and mental health, gambling or substance issues.

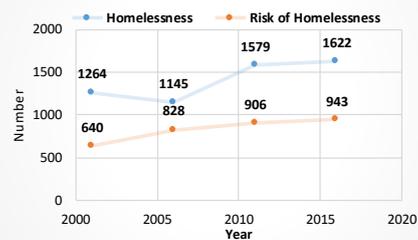
For many people homelessness is temporary, and they can quickly recover and stabilise their situation. For others, finding and maintaining a safe affordable home is extremely difficult, and homelessness lasts much too long.

In March 2021, 338 Tasmanians were living without any housing at all, but most homelessness is hidden from view. Less than one in ten people experiencing homelessness are sleeping rough. More people are staying temporarily with others (couch surfing); in crisis shelters; in precarious and substandard accommodation; with doubled up families in overcrowded dwellings or in cars.

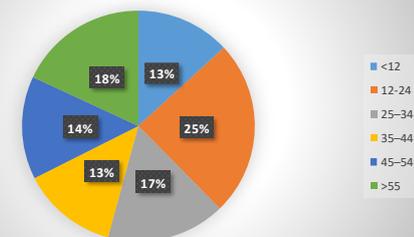
More than 120,000 Tasmanians live below the poverty line. As housing costs rise, it is more difficult for Tasmanians earning low and moderate incomes to find affordable housing. The chronic shortage of affordable rental housing in Tasmania is a major cause of homelessness and a barrier to pathways out of homelessness.

#### ABS Census 2016 shows:

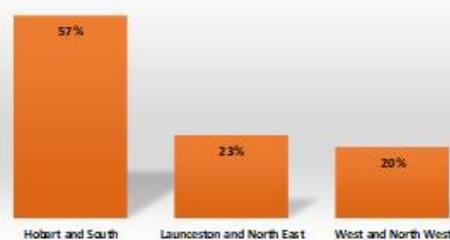
Homelessness Trends, 2001 - 2016



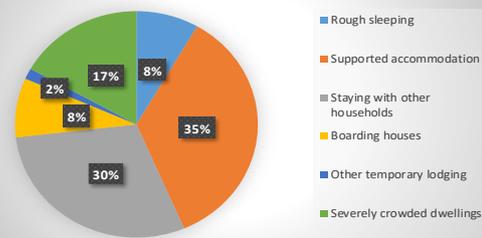
Age groups affected, 2016



Homelessness Across Tasmania, 2016



Where people stay, 2016



For more facts on homelessness in Tasmania: [www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/fact-sheets](http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/fact-sheets)

## Homelessness support in Tasmania

A network of shelters and specialist services across Tasmania support people experiencing homelessness and who are at risk of homelessness.

Social housing and crisis accommodation play a critical role in housing people experiencing homelessness, and support services help address issues that can lead to homelessness.

Support includes help to find emergency and long term housing; helping with issues like domestic violence, substance use, gambling or mental illness; counselling and legal advice; life skills, education and employment; as well as help with stabilising and maintaining existing tenancies.

Housing and homelessness support services can be accessed through Tasmania's *Housing Connect* service.

**For assistance call Housing Connect on: 1800 800 588**

### ***Demand for homelessness services in Tasmania (AIHW 2019-2020)***

*One in 83 people in Tasmania received homelessness assistance, higher than the national rate (1 in 87).*

*In the year 2019-2020, 6,400 clients were assisted in Tasmania, 2% of the national SHS client population.*

*Reasons for seeking assistance:*

- *housing crisis (50%, compared with 34% nationally)*
- *financial difficulties (45%, compared with 41%)*
- *housing affordability stress (44%, 29% nationally)*

*On any one day in Tasmania:*

- *36 requests for help go unassisted,*
- *One third of requests involve family or domestic violence*
- *Children who experience homelessness have an increased risk of becoming homeless in later life.*
- *More women than men requested assistance from homelessness services – 56% women, 44% men*

## What is needed to end homelessness in Tasmania?

Homelessness will end when everyone has access to appropriate, affordable and secure housing, along with the support needed to help people stay housed. **Housing ends homelessness.**

Shelter Tas calls for national and state level actions, including:

- A National Affordable Housing Strategy to increase the supply of affordable and social housing
- Strengthening the Tasmanian Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plans with a target of 10% of all dwellings to be social and affordable housing
- Increased investment in Tasmania's homelessness and crisis accommodation support
- Increased resources to ensure housing and support for Tasmania's young people at risk
- Raising the rates of government income support for low income households
- Making affordable housing a priority in Tasmania's planning system

**Shelter Tas' vision is for affordable, appropriate, safe and secure housing for all Tasmanians and an end to homelessness.**

