A HOUSING DATA CRISIS

& SALESFORCE/BIRDSEYE SOLUTIONS

by: Marjorie Justice

provisio partners

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, on a given night in 2019, over 550,000 Americans experienced homelessness.[1] The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty has stated that roughly three and a half million Americans will experience some form of homelessness each year.

Of this 3.5 million, 1.35 million are children.[2] And because of COVID-19, the situation has become even more dire. During the last three years, homeless numbers have been growing. As unemployment increases, that number will continue to grow. [1]

Of this 3.5 million, 1.35 million are children

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS PER YEAR BY TYPE, 2019

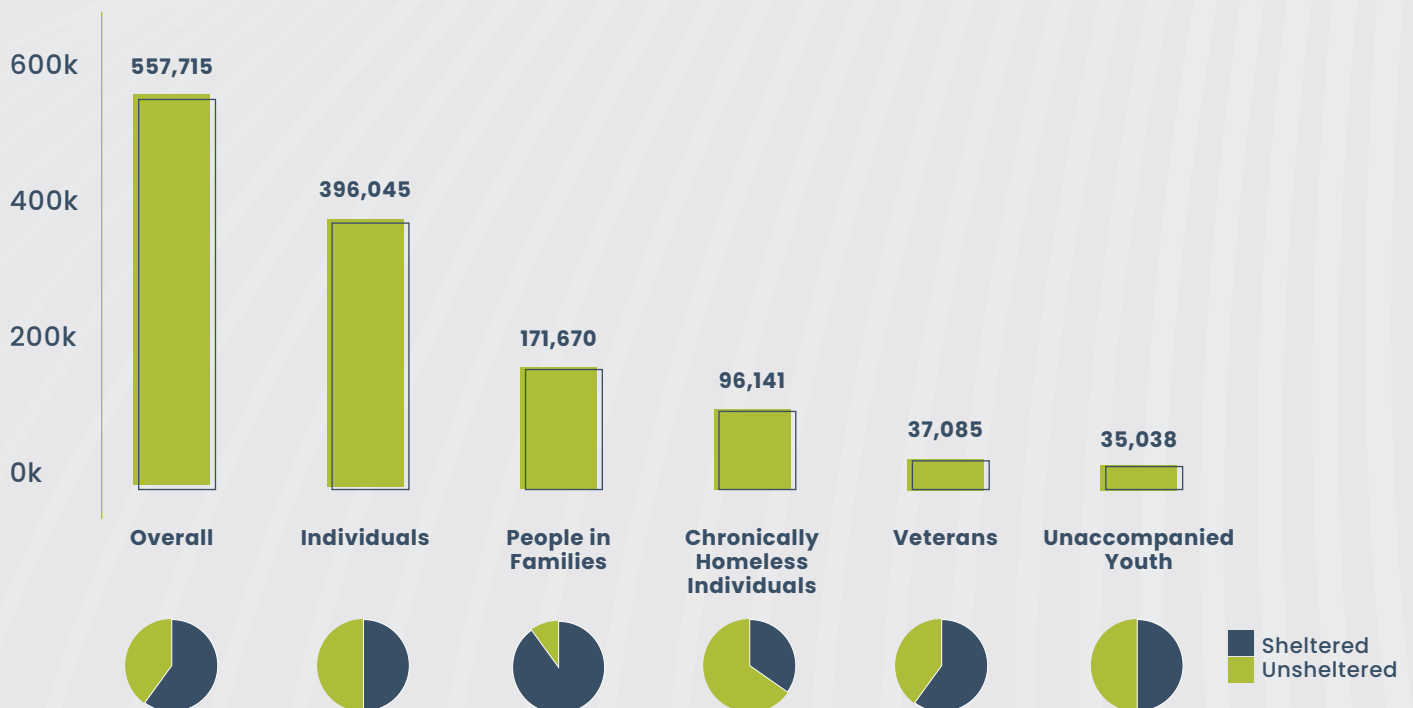|					
557,715	396,045	171,670	96,141	37,085	35,038
Overall	Individuals	People in Families	Chronically Homeless Individuals	Veterans	Unaccompanied Youth

Sheltered
Unsheltered

Fig 1. 1

Now, more than ever, housing agencies face serious challenges. With so many vulnerable people in their communities needing services, updating their technology may be low on their list of priorities. However, with the right technology, agencies can efficiently track data and report outcomes, so they can focus on their constituents, not data entry.

Many agencies use funder-mandated systems that cannot be customized, so the systems do not meet their unique needs. They may be forced to plug information into systems where it doesn't necessarily fit. Their data might also be in disjointed systems, like Access or Excel; many are forced to work off of printed spreadsheets. Agencies need to meet funder requirements and manage their programs but often cannot use the same system to do both their funding reporting and case management. Not having a single application makes program management, determining where people are in their programs, and funder reporting much more difficult.

But there is a solution to these issues.

Many nonprofits have turned to Provisio Partners to help them build out a cost-effective single source of truth with a more holistic way of looking at participants.

Some of these companies track data in spreadsheets and legacy databases and must look at multiple spreadsheets to determine where people are in their program. Now, they will be able to leverage Salesforce and birdseye to serve their clients and track program fundamentals around housing. Birdseye allows them to do case management and track housing data in a single system.

With the right technology, agencies can efficiently track data and report outcomes, so they can focus on their constituents, not data entry.

CASE MANAGEMENT AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT IN ONE SYSTEM

Birdseye allows agencies to track their buildings and units and enter income certifications required by most housing agencies to get federal funding. They can track the following:

- Where their buildings are
- Who is paying rent
- Who is subsidizing the unit or tenant
- Who is in each unit
- What are the tenants' maintenance requests

The crucial advantage is that they can track this information in one place. During Intakes, case managers can assess if clients qualify for any of their programs and then determine eligible properties. As agencies complete the housing intake, they can perform their case management responsibilities at the same time. The biggest challenge of disjointed systems is that there is no single source of truth and no connection between the physical management or knowledge of the property with case management. When leveraging an existing system like birdseye, an agency has case management and the ability to build on what they need for their specific housing program. As a major bonus, everyone in the agency would have access to birdseye, allowing teams to better coordinate their work.

THE PUSH TOWARD PAPERLESS PROCESSES

One effect of COVID-19 has been the push for agencies to go paperless as it is difficult for people to submit paperwork by hand now. Through Salesforce, Provisio Partners can help agencies create Community websites (Experiences) and move forms online. This benefits the users who now have a more convenient way to submit forms, plus it requires less data entry for agencies. Paperless systems also cut down on waste and streamline processes, decreasing the time spent going back and forth to collect eligibility documentation.

TELL FUNDERS YOUR STORY

Funders ask for more data than they used to about impact, but it is hard to report impact from a spreadsheet. Through birdseye and Tableau CRM, you can tell your data stories in a more compelling way.

Agencies want to ensure their participants are in a better state leaving than when they came into their programs, so they are hopefully not recycling into the same programs.

Funders need better impact measurements, and consulting partners, like Provisio Partners, can build out those frameworks and create dashboards for reporting. Adopting a comprehensive, secure, and user-friendly system that streamlines data collection and reporting across programs helps agencies achieve their goals.

"YOU WANT TO MEASURE WHETHER YOUR PARTICIPANTS HAVE EVOLVED FROM 'STRIVING TO THRIVING,' IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT DATA RELATED TO HOUSING. YOU NEED TO DEMONSTRATE WHETHER PARTICIPANTS' INCOMES HAVE GONE UP. DO THEY HAVE MORE STABLE EMPLOYMENT? CAN THEY AFFORD A MARKET-RATE RENTAL?"

– Valerie Rogers, a consultant at Provisio Partners

1. "State of Homelessness: 2020 Edition," National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020,
Available at: https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020
2. "Housing and Homelessness," HumanServicesEdu.org, 2020,
Available at: https://www.humanservicesedu.org/housing-and-homelessness.html

provisio partners

Founded in 2017, Provisio Partners is focused on empowering changemakers with the right-fit Salesforce solution so they can connect their one, true mission with the people who need it the most.

Provisio Partners is located in Chicago, Illinois.

(312) 724-8228

Visit www.provisiopartners.com/get-started to sign up for a consultation.