2024

Northern Saskatchewan Administrative District

Point-In-Time Count Report

Métis Nation
Saskatchewan

2024 Count Summary

In fall 2024, six communities (listed below) in the Northern Saskatchewan Administrative District (NSAD) participated in a Point in Time (PiT) Count, an initiative led by Métis Nation - Saskatchewan (MN-S) to capture information on the community's current homeless population. This inaugural effort is part of a broader project that encompasses many towns and small cities in Saskatchewan that have never conducting a count of the homeless population.

Initiatives like the PiT Count provide crucial data to inform policy decisions, planning, and the development of strategies to address homelessness in the province. The PiT Count is a coordinated effort to illustrate the state of homelessness in Saskatchewan and is conducted in collaboration with local communities and organizations.

This data is vital for understanding homelessness at a local and provincial level, guiding efforts to create meaningful change. This first MN-S led PiT Count adds to a larger provincial and national conversation about ending homelessness, and demonstrates MN-S's commitment to addressing this issue and ensuring no one is left behind.

How Many People Were Counted in NSAD?

- 407 people were counted as experiencing homelessness in NSAD on a single night.
- 378 individuals experiencing homelessness completed surveys between October 1 and November 30, 2024.
- 58% of people counted experiencing chronic homelessness.

Where Were People Sleeping?

- 60% were staying at someone else's place
- 16% were unsure
- 11% were staying at an encampment

Who Was Experiencing Homelessness?

- 52% Male
- 29% Female
- 13% Youth
- 43% First Nations
- 49% Métis
- 2% have Indigenous ancestry

Introduction

In the month of October, 2024, a Point in Time (PiT) Count of homelessness was conducted in NSAD. The PiT Count was lead by local organizations within each community, and yielded rich information about individuals who are experiencing homelessness in the community.

A PiT Count serves an important function: it provides a current snapshot of the community's homeless population. Over time, future PiT Counts will show how homelessness might change over time, and help gauge the effectiveness of efforts to address homelessness in the community.

This analysis examines the key factors contributing to homelessness in NSAD based on survey data from the local individuals experiencing homelessness. Ultimately, information from the PiT Count is used to inform solutions to ending homelessness in the community.

Methods

The data for this analysis was collected through an enumeration (a count of how many people are experiencing homelessness in a community on a single night, including in shelters, transitional housing, and unsheltered locations), and a survey aimed at understanding the scope and characteristics of homelessness. Survey administration occurred between October 1 and November 30, 2024. The survey captured responses from individuals experiencing homelessness, addressing factors such as demographics, housing history, and sources of income.

Once collected, the data was organized, analyzed, and interpreted by the Northern Research Group (NRG), ensuring a thorough examination of trends and key findings. NRG applied a systematic approach to categorize responses and identify patterns, providing actionable insights to inform community-driven solutions for homelessness.

Participating Communities in the NSAD:

- La Ronge
- Buffalo Narrows
- La Loche
- Beauval
- Ile-a-la-Crosse
- Pinehouse

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Count Results - Demographics

The Count

Table 1: Count of Homeless Individuals

Community	Enumerated (Single Night)	Surveyed (Oct/Nov 2024)
Buffalo Narrows	30	30
Ile-a-la-Crosse	49	49
La Loche	37	37
Beauval	29	29
La Ronge	100	100
Pinehouse	162	133
Total (NSAD)	**407**	**378**

Gender

52% of respondents identified as men and 41% as women, indicating a relatively equal gender distribution among the homeless population in NSAD (See Figure 1).
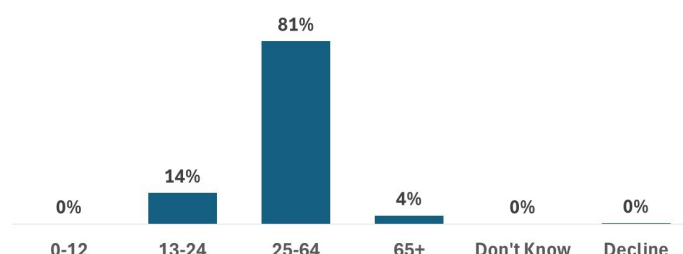
Figure 1: Gender
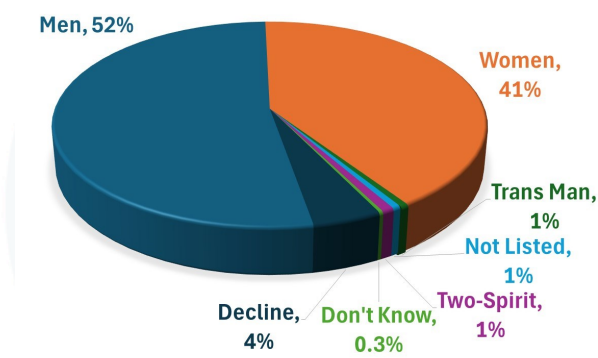
Age

Of individuals surveyed in 2024, the largest group experiencing homelessness in NSAD are adults aged 25–64 (81%), with 14% youth (13–24), and 4% aged 65 or over.
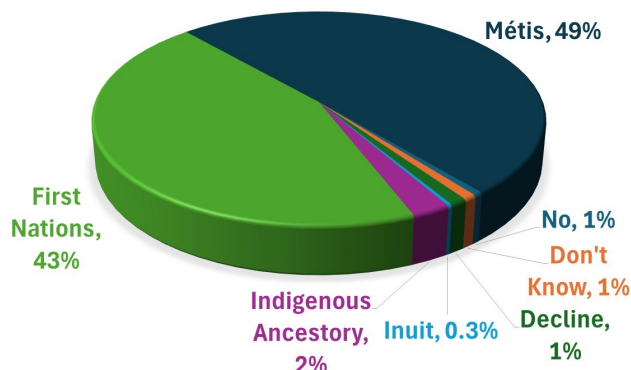
Figure 2: Age

Indigenous Identity

The data shows the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples among the homeless population. The majority of respondents experiencing homelessness in NSAD identify as Métis (49%), followed by 43% identifying as First Nations, and 2% with Indigenous ancestry.

### Figure 3: Indigenous Identity

Count Results - Survey Data

Count survey contained five screening questions and 15 additional questions (See Appendix A). Results based on survey data are included in this section.

Shelter Type/Sleeping Location

Individuals who completed the 2024 Count survey were asked "Have you spent at least one night in any of the following locations in the past year?" as a screening question. The type of shelter people used most frequently is detailed in Figure 4.

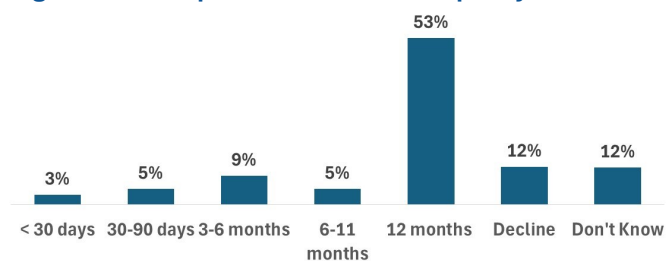### Figure 4: Shelter / Sleeping Location
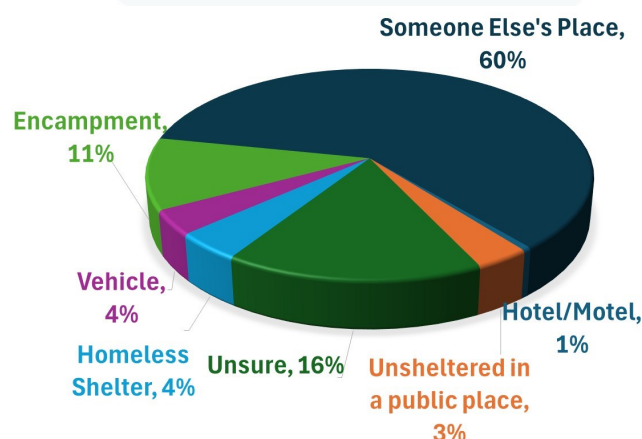
Chronicity

58% of individuals surveyed indicated that they experienced homelessness anywhere from 6 – 12 months over the past year, 14% said their homelessness was more recent.

Figure 5: Time spent homeless in the past year

< 30 days	30-90 days	3-6 months	6-11 months	12 months	Decline	Don't Know
3%	5%	9%	5%	53%	12%	12%

When looking over a longer period, Figure 6 shows that 56% of respondents reported being homeless for about half or more of the past three years, while 22% experienced homelessness for less than half of that time.

Figure 6: Time spent homeless past 3 years

About half or more, 56%
Less then half, 22%
Don't Know, 10%
Decline, 12%
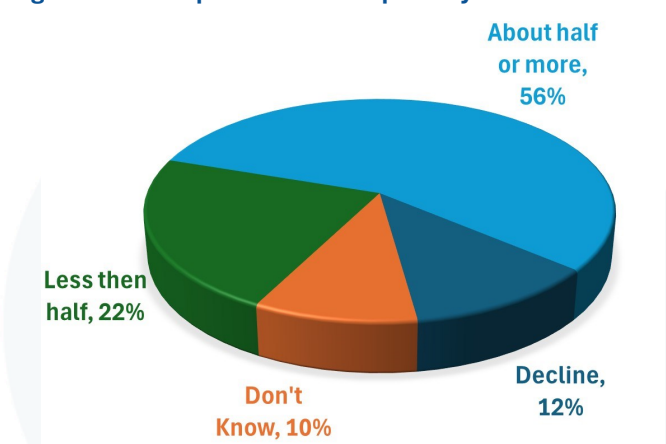
Age First Homeless

About one half of the individuals surveyed indicated that their homelessness in NSAD often began in their youth, with 6% of respondents first experience homelessness over the age of 50.
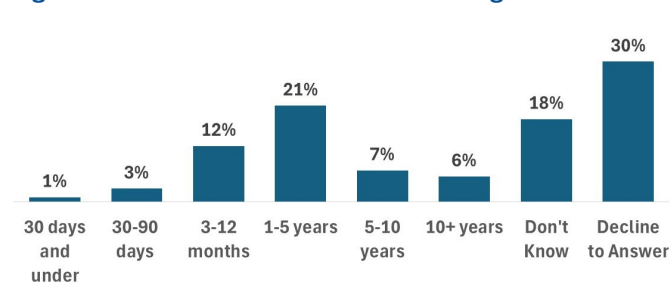
Figure 7: Age first homeless

10 and under	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 and over	Don't know	Decline
3%	24%	24%	12%	6%	5%	1%	11%	12%
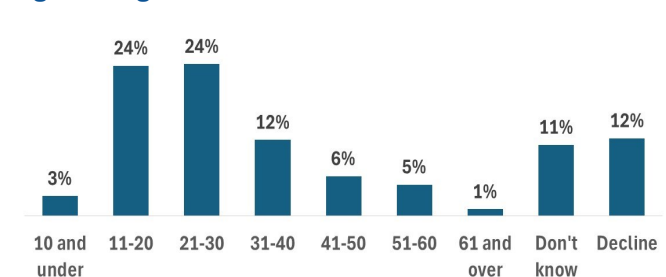
Time Since Most Recent Housing Loss

As seen in Figure 8, over one third of individuals surveyed lost their housing at least one year ago, while 18% were uncertain about when their homelessness began.
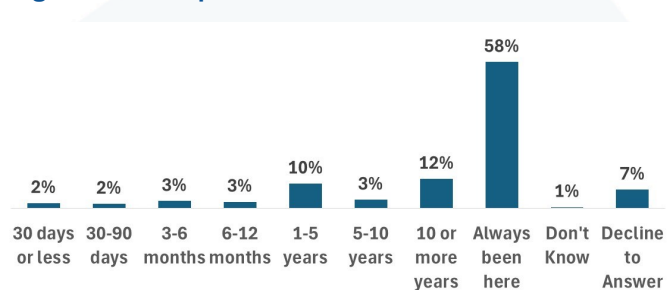
Figure 8: Time since most recent housing loss

30 days and under	30-90 days	3-12 months	1-5 years	5-10 years	10+ years	Don't Know	Decline to Answer
1%	3%	12%	21%	7%	6%	18%	30%

Length of Time in NSAD

Individuals who answered the 2024 Count were asked how long they had lived in NSAD. Figure 9 provides an overview of responses for the length of time in the community. 58% of individuals reported they had always been in NSAD

Figure 9: Time spent in NSAD

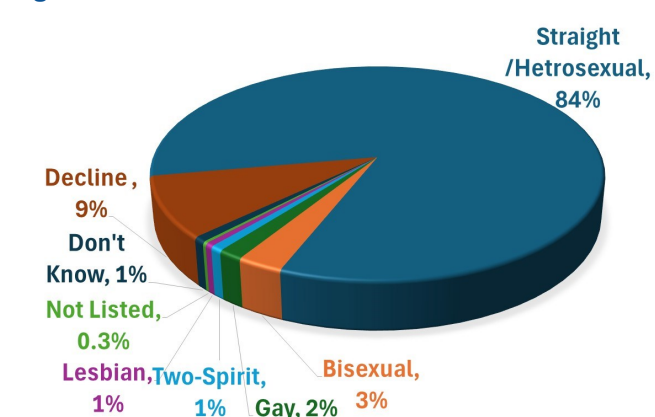| 30 days or less	30-90 days	3-6 months	6-12 months	1-5 years	5-10 years	10 or more years	Always been here	Don't Know	Decline to Answer
2%	2%	3%	3%	10%	3%	12%	58%	1%	7%

Sexual Orientation

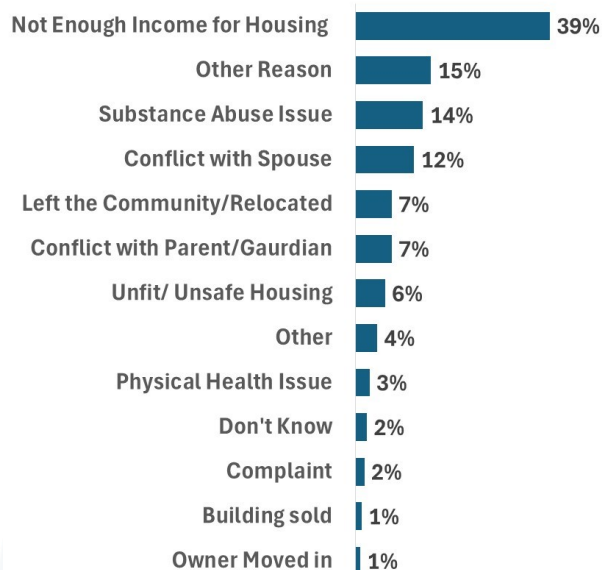Data reveals that the majority of respondents (84%) identified as straight/heterosexual, while 9% declined to answer.

Figure 10: Sexual orientation

Straight/Hetrosexual, 84%
Decline, 9%
Don't Know, 1%
Not Listed, 0.3%
Lesbian, 1%
Two-Spirit, 1%
Gay, 2%
Bisexual, 3%

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Housing Loss

Results showed that the primary cause of homelessness for respondents in NSAD is not enough income for housing (39%), other reason (15%) and substance abuse issues (14%). Other notable causes include conflict with spouse (12%), relocated (7%) and conflict with parent/guardian (7%). Smaller proportions reported issues such as physical health issues (3%), complaint (2%), and building sold (1%).

Figure 11: Housing loss reason

Reason	%
Not Enough Income for Housing	39%
Other Reason	15%
Substance Abuse Issue	14%
Conflict with Spouse	12%
Left the Community/Relocated	7%
Conflict with Parent/Gaurdian	7%
Unfit/ Unsafe Housing	6%
Other	4%
Physical Health Issue	3%
Don't Know	2%
Complaint	2%
Building sold	1%
Owner Moved in	1%

Foster Care

While a majority of individuals surveyed did not grow up in foster care, 26% had experience with the foster care system.

Figure 12: Foster care


No, 64%
Yes, 26%
Decline to Answer, 8%
Don't Know, 1%

Origin and Citizenship

The survey data showed that one individual that was part of the homeless population in NSAD was an asylum seeker, refugee, or immigrant.

Income

The primary source of income for respondents was social assistance (39%), while 18% indicated they had no income. Other sources of income included GST (24%), child and family benefits (12%), part time employment (6%), and employment insurance (5%). Smaller portions rely on disability benefit (4%), and casual employment (4%). It is important to note that while some respondents had full-time employment (14%), they were still experiencing homelessness.

Figure 13: Main source of income

Source	%
Social Assistance	39%
GST	24%
No Income	18%
Full Time Employment	14%
Child and Family Benefits	12%
Part Time Employment	6%
Employment Insurance	5%
Other	5%
Disability Benefit	4%
Casual Employment	4%
Seniors Benefit	4%
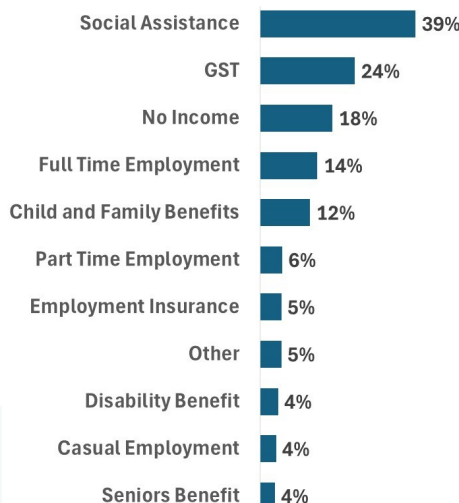
Families

Challenges are compounded when individuals experiencing homelessness who have dependents, particularly children. 56% of the respondents had a dependent of some sort, with 25% noting that they had children relying on them.

Figure 14: Dependents

Children, 25%
Partner, 17%
Other Adults, 12%
Pets, 2%
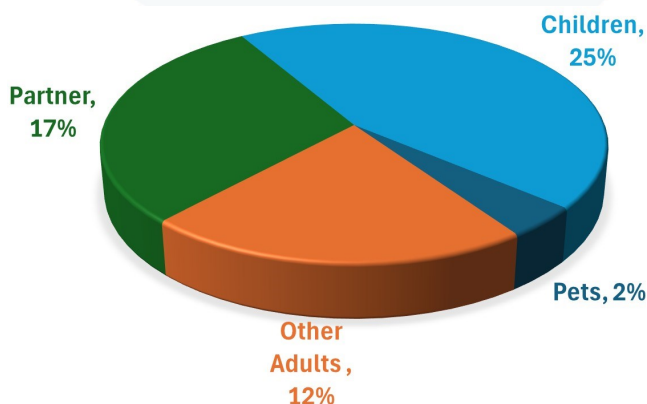
Veterans

Data gathered on veterans' status indicates that 14 of the respondents reported having a history of service in the military or RCMP.

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Conclusion

The inaugural 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count in NSAD has provided critical baseline data about homelessness in this northern Saskatchewan communities. With 407 individuals (approximately 4% of the total population) identified as experiencing homelessness, this count offers valuable insights into a previously undocumented issue.

Several key findings stand out from this first count:

- **Indigenous overrepresentation:** 94% of individuals experiencing homelessness identified as Indigenous (49% Métis, 43% First Nations, and 2% reporting Indigenous ancestry), highlighting the continued impacts of systemic barriers facing Indigenous communities.

- **Economic challenges:** The primary cause of housing loss was insufficient income for housing, with 39% of respondents relying on social assistance as their main income source. Notably, 14% of those experiencing homelessness reported having full-time employment, indicating that employment alone does not guarantee housing security in the community.

- **Chronic homelessness:** 58% of individuals counted were experiencing chronic homelessness, suggesting long-term barriers to stable housing that require comprehensive intervention strategies.

- **Early onset:** Over half (51%) of respondents first experienced homelessness between the ages of 0-30, pointing to the need for youth-focused prevention strategies.

This initial PiT Count, led by the community organizations in collaboration with MN-S, establishes a foundation for tracking changes in homelessness over time and evaluating the effectiveness of future interventions. The data gathered will be essential for developing targeted, community-specific solutions that address the unique needs of NSAD residents experiencing housing instability.

As part of MN-S's broader initiative to document homelessness across Saskatchewan communities, this count contributes to provincial and national understanding of rural and northern homelessness. By continuing to conduct regular counts and expanding data collection efforts, NSAD will be better positioned to develop evidence-based strategies that can effectively reduce homelessness and improve housing security for all community members.

Count Definitions

Chronic Homelessness: An individual must have spent a total of at least six months (180 days) as homeless over the past year or have had recurrent episodes in the past three years with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months staying in unsheltered locations, in emergency shelters, or staying temporarily with friends or family members. (Statistics Canada (2023))

Dependents: Individuals who rely on the respondent for financial, emotional, or physical support. This includes children, partners, or other adults.

Episodic Homelessness: Includes people who have been homeless for less than a year and have had fewer than four episodes of homelessness in the past three years (Human Services, 2012).

Sheltered: Includes people who are accessing emergency shelters available at minimal or no cost. Shelters include emergency shelters for people who are homeless and emergency shelters for people affected by domestic violence (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012).

Homelessness: The "situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's finances, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination." (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012)

Indigenous: Individuals captured in the Point in Time Count who identified as First Nations, Metis, Inuit or as having indigenous ancestry have been categorized as indigenous.

Point-in-Time Count: A method used to measure homelessness by conducting a survey or count on a specific day to capture a snapshot of individuals experiencing homelessness at that time.

Provisionally Accommodated: Includes people who are technically homeless because their current housing offers no prospect of permanence. Individuals in this group may be staying in residential treatment facilities, health facilities, group homes, jail/prison, transitional housing/second stage/short-term supportive housing, rooming houses, etc. (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012).

Unsheltered: Includes people who lack housing and are not accessing emergency shelter. Individuals in this group may be staying on the street, in abandoned buildings, stairwells, sheds, parks, tents, vehicles, etc. (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012).

Youth: Individuals captured in the Point in Time Count who are 18-24 years old have been categorized as youth. Individuals under age 18 are also included as youth where data is available.

Appendix A - Survey Questions

1. Have you spent at least one night in any of the following locations in the past year? (check all that apply)
2. Do you have family members or anyone else who is staying with you tonight? / Did any family members or anyone else stay with you last night? (Indicate survey number for partners. Check all that apply)
3. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? (If unsure, ask for best estimate)
4. In total, for *how much time* have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR (the last 12 months)? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)
4b. In total, for *how much time* have you experienced homelessness over the PAST 3 YEARS? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)
5. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?
6. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, asylum claimant (i.e. applied for refugee status after coming to Canada), or through another process?
7. How long have you been in (*community name*)?
8. Do you identify as First Nations (with or without status), Métis, or Inuit? (If yes, please specify) (*COMMUNITY NOTE: The wording of this question can be adapted to what makes sense in your community, for example by listing specific First Nations*)
8b. In *addition* to your response in the question above, do you identify with any of the racial identities listed below? (Show or Read list. Select all that apply)
9. Have you ever served in the Canadian Military or RCMP?
10. As a child or youth, were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home (*COMMUNITY NOTE: include any other Provincial child welfare programs*)? (Note: This question applies specifically to child welfare programs.)
11. Have you been experiencing difficulties related to any of the following?:
12. What gender do you identify with? (Show list or read list.)
13. How do you describe your sexual orientation, for example straight, gay, lesbian? (Show list or read list.)
14. What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently? (Do not read the options. Check all that apply. "Housing" does not include temporary arrangements (e.g., couch surfing) or shelter stays. Follow up for the reason if the respondent says "eviction" or that they "chose to leave".)
14b. Was your most recent housing loss related to an eviction?
14c. How long ago did that happen (that you lost your housing most recently)? (Best estimate)
15. What are your sources of income? (Reminder that this survey is anonymous. **Read list** and check all that apply)