

Emergency Shelter System and Size Review

In collaboration with the City of Boise (City), the Idaho Policy Institute (IPI) used an objective, statistical approach to determine a set of peer cities for use across City departments. This analysis uses a set of population and demographic variables to identify a group of cities that closely match Boise's demographic profile. This peer city selection process has helped City departments standardize their research about peer cities and apply lessons learned from these cities into policy and operational decisions throughout City government.

Our Path Home has conducted a quick review of [Peer Cities](#) and the associated emergency shelter response systems seeking to understand the largest shelter that services each system.

The Homeless Population column is calculated using the Point-In-Time Count, otherwise known as the PIT count. The PIT count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night. Although the PIT count is used nationally to determine the homeless population on a single night, it is important to note that it illustrates only 1/365 of the overall, varying picture of homelessness and does not capture those who may be experiencing homelessness, but have a living arrangement that was not calculated in the annual count (i.e. staying with a friend, living in a garage, etc...). For more information on the PIT count, please read this article on "[Why the PIT Count Counts.](#)"

Primary Peer Cities

CITY (COC)	POPULATION(2019)	HOMELESS POPULATION (PIT 2020)	LARGEST SHELTER	
			TOTAL BEDS	ADDT'L INFOFRMATION
Spokane, WA	522,798	1,559	100	House of Charity ; 100 people currently but had larger bed capacity pre-covid
Reno, NV	255,601	1,231	704	Nevada Cares Campus ; 604 permanent beds with 100 additional overflow beds
Lincoln, NE	289,102	457	350	People's City Mission ; 185-200 people currently, 300-350 pre-covid. 110 men's beds, men's transitional housing

				holds 60, women's transitional housing holds 8, 31 single women's beds, 25 rooms for family holds 3-8. All held in one location.
Little Rock, AR	197,312	1,186	250	Little Rock Compassion Center : 250 permanent beds
Greensboro, NC	296,710	624	125	Weaver House : 100 beds, 25 overflow beds available
Des Moines, IA	214,237	646	207	Central Iowa Shelter & Services ; 207 permanent beds with 150 shelter beds and 19 Vet transitional housing and 38 Section 8 voucher apartments

Secondary Peer Cities

CITY (COC)	POPULATION (2019)	HOMELESS POPULATION (PIT 2020)	LARGEST SHELTER	
			TOTAL BEDS	ADDT'L INFOFORMATION
Fort Wayne, IN	270,402	542	200	Fort Wayne Rescue Mission : 80+ beds; capacity for 200 men pre-covid
Huntsville, AL	200,574	561	300	Downtown Rescue Mission : 300 beds; 275 nightly average guests
Lexington, KY	323,152	689	250	Hope Center : 200 nightly average guests; in colder months 250
Salem, OR	174,365	624	300	Union Gospel Men's Mission : 200 emergency shelter beds; 100 transitional housing beds. All 300 beds located in same building.
Madison, WI	259,680	630	250	Porchlight : 250 beds
Winston-Salem, NC	247,945	504	100	Bethesda : 100 beds
Wichita, KS	389,938	619	150	Union Rescue Mission : Approx. 150 beds; 116 average nightly guests

Chattanooga, TN	182,799	648	79	Chattanooga Rescue Mission : 23 beds for women; 56 beds for men; Winter shelter also opens (Community Kitchen; currently closed)
Durham, NC	278,993	349	400	Durham Rescue Mission : 400 beds; 24 hour shelter serving men, women, and children
Amarillo, TX	199,371	600	230	Salvation Army of Amarillo : 230 beds
Anchorage, AK	288,000	1,058	450	Sullivan Arena Shelter (Bean's Café) : 350 permanent beds; 16 overflow mats. 450 permanent beds pre-covid.