

# I. Executive Summary

The 2007 County of Ventura Homeless Survey is based upon a questionnaire that was administered to 273 homeless adults. The number of adults who were surveyed is equivalent to 16.3% of persons who were also included in the County of Ventura 2007 Homeless Count. There were 1,679 homeless adults who were counted. Of the 273 homeless adults who were surveyed, 134 or 48.2% were living on the streets and 139 or 51.8% were living in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs.

## A. Background Information

The purpose of the 2007 County of Ventura Homeless Survey was to obtain a wide-range of information about the County's homeless population. In order to do so, a survey instrument was developed by several local stakeholders that focused on several fields of information to gain a general profile of the local homeless population. Local stakeholders decided that the goal was to administer the survey to 20% of the number of adults who were homeless on the day of the homeless count and nearly 20% (16.5%) was achieved.

The County of Ventura 2007 Homeless Count was a street-based and service-based count of all homeless individuals in the county during the designated day-of-the-count which was Tuesday, January 23, 2007. The street-based enumeration included homeless encampments and other places that homeless people use as part of their daily activities. Homeless encampments are those places that homeless people use primarily for sleeping. Other places (non-encampments) include streets and sidewalks where homeless people are usually en route, and locations that homeless people gather such as vacant lots, parks, municipal service or business centers, parked cars, abandoned buildings, and other locations that are not homeless encampments.

The service-based enumeration included both residential and non-residential locations where homeless persons receive temporary housing and other essential services. Such places include emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, substance abuse treatment facilities, mental health service facilities, public social service agencies, public schools, food and clothing programs, etc.

The count included a methodology that relied on a simple count instrument for recording a small amount of identifier information from each homeless adult encountered during the process. The identifier prevented a person from being included in the final tally of the count more than once. During the enumeration, counters recorded the initials, gender, ethnicity, year of birth, and state born of each individual homeless person. If the same person was encountered again, counters would establish the same code.

Afterwards, the information for every person every time was loaded into a data base. The information was then used to code each person. For example, a homeless person may have the following code of “WTMW1957CA. This meant that this person’s first name began with “W”, his last name began with “T”, he was male “M”, he was White “W”, born in 1957, and born in California. If the code appeared more than once, however, this person would only be counted once in the final tally.

Identifier information for the count was generally not collected from children under the age of 18 unless they were emancipated or otherwise homeless and unaccompanied. The number of children under 18 years of age in homeless families during the designated day-of-the-count was captured by asking the adults encountered “how many children under 18 years old are living with you today?”

### **B. Why Was the Survey Conducted?**

The survey was conducted in order to:

1. provide a representative sample of a wide-range of information of the number of adults who were included in the homeless count;
2. input HUD required information concerning homeless subpopulations in Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance grant applications;
3. make available information to local jurisdictions to help meet requirements for planning documents such as consolidated plans, housing elements, and impediments to fair housing choice;
4. serve as a basis for developing strategies for public and private agencies to respond to specific needs of homeless families and individuals; and
5. develop strategies for filling gaps in services in the regional homeless continuum of care system through public and private collaborations.

### **C. When Was the Survey Conducted?**

The survey was conducted over a 10 week period from mid-March through May of 2007.

#### **D. Where Was the Survey Conducted?**

The survey was conducted on the streets and at various residential and non-residential social service sites that participated in the homeless count.

#### **E. How the Survey Was Conducted?**

Representatives from more than 30 public and private agencies, service-providers and faith-based institutions participated in conducting survey interviews throughout the county. The process involved administering a comprehensive one-on-one interview survey with a representative sampling of homeless adults in Ventura County. There were three (3) primary methods of contact with homeless persons who participated in the survey. They were: 1) interviews with homeless persons who were contacted on the streets; 2) interviews with homeless persons who were contacted while living in shelters and transitional housing; and 3) interviews with homeless persons who were contacted while using non-residential homeless services.

All surveyors who participated in administering the survey questionnaire were oriented and trained by staff of the Institute for Urban Initiatives with assistance from staff with the Ventura County Homeless and Housing Coalition. Using trained interviewers to administer the survey, as opposed to conducting a self-administered survey, increased the opportunity for collecting complete and accurate answers to the questions as well as opportunity for receiving useful evaluation information from the interviewers.

#### **F. Who Was Included in the Survey?**

Nearly 300 adults (273) participated in the survey and provided us with detailed information about themselves and any of their children who were living with them. Please note that every question was not answered 100% of the time. Thus, the base number for many of the questions varies because 273 survey respondents did not answer the question each time.

A demographic breakdown of survey respondents includes:

##### **> Gender**

- 85 or 31.1% were women;
- 188 or 68.9% were men.

##### **> Ethnicity**

- 15 or 5.5% were American Indian or Alaskan Native;
- 1 or 0.4% were Asian or Pacific Islander;
- 17 or 6.2% were Black or African American;

- 73 or 26.7% were Hispanic or Latino;
- 165 or 60.4% were White;
- 2 or 0.7% were “Other”.

> **Age**

- 1 or 0.4% were unaccompanied youth 17 years of age or younger;
- 20 or 7.3% were youth between the ages of 18 and 24;
- 95 or 34.8% were between the ages of 25 and 39;
- 157 or 57.5% were adults 40 years of age or older;
- 13 or 4.8% were adults 62 years of age or older.

### **G. What Was Included in the Survey?**

The survey instrument was designed to collect a wide-range of information on homeless individuals in order to assess their service needs using questions focusing on areas including: Domestic Violence, Education, Ethnicity, Familial Status, Geo-History, Health Care, Income, Mental Health History, Residency, Substance Abuse History, Veteran’s status, etc.

The survey instrument was also designed to compile a cross-section of information concerning several pre-determined sub-populations that included: chronically homeless persons, families with children, men, people living in homeless facilities, people living on the streets, persons with dual diagnoses, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with mental illness, pregnant women, seniors, substance abusers, various ethnic groups, veterans, victims of domestic violence, unaccompanied youth, and women. As a result, the survey provides a sampling of data that helps us examine the issues and needs of each homeless sub-population as well as the entire homeless population.

### **H. Key Findings Concerning Survey Questions**

The survey instrument contained more than 100 questions that were grouped under 16 categories that provide a general profile of the County’s homeless population. Section II of this report provides the General Profile, which begins on page 9. Key findings within these categories follow.

#### **1. Location**

A range of questions under location concerning residency and “ties” to the county were asked. Responses include:

- a. More than 95% (95.6%) or 261 survey respondents stated that they were a resident of the county;

- b. More than half (58.6%) or 160 survey respondents stated that they have family who live in the county;
- c. More than 90% (90.5%) or 247 survey respondents stated that they have friends who live in the county;
- d. Nearly 90% (87.2%) or 238 survey respondents stated that they had worked in the county;
- e. More than one-fourth (25.3%) or 69 survey respondents stated that they were currently working in the county;
- f. More than 60% (60.4%) or 165 survey respondents stated that they attended school in the county in the past.

## 2. Length of Time Homeless

- a. Nearly two-thirds (61.6%) of survey respondents stated that they were currently homeless one year or more and more than one-third (33.4%) stated that they were currently homeless three years or more;
- b. Additionally, one of five (20.2%) of survey respondents stated that they were currently homeless five years or more and nearly one of 10 of survey respondents stated that they were currently homeless 10 years or more.

## 3. Income

- a. Nearly one-fourth (24.6%) of survey respondents stated that they had a part-time or full-time job.

## 4. Marital Status

- a. Just over 10% (11.7%) of survey respondents stated that they were currently married.

## 5. Veteran Status

- a. Nearly 15% (14.3%) of survey respondents stated that they were a veteran. However, the number of men who were veterans was much higher than women—19.2% of men who were survey respondents stated that they were a veteran and 3.6% were women.

## 6. Domestic Violence and Assault

- a. More than one-third (34.4%) of survey respondents stated that they had been abused/mistreated by a spouse or intimate partner. The percentage of women who were abused/mistreated was higher than men—59.6% were women and 40.5% were men;

- b. Nearly one-third (30.0%) of survey respondents stated that they had been a victim of assault while living on the street. The percentage of men who were assaulted was higher than women—62.2% were men and 37.8% were women.

## **7. Health Status**

- a. Nearly 30% (28.2%) of survey respondents stated that they have a physical or developmental disability that impairs activities such as walking, eating, breathing, reading, etc. Among those with a physical or a developmental disability the percentage of men was higher than women—66.2% were men and 33.8% were women;
- b. More than one-third (40.1%) of survey respondents stated that they have been able to obtain services for their health care needs.

## **8. Foster Care**

- a. Only one (1) person was currently in the foster care system;
- b. Nearly 10% (8.5%) of survey respondents stated that they had been in the foster care system.

## **9. HIV/AIDS**

- a. Only one survey respondent stated that he or she was HIV+;
- b. More than three-fourths (80.6%) of survey respondents stated that they had been tested for HIV/AIDS;
- c. Of the 219 survey respondents who stated that they had been tested for HIV/AIDS, more than 95% (95.5%) also indicated that they knew their results.

## **10. Pregnancy**

- a. There were 3 female survey respondents that stated that they were pregnant.

## **11. Drug History**

- a. Nearly 30% (29.3%) or 273 survey respondents admitted that they have a substance abuse problem;

- b. The following table notes the history of use by various drugs.

Type of Drug	Current Use		Past Use		Never Used	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
Alcohol (n=273)	37.7	103	50.5	138	11.7	32
Marijuana (n=271)	2.6	7	48.9	133	48.5	131
Uppers, Speed (n=272)	8.5	23	44.2	120	47.3	129
Downers (n=271)	3.4	9	33.3	90	63.3	172
Tranquilizers (n=272)	3.0	8	28.5	77	68.5	187
Cocaine or Crack (n=271)	2.6	7	49.1	133	48.3	131
PCP, LSD (n=268)	1.2	3	33.6	90	65.2	175
Heroin (n=269)	3.8	10	26.1	70	70.1	189

## 12. Tobacco

- Nearly two-thirds (65.2%) of survey respondents stated that they smoke cigarettes.
- When respondents who smoke cigarettes were asked, How many cigarettes do you smoke per day? more than one-third 39.2% of survey respondents stated “less than one pack,” nearly one-fourth (23.4%) stated “one pack,” and 2.6% stated “two or more packs.”
- When respondents who smoke cigarettes were asked if they were interested in quitting, 44.5% stated they were “not interested,” 22.8% stated they were “somewhat interested,” and 32.8% stated they were “very interested.”

## 13. Education

- Nearly three-fourths (72.4%) of survey respondents completed high school. Of the 196 survey respondents, nearly half (48.0%) or 94 completed some junior college, college, or post-graduate education.

## 14. Mental Health

- More than one-third (37.0%) of survey respondents stated that they have been diagnosed with a mental or emotional problem;
- Nearly one third (34.5%) of survey respondents stated that they had been prescribed medications for mental or emotional problems.
- Nearly one-fourth (23.8%) of survey respondents acted/conversed in a mentally unstable manner according to the interviewer.

## 15. Religion

- a. Three-fourths (75.1%) of survey respondents stated that they considered themselves religious persons;
- b. Two-thirds (66.0%) of survey respondents stated that they were members of a religious faith;
- c. More than one-third (36.4%) of survey respondents stated that they attend a religious service.

## 16. Children

- a. There were 50 children living with survey respondents.
  - more than two-thirds (68.0%) or 33 were enrolled in school;
  - nearly all of them (96.0%) had received health care;
- b. One hundred percent (100%) of survey respondents with children stated that they were able to obtain health care for their children.
- c. One hundred percent (100%) of survey respondents with children stated that they were able to provide three meals a day for their children.

## II. General Profile

The following section provides a general profile of homelessness in the County of Ventura. The profile is based upon 16 categories of questions that were contained in the survey. Categories included:

1. Location
2. Length of Time Homeless
3. Income
4. Marital Status
5. Veteran Status
6. Domestic Violence and Assault
7. Health Status
8. Foster Care
9. HIV/AIDS
10. Pregnancy
11. Drug History
12. Tobacco
13. Education
14. Mental Health
15. Religion
16. Children

### 1. LOCATION

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Questions concerning location focused on the following areas of concern: places of birth, city in which homelessness occurred, and local community “ties.”

## > Places of Birth

Survey respondents were asked in what country, state, and city were they born. Responses were as follows:

- **In What County Were You Born?**

More than 80% (83.5%) or 228 survey respondents stated that they were born in the United States, 5.9% or 16 stated that they were born in Mexico, and 10.6% or 29 stated another country.

- **In What State Were You Born?**

More than 50% (52.7%) or 144 survey respondents stated that they were born in California, 4.8% or 13 stated Texas, and 2.9% or 8 stated Illinois. More than one-third (39.6%) or 108 survey respondents stated some other state in the United States or another country.

- **In What City Were You Born?**

Approximately 150 cities were recorded. Nearly 10% (8.4%) or 23 survey respondents stated that they were born in the city of Oxnard and the same number (23 or 8.4%) stated Ventura. Four percent (4%) or 11 survey respondents stated Los Angeles and 2.2% or six (6) stated Santa Paula. All other cities had a percentage of less than 2%.

## > City in Which Homelessness Occurred

- **In What City Did You First Become Homeless?**

More than three-quarters (79.6%) or 217 survey respondents stated that they first became homeless while living in a city in Ventura County. Among this group, approximately two-thirds (67.8%) of survey respondents stated that they first became homeless while living in one of the following three cities—28.6% or 78 stated Ventura; 25.6% or 70 stated Oxnard; and 13.5% or 37 stated Simi Valley. An additional 11.8% or 32 others stated another city in Ventura County.

## > Local Community Ties

A range of questions concerning “ties” to the county were asked. Such ties focused on whether survey respondents had family members or friends who lived in the county or whether they currently worked, worked in the past, or went to school in the county. An additional question was also asked—Are you a resident of Ventura County?

- **Are You A Resident of Ventura County?**

Ninety-five percent (95.6%) or 261 survey respondents stated that they were a resident of the county.

- **Do You Have Family Who Live In Ventura County?**

More than half (58.6%) or 160 survey respondents stated that they have family who live in the county.

- **Do You Have Friends Who Live In Ventura County?**

Ninety percent (90.5%) or 247 survey respondents stated that they have friends who live in the county.

- **Have You Ever Worked In Ventura County?**

Almost 90% (87.2%) or 238 survey respondents stated that they worked in the county.

- **Are You Currently Working In Ventura County?**

One-fourth (25.3%) or 69 survey respondents stated that they were currently working in the county.

- **Have You Ever Attended School In Ventura County?**

More than half (60.4%) or 165 survey respondents stated that they attended school in the county. When asked what level of school they had completed, 37.0% or 101 stated elementary, 38.8% or 106 stated middle school/junior high, 44.3% or 121 stated high school, and 25.3% or 69 stated college.

## **2. LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS**

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The primary question in this section focused on the length of time of each survey respondent's current homeless experience.

• **How Long Have You Been Currently Homeless?**

Length of Time Homeless	Percent	Number
One Year Or More	61.6	168
Three Years Or More	33.4	91
Five Years Or More	20.2	55
10 Years Or More	08.8	24

Nearly two-thirds (61.6%) or 168 survey respondents stated that they were currently homeless one year or more and more than one-third (33.4%) or 91 survey respondents stated that they were currently homeless three years or more. Additionally, one of five (20.2%) or 55 survey respondents stated that they were currently homeless five years or more and nearly one of 10 of survey respondents or 24 stated that they were currently homeless 10 years or more.

**3. INCOME**

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Questions concerning income concentrate on employment and public assistance. Employment included part-time and full-time work and public assistance included current and past sources.

> **Employment**

• **Do You Have a Part-Time Job?**

Less than 15% (14.7%) or 40 survey respondents stated that they had a part-time job.

• **Do You Have a Full-Time Job?**

A little less than 10% (9.9%) or 27 survey respondents stated that they had a full-time job.

Together, nearly one-fourth (24.6%) or 67 survey respondents stated that they had a part-time or full-time job.

## > Public Assistance

### • Do You Receive Any Of The Following Kinds Of Monthly Incomes?

Almost one fourth (23.4 %) or 64 of all survey respondents stated that they were receiving public assistance. The majority of the participants received public assistance from two or more sources. Among those receiving assistance, more survey respondents were receiving Food Stamps (48.4%) and Medi-Cal (60.0%) than other types of public assistance.

Length of Public Assistance	Yes	
	%	#
AFDC/TANF	21.9	14
Social Security – Retirement (age 62+)	10.9	7
Social Security – Disability	43.8	28
General Relief	4.7	3
Unemployment	4.7	3
Veteran Benefits	4.7	3
Food Stamps	48.4	31
MediCare	25	16
Medi-Cal	60.9	39

## > Total Monthly Income

### • What is your total current monthly income?

Of the 257 survey respondents who answered this question:

- Forty-four percent (44.0%) or 113 stated that they did not have any monthly income;
- Nearly two-thirds (63.5%) or 163 stated that they had a monthly income that ranged between \$0.0 and \$500 a month;
- Ninety percent (90.3%) or 232 stated that they had a monthly income that ranged between \$0.0 and \$1,000 a month

#### 4. MARITAL STATUS

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There was only one question concerning marital status which was:

- **What Is Your Marital Status?**

Just over 10% (11.7%) or 31 survey respondents stated that they were currently married. Of those who were not, 54.4% or 144 stated that they were single, 26.1% or 69 stated that they were divorced, 6.8% or 18 stated that they were separated, and all others (1.0%) or 3 survey respondents stated that they were separated or widowed.

#### 5. VETERAN STATUS

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The primary question concerning veteran status was:

- **Are You A Veteran?**

Nearly 15% (14.3%) or 39 survey respondents stated that they were a veteran. However, the number of men who were veterans was much higher than women—36 or 19.2% of men who were survey respondents stated that they were a veteran and three (3) or 3.6% were women.

Other questions concerning veteran status included:

- **Do You Have A Veteran's Administration ID Card?**

Nearly half (41.1%) of survey respondents who were veterans or 16 stated that they have a Veteran's Administration ID Card.

- **Have You Used Any Veteran Services In The Past?**

More than half (56.5%) of survey respondents who were veterans or 22 stated that they have used veteran services in the past.

#### 6. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ASSAULT

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There were three (3) questions that were asked that concerned domestic violence and one question that concerned physical assault. The three (3) questions concerning domestic violence were as follows:

- **Have You Ever Been Abused/Mistreated By A Spouse Or Intimate Partner?**

More than one-third (34.4%) or 94 survey respondents stated that they had been abused/mistreated by a spouse or intimate partner. The number of women who were abused/mistreated was higher than men—56 or 59.6% were women and 38 or 40.5% were men.

- **Have You Ever Been Abused/Mistreated By A Parent Or Relative?**

Nearly one-third (32.6%) or 89 survey respondents stated that they had been abused/mistreated by a parent or relative. The number of women who were abused/mistreated was about even with men—44 or 49.5% were women and 45 or 50.5% were men.

- **Have You Ever Been Abused/Mistreated By Someone Other Than A Spouse, Intimate Partner, Parent, Or Relative?**

Less than one-fourth (23.4%) or 64 survey respondents stated that they had been abused/mistreated by someone other than a spouse, intimate partner, parent, or relative. The number of women who were abused/mistreated was slightly higher than men—33 or 51.6% were women and 31 or 48.4% were men.

- **Have You Ever Been A Victim Of Assault While Living On The Street?**

Nearly one-third (30.0%) or 82 survey respondents stated that they had been a victim of assault while living on the street. The number of men who were assaulted was higher than women—51 or 62.2% of men who were survey respondents stated that they were assaulted and 31 or 37.8% of women.

- **Type of Assault?**

Physical Assault

Of the 82 survey respondents who stated that they had been a victim of assault while living on the street, 92.7% or 81 stated that the assault was physical—64.2% or 52 were men and 35.8% or 29 were women.

Sexual Assault

Of the 82 survey respondents who stated that they had been a victim of assault while living on the street, 8.4% or 23 also stated that they had experience a sexual assault—22 or 95.7% were experienced by women and 4.3% or 1 was experienced by a man.

## 7. HEALTH STATUS

There were several questions concerning health care that focused on disability, health problems, and dental and vision care. They included the following:

- **Do You Have A Physical Or Developmental Disability That Impairs Any Activities Such As Walking, Eating, Breathing, Reading, Etc.?**

Nearly 30% (28.2%) or 77 survey respondents stated that they have a physical or developmental disability that impairs activities such as walking, eating, breathing, reading, etc. The number of men who had a disability was higher than women—51 or 66.2% were men who and 26 or 33.8% were women.

- **Do You Use Any Equipment Because Of Your Disability?**

Of the 77 survey respondents that stated that they have a physical or developmental disability that impairs activities such as walking, eating, breathing, reading, etc., 29 or (37.7%) stated that they use equipment as a result of their disability.

- **Have Any Of The Following Health Problems Impacted Your Daily Functioning For Three (3) Months Or More?**

Survey respondents were asked if they had any of the following health care problems:

Type of Health Problem	Yes	
	%	#
Anemia	5.1	14
Arthritis	18.7	51
Asthma	9.5	26
Cancer	2.2	6
Deafness	2.9	8
Dermatitis	3.7	10
Diabetes	7.7	21
Digestive Trouble	10.6	29
Epilepsy	1.8	5
Heart Trouble	10.6	29
High Blood Pressure	22.0	60
Infections	7.3	20
Obesity	5.1	14
Respiratory Problems	9.2	25
Seizures	4.8	13
Strokes	2.9	8
Tuberculosis	0	0.0
Hepatitis	7.3	20

- **Have You Been Able To Obtain Services For The Health Care Needs You Noted Above When Needed?**

More than one-third (40.1%) or 109 survey respondents stated that they have been able to obtain services for their health care needs.

- **Do You Currently Need Health Care Services For Any Of The Conditions You Listed Above?**

More than one-third (34.4%) or 93 survey respondents currently needed health care services for their health care problems.

- **Have You Had A Dental Exam During The Past Year?**

More than one out of four (28.6%) or 78 survey respondents stated that they had a dental exam during the past year.

- **Have You Been Able To Obtain Dental Care When You Needed It?**

More than one-half (50.2%) or 137 survey respondents were able to obtain dental care when needed.

- **Do You Need Dental Care At This Time?**

Approximately two-thirds (67.0%) or 183 survey respondents stated that they needed dental care at the time of the survey.

- **Have You Had A Vision Exam During The Past Year?**

More than one out of four (28.2%) or 77 survey respondents stated that they had a vision exam during the past year.

- **Have You Been Able To Obtain Vision Care When You Needed It?**

Nearly half (48.7%) or 133 survey respondents stated that they were able to obtain vision care when needed.

- **Do You Need Vision Care At This Time?**

More than half (52.0%) or 142 survey respondents stated that they needed vision care at the time of the survey.

- **Have You Had A Prescription You Could Not Fill?**

Nearly one-third (30.4%) or 83 survey respondents stated that they had a prescription that they could not fill.

## **8. FOSTER CARE**

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Questions concerning foster care centered on current and past placement and incidents of homelessness during and after placement. They included:

- **Are You Currently In The Foster Care System?**

Only one (1) person was currently in the foster care system.

- **Have You Ever Been In The Foster Care System?**

Slightly less than 10% (8.5%) or 23 survey respondents stated that they had been in the foster care system.

- **Were You Homeless During The Time You Were In Foster Care?**

Of the 23 survey respondents that stated they had been in the foster care system, 26.1% or 6 stated that they were homeless during the time they were in foster care.

- **How Long After Being Discharged From Foster Care Did You Become Homeless?**

Of the 23 survey respondents that stated they had been in the foster care system, 39.2% or nine (9) became homeless within one (1) year or less.

## **9. HIV/AIDS**

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Questions about HIV/AIDS focused on testing for HIV/AIDS and having HIV/AIDS. They included:

- **Have You Ever Been Tested For HIV/AIDS?**

More than three-fourths (80.6%) or 219 survey respondents stated that they had been tested for HIV/AIDS.

- **Do You Know Your Results?**

Of the 219 survey respondents that stated that they had been tested for HIV/AIDS, more than 95% (95.5%) or 209 stated that they knew their results.

- **Would You Like To Be Tested?**

Of the 42 survey respondents who stated that they had never been tested for HIV/AIDS, 100% or 42 stated that they would like to be tested.

- **Are You HIV+?**

One survey respondent stated that he was HIV+.

## 10. PREGNANCY

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There was just one (1) question concerning pregnancy which was

- **Are You Pregnant?**

There were 3 female survey respondents that stated that they were pregnant.

## 11. DRUG HISTORY

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There were several questions concerning different types of drug use. Each question asked if the survey respondent was currently using, used in the past, or never used the drug. The last question asked if the survey respondent had a substance abuse problem. The primary question was:

- **Do You Now Use, Or Have You Ever Used, Any Of The Following Drugs?**

Type of Drug	Current Use		Past Use		Never Used	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
Alcohol (n=273)	37.7	103	50.5	138	11.7	32
Marijuana (n=271)	2.6	7	48.9	133	48.5	131
Uppers, Speed (n=272)	8.5	23	44.2	120	47.3	129
Downers (n=271)	3.4	9	33.3	90	63.3	172
Tranquilizers (n=272)	3.0	8	28.5	77	68.5	187
Cocaine or Crack (n=271)	2.6	7	49.1	133	48.3	131
PCP, LSD (n=268)	1.2	3	33.6	90	65.2	175
Heroin (n=269)	3.8	10	26.1	70	70.1	189

- **Do You Have A Substance Abuse Problem?**

Nearly 30% (29.3%) or 79 survey respondents admitted that they have a substance abuse problem.

## 12. TOBACCO

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The questions about tobacco focused on frequency of use and interest in quitting. They include:

- **Do You Smoke?**

Nearly two-thirds (65.2%) or 178 survey respondents stated that they smoke cigarettes.

- **How many Cigarettes Do You Smoke Per Day—less than one pack; one pack; or two or more packs?**

When asked, How many cigarettes do you smoke per day? more than one-third 39.2% or 107 survey respondents stated “less than one pack,” nearly one-fourth (23.4%) or 64 stated “one pack,” and 2.6% or 7 stated “two or more packs.”

- **How Interested Are You In Quitting Smoking—not interested; somewhat interested; or very interested?**

When asked if they were interested in quitting smoking, nearly half (44.5%) or 76 stated “not interested,” nearly one-fourth (22.8%) or 39 stated “somewhat interested,” and nearly one-third (32.8%) or 56 stated “very interested.”

- **Do You Chew Tobacco?**

One and a half percent (1.5%) or 4 survey respondents stated that they chew tobacco.

## 13. EDUCATION

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Questions about education asked about the highest grade completed, vocational training, and business school attendance. They specifically asked

- **What Is The Highest Grade Of School That You Completed?**

Nearly three-fourths (72.4%) or 196 survey respondents completed high school. Of the 196 survey respondents, nearly half (48.0%) or 94 completed some junior college, college, or post-graduate education.

- **Have You Ever Completed A Vocational Training Course?**

Forty percent (40.0%) or 109 survey respondents stated that they completed a vocational training course.

- **Have You Ever Attended A Business School?**

More than 10% (13.6%) or 37 survey respondents stated that they attended a business school.

## 14. MENTAL HEALTH

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There were several questions about mental health symptoms and medications. In addition, there was a question that was answered by the interviewer which was—Does the interviewee act/converse in a mentally unstable manner?

- **Have You Ever Been Diagnosed With A Mental Or Emotional Problem?**

More than one-third (37.0%) or 101 survey respondents stated that they have been diagnosed with a mental or emotional problem.

- **If Yes, Have You Experienced Any Symptoms Of This Diagnosis Within The Past Year?**

Of the 101 survey respondents who stated that they have been diagnosed with a mental or emotional problem, more than three-fourths (76.3%) or 77 stated had experienced symptoms within the past year.

- **Have You Ever Been Prescribed Medications For Mental Or Emotional Problems?**

Nearly one third (34.5%) or 94 survey respondents stated that they had been prescribed medications for mental or emotional problems.

- **If Yes, Are You Currently Taking Any Psychotropic (Psychiatric) Medications?**

Of the 94 survey respondents who stated that they had been prescribed medications for mental or emotional problems, more than half (55.4%) or 52 stated that they were currently taking psychotropic medications.

- **Have You Been Hospitalized For Psychiatric Problems During The Past Year?**

Over 10% (13.6%) or 37 survey respondents stated that they had been hospitalized for psychiatric problems during the past year.

- **If No, Have You Ever Been Hospitalized For Psychiatric Reasons?**

Of those survey respondents who stated “no” to whether they had been hospitalized in the past year, 12.8% or 30 stated “yes” when asked if they had ever been hospitalized for psychiatric reasons.

- **Have You Ever Seen A Counselor For Help While Dealing With Your Emotions Or Stress?**

Forty two percent (42.9%) or 117 survey respondents stated that they had seen a counselor for help while dealing with emotions or stress.

- **Have Friends Or Family Ever Expressed Concern About Your Mental Health?**

More than one-third (34.8%) or 95 survey respondents stated that friends or family expressed concern about their mental health.

- **Does The Interviewee Act/Converse In A Mentally Unstable Manner (answered by the Interviewer)?**

Nearly one-fourth (23.8%) or 65 survey respondents acted/conversed in a mentally unstable manner according to the interviewer.

## **15. RELIGION**

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Questions concerning religion focused on personal faith, service attendance, and its impact on people during their homeless experience. They included:

- **Do You Consider Yourself A Religious Person?**

More than three-fourths (75.1%) or 205 survey respondents stated that they considered themselves a religious person.

- **Are You A Member Of A Religious Faith?**

More than two-thirds (66.0%) or 180 survey respondents stated that they were members of a religious faith.

- **Do You Regularly Attend A Religious Service?**

More than one-third (36.4%) or 112 survey respondents stated that they attend a religious service.

- **Were You Raised As A Child In A Religious Home?**

Nearly half (41.1%) or 184 survey respondents stated that they were raised as a child in a religious home.

- **Has Your Faith Increased Or Decreased During Your Homeless Experience?**

Nearly two-thirds (65.6%) or 179 survey respondents stated that their faith increased during their homeless experience.

## 16. CHILDREN

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There were 50 children living with survey respondents. Questions concerning children were answered by the adult survey respondents who were with them. Questions included:

- **Is Your Child Enrolled In School?**

Of the 50 children, more than two-thirds (68.0%) or 33 were enrolled in school.

- **Does Your Child Have Health Care?**

Of the 50 children, nearly all of them (96.0%) had received health care.

- **Have You Been Able To Obtain Health Care For Your Children?**

One hundred percent (100%) of survey respondents with children stated that they were able to obtain health care for their children.

- **Have You Been Able To Provide Three Meals A Day For Your Children?**

One hundred percent (100%) of survey respondents with children stated that they were able to provide three meals a day for their children.

- **Are You The Only Parent In Your Household?**

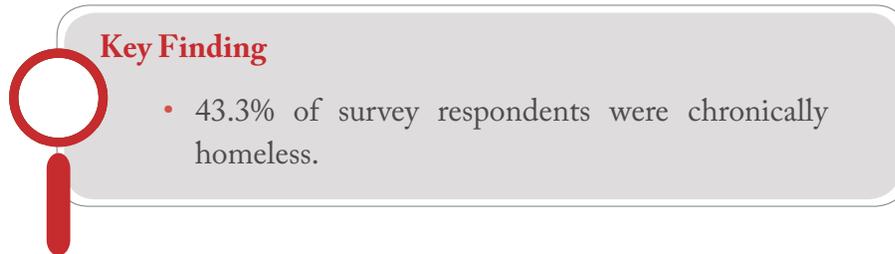
More than two-thirds (69.6%) of survey respondents with children stated that they were the only parent in their household.

## III. Summary of Sub-Populations

The survey instrument was designed to determine the percentage and number of several pre-determined sub-populations that included: chronic homeless persons, persons with mental illness, seniors, substance abusers, veterans, victims of domestic violence, and unaccompanied youth. These sub-populations were chosen because the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires applicants to provide such data as part of its Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Application. The Ventura County Homeless and Housing Coalition, which submits an annual application to HUD, wants to remain competitive for this funding. Past applications have been awarded over \$1 million dollars.

### CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

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**Key Finding**

- 43.3% of survey respondents were chronically homeless.

Of the 273 survey respondents, 118 or 43.3% stated that they were chronically homeless.

According to HUD, a chronically homeless person is an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. Disabling condition is defined as “a diagnosable substance (abuse), serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions.” Also, to be considered chronically homeless, persons must have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets) or in an emergency homeless shelter during that time.

## PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

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### Key Finding

- 37.4% of all survey respondents reported symptoms of mental illness.

Of the 273 survey respondents, 102 or 37.4% reported symptoms of mental illness. A person with symptoms of mental illness was defined as an individual who answered “yes” to the following sets of questions (see Appendix A for list of questions):

- Questions 45 and 45a;
- Questions 45 and 50;
- Questions 46 and 46a;
- Questions 46 and 50;
- Questions 47 and 50;
- Questions 47a and 50;
- Questions 49 and 50; and
- Any three (3) questions between 45 and 50.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

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### Key Finding

- 43.6% of survey respondents stated that they are a substance abuser.

One hundred and nineteen (119) or 43.6% stated that they were substance abusers. A substance abuser was defined as an individual who answered “yes” to the question “Do you have a substance abuse problem” and/or stated “yes” when asked if they currently use any of the following drugs: alcohol, marijuana, uppers/speed, downers, tranquilizers, cocaine/crack, PCP/LSD, heroin, and/or methadone.

## VETERANS

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### Key Finding

- Nearly 15% (14.3%) or 39 survey respondents stated that they were a veteran. However, the number of men who were veterans was much higher than women—36 or 19.2% of men who were survey respondents stated that they were a veteran and three (3) or 3.6% were women.

Of the 273 survey respondents, 39 responded concerning veteran status. A veteran was defined as an individual who answered “yes” to the question “are you a veteran?”

## YOUTH 18 - 24

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### Key Finding

- 7.3% of survey respondents stated that they were a youth between the ages of 18 – 24.

Of the 273 survey respondents, 20 or 7.3% stated that they were between the ages of 18 – 24.

## SENIORS 62+

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### Key Finding

- 4.8% of survey respondents stated that they were a senior 62 years of age or older.

Of the 273 survey respondents, 13 or 4.8% stated that they were seniors age 62 or older.

## IV. Conclusion

The results of the 2007 Homeless Count combined with the results of the 2007 Homeless Survey provides information that serves as the basis for three (3) important tasks:

- understanding the nature and extent of the current trends in homelessness in Ventura County communities;
- responding to the unmet needs and gaps in services for homeless individuals and families in Ventura County;
- developing local community and countywide strategies to meet the goal of ending homelessness over the next ten years.

The challenge is to develop solution-oriented approaches through a well-coordinated, outcome driven social service system designed to directly meet the needs of our local homeless population. Such activities will further build upon collaborative efforts between homeless service providers, business enterprises, residents, faith-based organizations, other community agencies, and local government that will provide service-enriched program environments in which homeless persons will receive the tools necessary to achieve self-sufficiency and maintain permanent housing.

Thus, an important use of this report is to provide accurate information necessary to design and implement the housing and social service assistance needed to bring homeless persons back into our workforce, schools, faith-based institutions, and other community institutions and provide the means for them to become stable, productive contributors to our communities.

# Appendix A - Survey Instrument

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LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_ SURVEYOR: \_\_\_\_\_

**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

**A. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

- 1) Gender:     Female     Male
  
- 2) Ethnicity:     American Indian or Alaskan Native     Hispanic or Latino  
                    Asian/Pacific Islander     White  
                    Black or African-American     Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3) Age:     13 - 17     30 - 39     55 - 59     65 - 69  
                18 - 24     40 - 49     60 - 61     70+  
                25 - 29     50 - 54     62 - 64

**B. GEO-HISTORY:**

- 4) Where were you born?  
     4a) Country:     U.S.     Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Record Other Country)  
     4b) If born in U.S., which State:     California     Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Record Other State)  
     4c) If born in U.S., which City? \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Record City)
  
- 5) In what city and state did you **FIRST** become homeless?  
     (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State) \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 6) How long have you been **currently** homeless? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 7) Have you been currently living on the street and/or in shelters for at least 1 year?  
      Yes     No
  
- 8) How many times have you experienced homelessness during the last 3 years? \_\_\_\_\_ times
  
- 9) How old were you the first time you became homeless? \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Record Age)
  
- 10) What city do you consider to be your home? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 11) How long have you been living in the above city? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 12) Are you a resident of Ventura County?     Yes     No  
     12a) What City? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 13) Do you have family who live in Ventura County?     Yes     No  
     13a) What City? \_\_\_\_\_

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2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY

14) Do you have friends who live in Ventura County? [ ] Yes [ ] No
14a) What City? \_\_\_\_\_

15) Have you ever worked in Ventura County? [ ] Yes [ ] No
15a) What City? \_\_\_\_\_

16) Are you currently working in Ventura County? [ ] Yes [ ] No
16a) What City? \_\_\_\_\_

17) Have you ever attended school in Ventura County? [ ] Yes [ ] No
17a) What City? \_\_\_\_\_

If YES to #17:
17b) Check all that apply:
[ ] Elementary [ ] Middle School/Jr. High [ ] High School [ ] College

C. INCOME:

18) Do you have a part-time job? [ ] Yes [ ] No
Do you have a full-time job? [ ] Yes [ ] No
(Person must be earning minimum wages or more).

19) If you are not currently employed, when was the last time you were employed? \_\_\_\_\_

20) What was the reason that you left your job? [ ] laid off [ ] fired [ ] other: \_\_\_\_\_

21) What is your primary occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

22) Do you receive any of the following kinds of monthly incomes (check all that apply):
[ ] (AFDC/TANF) [ ] (Food Stamps)
[ ] (Social Security - Retirement (age 62+)) [ ] (MediCare)
[ ] (Social Security - Disability) [ ] (Medi-Cal)
[ ] (GR) [ ] (Union Pension)
[ ] (Unemployment) [ ] (Other: Please Describe) \_\_\_\_\_
[ ] (Veterans Benefits)

22a) If you do not currently receive any of these monthly incomes, did you receive any of these monthly incomes in the past? [ ] Yes [ ] No

**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

22b) If so, which ones:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (AFDC/TANF)                              | <input type="checkbox"/> (Veterans Benefits) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (Social Security - Retirement (age 62+)) | <input type="checkbox"/> (Food Stamps)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (Social Security - Disability)           | <input type="checkbox"/> (MediCare)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (GR)                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> (Medi-Cal)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (Unemployment)                           | <input type="checkbox"/> (Union Pension)     |

23) What Is Your Total Current Monthly Income? \_\_\_\_\_

**D. FAMILY HISTORY:**

24) What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Describe)

**E. VETERAN'S STATUS:**

25) Are you a veteran?     Yes     No

**If YES to #25, please answer the following:**

25a) Period of service:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> World War II (12/41 to 12/46) | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam (8/64 to 4/75)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Korea (1/47 to 6/50)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Vietnam (5/75 to 7/90)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korea (7/50 to 1/55)          | <input type="checkbox"/> Persian Gulf (8/90 to Present) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Vietnam (2/55 to 7/64)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                   |

26) Do you have a VA medical card?     Yes     No

27) Have you used any veteran services in the past?     Yes     No

**F. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:**

28) Have you ever been abused/mistreated by a spouse or intimate partner?     Yes     No

29) Have you ever been abused/mistreated by a parent or relative?     Yes     No

30) Have you ever been abused/mistreated by someone other than a spouse, intimate partner, parent, or relative?     Yes     No

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**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

31) Have you ever been a victim of assault while living on the streets?  Yes  No

<b>IF YES to #31, please answer the following:</b>			
31a) Was the assault:	Physical	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Sexual	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**G. HEALTH STATUS:**

32) Do you have a physical or developmental disability that impairs any activities such as walking, eating, breathing, reading, etc.?  Yes  No

33) Do you use any equipment because of your disability?  Yes  No

34) Have any of the following health problems impacted your daily functioning for 3 months or more?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> anemia            | <input type="checkbox"/> high blood pressure  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> arthritis         | <input type="checkbox"/> infections           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> asthma            | <input type="checkbox"/> obesity              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cancer            | <input type="checkbox"/> respiratory problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> deafness          | <input type="checkbox"/> seizures             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dermatitis        | <input type="checkbox"/> strokes              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> diabetes          | <input type="checkbox"/> tuberculosis         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> digestive trouble | <input type="checkbox"/> hepatitis            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> epilepsy          | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heart trouble     |   |

35) Have you been able to obtain services for the health care needs you noted above when needed?  Yes  No

35a) Do you currently need health care services for any of the conditions you listed above?  Yes  No

36) Have you had a dental exam during the past year?  Yes  No

36a) Have you been able to obtain dental care when you needed it?  Yes  No

36b) Do you need dental care at this time?  Yes  No

37) Have you had a vision exam during the past year?  Yes  No

37a) Have you been able to obtain vision care when you needed it?  Yes  No

37b) Do you need vision care at this time?  Yes  No

38) Have you had a prescription you could **not** fill?  Yes  No

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**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

**I. FOSTER CARE:**

39) Are you currently in the foster care system?     Yes **(skip to question #40)**     No

40) Have you ever been in the foster care system?     Yes     No

**If YES to #40:**

40a) When were you released from the foster care system?  
 1 month ago     3 months ago     6 months ago     12+ months ago

40b) How old were you when you were released from foster care?    Age: \_\_\_\_\_

40c) Were you homeless during the time you were in foster care?     Yes     No

40d) How long after being discharged from foster care did you become homeless?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ months \_\_\_\_\_ years

**J. HIV/AIDS:**

41) Have you ever been tested for HIV/AIDS?     Yes     No

41a) **IF YES**, when were you tested? \_\_\_\_\_

41b) Do you know your results?     Yes     No

**If NO to #41:**

42) Would you like to be tested for HIV/AIDS?     Yes     No

43) Are you HIV+?     Yes     No

43a) Do you know if you are:     w/o symptoms     with symptoms     AIDS diagnosis

**K. PREGNANCY:**

44) Are you pregnant?     Yes     No

**AT THIS POINT, REMIND CLIENT AGAIN THAT THE SURVEY IS CONFIDENTIAL  
AND THAT HIS/HER IDENTITY IS PROTECTED!**

**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

**L. DRUG HISTORY:**

45) Do you now use, or have you ever used, any of the following drugs?

- |                  |   |                                      |                                |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Alcohol          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Marijuana        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Uppers, speed    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Downers          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Tranquilizers    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Cocaine or Crack | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| PCP, LSD         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Heroin           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |
| Methadone        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, currently | <input type="checkbox"/> In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

46) Do you have a substance abuse problem?  Yes  No

**M. TOBACCO:**

47) Do you smoke?  Yes  No

**IF "YES" to #47:**

47a) How many cigarettes do you smoke per day?  
 Less than one pack       One pack       Two or more packs

47b) How interested are you in quitting smoking?  
 Not interested       Somewhat interested       Very interested

48) Do you chew tabbaco?  Yes  No

**IF "YES" to #48c:**

48a) How much do you chew per day?  
 Less than one container       One container       Two or more containers

48b) How interested are you in quitting?  
 Not interested       Somewhat interested       Very interested

**N. EDUCATION:**

49) What is the highest grade of school that you completed?

- Circle one:    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
 13 Some college or post-high school  
 14 Junior College  
 15 4 Year College graduate  
 16 Post-graduate

50) Have you ever completed a vocational training course?  Yes  No

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**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

50a) If **YES**, what kind? \_\_\_\_\_

51) Have you ever attended a business school?  Yes  No

**O. MENTAL HEALTH:**

52) Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental or emotional problem?  Yes  No

52a) If **YES**, have you experienced any symptoms of this diagnosis within the past year?  
 Yes  No

53) Have you ever been prescribed medications for mental or emotional problems?  
 Yes  No

53a) If **YES**, Are you **currently taking** any psychotropic (psychiatric) medications?  
 Yes  No

54) Have you been hospitalized for psychiatric problems during the past year?  
 Yes  No

54a) If **NO**, have you **ever been** hospitalized for psychiatric reasons?  
 Yes  No

55) Have you ever seen a counselor for help dealing with your emotions or stress?  
 Yes  No

56) Have friends or family ever expressed concern about your mental health?  
 Yes  No

**Answered by the Interviewer**

57) Does the interviewee act/converse in a **mentally unstable** manner?  Yes  No

**P. RELIGION:**

58) Do you consider yourself a religious person?  Yes  No

59) Are you a member of a religious faith?  Yes  No

60) Do you regularly attend a religious service?  Yes  No

61) Were you raised as a child in a religious home?  Yes  No

62) Has your faith increased or decreased during your homeless experience?  Yes  No

**2007 COUNTY OF VENTURA HOMELESS SURVEY**

**Q. CHILDREN:**

63) Do you have any children living with you?  Yes  No **(if no, survey is completed)**

63a) How many? \_\_\_\_\_

63b) What is the gender of the child(ren)?

Child 1  Male  Female

Child 2  Male  Female

Child 3  Male  Female

Child 4  Male  Female

Child 5  Male  Female

63c) How long has each child been homeless?

Child 1  1 week or less  1 month or less  1-6 months  6 months to 1 year

Child 2  1 week or less  1 month or less  1-6 months  6 months to 1 year

Child 3  1 week or less  1 month or less  1-6 months  6 months to 1 year

Child 4  1 week or less  1 month or less  1-6 months  6 months to 1 year

Child 5  1 week or less  1 month or less  1-6 months  6 months to 1 year

63d) Is your child(ren) enrolled in school?

Child 1  Yes  No

Child 2  Yes  No

Child 3  Yes  No

Child 4  Yes  No

Child 5  Yes  No

63e) If YES to 25f, is your child enrolled in a meal program at school?

Child 1  Yes  No

Child 2  Yes  No

Child 3  Yes  No

Child 4  Yes  No

Child 5  Yes  No

63f) Does your child(ren) have health care?

Child 1  Yes  No

Child 2  Yes  No

Child 3  Yes  No

Child 4  Yes  No

Child 5  Yes  No

63g) Have you been able to obtain health care for your children when needed?  Yes  No

63h) Have you been able to provide three meals a day for your child(ren)?  Yes  No

63i) Are you the only parent in your household?  Yes  No

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