

## Homelessness in Halton (Revised)

What is homelessness? According to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness<sup>1</sup>, homelessness is “the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.” The homeless population is hard to count because of their mobility and the cyclical nature of homelessness.

The first coordinated Point-in-Time (PiT) count of homelessness in Canada took place in 2016 covering 32 communities. The second count that took place in 2018 included 62 communities. Halton Region participated in both Point-in-Time counts.

For context, methodological approaches across Service Manager areas (municipalities) are more or less consistent with respect to enumerating single individuals accessing emergency shelter and/or sleeping rough. There is, however, a great degree of variance among methodological approaches with respect to enumerating families, transitionally housed individuals, couch surfers and those experiencing homelessness in Provincially funded institutions that makes direct comparison between Service Manager areas (municipalities) more difficult.

In Halton, 271 individuals/head of household experiencing homelessness were identified in 2018 compared to 264 in 2016. The following table lists the number of individual/head of household enumerated in the municipalities within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

Individual/Head of Household Experiencing Homelessness		
Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, 2018		
Census Division	2016 Population*	Individual/head of household**
Durham	645,862	291
Halton	548,435	271
Hamilton	536,917	386
Peel	1,381,739	922
Toronto	2,731,571	8,715
York	1,109,909	389
Source:		
* Statistics Canada, 2016 Census		
** Canadian Observatory of Homelessness, <a href="https://www.homelesshub.ca/CommunityProfiles">https://www.homelesshub.ca/CommunityProfiles</a>		

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/what-homelessness>

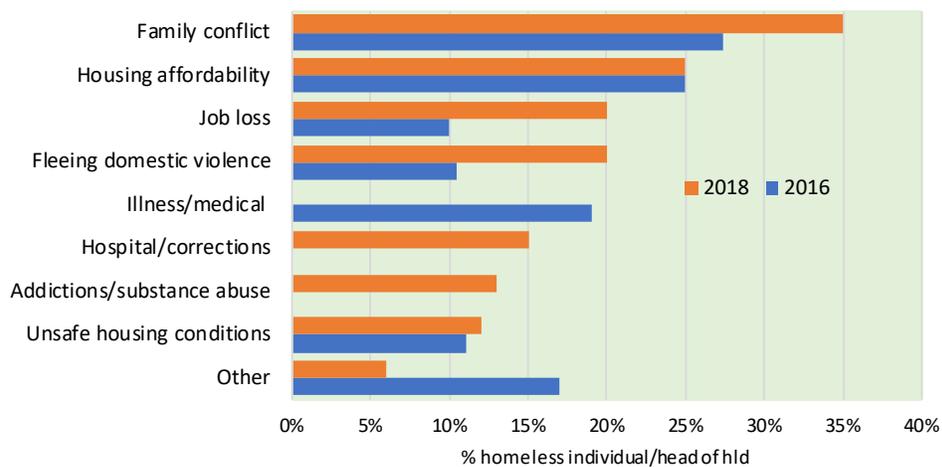
In Halton, over half of the homeless individuals stayed in transitional housing (38%) and shelters (27%). Close to half (47%) of the homeless individuals were recorded in Oakville and over one-quarter (28%) in Burlington. However, it should be noted the survey data records only where the individual is currently located or receiving service, and not necessarily that the individual is from the respective municipality. For example, the Salvation Lighthouse Shelter is based in Oakville, resulting in a greater number of individuals enumerated in this community.

Homelessness Enumeration by Local Municipality, Halton Region, 2018		
	# Individuals	% of Total individuals
Oakville	127	46.9%
Burlington	75	27.7%
Milton	30	11.1%
Halton Hills	17	6.3%
Not Disclosed	22	8.1%
Halton Region	271	100.0%

*Source: Halton Region, Social & Community Services Department*

Many factors are at play that cause an individual or head of a household to become homeless. However, homelessness is usually the results of cumulative effects of a number of factors such as family conflict, job loss, illness, and unaffordable housing. Based on the two Point-in-Time surveys (2016 and 2018), family conflict ranks as the top reason(s) for homelessness. Family conflict includes conflict or poor relationship between parents and children, physical violence, or sexual abuse. Lack of affordable housing is another top reason for homelessness. Job loss and precarious employment can easily lead to homelessness. Less than one-quarter (24%) of the homeless individuals are employed. Another main reason for homelessness is fleeing domestic violence which includes physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current/former partner or spouse as well as by other family members, or by a partner's family member.<sup>2</sup>

### Reasons\* for Housing Loss, Halton Region



\* multiple reasons provided in some cases

Community Development Halton/Source: Halton Region's Point in Time Count, 2016, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada, Family Violence and Homeless: A Review of the Literature, 2012 <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/prevention-resource-centre/family-violence/homelessness-review-literature/review-literature.html>



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