

Homelessness PDX Connection

Fall 2020



PSU study reveals widespread housing insecurity

Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative conducted Portland State University's first survey on homelessness, housing insecurity, and food insecurity among students and employees. The center also conducted a follow-up survey on the impact of COVID-19.

More than 60% of PSU students and nearly 30% of employees struggle with food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness with higher rates for students and employees of color. Native American students were twice as likely to experience homelessness compared to White students.

"If we have any hope of helping Portland and the region more broadly address homelessness, we must address it within our own campus community," said Research Director Greg Townley.

Learn more about the findings, student experiences, and resources at pdx.edu/homelessness/psu

Read the full report



PSU, partners work on student housing insecurity

Portland area colleges and universities are working to address student homelessness and housing insecurity through a variety of programs and events. Initiatives include:

Affordable Rent for College Students (ARCS) is a partnership between PCC, PSU, New Avenues for Youth, and College Housing Northwest. The pilot program provides a 50% rental subsidy to students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. The goal is to provide stable, affordable housing to college students in Portland to increase academic success.

PSU's Student Housing Assistance Program (SHAP) will provide a continuum of support, emergency housing, transitional housing, and stable housing. Students will need a referral from the CARE Program.

FUMC PSU Student Shelter will provide students experiencing homelessness a safe place to sleep as soon as this fall. Portland's First United Methodist Church plans to open the shelter at 1838 SW Jefferson Street. For more information go to https://fumcpdx.org/landing/.

Student Housing Insecurity Summit hosted by PSU will bring together Portland area institutions of higher education, policy makers, and philanthropists Nov. 19 to address student homelessness and housing insecurity.

Oregon renters cutting back on food, essentials to pay rent during pandemic

As many as 53% of renters cut back on food and medications to pay rent, and half dipped into savings, according to a report by HRAC faculty member Dr. Lisa Bates.

The associate professor of Urban Studies and Planning at PSU partnered with Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT) in a survey on housing insecurity among Oregon renters during COVID-19.



The results show that more than one in three Oregon renters surveyed owe back rent that they are unable to pay. That number increases to more than one in two for people of color. The findings reveal an escalating problem that risks a wave of evictions when the current eviction moratorium expires at the end of December.

Read the full report



Grant helps explore transportation justice

People of color experiencing homelessness and those who identify as transgender and gender nonconforming face discrimination accessing transit.

A new study from Portland State University and the University of Utah will shed light in hopes of change thanks to a $93,115 grant from the National Institute for Transportation and Communities.

“Understanding the lived experiences of marginalized people accessing and using transit will help us create mobility and transit justice for all,” said Principal Investigator Dr. Marisa Zapata who leads PSU’s Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative.

Read the full story



We're fans of Street Roots' Rose City Resource guide

Street Roots prints about 200,000 copies of this handy booklet each year to help people find everything from food to shelter. Now, the guide is also available online through a partnership with Mapping Action Collective. Users can search nearby resources and get turn-by-turn directions. Contact Sophie Maziraga at Street Roots to get copies of the guide or to donate.

Innovative idea helps research resume



In-person research paused this spring and summer due to the dangers of COVID-19, including the possibility of exposing vulnerable populations. But HRAC Designer Marta Petteni created a solution to resume research this fall.

She designed a social-distancing engagement station for interviews and shared the plans with researchers at PSU and made them available online for free.

Thanks to her design, researchers began in-person interviews at Kenton Women's Village this month as part of a new study to evaluate the village model for people experiencing homelessness.

Researchers will conduct interviews with residents at five Portland area villages. The goal is to better understand how villages work, and for whom, in order to develop a best practices guide.

Design plans

Five insights on homelessness in US & Canada

1. **New Leaf Project**, a University of B.C. pilot program, distributed payments of $7,500 in Canadian dollars to almost fifty people experiencing homelessness with encouraging results and improved outcomes for the majority of participants.
2. **A new study** shows that permanent supportive housing for those experiencing chronic homelessness leads to lower use of psychiatric emergency departments and shelters, and higher rates of housing and community mental health treatment.

3. **The Brookings Institute** examines how we define ‘need’ for place-based policy and what it reveals where poverty and race intersect.
4. **The Urban Institute's brief** shows that housing insecurity caused by COVID-19 doesn’t have to exacerbate educational inequities.
5. **Part 2 of the 2018 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report** to Congress was recently released: Part 1: Point-In-Time Estimates of Homelessness and Part 2: Estimates of Homelessness in the United States.

For more international news, insights, and reports on homelessness, sign up for the weekly update.

Sign up for updates



Co-founder Greg Townley recognized for research

Congratulations to Research Director Greg Townley on receiving the Portland State University 2020 Early Career Research Award for excellence in research, teaching & service.

He is an Associate Professor of Community Psychology and specializes in Community Psychology. Last month he released the university's first report on student & employee basic needs insecurity and homelessness.



Nov. 9

Free Food Market at PSU: The market is held the second Monday of each month and offers free food, no questions asked. Check the website and social media for updates on times and locations.

Nov. 15-23

National Hunger and Homlessness Awareness Week (NHHA): More than 700 sites, including Portland State University, will mark this annual event to bring awareness to hunger and homelessness. Watch our social media channels and your inbox for more details about events.

Nov. 19

Student Housing Insecurity Summit hosted by Portland State University: The virtual summit will bring together Portland area institutions of higher education, policy makers, and philanthropists next month to address student homelessness and housing insecurity, 9 a.m. to noon. For more information contact Ryan Sturley at College Housing Northwest.

Nov. 20

Panel Discussion on Hunger and Homelessness: Research Director Greg Townley will participate in a panel hosted by Student Community Engagement Center as part of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week noon to 1 p.m. with an optional reflection room following. Check with Student Community Engagement Center to sign up.



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