2022 Racial Equity Assessment

Evaluating Racial Disparities in the North Carolina Balance of State CoC

Section 1: Introduction

"Racism is fundamental to the United States' inception: our founding as a nation and economy depended on it. Chattel slavery and the genocide of Indigenous people supplied the labor and land for cotton, our nation's first economic boon and lucrative export. Through social practice and policy, the U.S. has maintained a racialized underclass and the legacy of policies like redlining, black codes, and the War on Drugs have deeply disadvantaged Black and Brown lives today and will for generations to come."[1] Housing, labor, and justice policies like these and others have greatly impacted Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), leading to a disproportionate rate of these populations experiencing homelessness.

The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) demonstrates these glaring disparities, where nationally African Americans make up 39 percent of people experiencing homelessness while only representing 13 percent of the general population. While Black people represent the minority group with the largest disparities, other minority groups show significant overrepresentation amongst the homeless population as well.[2]

These disparities have spurred conversations and action across the country amongst national leaders, advocacy organizations, technical assistance collectives, direct service providers, and government departments. The United States Interagency Council on Coordinating Homeless Programs (USICH) included racial equity as an essential component to improve access to emergency assistance, housing, and supports for historically underserved populations in its updates to the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, *Home Together*.[3] The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) committed to ending racial disparities and began awarding points in its annual Continuum of Care (CoC) Program competition to CoCs that evaluate and develop strategies to address these disparities. Both HUD and the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) have developed Racial Equity tools that use data to help communities understand who they serve and how people of different races access the available resources compared to Census data.

The North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care (NC BoS CoC) has committed to racial equity in its 79-county geographic area. In late 2019, the CoC developed a Racial Equity Subcommittee "to [oversee] implementation of the annual Racial Equity Assessment . . . [analyze] data collected, . . . and [recommend] data-informed action steps to the NC BoS CoC Steering Committee to improve equity across the CoC."[4] This assessment represents the most recent NC BoS CoC data using the above referenced HUD and NAEH tools as well as the Stella Performance Module in HUD's HDX data reporting software and CoC coordinated entry system. The CoC will use this data to continue further analysis of racial disparities and as a guide to decision-making in the CoC.

---

[1] NAEH: https://endhomelessness.org/equity-is-the-answer-all-along-addressing-racial-trauma-and-homelessness/
[2] NAEH: https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf
[3] USICH: link
[4] NC BoS CoC Governance Charter: https://www.ncceh.org/media/files/files/eb0cb776/bos-governance-charter-2019-revisions-final-sc-approved.pdf

North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

The North Carolina Balance of State CoC serves as a regional planning body, including various public and private stakeholders committed to preventing and ending homelessness. The NC BoS CoC is one of 12 CoCs in North Carolina, representing 79 out of 100 counties in the state. Specifically, the counties that encompass the NC BoS CoC are:

> *Alamance, Alexander, Anson, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Camden, Carteret, Caswell, Catawba, Chatham, Cherokee, Chowan, Clay, Columbus, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Davidson, Davie, Duplin, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gates, Graham, Granville, Greene, Halifax, Harnett, Haywood, Henderson, Hertford, Hoke, Hyde, Iredell, Jackson, Johnston, Jones, Lee, Lenoir, Macon, Madison, Martin, McDowell, Montgomery, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Onslow, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Person, Pitt, Polk, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rockingham, Rowan, Rutherford, Sampson, Scotland, Stanly, Stokes, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Tyrrell, Union, Vance, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wilson, Yadkin*

To respond to the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness as well as create a robust system to ensure homelessness remains rare, brief, and one-time only, the NC BoS CoC has formed 13 local planning bodies called Regional Committees. Regional Committees support NC BoS CoC activities at the local level and form geographic representation on the NC BoS CoC Governance Committee and other subcommittees and workgroups.

Based on 2017 U.S. Census Data estimates, NC has a population of 10,052,564 people.[5] The NC BoS CoC geographic area encompasses 51 percent of the state's population at 5,079,511 people. The Census estimates 1,579,871 people live in poverty in NC with 55% of people experiencing poverty in the NC BoS CoC's 79 counties. In the latest statewide Point-In-Time Count from 2020, 9,280 people experienced homelessness on a given night, 3,185 or 34 percent of which reside in the NC BoS CoC.

The strategies the NC BoS CoC employs make a big impact on the state as a whole. The NC BoS CoC has committed to ensuring all people experiencing homelessness in its 79 counties can successfully access a permanent place to live. The CoC reflects its strong commitment to equity through its Anti-Discrimination Policy, which states:

> *...NC BoS CoC is committed to providing housing and services in an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and have equal treatment and opportunity. The NC BoS CoC's Anti-Discrimination Policies and Procedures ensure all people experiencing homelessness in the CoC have equal access to the housing and services necessary to end homelessness. The Policies and Procedures apply to staff, volunteers, and contractors at all partner agencies. We strongly encourage all NC BoS CoC partners, regardless of funding source,*

---

[5] HUD Racial Equity Tool.

to adopt these Anti-Discrimination policies [which] adhere to the Department of Housing Urban and Development (HUD) Equal Access Rule.

While robust policies and procedures with a strong equity lens can help guide the CoC, we know it takes ongoing vigilance, oversight, technical assistance, and evaluation to ensure we meet the goals and outcomes we intend with our work.

Section 2: Our Approach

The NC BoS CoC is committed to dismantling racism and eliminating racial, ethnic, and gender disparities. Through its Racial Equity Subcommittee, the CoC will continue to use this assessment as an access point for understanding who the CoC serves and how people of different racial and ethnic identities access the system. Along with assessment, the Racial Equity Subcommittee will foster dialogue on the intersections of racism, white supremacy, and ending homelessness, develop a tool for the CoC to use when making decisions to ensure fidelity to racial equity, and review and enhance current and new policies with a racial equity lens.

Using tools created by federal and national partners, the CoC has conducted an initial analysis of Point-in-Time Count, HMIS, and coordinated entry data to clarify who accesses our system and housing resources.

This document focuses on answering these basic questions:
1. Who does the CoC serve in comparison to people in NC and people in poverty?
2. Who accesses permanent housing in the CoC's system?
3. How does the system support people to end their homelessness?
4. Who has access to coordinated entry and permanent housing resources?

The document answers these questions using HUD's Continuum of Care Assessment Tool, the National Alliance to End Homelessness' Racial Equity Tool, HUD's Stella Performance Module, and local coordinated entry data. The subsequent sections provide more detail about each tool and the results. The CoC uses these results to discuss our observations and next steps.

Section 3: Methodology and Results

Question 1: Who does the CoC serve in comparison to people in NC and people in poverty?

Assessment Tool: HUD Continuum of Care Racial Equity Assessment Tool (HUD Tool)[6]

Description: The HUD Tool provides information about racial distributions of people living in poverty and of people experiencing homelessness by race, ethnicity, age, and Veteran status. It allows CoCs to visualize the racial dimensions of poverty and homelessness within their state and geographic area.

Data Source:
- Population Estimates: The tool sources state and CoC population estimates (for everyone and people in poverty) from the U.S. Census, specifically, the American Community Survey (ACS) 2015-2019 5-year estimates. The tool also uses Tract estimates[7] to crosswalk CoC data, which look slightly different from state-level estimates available directly from the ACS.
- Homelessness: Homeless population and subpopulation data comes from the 2021 Point-In-Time Count data reported in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to the U.S. Congress. PIT Counts serve as an unduplicated, 1-night estimate of sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations conducted annually during the last 10 days of January.

Limitations:
- The HUD Tool uses 2021 PIT Count data only. While more recent PIT Count data has been submitted to HUD, this tool has not been updated yet and the 2021 data compared to the most recent census data remains relevant. With more time and resources, the NC BoS CoC can recreate the tool and use more recent PIT and Census data.
- Point-In-Time Count data is limited because it only records one night during a year. The CoC should combine analysis completed using PIT Count data with other data sources, such as HMIS data.
- The tool identifies race solely on the head of household for individuals living in families. This proxy may not accurately represent the racial identity of each household member.

HUD Definitions Used in the Tool:
- *Race Categories:* White, Black[8], Native American/Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Other/Multi-Racial
- *Ethnic Categories:* Hispanic and Non-Hispanic
- *Families:* A household with at least one adult 18 years or older and one child under 18
- *Unaccompanied Youth:* Youth under age 25 who do not live in households with adults 25 years or older or other children under 18

---

[6] https://www.hudexchange.info/news/new-coc-racial-equity-analysis-tool/
[7] https://www2.census.gov/geo/tiger/TIGER_DP/2017ACS/ACS_2017_5YR_TRACT.gdb.zip
[8] The CoC uses the term "Black" in this report to align with HUD's language and because it incorporates all people who identify as black. Because of the importance of terminology, the CoC will continue to evaluate and update it as it addresses racial disparities.

Key Results from the HUD Continuum of Care Racial Assessment Tool

North Carolina and the NC Balance of State CoC Populations & Race
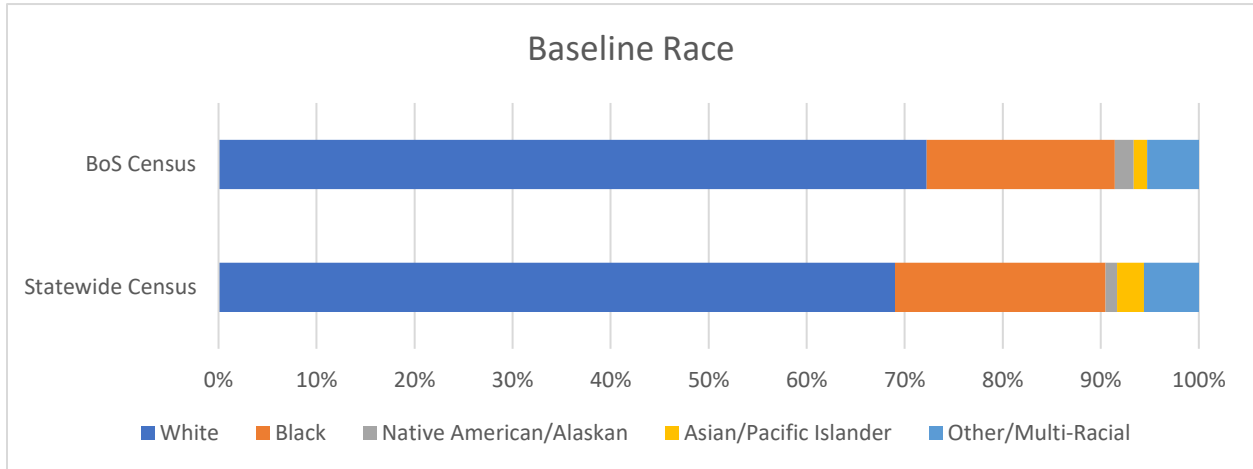

Table 1: Race in North Carolina and the NC Balance of State CoC (HUD Tool)

When comparing the population of everyone within the 79 counties of the NC BoS CoC and the general populations of North Carolina, more people identified as White in the CoC (72%) versus people throughout North Carolina (69%), slightly fewer people identified as Black (19% versus 21%), more people identified as Native American (2% versus 1%), fewer people identified as Asian/Pacific Islander (1% versus 3%), and fewer people identified as Other/Multi-Racial (5% versus 6%).

North Carolina and the NC Balance of State CoC Populations and Ethnicity
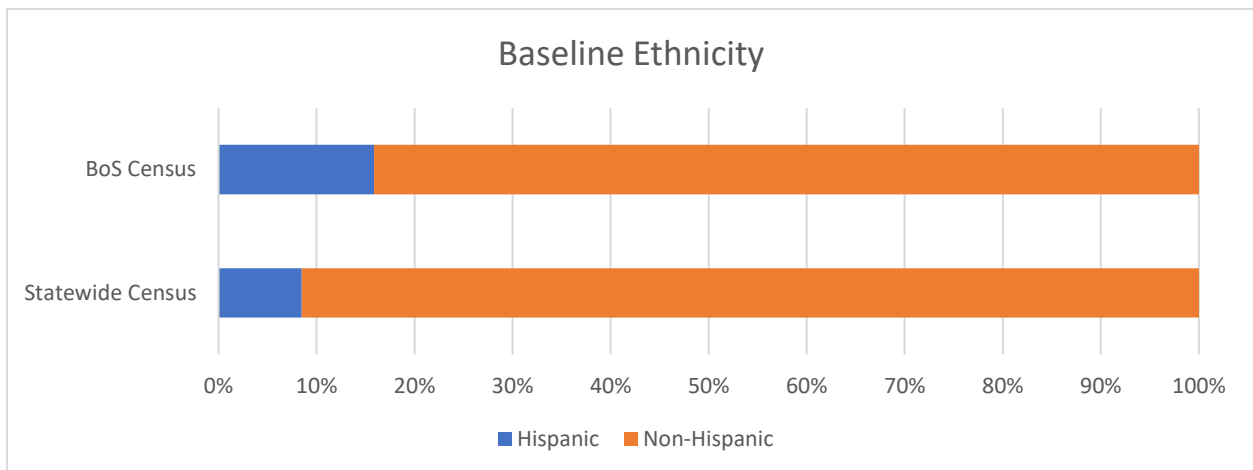

Table 2: Ethnicity in North Carolina and the NC Balance of State CoC (HUD Tool)

While we see differences in racial makeup, the NC BoS CoC geographic area has a very similar ethnic profile to everyone in North Carolina, with an estimated 8% of people identifying as Hispanic in the NC BoS CoC versus 9% of people in the full state.

NC Balance of State CoC: Poverty, Homelessness, Race

	White	Black	Native American/Alaskan	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other/Multi-Racial
% of Everyone	72%	19%	2%	1%	5%
% of People Experiencing Poverty	56%	31%	3%	1%	9%
% of People in Families Experiencing Poverty	49%	34%	4%	1%	12%
% of Everyone Experiencing Sheltered Homelessness	51%	43%	2%	1%	4%
% of People in Families Experiencing Sheltered Homelessness	37%	52%	2%	2%	6%

Table 3: NC Balance of State CoC (HUD Tool)

As the data in Table 3 demonstrates, people who identify as White made up 72% of the entire population in the NC BoS CoC geographic area. Narrowing our lens, first to people experiencing poverty and then to people experiencing homelessness, we see significantly less people identifying as White than in the general population. For White families, fewer families experience homelessness than experience poverty.

In contrast, people who identify as Black make up only 19% of the entire population in the NC BoS CoC's 79 counties, while the percentage of people who identify as Black increased when looking at poverty (31%), homelessness (43%), and especially families experiencing homelessness (52%).

While dealing with far lower raw numbers of people identifying as Native American/Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Other/Multi-Racial, we observe similar percentages of people who make up the general population and people who are experiencing poverty and homelessness.

NC Balance of State CoC: Poverty, Homelessness, and Ethnicity

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
% of Everyone	9%	91%
% of People Experiencing Poverty	16%	84%
% of People in Families Experiencing Poverty	23%	77%
% of People Experiencing Sheltered Homelessness	6%	94%
% of People in Families Experiencing Sheltered Homelessness	11%	89%

Table 4: NC Balance of State CoC Populations and Ethnicity (HUD Tool)

Reviewing data on ethnicity in the NC BoS CoC, we see significant jumps in the percent of people identifying as Hispanic living in poverty (both individuals and families) as compared to the overall population. While only 9% of people identify as Hispanic in the general population of the NC BoS CoC's 79 counties, 16% of people identifying as Hispanic experience poverty and 23% of families identifying as Hispanic experience poverty. The rates of individuals and families identifying as Hispanic experiencing homelessness seem lower than expected at 6% and 11% respectively. Several factors might contribute to these lower numbers including data collection issues during the PIT night where ethnicity is a commonly unasked question and the general fear for Hispanic people to identify as Hispanic because they believe providers will report them to the government. The CoC must provide better training on data collection during the PIT count, especially differentiating race and ethnicity questions, as well as work to determine other reasons for lower rates of homelessness.

NC Balance of State CoC: Sheltered and Unsheltered
In the 2021 Point in Time Count, NC Balance of State was unable to conduct a full unsheltered count. The coronavirus pandemic significantly disrupted planning by providers and eliminated volunteer support from many communities. In previous years, the racial makeup of the unsheltered population has disproportionately identified as White Non-Hispanic. Although HUD had not reviewed and approved of the 2022 Point in Time Count at the time of this assessment's analysis, the pattern still stands: the unsheltered population is still disproportionately Black but less so than the sheltered population.

Additional Populations: Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness

The total youth experiencing homelessness counted in the 2021 Point-In-Time Count was just 93 or 6% of the total number of people counted in the NC BoS CoC. The small percentage of youth counted means that small fluctuations in people identifying as different races on the night of the count can skew how we evaluate this information using the HUD Racial Equity Tool.

In last year's assessment, the racial identity of youth experiencing homelessness aligned with the percentages of like races in the total NC population. This year, we see that the results are more disproportionate. Youth identifying as White in the total census in NC is higher than White youth experiencing homelessness (66% versus 48% respectively). For youth identifying as Black, the data shows the opposite discrepancy, where the total census of youth identifying as Black in NC is 21% while the PIT count shows 42% of youth experiencing homelessness identifying as Black.
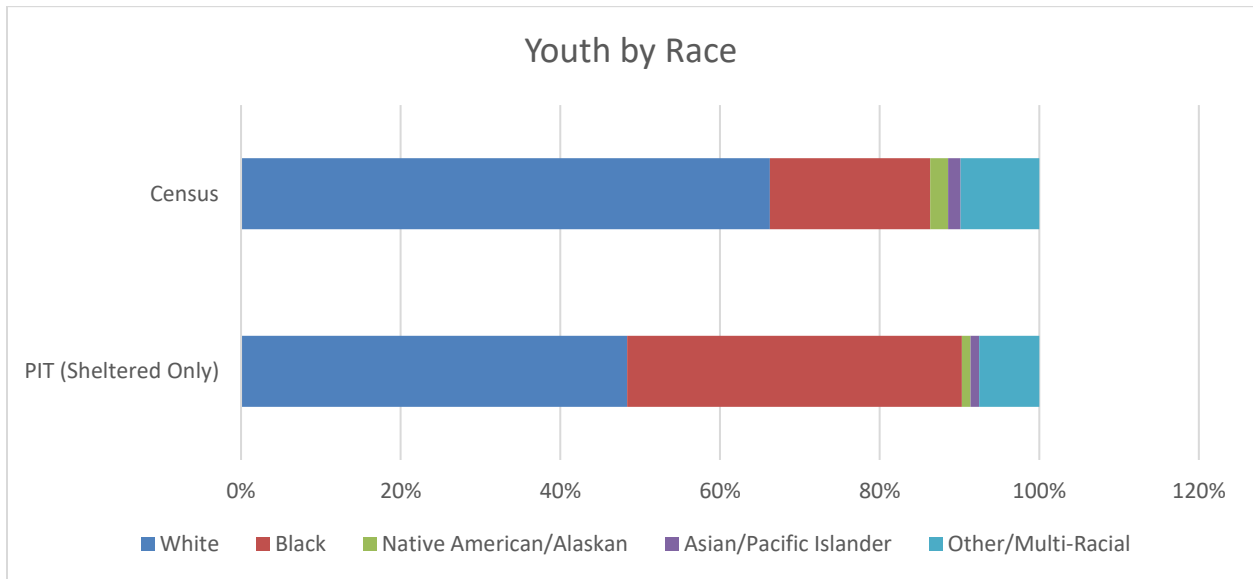

Table 5: NC Balance of State CoC Populations: Unaccompanied Youth-Race (HUD Tool)

Like race of youth, data indicates a wide discrepancy between the number of youth identifying as Hispanic in the total population versus the number counted as homeless during the Point-In-Time Count (15% versus 9% respectively). The youth count for ethnicity mirrors the underrepresentation trend we see in the total population counts for people identifying as Hispanic.
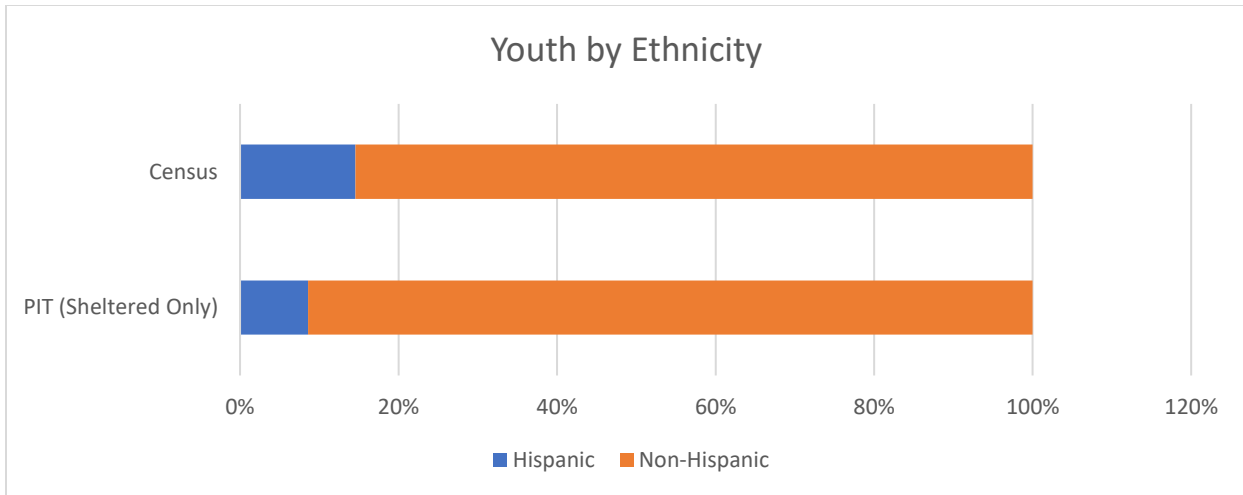
Youth by Ethnicity

Table 6: NC Balance of State CoC Populations: Unaccompanied Youth-Ethnicities (HUD Tool)

Additional Populations: Veterans

As with youth, Veterans make up a small percentage of the overall population of people experiencing homelessness in the NC BoS CoC (104 people or 7%). Compared to Veterans across the Balance of State, the percentage of Veterans identifying as Black experiencing homelessness is more than two times larger (18% versus 53%).
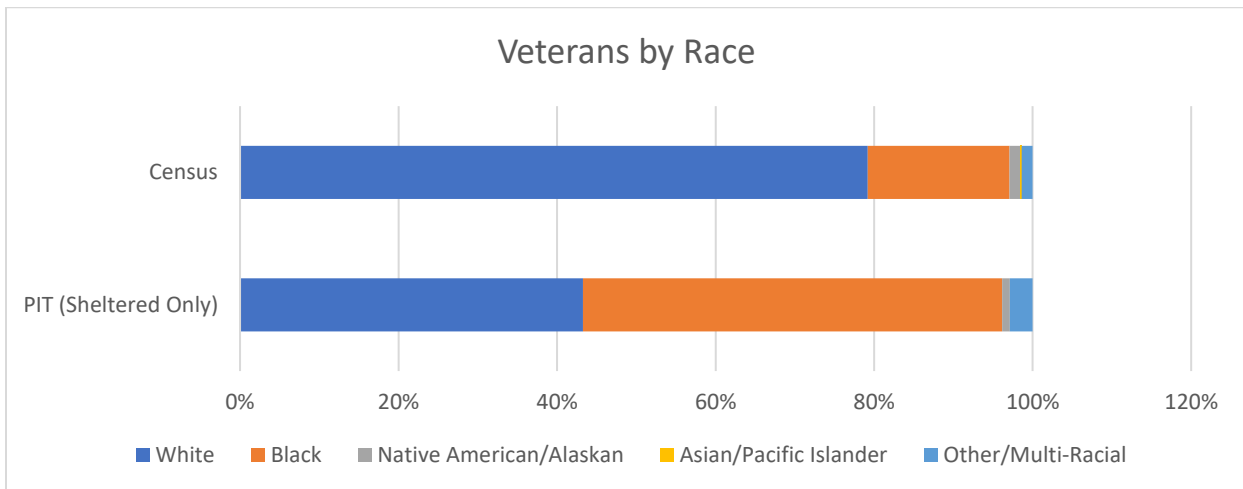

Veterans by Race

Table 7: NC Balance of State CoC Populations: Veterans-Race (HUD Tool)

When looking at ethnicity amongst Veterans, a similar trend exists as seen with the total population and other subpopulations such as Youth. The same percentage of Veterans identifying as Hispanic report experiencing homelessness versus the total population of Veterans in NC BoS CoC (3% versus 3%).
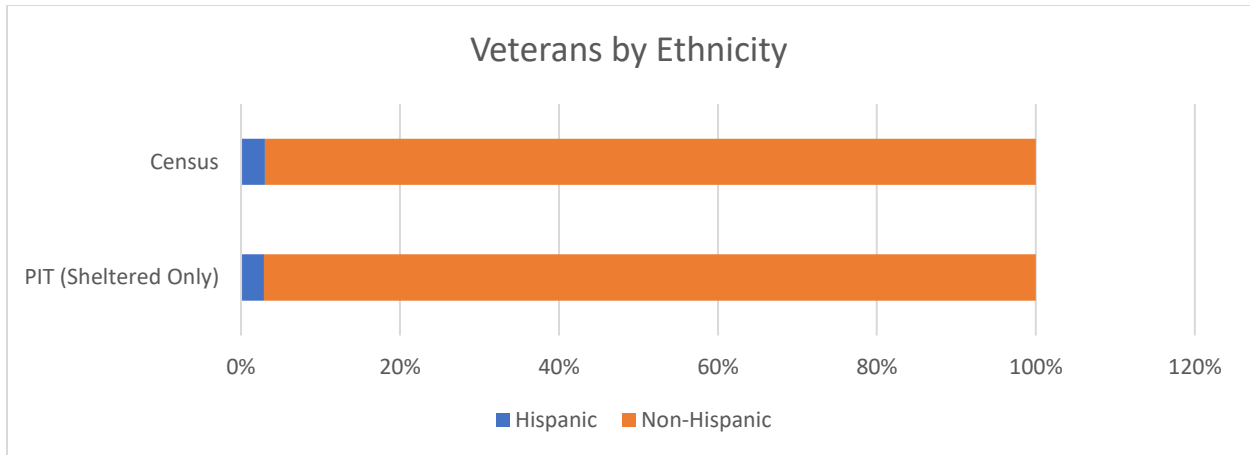
Veterans by Ethnicity

Table 8: NC Balance of State CoC Populations: Veterans-Ethnicity (HUD Tool)

NC Balance of State CoC: Changes over Time

For a look at the racial and ethnic breakdown of the PIT Count over four years, the CoC has included the 2022 PIT count results that have not been reviewed by HUD and are therefore subject to change. Given the COC was unable to conduct an unsheltered PIT Count in 2021, the inclusion of 2022's preliminary data is still useful. The 2022 data tempers the results from 2021.

The over-representation of people identifying as Black have increased slightly by 2% across these years. On the other hand, the increase in people identifying as Native American (pre-rounding) brings the PIT Count in line with the NC Balance of State CoC Census population rate. Additionally, the change in ethnicity may be promising. The rate of people identifying as Hispanic or Latinx has increased by 1%. While marginal changes overall, it is crucial to evaluate these results especially in comparison to HMIS data.
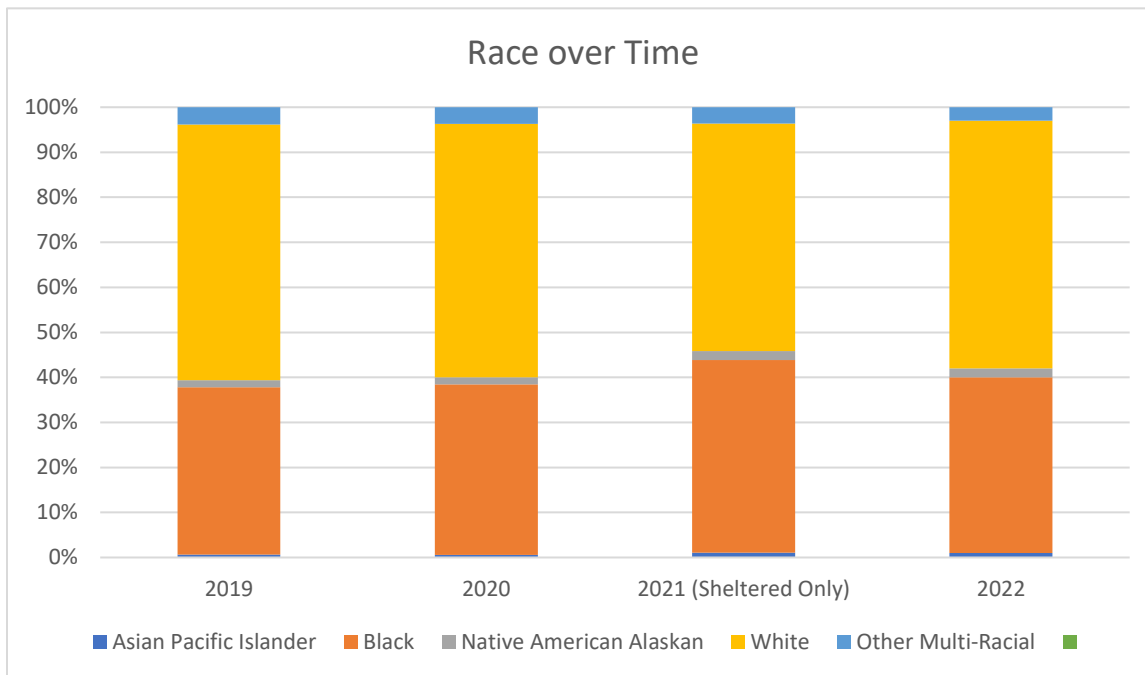

Race over Time

Table 9: NC Balance of State CoC Populations: PIT Count of Race 2019-2022 (HDX)
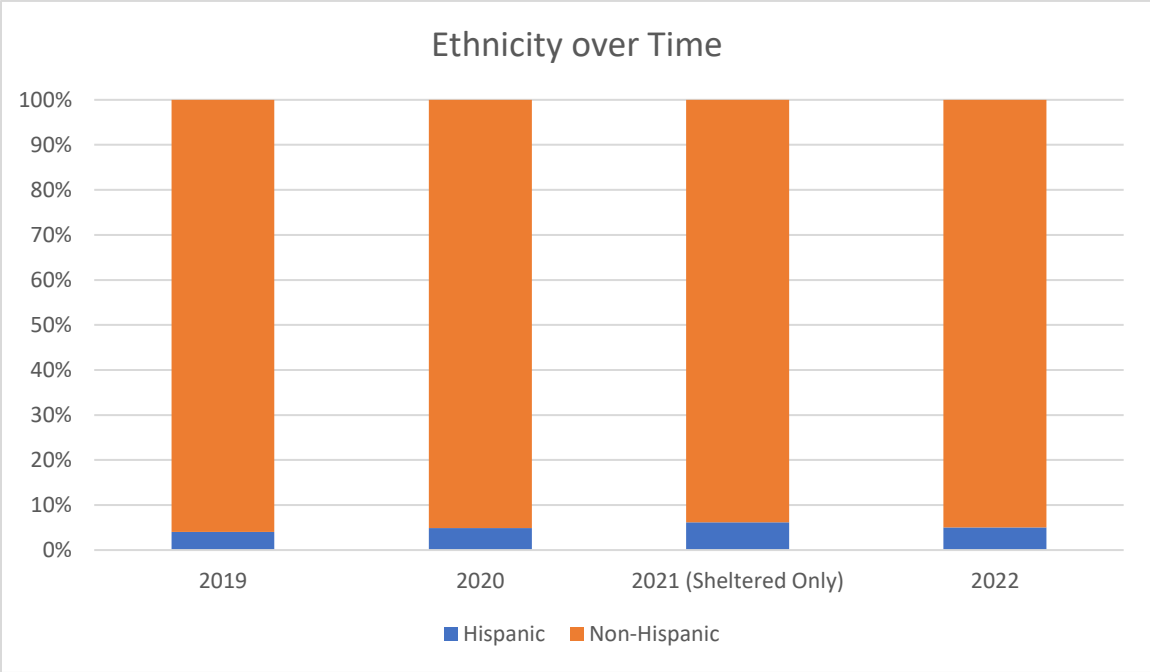
Table 10: NC Balance of State CoC Populations: PIT Count of Ethnicity 2019-2022 (HDX)

Race or Ethnicity	2019	2020	2021 (Sheltered Only)	2022	Changes
Asian Pacific Islander	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Black	37%	38%	43%	39%	2%
Native American Alaskan	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
White	57%	56%	51%	55%	-2%
Other Multi-Racial	4%	4%	4%	3%	-1%
Hispanic	4%	5%	6%	5%	1%

Non-Hispanic	96%	95%	94%	95%	-1%

Question 2: Who accesses temporary and permanent housing?

<u>Assessment Tool:</u> Stella P (Performance) in HUD 2.0

<u>Description:</u> HUD provides Stella as a strategy and analysis tool to help CoCs understand how their system performs. Available in HUD's HDX 2.0, Stella P visualizes Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA) data to illustrate how households move through the homeless service system, highlighting demographic and outcome disparities.

<u>Data Sources:</u> The tool uses CoC LSA data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data from 10/01/2020-09/30/2021. For longitudinal analysis, fiscal years 2019 and 2020 were included for comparison. Lastly, 10/01/2021-06/30/2022 (the first three quarters of the Federal Fiscal Year 2022) was included.

<u>Limitations:</u>
- HMIS only documents people who access homeless service providers participating in the system. The CoC may not document many people experiencing homelessness in HMIS because they live unsheltered or access services from victims' service providers or mainstream service providers not using the HMIS. Currently, the NC BoS CoC has 49% ES, 34% TH, 93% RRH, and 85% PSH bed coverage in HMIS[9].
- Component type also limits the data. LSA data only includes Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Other Permanent Housing projects. People recorded in HMIS in street outreach, supportive services only, and coordinated entry projects without entries in the project types listed above will not be included. It is also important to note that certain areas of the NC BoS CoC have limited availability of ES, TH, RRH, and PSH programs, meaning people of all races and ethnicities have limited access to certain types of services depending on where they seek services.
- While Stella P can provide data showing the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and age, the data presented focuses solely on race and ethnicity. Later analysis of Stella P data might include additional points of interest. The tool bases a household's race and ethnicity solely on the head of household, which may not align with the race and ethnicity of all household members.
- The tool specifies ethnicity alongside race for some groups such as White Hispanic/Latinx or White Non-Hispanic/Latinx and but does not include Hispanic origin in other racial categories.
- With only small numbers of heads of households exiting the system identifying as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (18), Asian (26), American Indian or Alaskan Native or Indigenous (94), White Hispanic or Latinx (155), and Multiple Races (198), small changes could overtime shift percentages and patterns significantly.

<u>Definitions:</u>

---

[9] NC BoS CoC data submitted in 2022

- *Race Categories:* The tool measures several racial categories including White Non-Hispanic, Black or African American, Multiple Races, White Hispanic, American Indian or Alaska Native or Indigenous, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- *Ethnicity Categories:* Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x) and Non-Hispanic/Non- Latin(a)(o)(x)
- *Intersectional Race and Ethnicity Categories (when available):* White Hispanic, White Non-Hispanic, Black or African American or African Hispanic, Black or African American or African Non-Hispanic, American Indian or Alaska Native or Indigenous Hispanic, and American Indian or Alaska Native or Indigenous Non-Hispanic. Asian or Asian American and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander are not available with Ethnicity.

Key Results from Stella P visualization of the Longitudinal System Analysis

Who has access to the homeless response system?

Like the disproportionality seen in annual Point in Time Count data, people accessing the homeless response system (using the Homeless Management Information System or HMIS) identify as Black more often than the general population. This is still true when our HMIS data is divided by project type where the heads of households and adults identify as Black in 40% of ES or TH, 52% of RRH, and 54% of PSH enrollments. Even as people experiencing homelessness identify as Black, the most significant resources the system can offer are also being utilized at disproportionate rates. The CoC should continue to investigate how populations move through the system and whether they can access tenancy services from robust RRH or PSH programs equitably and proportionately.
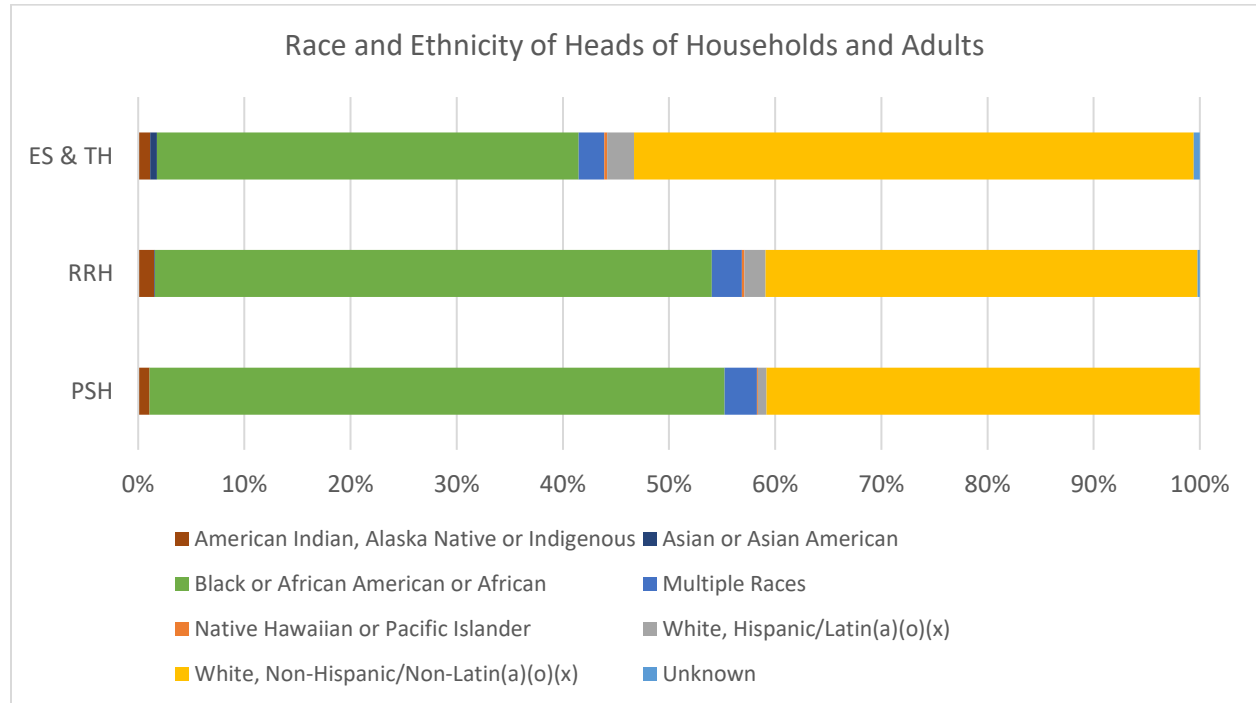

Table 11: NC Balance of State CoC: FY21 Heads of Households and Adults with enrollments in ES, TH, RRH, PSH Projects (Stella P)

How long do households experience homelessness?

People identifying as Black/African American have the longest lengths of stay in projects at 128 days. People identifying as White have much shorter stays with an average of 99 days. All other race categories stay in programs for less than the overall average of 112 days, although the universe of people for races other than Black/African American and White is quite small. Less than 100 people identify as Multiple Races, Native Hawaiian, Indigenous, or Asian American, in contrast to 3,055 people identifying as Black/African American and 3,327 people identifying as White). The smaller universe and shorter lengths of stay in programs for these races could imply that people of color other than Black/African American have access issues to essential services such as shelter and permanent housing projects.
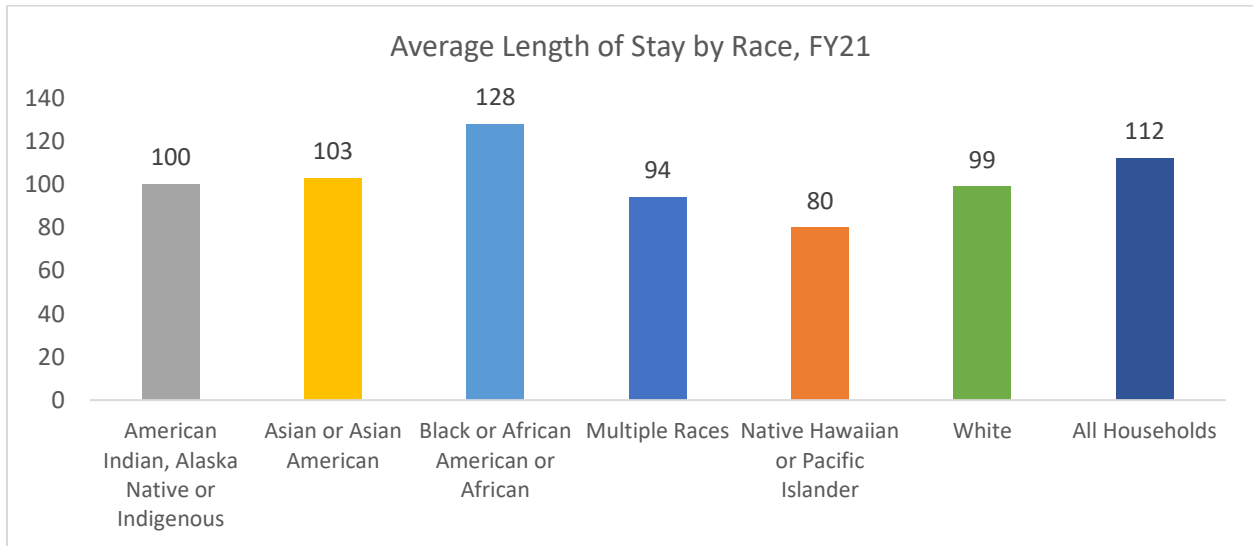

Table 12: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless by ES, TH, RRH, PSH Project Stay (Stella P)

The intersectional data available in Stella P do not reveal disparities compounded by race and ethnicity in length of stay. Overall, people identifying as Hispanic or Latinx have shorter length of stays (81 average) than those identifying as Non-Hispanic or Non-Latinx (113 average) across race. Those with the shortest stays on average represent a small universe (201 heads of households identify as Hispanic or Latinx). As greater outreach and engagement efforts are attempted with Hispanic/Latinx communities, the CoC will monitor this data by ethnicity and try to avoid negatively impacting average length of stay.
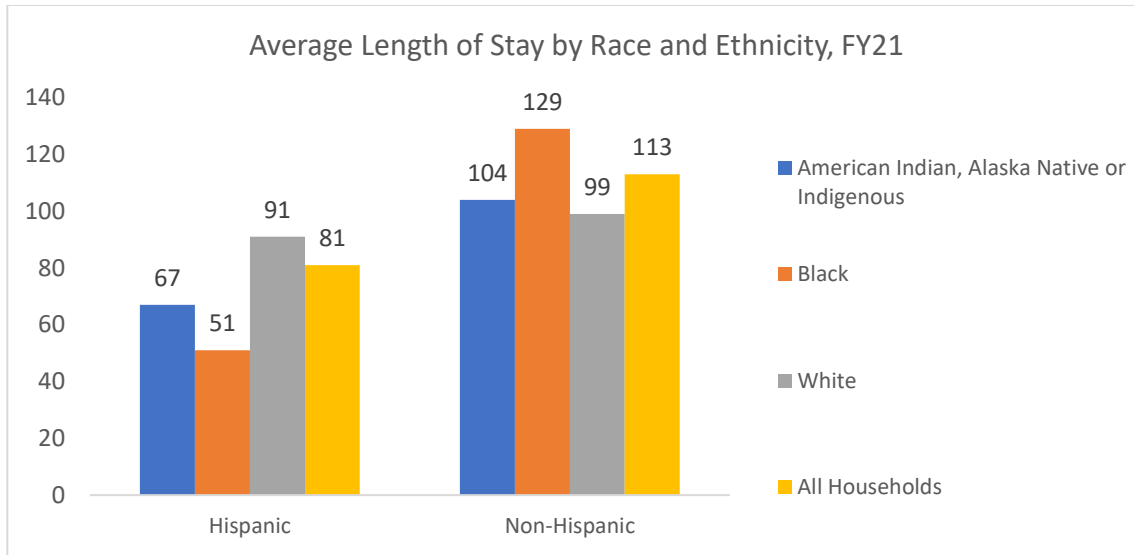
Average Length of Stay by Race and Ethnicity, FY21

Table 13: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless by ES, TH, RRH, PSH Project Stay (Stella P)

When evaluating the comparison to lengths of stay in projects with self-reported lengths of time experiencing homelessness, we see a stark contrast. Every racial and ethnic population except Native Hawaiian and Hispanic/Latinx people report average lengths of time experiencing homelessness of at least one year. American Indian/Alaska Natives reporting the greatest number of days homeless at 682 days. The huge difference between the project stays and self-reported average length of homelessness demonstrates the limits of HMIS in reporting actual length of time homeless for individual households. A length of stay in a project is helpful for individual agencies to evaluate service effectiveness but less so to help the CoC understand homeless history. Self-reported homelessness shares similar issues because households understand their housing crises differently than HUD's definitions of homelessness. The data on self-reported homelessness does indicate at the very least that all populations accessing the system, whether they meet HUD's narrow definition of homelessness or not, have long-term housing insecurity.
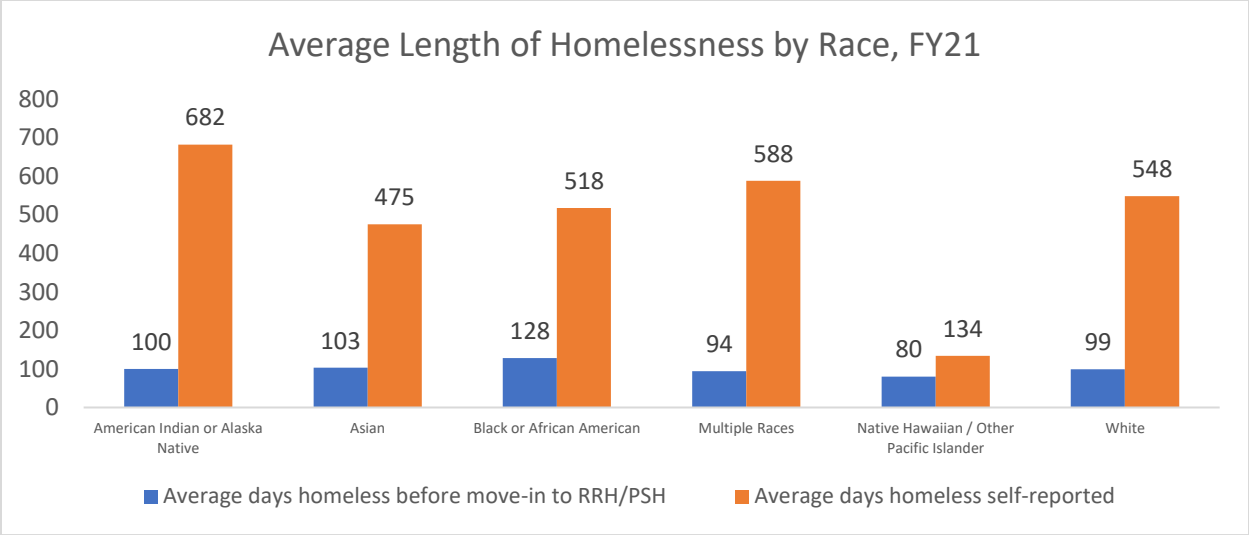
Average Length of Homelessness by Race, FY21

Table 14: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless – Project Stay vs. Self-Reported (Stella P)

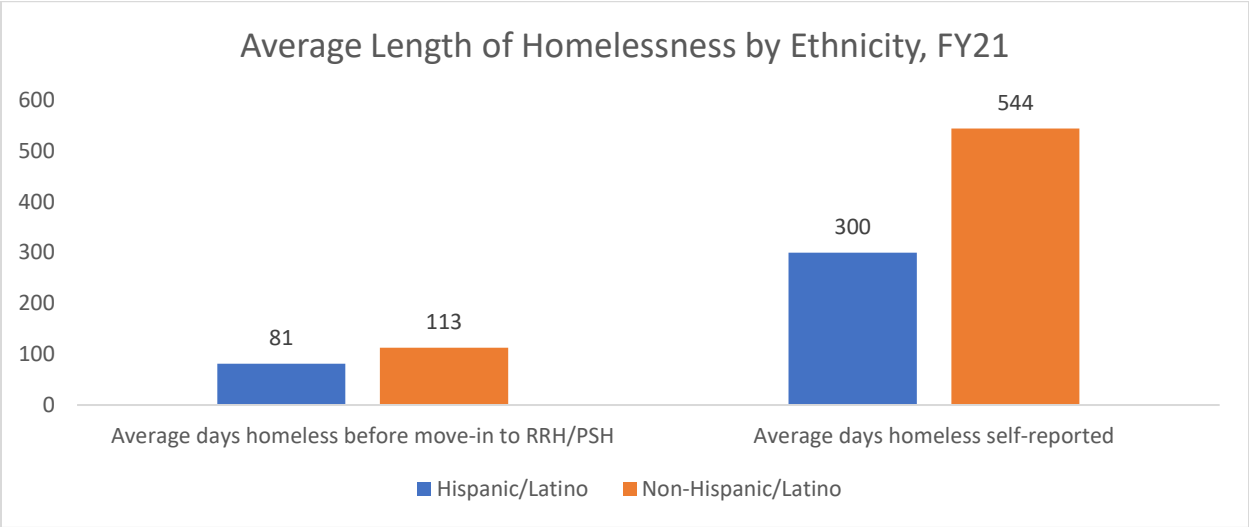Average Length of Homelessness by Ethnicity, FY21

Table 15: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless – Project Stay vs. Self-Reported (Stella P)

Over time, the average number of days enrolled in HMIS projects has increased from 73 days in FY 2018 to 132 days in the first three quarters of FY 2022. When broken out by race and ethnicity, average experiences of homelessness in the response system did not change uniformly. People identifying as Asian saw a decrease of 4 days and were the outliers in the results. All other categories of people have averages increased ranging from 42 days more for White and 78 days more for Black people. As the two largest categories of people by race, the month-long difference is significant and not due to individual circumstances.

Average Length of Stay in Days

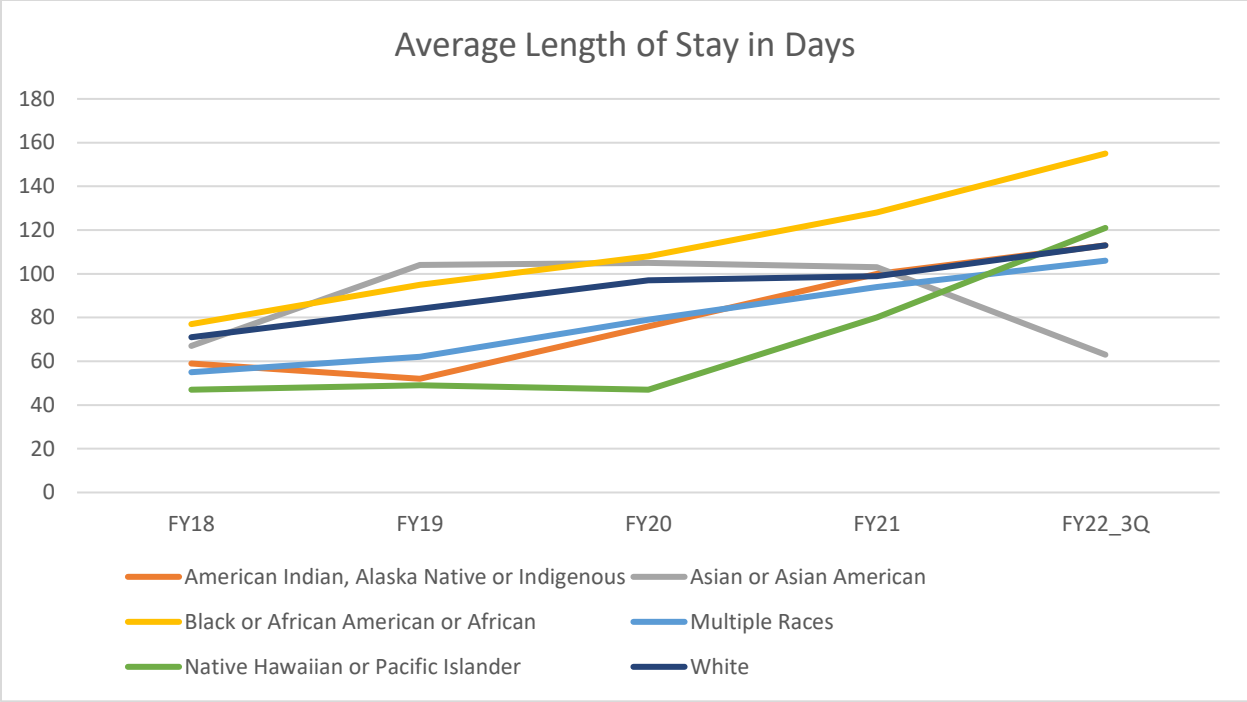*Table 16: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless by ES, TH, RRH, PSH Project Stay (Stella P)*

An overall increase is seen in ethnicity but the relationship between the two categories did not change. Non-Latinx heads of households still had longer lengths of stays on average.
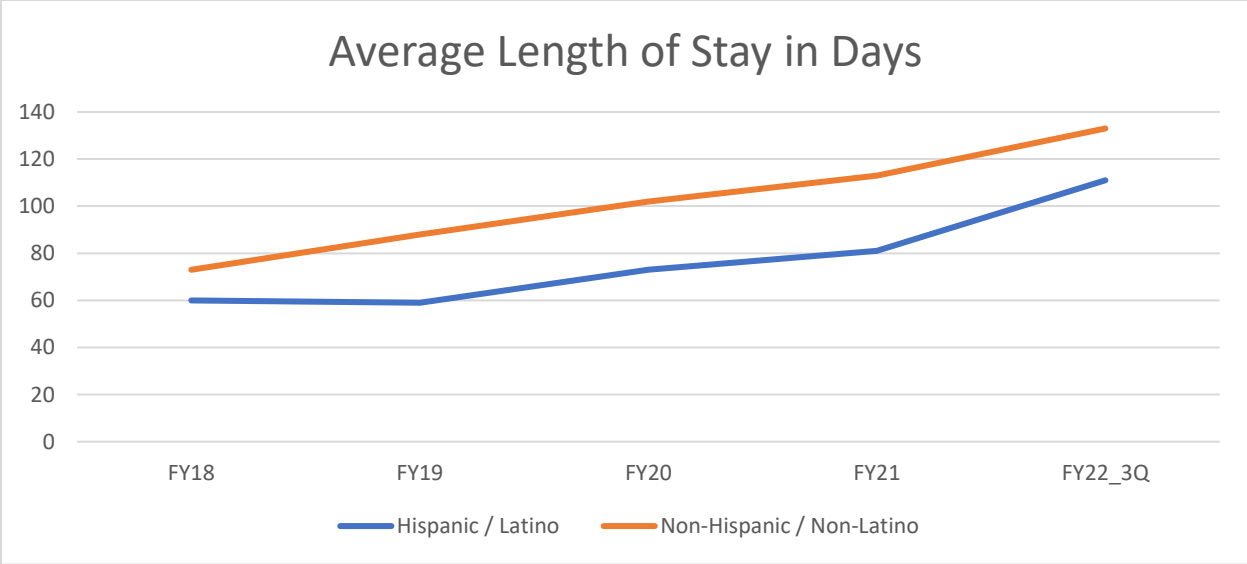

Average Length of Stay in Days

Table 17: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless by ES, TH, RRH, PSH Project Stay (Stella P)

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22_3Q	Change
American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous	59	52	76	100	113	54
Asian or Asian American	67	104	105	103	63	-4
Black or African American or African	77	95	108	128	155	78
Multiple Races	55	62	79	94	106	51
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	47	49	47	80	121	74
White	71	84	97	99	113	42
Hispanic / Latinx	60	59	73	81	111	51
Non-Hispanic / Non-Latinx	73	88	102	113	133	60
All Households	73	87	101	112	132	59

Table 18: NC Balance of State CoC: Average Days Homeless by ES, TH, RRH, PSH Project Stay (Stella P)

Where do households exit?
Using Stella to compare exit data for different races and ethnicities. People identifying as White Hispanic have slightly higher positive exit percentages than people identifying as White Non-Hispanic (32% versus 30% respectively). Overall BIPOC clients have above-average exits to permanent housing destinations in FY21 (37% vs 32% average). As the CoC makes changes to address disparities, the CoC will need to watch Exits to Permanent Housing to prevent any dips in positive outcomes.

With high unknown exit percentages (over 15% for people identifying as Asian or Asian American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Black or African American Hispanic, as Black or African American Non-Hispanic, White Non-Hispanic, and American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous Hispanic), the comparisons between racial and ethnic populations could be revealed as disproportionate. For example, people identifying as Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander has relatively high exits to unknown destinations at 29%. However, the low number of people identifying as Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander in the HMIS data could easily shift these percentages over time (7 people). The CoC must work with providers to collect as much exit data as possible to fully understand this data.
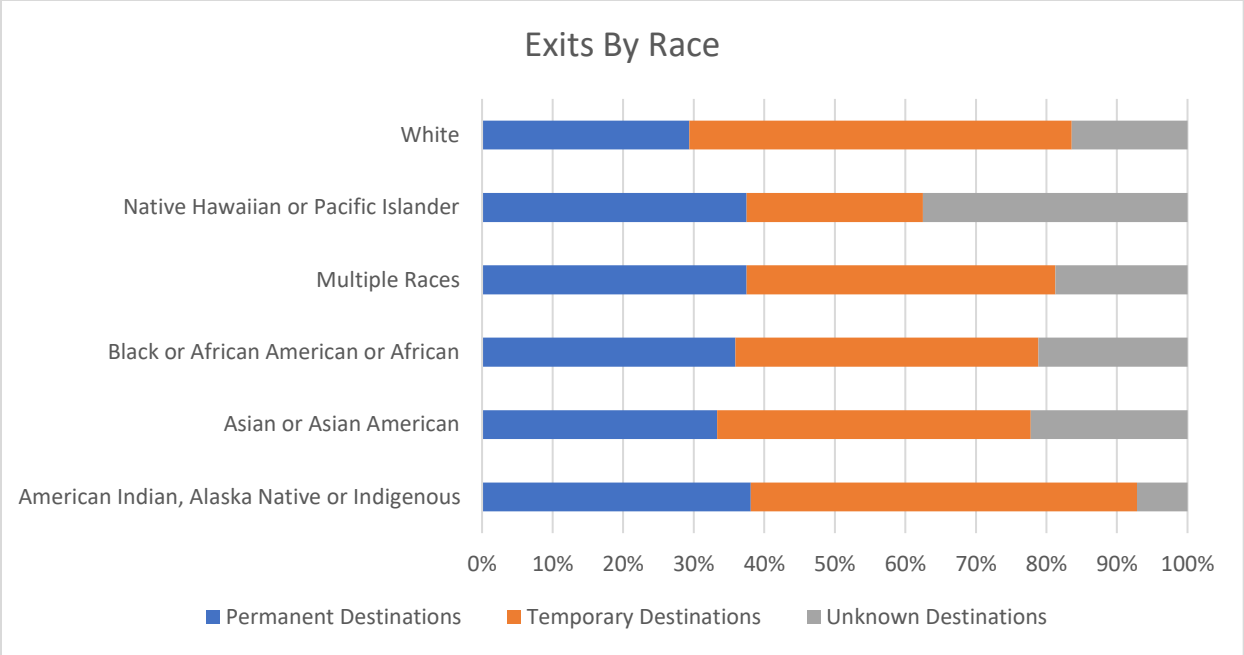
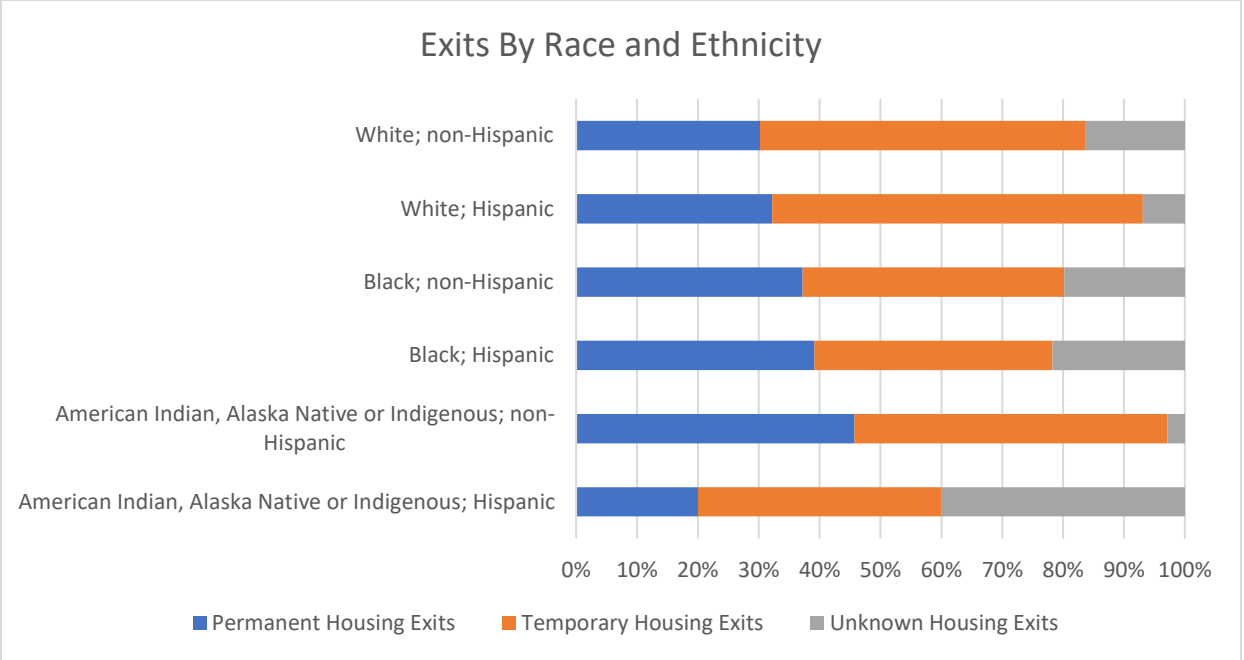Table 19: NC Balance of State CoC: % of Exits from Homelessness (Stella P)

Table 20: NC Balance of State CoC: % of Exits from Homelessness (Stella P)

In a year-to-year comparison including the first 3 quarters of Fiscal Year 2022, we see promising signs from our Exits Destination data in Stella P. Unknown Exit Destinations have decreased significantly from 35% in FY18 down to 13% FY22. The bulk of that difference seems to have landed in Temporary Exits, which increased from 32% to 54% over the same time. While Exits to Permanent Housing Destinations has remained constant at 33%, there was a brief increase just before and during the beginning of the pandemic. The fact that positive exits peaked at 40% amid a worldwide health catastrophe is inspiring to see.
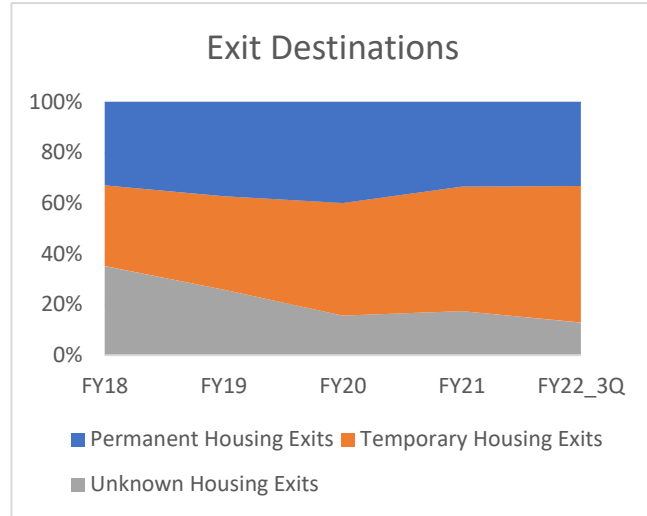
Against this backdrop, the Exits to Permanent broken out by racial identify appear very similar. Every identify saw an increase in these positive exits in FY20 and have since fallen except Indigenous heads of households (29% in FY20 and up to 36% in FY22). As COVID specific funding begins to end in FY22, the CoC may want to see if outcomes differ across race and funding type in the future.

In particular, the CoC should monitor changes between the two largest groups. We see modest changes with Exits to Permanent Housing rising 1% for Black people (35% to 36%) and falling 1% for White people (32% to 31%). Again, investigating deeper into the circumstances that generated more successful outcomes for most groups of people in FY20 could yield practices to replicate even as the pandemic ends.
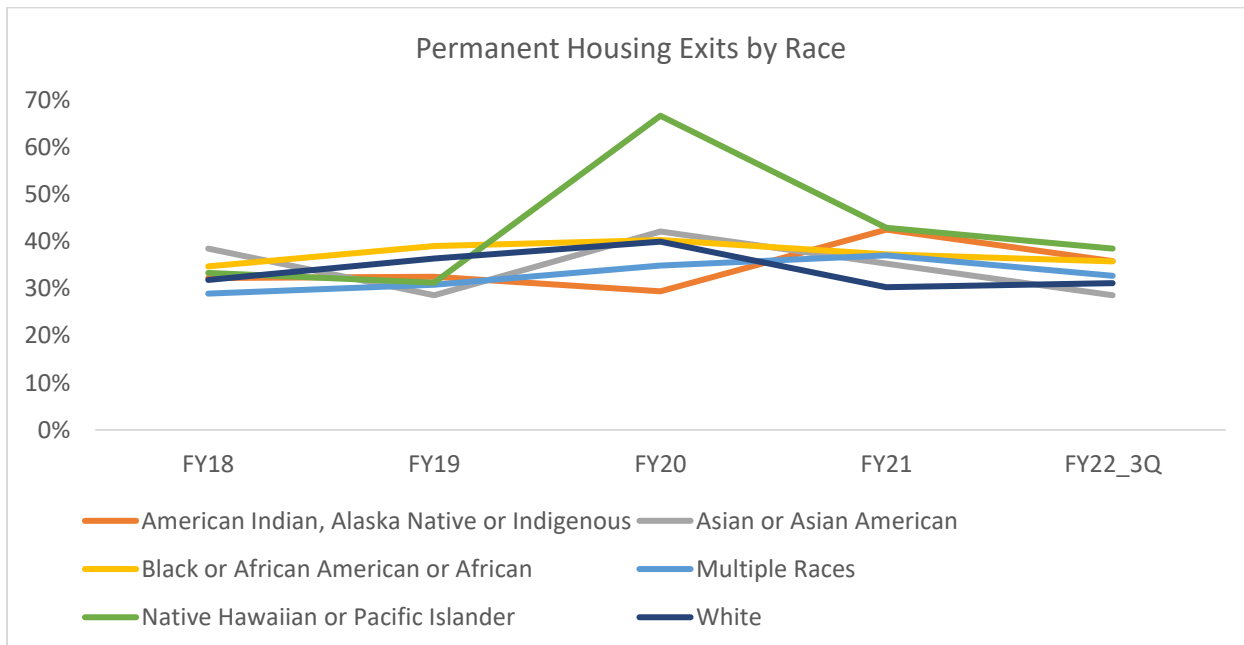

Table 21: NC Balance of State CoC: FY18 – FY22 % of Exits to Permanent Housing by Race (Stella P)

When considering exit destinations year to year by ethnicity, Hispanic/Latinx and Non-Latinx did not change dramatically. Comparing FY 2018 to the first three quarters of 2022, Hispanic/Latinx heads of households saw exits to permanent destinations increase by almost 2% to 39% while Non-Hispanic/Non-Latinx heads of households stayed steady at 33%. Significant variation did occur during the beginning of the pandemic in FY 2020 when the percent dropped to 31% for the Hispanic/Latinx category. Only in 2022 has that rate increased to the previous range.

Table 22: NC Balance of State CoC: FY18 – FY22 % of Exits to Permanent Housing for Black and White identities only (Stella P)

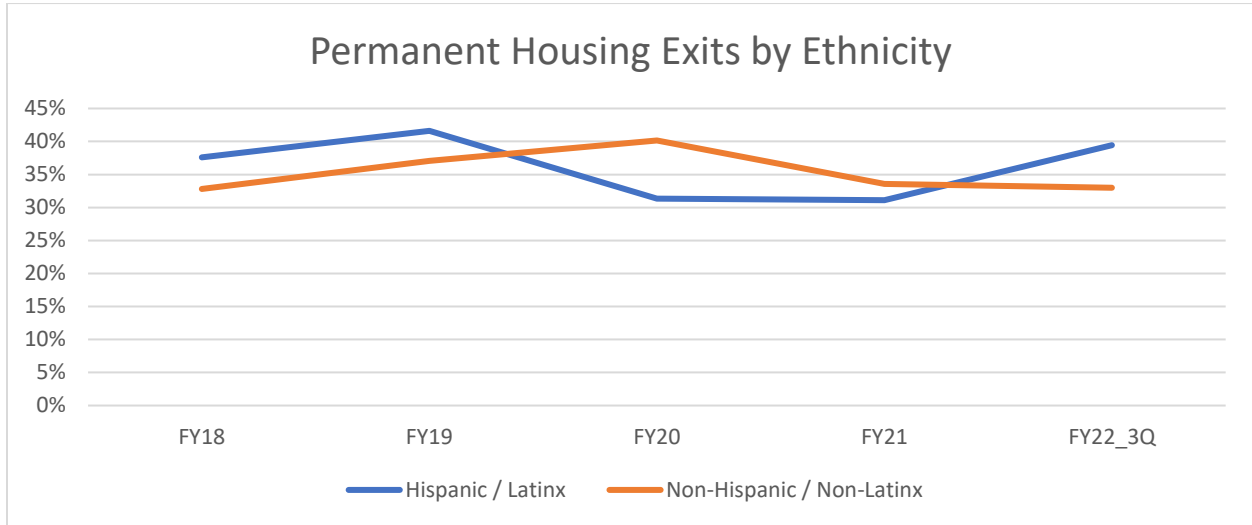| Permanent Housing Exits	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22_3Q
American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous	32%	33%	29%	43%	36%
Asian or Asian American	38%	29%	42%	35%	29%
Black or African American or African	35%	39%	40%	37%	36%
Multiple Races	29%	31%	35%	37%	33%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	33%	31%	67%	43%	38%
White	32%	36%	40%	30%	31%
Hispanic / Latinx	38%	42%	31%	31%	39%
Non-Hispanic / Non-Latinx	33%	37%	40%	34%	33%
All Households	33%	37%	40%	33%	33%

Table 23: NC Balance of State CoC: FY18 – FY22 % of Exits to Permanent Housing for Black and White identities only (Stella P)

How often do households return to homelessness?

When comparing returns to homelessness after exits to a permanent destination in the 12 months prior, we see varying degrees of housing stability for BIPOC. People identifying as White return at a higher rate than people identifying as Black/African America (7% versus 5% respectively). However, people identifying as American Indian (11%), Asian American (20%), and Multiple Races (8%) have above average rates of return (6% average). As in other measures, fewer households are represented by these percentages. Only 1-2 heads of households from the prior year's permanent housing exits returned.

Rate of Returns in FY21

Category	Rate
Multiple Races	8%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%
Asian or Asian American	20%
American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous	11%
Black or African American or African	5%
White	7%
Non-Hispanic / Non-Latino	6%
Hispanic / Latino	14%
All HH	6%

Table 24: NC Balance of State CoC: % of Returns to Homelessness in FY21 from permanent exit destinations in FY20 (Stella P)

Regardless of racial identity, people identifying as Hispanic/Latinx were at least twice as likely to return to homelessness. For all people identifying as Hispanic/Latinx, 14% of those exiting to permanent housing returned to seek services. Within this group, the rate was the same for people identifying as White (14%). The 1 head of household identifying as both American Indian and Hispanic/Latinx in the prior year did return, making the rate of return a dramatic 100%. While there are 0 returns for this identity category in the first 3 quarters of 2022, the overall return rate for Hispanic/Latinx people continues to be 14%. The CoC will monitor overall rates of returns for those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx.

Rate of Returns in FY21

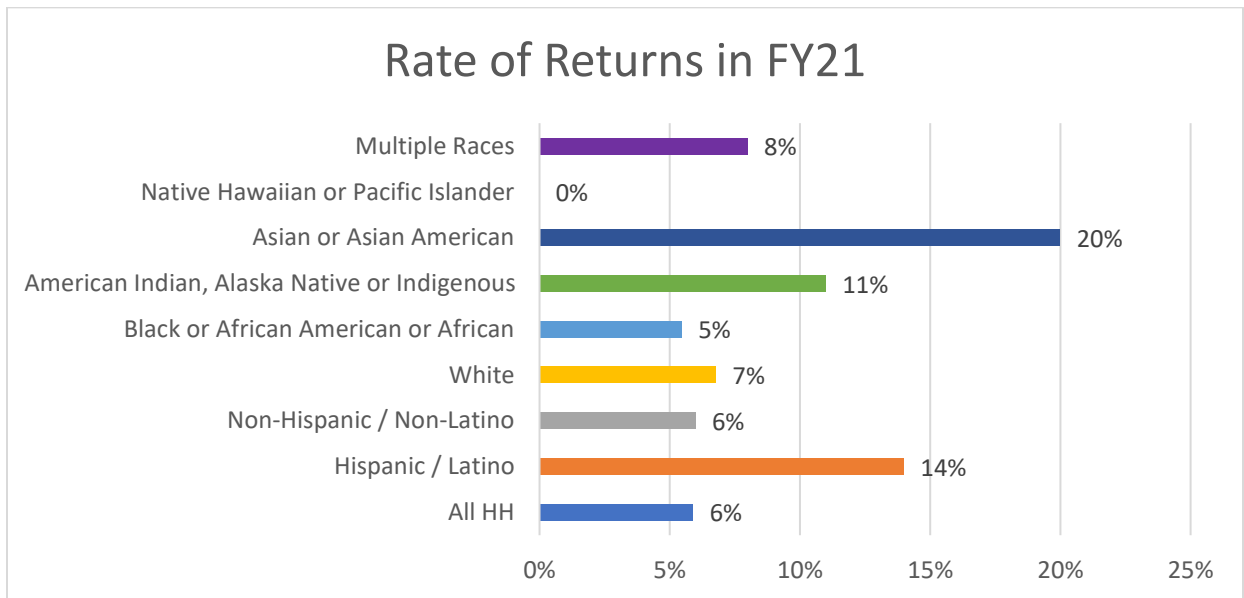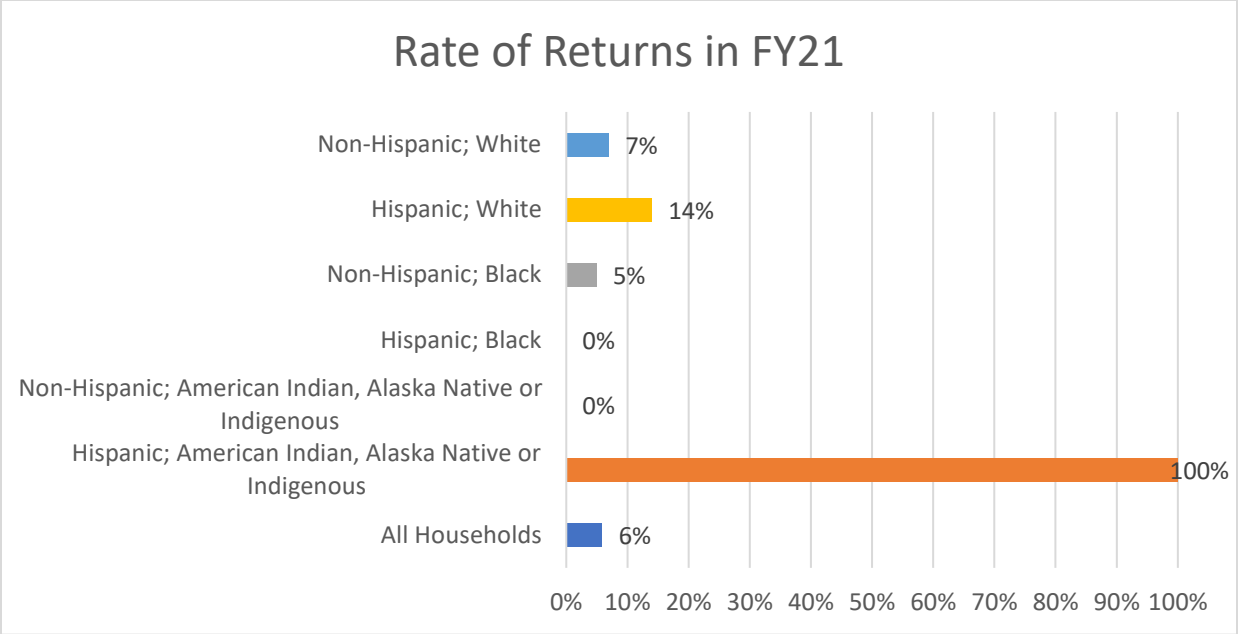| Category	Value
Non-Hispanic; White	7%
Hispanic; White	14%
Non-Hispanic; Black	5%
Hispanic; Black	0%
Non-Hispanic; American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous	0%
Hispanic; American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous	100%
All Households	6%

Table 25: NC Balance of State CoC: % of Returns to Homelessness in FY21 from permanent exit destinations in FY20 (Stella P)

	American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American or African	Multiple Races	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Hispanic/ Latinx	Non-Hispanic/ Non-Latinx
FY21 Returns from 12 months prior	11%	20%	5%	8%	0%	7%	14%	6%

Table 26: NC Balance of State CoC: % of Returns to Homelessness in FY21 from permanent exit destinations in FY20 (Stella P)

The rate of return in a year has fluctuated over the last five years, with a decrease for most people experiencing homelessness during the early part of the pandemic. The metric taken from Stella P measures the rate of return looks at a narrow group of heads of households with positive exits from one year and determines whether they were served by the homeless response system the next year. Thus, we would expect that year-to-year rates of return would reflect the system's conditions from the prior year to a large extent. With that in mind, the successful decrease of returns in people identifying as Black, White, and any other race in FY 2021 and the first 3 quarters of FY 2022 is even more remarkable.

Returns peaked in FY 2020 for all races. In particular, the 'All other races' category that combined Asian, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander's had had the highest rate at 17%. This category was used in this part of the

analysis because rates varied so wildly and made trends more difficult to visualize. The only exception to the decreasing rates of returns was Hispanic/Latinx people. This has held steady at 14% returns since FY 2020, representing about 4 households each year. Where once there was not disparity, there is now. The CoC should be mindful to ensure that Hispanic/Latinx led households access the same aftercare and diversion interventions that may prevent other people from returning to the homeless response system.
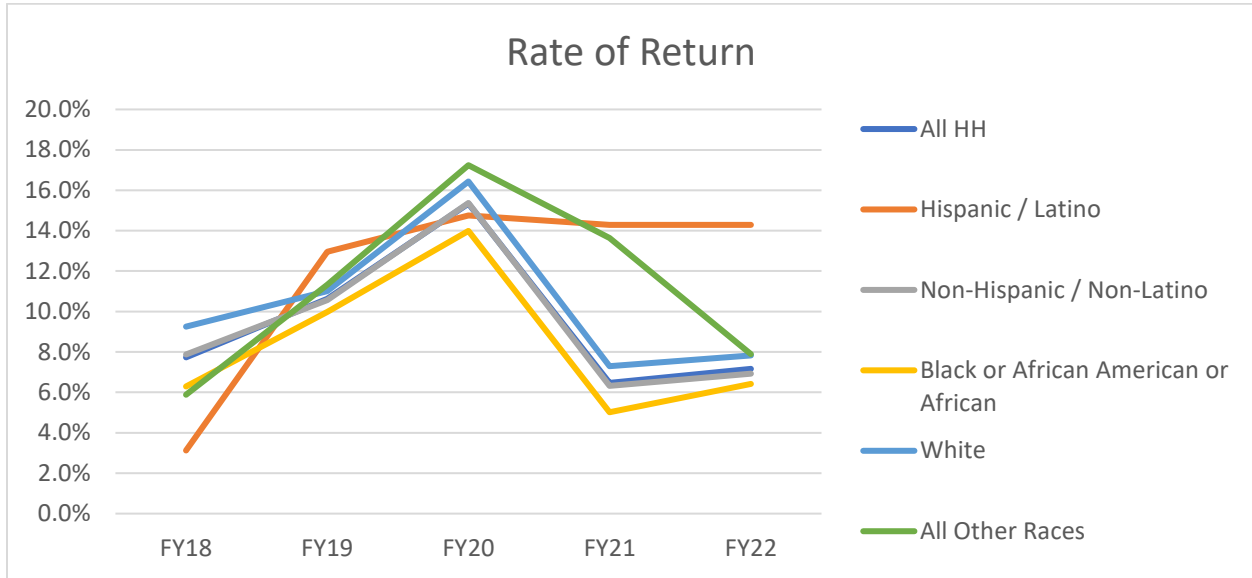

Table 27: NC Balance of State CoC: % of Returns to Homelessness in the listed year from permanent exit destinations in the year prior (Stella P)

The All Other Races category includes Asian, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander heads of households due to low totals to be more comparable to Black or White counterparts.

Section 4: Discussion

Like the rest of the country, the NC Balance of State CoC data demonstrates that BIPOC represent disproportionately high rates of poverty and homelessness across its geographic area. To effectively end homelessness, the NC BoS CoC needs to vigilantly vet and update its strategies with an equity lens to ensure everyone has a safe, affordable, permanent place to live.

Both PIT Count and HMIS data have limitations. While the PIT Count data provides the most comprehensive data set because it includes unsheltered, sheltered, and domestic violence shelter data, as a one-day count, it simply shows a snapshot of the system at a particular moment and does not demonstrate seasonal and current trends. HMIS data provides richer, more nuanced data, which the CoC can use to show current need and trends. However, many providers do not use the system, and the data does not account for people those providers serve. People living unsheltered are also less frequently accounted for due to the lack of street outreach across the 79 counties. For the most accurate and comprehensive picture of homelessness in the NC BoS CoC, we will need to combine these resources and use data from the coordinated entry and other peripheral systems, including municipal, county, and state government systems, Community Action agencies, and other relevant partners that serve people experiencing homelessness. This year's assessment uses local coordinated entry data as well as Longitudinal System Analysis data to enhance the CoC's understanding of our system and how race and ethnicity factor into access and success.

The NC BoS CoC gleans the following information from assessing our data:

- The percentage of people identifying as Native American was higher in the PIT Count (2% versus 1%). Both percentages seem low considering Native Americans experiencing homelessness tend to be higher disproportionately nationally than the Census data for people identifying as Native American. The NC BoS CoC has two areas in which Native Americans reside in larger numbers, the Cherokee Nation in Western NC and the Lumbee Tribe in Southeastern NC. Both regions have smaller provider capacity to perform the annual PIT Count and the providers that do exist focus on domestic violence services, which cannot be included in HMIS. The Housing Barriers Assessment data demonstrates that more people experiencing homelessness identifying as Native American exist than our PIT Count and HMIS data capture. Having a well-advertised, central access point seems to indicate that more BIPOC access is possible.
- Like the Native American population, the percentage of people identifying as Hispanic seems artificially low. HMIS data showed only 3% of people identifying as Hispanic and PIT Count data only 5% of people identifying as Hispanic. Because the NC BoS CoC geographic area covers 79 counties, the lack of people identifying as Hispanic could be due to lack of HMIS or PIT Count coverage in regions with lower capacity. The CoC also understands from providers that migration during certain portions of the year could deflate PIT Count numbers for this population because of the timing of the count. The CoC believes that the number of people identifying as Hispanic are undercounted and potentially underserved.

- The HUD CoC tool effectively measure race and ethnicity but do not allow users to understand the intersection of race, ethnicity, and gender. In future research, the CoC needs to dig deeper into our

raw Point in Time data to understand the intersections of race, ethnicity, and gender to illuminate and address these more nuanced discrepancies.

- NC Balance of State CoC HMIS and PIT Count data show small percentages of people experiencing homelessness identifying as Hispanic (3% and 5% respectively) when compared to the total people identifying as Hispanic in the Census data (8%) and people experiencing poverty identifying as Hispanic (16%). The CoC needs to do further research to see if data collection and system access deficiencies cause lower counts of people identifying as Hispanic and/or if cultural protective factors exist that prevent people identifying as Hispanic from experiencing homelessness. If the latter exists, the CoC could investigate ways that these factors could be used to support other populations as well. There are known issues around paper forms and language accessibility leading the CoC to believe that the number of people identifying as Hispanic are undercounted and potentially underserved. For example, HMIS and unsheltered PIT paper forms are usually only available in English. However, the most recent information available suggests that 7% of North Carolinians speak Spanish at home and another 4% speak another language (2009-2013 American Community Survey).

- The data shows people identifying as Black still experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate (with 43% of the sheltered PIT Count and 40% of HMIS clients identifying as Black). Over time because of generational poverty and homelessness, many people identifying as Black have needed to ask for assistance and relied on the human services network to make ends meet whereas people identifying as White, in a system catering to their values and needs, find asking for help or being forced to follow strict shelter rules and guidelines less palatable. The CoC could research data on generational poverty and eligibility for public assistance to further understand how this may play a role in where people of different races access services.

- According to PIT Count data, the NC Balance of State CoC has low raw numbers of youth and Veterans experiencing homelessness. With renewed effort and specific strategies catering to their needs, the CoC could effectively end homelessness for these subpopulations. For both youth and Veterans experiencing homelessness, data indicates that people identifying as Black are disproportionately affected. 48% of youth experiencing sheltered homelessness are Black (versus 20% of the total youth identifying as Black in NC). Unlike in the general homeless population of people identifying as Black, youth identifying as Black access shelter at much lower rates than their adult counterparts and have higher incidences of unsheltered homelessness. This may indicate that shelters do not provide the services that Black youth need. 43% of Veterans experiencing homelessness identify as Black (versus only 18% of Veterans identifying as Black in NC). The CoC should do further research on the historical treatment of Black and other people of color in the armed forces that could help us understand the context and causes of this disproportional data and strategies to combat it.

- People identifying as Black accessed permanent housing resources at a higher rate (52% of RRH and 54% of PSH enrollments) as people identifying as White (41% of RRH and PSH) and lower

percentages of returns to homelessness (5% versus 7% respectively). As program types providing more robust, higher-level services, the following could be inferred:

- o Within the limits of the data, this suggests that the NC BoS CoC housing crisis response system may be counteracting disparities caused by race. Observing trends in coordinated entry data over time could help the CoC better understand how these resources and strategies impact people of color.
- o People identifying as White may have more resources to self-resolve their housing crises before needing higher level services such as RRH, and PSH. Reviewing income resources of people in ES and TH compared to RRH and PSH by race and ethnicity could help validate this hypothesis. All people in the housing crisis response system need services earlier in their crises to have better chances of self-resolving.

- Exit data from HUD's Stella Performance Module shows that people identifying as Multi-Racial, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian have lower exits to permanent destinations and higher exits to temporary destinations than people identifying as Black or White Non-Hispanic. The data shows a similar trend when reviewing ethnic data with people identifying as White Hispanic exiting to permanent destinations at a far lower percentage than people identifying as White Non-Hispanic.

- Stella Performance tool data demonstrates a stark difference in how people perceive their homelessness through self-report and the data HMIS provides on the length of stay in programs. By self-report, all racial and ethnic populations show an average time of homelessness of over one year. Because people experiencing homelessness do not necessarily define their homelessness to meet HUD's homelessness definition, self-reporting probably does not clearly define the length of time that these households experience literal homelessness. This data does highlight at the very least that all populations served by the CoC live with housing insecurity.

- Within the CoC's influence to a greater extent is the time that people experience homelessness while participating in the system's projects. Stella P ES, TH, RRH, and PSH data show that people identifying as Black also experience homelessness longer than people identifying as White (128 days to 99 days). The reason for this month-long disparity is less clear.

  - o It could be the barriers such as justice involvement and background checks that disproportionately impact Black people meaning that housing units are denied to clients identifying as Black more often. Another possible reason is that landlord recruitment is extremely difficult. Community partners report that landlords routinely do not want to rent to people utilizing homeless services (case management, financial assistance over vouchers) can appear to not be discrimination based on race, on the surface. However, since clients using homeless services are disproportionately identifying as Black, the ripple effect could impact the length of stay data disparities. The CoC should identify opportunities to build better relationships with landlords to counter-act prejudice against CoC programs.
  - o The CoC should also dive deeper into the Coordinated Entry length of time data to identify where the bottleneck lies. Is it the time between shelter entry and assessment, assessment

to permanent housing referral, or from permanent housing project entry to move-in date? The results would better direct CoC efforts for provider-level technical assistance. The CoC should also consider that actions taken to improve the length of stay in the group with the highest starting average will likely be able to be replicated to improve the data for everyone after testing.

- The results of exits to permanent housing by race and ethnicity over about 5 years yielded more questions than answers.

  - Why did rates across populations change so much between FY 2020 and FY 2022? After COVID pandemic-specific resources taper off later this year, the CoC might be able to answer this question by comparing positive exit rates between funding sources.
  - While unknown destinations have shrunk significantly over time, temporary destinations have increased. In the most recent full year, FY 2021, people identifying as White had a lower permanent destination rate than people identifying as Black (29% to 36%) but a higher temporary destination rate (54% to 43%). Since the difference between those two types of destinations can often be based on the best guess of the client or case manager, more follow-up is needed. Confidence in the friends or family destinations category is lower than where a person is renting for themselves or enrolled in another program with more guarantees. Analyzing the detail of these exit destinations will help the CoC to better understand how people of different races and ethnicities flow through the system and their relative success at accessing and maintaining housing.

- For most of the populations, FY 2021 saw a dramatic decrease in the rate of returns from FY 2020 permanent exits – even as FY 2020 had the highest rates of exits to permanent housing in the last five years. This should reassure the CoC that in an acute crisis, grit, creativity, and additional resources were able to house more people with greater stability. A tremendous effort, especially when external affordable housing pressures could have resulted in expanding disparities reflecting the pandemic impacts overall.

2021's Racial Equity Assessment data illustrated that the VI-SPDAT and VI-FSPDAT favor people identifying as White over BIPOC, especially when comparing against a different assessment that weighs barriers equally to prioritize households for permanent housing resources. The NC BoS CoC is currently finishing a year of work with HUD TA's Equity Initiative to build a diverse Core Team and plan a new standardized coordinated entry assessment that supports equal access for BIPOC to permanent housing resources.

Section 5: Next Steps

To combat racism and make decisions with a racial equity lens, the CoC uses the Social Ecological Model[10], which explains the multiple relationships and experiences a person or group of people has with race. Together, these relationships develop cultures and norms.
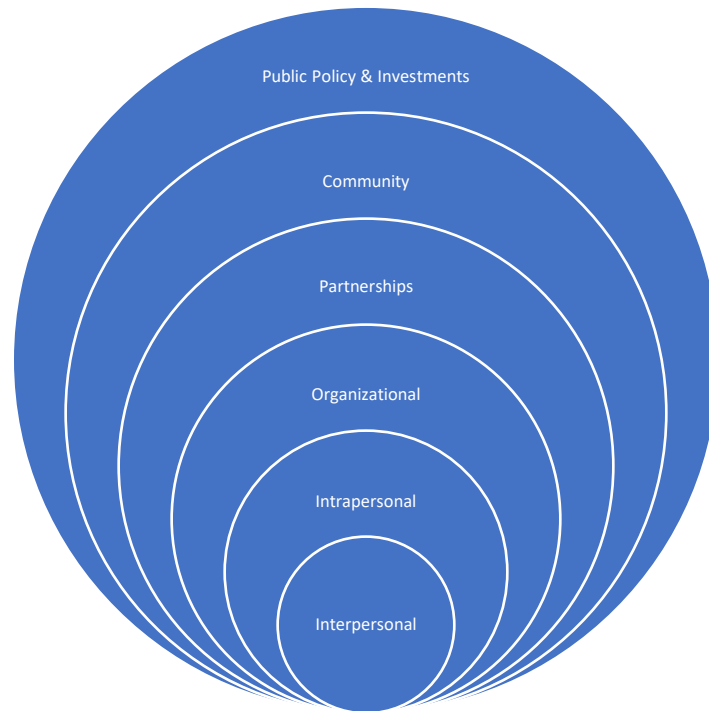
From the individual to the system level, these experiences define how the CoC can approach its work and focus on the challenges and opportunities that have the greatest impact on dismantling racism and guiding a racial equity approach to ending homelessness.

- *Intrapersonal* experiences happen within a single person and include the thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the world.
- *Interpersonal* experiences happen when people interact with each other, such as an interaction between a case manager and a shelter guest.
- *Organizational* experiences incorporate the processes, actions, and activities of a group of people or organizations, such as a local Regional Committee or Coordinated Entry System.

---

[10] 2019 NAEH Conference: Pre-Conference Session – Race and Homelessness: What You Should Know about the Past and Present to Address Racial Inequities in Your System (Regina Cannon, Earl Edwards, Daryl Fraser, Stephanie Odera, Alex Wagman).

- *Partnership* experiences emerge as groups of people form collaborations or partnerships and interact with one another as groups, such as a service provider working closely with a public housing authority.
- *Community* experiences occur through interacting with people and structures within a community, such as a neighborhood or city.
- *Public Policy and Investment* experiences happen as people, groups, or organizations interact with policies that regulate, support, and enforce actions within society. Examples include a provider and its clients interacting with police officers enforcing local ordinances or how federal dollars are distributed in a community.

The NC Balance of State CoC and its stakeholders can and should use their institutional power, access to decision-makers, and knowledge and experience to make decisions at every level with a racial equity lens. By evaluating and analyzing our data, incorporating the voices of people from historically marginalized populations and with lived experience into CoC governance, and taking responsibility for substantive change, we can build a stronger, more just system that works for everyone equitably.

Key areas of action
- *Staff and stakeholder engagement*: What can the CoC do to ensure that we understand the impact of our interactions and intentionally encourage conversation and dialogue that support racial equity? How do we adjust/change policies that reflect historical discrepancies? How do we advocate for legislation and policy to include rather than exclude BIPOC?
- *CoC and agency policies and activities:* How do we design programs, policies, and procedures that drive racial equity? How do we ensure that we include BIPOC and people with lived experience in the decision-making of policies and activities?
- *CoC governance and accountability:* How does the CoC use governance to drive racial equity throughout the CoC and with our partners in the state and nation? How do we incorporate voices of people from historically marginalized populations and with lived experience? How does the CoC empower providers to drive racial equity locally?

Strategies and activities
Collaborative and Inclusive Dialogue and Action: The CoC will engage in intentional, potentially difficult conversations and dialogue, identifying areas of action and engaging people with lived experience and historically marginalized populations to lead and be part of governance, subcommittees, and workgroups.

Activities
- Recruit new members to improve representation on Steering Committee, subcommittees, and workgroups to be part of the decision-making for the CoC.
- Support the Racial Equity Subcommittee and the Lived Expertise Advisory Council (LEAC), drawing on their expertise to guide CoC goals and priorities.
  - Integrate these groups into the CoC review of policy changes and procedure changes.
  - Leverage anti-discrimination policy and written standards to facilitate these discussions.

- o Coordinate joint-action between the Lived Expertise Advisory Council (LEAC) and Racial Equity Subcommittee
- Host dialogue calls on racial equity that engage CoC stakeholders on relevant and associated topics and systems.
- Share training and funding resources with CoC stakeholders to encourage independent action.
- Recruit and foster partnerships led by people of color to increase opportunities for investment in projects serving and led by people of color.

Data Collection and Assessment: The CoC will develop a plan for evaluating additional quantitative data from HMIS, PIT Count, and other systems as well as qualitative data to begin answering additional questions the current assessment does not answer. Data will be used by the Steering Committee, Racial Equity Subcommittee, Coordinated Entry Council, and Funding and Performance Subcommittee to build strategies to improve racial equity.

Activities
- Continue to encourage and support better data quality, allowing more detailed evaluation (such as improving documentation of exit destination, chronic homeless status, NC county of service, and zip code in HMIS).
- Include age, ethnicity, and gender in analysis to better understand how the intersection of these variables affects access to services and positive and negative outcomes.
- Conduct qualitative research to enhance the current assessment to understand the experience of people accessing the system.
  Develop additional questions with support from the Equity Initiative's Core Team and the Lived Expertise Advisory Council that existing data sets such as by-name lists, domestic violence programs, and targeted programs connected to coordinated entry can help answer. Discussions with the Core Team have already brainstormed avenues:
  - o Chronic Homeless rates by race and ethnicity
  - o Regional racial and ethnic disparities
  - o Prevention/Diversion project enrollment by race and ethnicity
- Develop a more equitable Assessment and Prioritization Tool for Coordinated Entry leveraging the breadth of experience in the Core Team group from HUD's 2022 Equity Initiative.
  - o Monitor equitable outcomes, especially Length of Stay / Length of Time Homeless
- Report on Length of Time, Returns, and Exits to Permanent Housing for the Coordinated Entry System, by race and ethnicity
- Study the demographics of agency staff providing services and compare to the people being served.
- Review the Racial Equity Scorecard for effectiveness in funding competitions.

Training and Support: The CoC will engage professional staff to provide training and support to set a baseline understanding of racial disparities and equity for stakeholders. The CoC will incorporate learning opportunities for people with lived experience, agency staff, partners and collaborators, and CoC leadership throughout the year.

Activities
- Deepen the racial equity questions and checks in funding process scorecards and program monitoring and oversight.
- Share resources on racial equity with CoC stakeholders and offer time to stakeholders for dialogue and questions, especially around analyzing their agency's data.
- Direct providers to expert training sources for support developing more racially equitable practices within agencies and community systems like Coordinated Entry.