



SACRAMENTO  
**LOAVES & FISHES**  
Homeless Survival Services Since 1983

## Health & Economic Impacts on Vulnerable Adults Surviving without Shelter

### Radical Hospitality

We have been providing homeless survival services since 1983 and have endured challenges in the past, but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic is insurmountable. As our most vulnerable populations are still without shelter or public health support, we remain dedicated to providing critical, no-barrier services that address the urgent needs of adults and children experiencing homelessness in our Sacramento community.

The National Coalition for the Homeless reports that the life expectancy of those experiencing chronic homelessness is almost 20 years lower than housed populations. The Center for Disease Control states that people experiencing homelessness are at greater risk of infectious and chronic illness, poor mental health and substance abuse. This dual crisis of housing and health has been dramatically exacerbated by COVID-19.

With an army of volunteers and service provider allies we offer hope and love to nourish not only the physical needs of those who come to Loaves & Fishes, but also their human spiritual need for respect and friendship. We annually serve over 130,000 meals, distribute nearly 200,000 items for daily survival, and maintain programs that strengthen the connection between our 13,000+ guests and the community.

### Our Guests

- **Continue to be older**  
Average 50 years of age
- **One-third are women**  
Rely on Maryhouse for safe space
- **Greater health risks**  
Half diagnosed with mental illness  
40% diagnosed w/ chronic disease  
Half have physical disability  
35% self-ID as substance abusers
- **More minorities**  
16% Latinx, up 45% since 2015  
One-third African American
- **More U.S. veterans**  
45% increase since 2015
- **Lack documentation**  
36% lost State Picture ID  
24% lack a mailing address  
29% report no income

### Source of Data

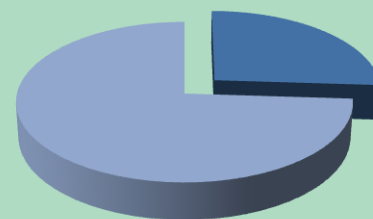
Volunteers conducted a survey of 236 Loaves & Fishes guests the end of October 2020 under the direction of Joseph Smith, Advocacy Director, and Ryan Finnigan, Assoc. Professor of Sociology, University of California, Davis. Findings were compared with Sacramento's 2019 point-in-time survey of homelessness and a 2015 Loaves & Fishes survey that Dr. Finnigan expanded to address housing navigation services and the impact of COVID-19. He completed his analysis in January 2021 for publication.



## “HOUSING IS HEALTH”

National League  
of Cities

### Length without Shelter



■ **New - under 1yr**  
■ **Chronic - over 1yr**

### UCD Findings of COVID-19 Impact

- **Proactive Testing**  
61% of guests reported receiving test for COVID-19.
- **Limited Exposure**  
27% reported avoiding group shelters, isolation likely crucial.
- **Few economically impacted**  
Guests had little to lose in the first place.
- **Pandemic compounds marginalization**  
High rate of disabilities calls for long-term support.



# SACRAMENTO LOAVES & FISHES



## Surviving Unhoused

3 out of 4 of our Guests were homeless all year  
31% had a tent or DIY tarp shelter  
29% survived without any outdoor covering  
Sleeping in cars increased over 300% in 5 years  
23.9% sleep in shelters or motels, or couch-surf  
47.7% experienced police harassment  
41.1% had key possessions confiscated by police  
4 out of 5 have live in Sacramento for over 5 years

What kind of resources do you think would be most effective for ending homelessness? Our Loaves & Fishes guests said:

- ❖ Affordable housing (63%)
- ❖ Job to pay rent (20%)
- ❖ Left alone (1%)

## Access to Housing

- 32.5% on a housing waitlist
- 16.5 month average on waitlists  
Maximum wait reported was 170 months
- 28.5% have a housing navigator
- 35.9% have SSI or SSA income



## Personal Experiences of Some our Guests

19.9% grew up in foster care  
25.8 experienced homelessness as a child  
31.1% were abused in the home as a child  
54.6% had never married, and another 25.3% were divorced or separated  
57% had been previously incarcerated  
57.6% experienced sudden death in the family

## Experience at Loaves & Fishes

99% have used the Wash House showers in the past month  
96% feel safe and are treated with respect in Friendship Park  
96% rely on the warm lunch, and 87% on the hosted breakfast  
95% report we are meeting their daily survival needs  
90% of the women rely on Maryhouse services  
34% utilize the library reading room & resources  
27% were assisted by the Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic  
16% receive mental health services at Genesis

Thinking back to the day you first came to Loaves & Fishes, is your current situation better, the same, or worse as it was then?

BETTER 52%

SAME 35.5%

WORSE 12.6%



## Guest Survival Needs

- › Sleeping bags, blankets, and tarps
- › Flashlights and batteries
- › Underwear and socks (new, all sizes)
- › Backpacks and reusable water bottles
- › Toilet paper, lip balm, & hand sanitizer
- › Coffee and healthy snack bars
- › Bus passes and food gift cards
- › Dog and cat food (canned & large dry)



Our vital work is only made possible by the support from everyday individuals and community donations