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## Nearly 2-in-3 people seeking homelessness help are women

In the lead-up to International Women’s Day, the peak body for homelessness in Victoria has released data showing that 62% of Victorians needing homeless help are female, and that the number of women experiencing homelessness is growing at a faster rate than for men.

The Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) conducted this analysis of Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data shattering community perceptions about homelessness.

“Contrary to the stereotype of the older male rough sleeper, the person mostly likely to seek help from a homeless service is a woman aged 25-34 years,” said Jenny Smith, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons.

“Women’s homelessness can be easier to ignore, because they’re less likely to be sleeping on the street, but the effects of homelessness are damaging and lasting, no matter what form it takes.”

“Women are more likely to be at risk of homelessness because of inherent financial disadvantage, a lack of housing that women on low incomes can afford, and the increasing reporting of family violence, which continues to be a major driver of homelessness,”

A mother on single parenting payments looking for a two-bedroom rental in Melbourne, has just 2-in-100 properties which she could afford (DHS, Rent Report, 2016).

### Number of women seeking assistance from Victorian homelessness services

	Females seeking help from homelessness services	Males seeking help from homelessness services	Total number seeking help from homelessness services
<b>2012-13</b>	55,805	36,657	92,462
<b>2013-14</b>	60,454	39,438	99,892
<b>2014-15</b>	63,081	39,712	102,793
<b>2015-16</b>	65,049	40,238	105,287
<b>Rate of growth (2012-13 vs 2015-16)</b>	14%	10%	12%

Source: Specialist Homelessness Services data (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare)

CHP says that the enormous demand on homelessness services combined with limited places to house clients means that agencies have to turn away too many people in need. Last year, twice as many women were turned away from homelessness services every day, when compared to men.

### No. of people turned away from Victorian homelessness services each day (AIHW, 2015-16)

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Number of Victorian clients turned away each day</b>	18.6	40.0	58.6

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