



Council
to Homeless
Persons



Make every person count

Recording Unassisted Persons

Specialist Homelessness Services Collection

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and pay respect to Elders past and present.

We will cover

- Measuring unmet demand for services
- Collecting data matters
- Make every person count

Measuring unmet demand for services

Understanding demand

Types of demand

Met demand

Unmet demand



Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC)

- Managed by **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare**
- Collects information about **all people who are referred to or seek assistance from SHS agencies**
- Publishes data online



The screenshot shows the AIHW website interface. At the top, there is a green header with the Australian Government logo, the text 'Australian Government Australian Institute of Health and Welfare', and the AIHW logo. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. Below the header is a dark navigation bar with menu items: 'Reports & data', 'About our data', 'Our services', 'Newsroom', and 'About us'. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > About our data > Our data collections'. The page title is 'Specialist Homelessness Services collection'. A left-hand navigation menu lists various sub-topics under 'Our data collections', with 'Specialist Homelessness Services collection' selected. The main text explains that the SHSC collects information about people referred to or seeking assistance from SHS agencies. It notes that there are two parts to the SHSC: a Client collection and an Unassisted Persons collection. A numbered list describes these two parts. Below the text, there is a section for 'Collection details' and a list of 'Variables to support reporting and linkage', including Age (Date of birth), Sex/gender, Indigenous status, and RA.

Source: [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare - Specialist Homelessness Services collection](#)

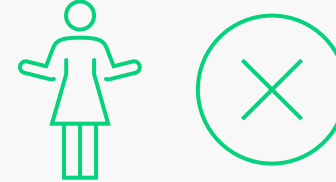
Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC)

- Two parts:
 - **Client Collection**
 - **Unassisted Persons Collection**
- **Collection Manual** outlines data collection requirements
- Download from aihw.gov.au



Source: [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare - Specialist Homelessness Services collection](https://aihw.gov.au)

Two parts



Client Collection

Collects data about who receives a service

Unassisted Person Collection

Collects data about whose request for a service **is not able to be met** by an SHS agency

Unassisted Person Collection = Unmet Demand

Collecting data matters



1,800

specialist homelessness
services (SHS) agencies
were supporting around

77,500 clients



11,900

of these clients
were young people
presenting alone^(a)

&



20,800

were children in
families that were
being supported



290 clients
received support for
the first time ever
from a SHS agency^(b)



10,200

clients spent the night
sleeping in crisis
accommodation^(c)



16,100

clients report having
slept rough in the
last month^(d)



350

requests for assistance
were unable to be met



agencies closed
540 cases^(e)
with **64%** achieving
stable housing outcomes^(f)

(a) Children and young people receiving support alone are aged 12–24. Children in families are aged 0–17. In this infographic, these groups are mutually exclusive.

(b) Clients who had not previously received SHS support since the collection began in 2011–12.

(c) Crisis accommodation refers to short-term or emergency accommodation, and may include hotels, motels and caravan parks.

Source: AIHW 2025. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/shs-annualreport>

(d) Clients who said they were 'Sleeping rough or in non-conventional accommodation' in the last month (previously homeless).

(e) Clients who had a valid 'homelessness last reported' status.

(f) Only includes cases where housing status at the end of support was known.

Rising demand + no resources = homelessness system in crisis

In one year:

People **missing out**
on homeless help
increased 18%



People **homeless**
before seeking help
increased 6%



People **sleeping rough**
before seeking help
increased 12%



More help to
PREVENT
homelessness

“Every day,
Specialist
Homelessness
Services receive
**353 requests for
help they cannot
meet.**”

Source: Homelessness
Australia

Daily homelessness in Australia statistics

290

received support for the **first time ever** from a SHS agency



10,200

spent the night sleeping in **crisis accommodation**



16,100

report having **slept rough in the last month**



350

requests for assistance were unable to be met



540

cases closed by SHS agencies



64%

achieved stable housing outcomes



Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2025

“350 Australians a day:
What happens to those on the
edge of a housing crisis”

Source: [SBS news](#)

A total of 540 cases are closed each day by specialist homelessness services (SHS), with 64 per cent leading to stable housing outcomes, according to the 2024-2025 SHS annual report. Source: SBS News



Specialist homelessness services: On any given day across Victoria



2025

660 
specialist homelessness
services (SHS) agencies
were supporting around
24,300 clients

3,100  & **6,600** 
of these clients
were young people
presenting alone^(a)
were children in
families that were
being supported


100 clients
received support for
the first time ever
from a SHS agency^(b)


1,900
clients spent the night
sleeping in crisis
accommodation^(c)


3,300
clients report having
slept rough in the
last month^(d)


91
requests for assistance
were unable to be met


agencies closed
205 cases^(e)
with **70%** achieving
stable housing outcomes^(f)

(a) Children and young people receiving support alone are aged 12–24. Children in families are aged 0–17. In this infographic, these groups are mutually exclusive.

(b) Clients who had not previously received SHS support since the collection began in 2011–12.

(c) Crisis accommodation refers to short-term or emergency accommodation, and may include hotels, motels and caravan parks.

(d) Clients who said they were 'Sleeping rough or in non-conventional accommodation' in the last month (previously homeless).

(e) Clients who had a valid 'homelessness last reported' status.

(f) Only includes cases where housing status at the end of support was known.

Victoria has the most missing information

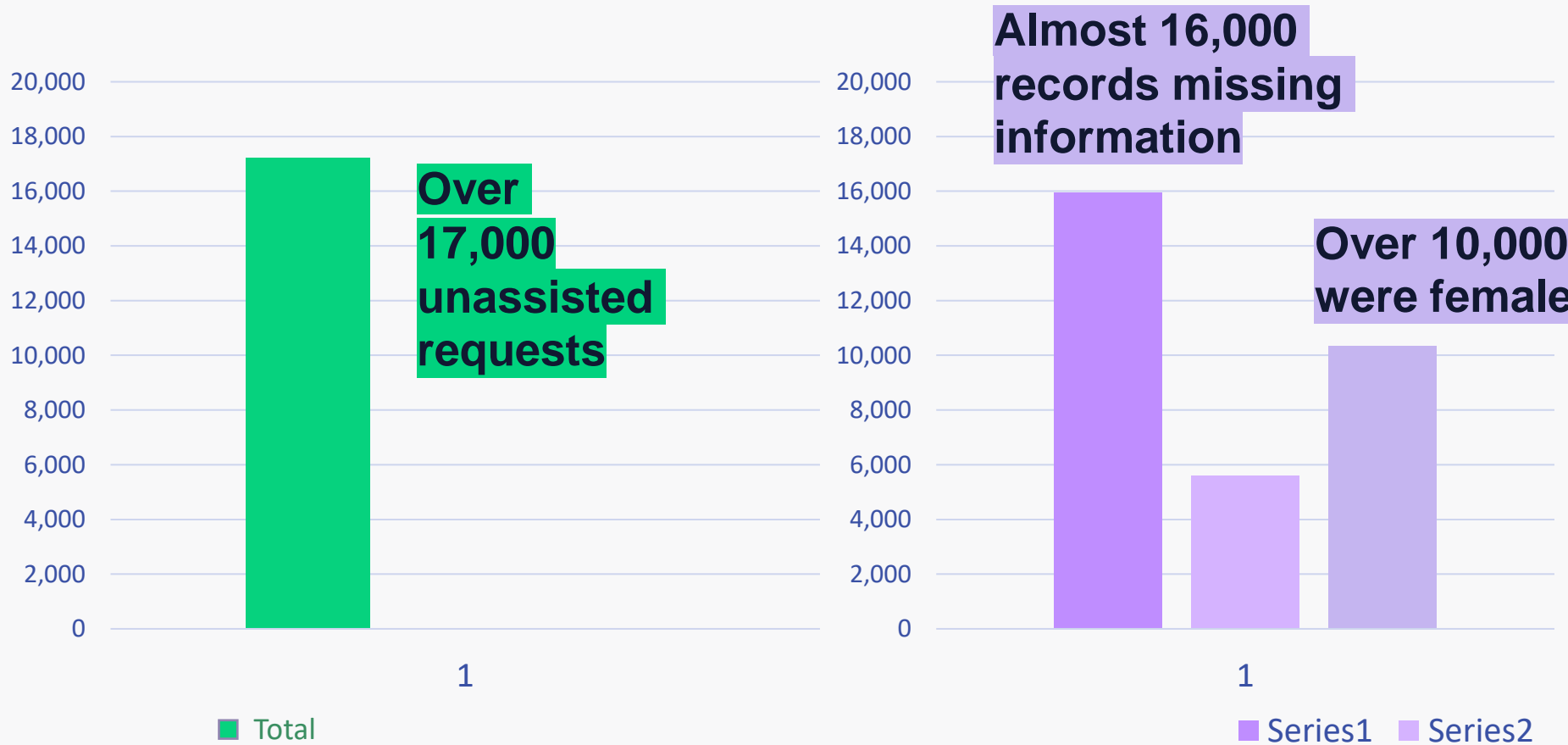


Figure: 2024-2025 Unassisted Requests Victoria

Making every person count

Collection data

With the data we can understand on any given day:

- How many **clients were supported**
- How many **requests for assistance** were unable to be met

The data is reported to measure:

- **client outcomes**
- **the level of unmet demand for SHS services**

Client Collection



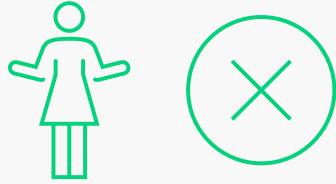
Captures information on adults and children who **receive a service** from a SHS agency.

Data collected:

- Client demographics
- Provided services
- Client circumstances

To measure and assess client outcomes.

Unassisted Person Collection



Gains information about adults and children whose **request for service is not able to be met** by a SHS agency

Existing clients are not to be included in this collection.

Data collected is **minimal**:

- Basic person demographics
- Requested services
- Reason services not provided

To **measure the level of unmet demand** for SHS agencies.

Summary



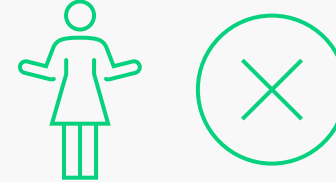
Client Collection

- service **was** provided
- Data collected - **demographics, services** and **circumstances**
- measures **client outcomes**

Unassisted Persons Collection

- service **was not** provided
- **Basic** data collected
- measures level of **unmet demand**

Definitions



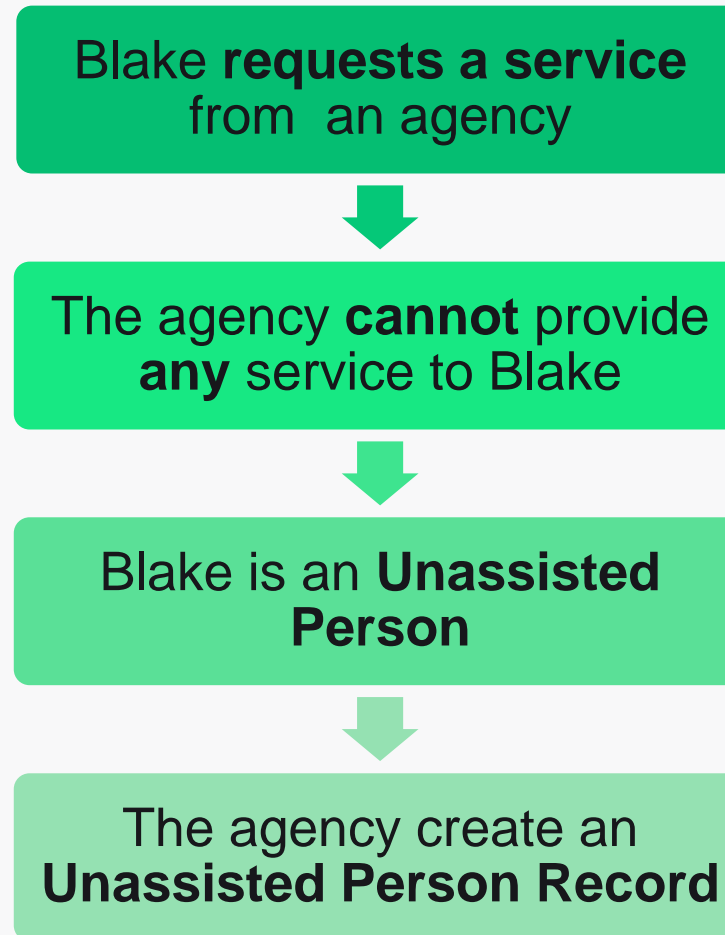
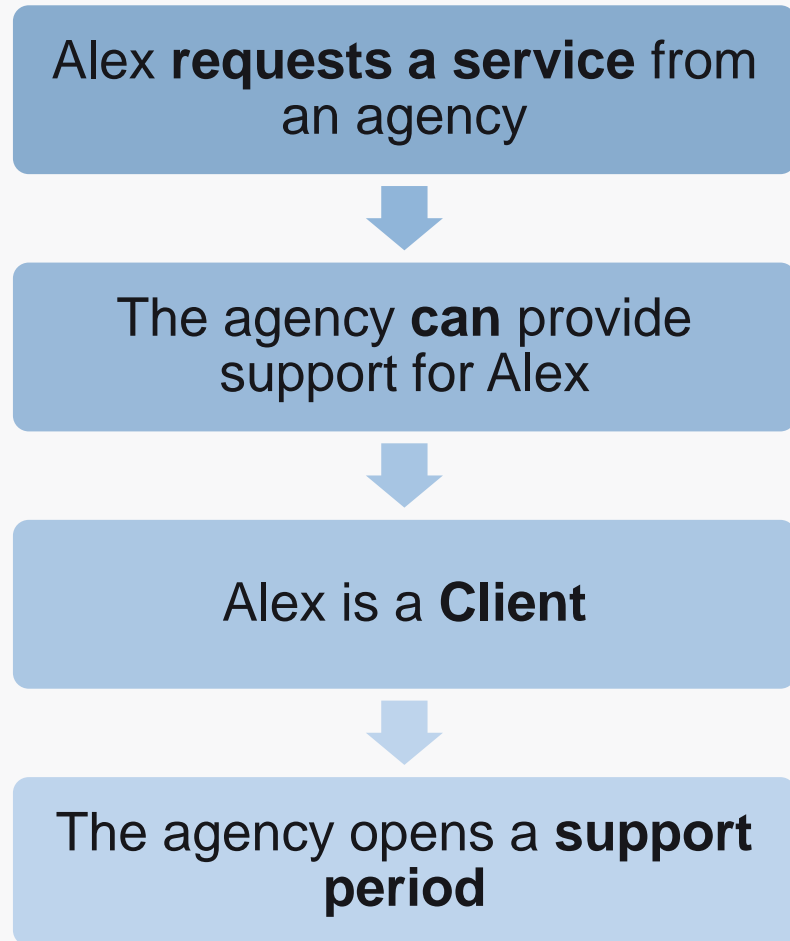
Client

A **Client** is any person **who receives a service** from a SHS agency.

Unassisted Person

An **Unassisted Person** is any person **who seeks services** from a SHS agency and **does not receive any service**.

Client or Unassisted Person



A person **must first** engage with the agency and **request a service**

Reasons someone is an Unassisted Person

- Person did not accept service
- Person wanted different services
- Agency was in the wrong area
- Agency had no accommodation available
- Agency had no other services available
- Agency had insufficient staff
- Agency was inappropriate/wrong target group
- Agency's facilities were not appropriate for a person with special needs
- Person was refused service/person did not meet criteria
- No fee-free services available at the time of request
- Other

When creating an Unassisted Person record, you **must** include a **reason why a service was not provided.**

Unassisted Person Summary

Someone who requests assistance from an agency but does not receive any service, for whatever reason.



1. Person **requests** a service
2. Person does **not** receive **any** service
3. Unassisted person record to be created

A person cannot be recorded as an unassisted person if:

- They receive at least one direct service from an agency
- If the agency is planning to, or are in the process of, providing case management to the person

It's not about "who showed up" It's about **“who asked and got nothing”**

Unassisted Persons Collection:

- provide information about whose request could not be met
- measures the level of **unmet demand**
- **minimal information** is needed
- there **must be a request** for service
- existing clients are not included in this collection

Make every person count

To complete an Unassisted Person Record
you must fill in these 3 fields:

- 1. Year** Date of birth - estimate is fine e.g. 1970, 1980...
- 2. Sex** Male, Female or other
- 3. Reason** Select from list

(*Name: can be blank)



Every Unassisted Person Record is a voice you can advocate for

The Unassisted Persons Collection measures unmet demand but last year almost 16,000 people were excluded due to incomplete fields.

Make every person count

To complete an Unassisted Person Record you must fill in these 3 fields:

1. **Year:** estimate is fine e.g. 1990, 1980...
2. **Sex:** Male, Female or other
3. **Reason:** select from list

(* **Name:** can be blank)

Need more help?

Specialist Homelessness
Collection (SHSC) Manual
pages 88-95

AIHW Collection
Support Hotline
1800 627 191



chp.org.au



**Council
to Homeless
Persons**

Thank you.

Contact
training@chp.org.au

Council to Homeless Persons

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