

# Toward Equity: Latine Experiences of Homelessness

Findings from the California Statewide Study  
of People Experiencing Homelessness

Benioff Homelessness  
and Housing Initiative

UCSF

University of California  
San Francisco

## Introduction

Over the past ten years, the number of Latine<sup>1</sup> individuals and families experiencing homelessness has risen sharply in the United States.<sup>2,3</sup> The trend in California is similar. To place homelessness in Latine communities in context, it is important to understand the history of systemic anti-Latine discrimination in the United States.

**Structural anti-Latine racism paired with the chronic shortage of affordable housing in California make Latine Californians vulnerable to homelessness.**

The term Latine refers to a diverse group of people who trace their origins to one of 20 Spanish-speaking countries across Central and South America.<sup>4</sup> Some Latine families trace their ancestral roots to the first Spanish settlements in present-day California, almost a century before the formation of the first English colony.<sup>5</sup> Many others have just arrived. According to the 2020 US Census, 67% of Latine Americans were born in the United States.<sup>6</sup> The majority of Latine immigration to the United States occurred after World War II; 90% of Latine Americans living in the United States trace their roots to Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador.<sup>7</sup> People of Mexican ancestry are the largest Latine group in the United States; the majority of those with Mexican American heritage live in the West and Southwest (primarily California, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas). In California, people with Mexican heritage make up the majority of the Latine population.<sup>8</sup> Other large Latine

communities in the United States include Puerto Rican and Dominican communities in New York City and Cuban communities in Florida and the greater New York City area.<sup>9</sup> Different nationalities of origin, levels of English-proficiency, immigration patterns, legal status, and number of generations in the United States shape Latine Americans' diverse experiences.



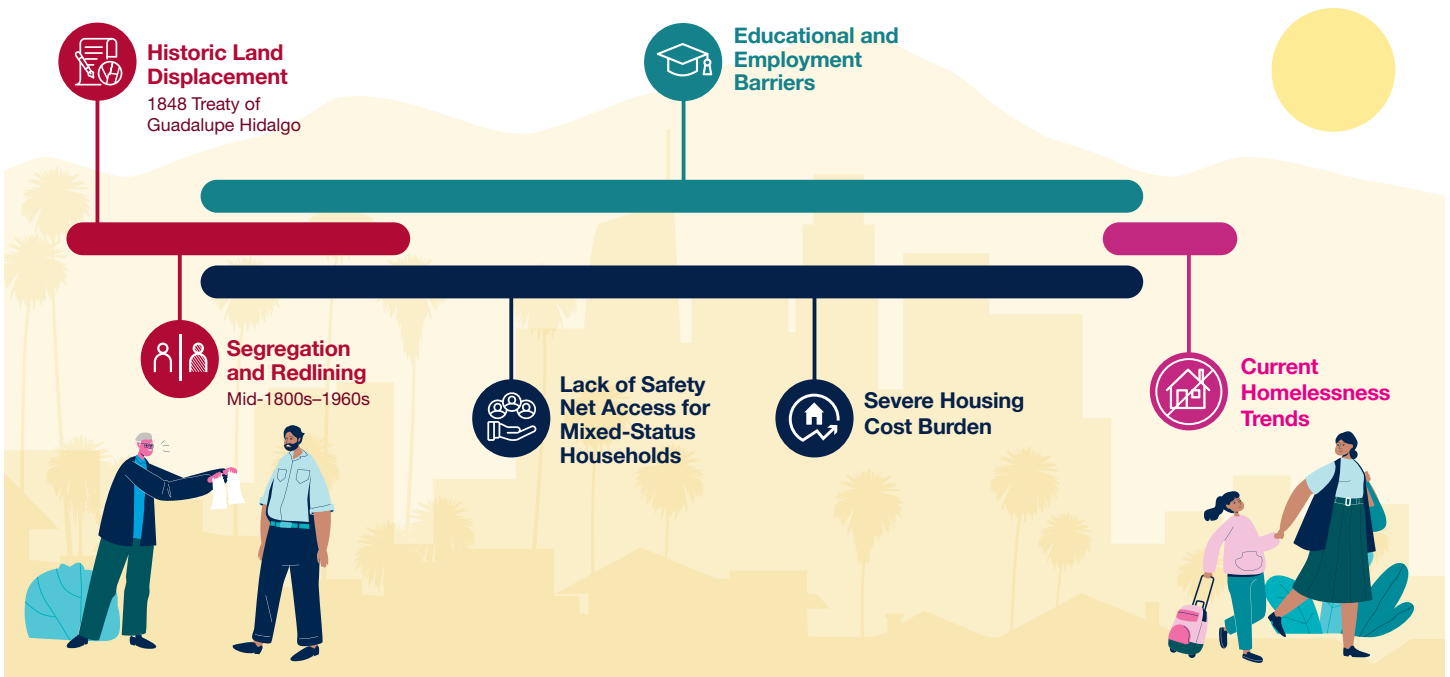
Latine Americans have faced structural racism and anti-Latine discrimination in policies, practices, and social norms designed to keep them in segregated spaces with limited access to public resources or opportunities available to white Americans.<sup>10,11</sup>

The first instances of homelessness in Latine communities came as the result of the annexation of the Southwestern part of the country (then belonging to Mexico) to the United States after the Mexican American War in the 19th century. As part of the resulting Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Mexican government signed over 500,000 square acres of land to the United States. This resulted in thousands of

Mexicans being displaced from their land and source of livelihood.<sup>12</sup> Although Mexicans who had been living there prior to the war were granted American

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## Structural Drivers of Homelessness in Latine Communities



Systemic discrimination, combined with the chronic shortage of affordable housing, places Latine Californians at risk of homelessness—even without personal vulnerabilities like mental health or substance use problems.

citizenship as part of the treaty, they faced anti-Latine discrimination in economic and social life.<sup>13</sup>

From the mid-1800s through the 1960s, Latine American communities across the United States were subject to state-sanctioned violence (e.g., lynchings, mob violence, and deportations) and segregation in economic and social life fueled by widespread fears and stereotypes that shape immigration policy today.<sup>14,15,16</sup> Then and now, the frame of anti-immigrant, anti-Latine sentiment has been shaped by antiblackness.<sup>17</sup> Black and Latine communities in the United States are subject to the same underlying logics of racialization -- systemic othering in social, political, and economic life built upon a belief that Black and Latine communities are biologically inferior with the potential to contaminate white American institutions and morals.<sup>18</sup> These underlying racial logics are articulated through different frames for Black and Latine communities, but with similar material

consequences. Like Black Americans, Latine communities were subject to Jim Crow segregation laws specifically targeting “Spanish” and “Hispanic” individuals. Under these laws, Latine communities were forced to live, work, and conduct social life in subpar institutions and public spaces, and were denied access to “white only” places. Like Black Americans, Latine Americans were subject to redlining practices, denied mortgages and pushed into the substandard and crowded housing in under-resourced neighborhoods.<sup>19</sup> Latine Americans were segregated into low-resource public schools, denying educational opportunities; they faced barriers to higher education.<sup>20</sup>

The effects of systemic discrimination and segregation of the Latine community are felt today. Many Latine Californians experience economic precarity, structural vulnerabilities, discrimination, and the absence of social safety net support which increases the

likelihood of homelessness. New immigrants face additional challenges to economic and housing stability. Latine households are more likely than non-Latine households to live in poverty.<sup>21</sup> They are more likely to work in low wage jobs,<sup>22</sup> reporting lower hourly and annual wages of any racial group.<sup>23</sup>

Many in California face severe housing cost burden—defined as paying more than 50% of their household’s income on rent. A higher proportion of Latine Californians face severe housing cost burden than other Californians.<sup>24</sup> Latine communities have long faced institutional and interpersonal discrimination in the education system, the carceral system, employment, and housing. Due to harsh disciplinary policies in schools serving primarily Black and Latine students, Latine youth are more likely than their white peers to face suspensions, expulsions, and forced transfer from schools into carceral institutions.<sup>25</sup>

Undocumented immigrants and monolingual Spanish speakers face additional vulnerabilities, with language barriers and lack of citizenship documents creating additional barriers to jobs, education, healthcare, and housing. Undocumented immigrants do not qualify for many federal programs and services.<sup>26,27</sup> Since 2024, Medi-Cal (California’s Medicaid program) has been available to all Californians regardless of immigration status; prior to the recent phased expansion, undocumented Californians were ineligible for Medi-Cal (other than limited emergency access in select circumstances).<sup>28</sup>

Barriers to federal funding create additional barriers to resolving episodes of homelessness.<sup>29</sup> Thirty percent of Latine Californians live in mixed-status housing, meaning families where U.S. citizens or permanent residents live with undocumented immigrants.<sup>30</sup> Both documented and undocumented members of mixed-status households report avoiding public services that they qualify for under public charge laws for fear of deportation or jeopardizing family members’ citizenship status.<sup>31,32</sup> When a member of a mixed-status family is deported, it reduces median household income by 47%, driving households further into poverty.<sup>33</sup>

Taken together, Latine communities face structural

vulnerabilities within a context of racism and xenophobia and racialized poverty, the dehumanization and dispensability of Latine populations across generations, and policies that underscore these practices. Many live with precarious citizenship status and find that their social safety nets are taxed and extremely low-income.

In this report, we review data from the California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness (CASPEH) to understand the Latine community’s experiences of homelessness in California.

**These structural inequalities, paired with the chronic shortage of affordable housing in California today, make Latine Californians vulnerable to homelessness—even absent individual vulnerabilities such as having mental health or substance use problems.**

## Key Findings

### Who in the Latine community experiences homelessness?

**35% of all California adults experiencing homelessness identified as Latine; 26% as their sole identity and 9% as one of their identities.**

Fourteen percent of Latine participants elected to take the survey in Spanish, suggesting that this was their preferred language.

**Latine homeless adults are younger than homeless adults from other racial groups; those born outside the US are more likely to be adults in homeless families.**

The median age of Latine Californian adults experiencing homelessness is 42 (range 18-87), lower than members of other racial groups. Sixty-two percent were between the ages of 25-49.

Thirty-three percent of Latine Californians shared that they had minor children who were not currently staying with them (36% of those born in the United States and 26% of those not born in the United States). Among

Latine adults who had minor children not currently staying with them, 24% reported being separated from their minor children due to their homelessness.

**Twelve percent of Latine adults experiencing homelessness were adults in homeless families, but this varied by nativity.** Ten percent of Latine adults born in the US and 19% of those born outside were adults in homeless families.

**Roughly one quarter (24%) of Latine adults were born outside the United States, a higher proportion than other racial groups.**

Like other homeless Californians, 93% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness lost their last stable housing in California and 78% are living in the same county as they were when they last lost their housing. Almost half (48%) of Latine Californians were in their first episode of homelessness. Among those who took the survey in Spanish, 71% were in their first episode.

### Pathways to homelessness for Latine Californians:

**Immediately prior to homelessness, 52% of Latine adults experiencing homelessness lived in housing for which they did not have legal rights (“non-leaseholder” housing); 29% lived in housing for which they held a lease or owned; and 19% came directly from an institutional setting, primarily long-term jail or prison stays.**

Latine adults born outside the United States were more likely to have lived in a non-leaseholder setting than those born within the U.S. (70% versus 46%).

**In the six months prior to homelessness, the median monthly household income amongst Latine Californians was \$1000.** Among non-leaseholder Latine Californians, the median monthly household income was \$950; they reported a median housing cost of \$200. Among leaseholders, the median income of Latine Californians was \$2,000; they reported median housing costs of \$600

**Among Latine adults experiencing homelessness, the median warning prior to losing housing was 2 days (1 day for non-leaseholders; 3 for leaseholders).** One third, or 31% of Latine Californians reached out for help prior to losing their housing, most

commonly from family or friends or non-profit and religious institutions.

**Eighty-two percent of Latine adults thought that a one-time subsidy of \$5,000 to \$10,000 would have prevented their homelessness;** 73% believed that a monthly shallow subsidy of \$300-\$500 would have. Ninety percent thought that a housing voucher that limits their rent to 30% of their income (such as a Housing Choice Voucher) would have prevented their homelessness.

### Experiences of Homelessness for Latine Californians

**Seventy-nine percent of Latine respondents spent most of their nights in unsheltered locations; either outdoors (54%) or in vehicles (26%).** Nearly half (47%) of Latine Californians reported that there was a time that they had wanted shelter but been unable to access it. Twenty-one percent reported that they slept most often in a sheltered setting, including short stays with families or friends. Latine Californians described brief stays with family or friends (i.e. “couch-surfing”) interspersed with other forms of homelessness.

**Among Latine Californians, the median length of this episode of homelessness was 22 months.**

**Nearly half (48%) of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness rated their health as fair or poor.** Almost one third (32%) of Latine Californians reported having a difficulty with one of the five main activities of daily living (ADLs) bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, or eating. Fifteen percent of Latine Californians reported having difficulty with three or more ADLs.

**Over a quarter (27%) of Latine people capable of pregnancy between the ages of 18 and 44 reported experiencing a pregnancy during their episode of homelessness.**

**Almost two thirds (63%) of Latine respondents reported that they had experienced mental health symptoms in the prior month.** Similar to those of non-Latine Californians, the most common mental health symptoms were depression and anxiety symptoms. Similar to other racial groups, 35% reported regular illicit drug use of either

methamphetamine, non-prescribed opioids, or cocaine three times a week or more. Among Latine Californians experiencing homelessness, 33% reported using methamphetamine regularly; 11% reported regular use of non-prescribed opioids and 1% reported regular use of cocaine. Over one in ten (11%) reported heavy drinking weekly or more often.

**More than one third (37%) of Latine Californians reported experiencing physical or sexual violence during this episode of homelessness:**

37% experienced physical violence and 13% experienced sexual violence. Latine cisgender women were more likely to report experiences of sexual violence (22%) compared to Latine cisgender males (9%).

**In the prior six months, 35% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness had their belongings taken at least once by the police or other government workers in a forced displacement.**<sup>34</sup>

Almost half (45%) of Latine Californians reported being roughed up by the police during this episode of homelessness, similar to other racial groups.

**Almost two thirds (62%) of Latine Californians mentioned not receiving help from a case manager or housing navigator as a major barrier to regaining housing.**

Several barriers to housing were more commonly cited by Latine Californians than white Californians, including lacking documents and facing discrimination. Sixty percent of Latine Californians cited lacking documents (e.g., proof of identification or income) as a major barrier, slightly higher than Black non-Latine Californians (48%), non-white non-Latine Californians (47%), and white non-Latine Californians (50%).

Eighty-one percent of Latine respondents reported that they experienced any discrimination in their daily lives: 30% said it was due to ancestry or national origin and 28% said it was due to the color of their skin.

**Forty-six percent of Latine respondents indicated that discrimination they faced while attempting to regain housing was a major barrier to regaining housing,**

compared to 50% of Black Californians but only 31% of white non-Latine Californians.

**Latine Californians born outside the United States had several differences from those born in the United States.**

They were more likely to be an adult in a homeless family, be in their first episode of homelessness, and have entered homelessness from a non-leaseholder housing status. Those born outside of the United States were less likely to report having health insurance, were less likely to report mental health symptoms, and were less likely to have experienced a jail stay during this episode of homelessness. They were less likely to have received assistance from a case manager or housing navigator.

## Recommendations

- The Latine population experiencing homelessness is younger than the general population experiencing homelessness, with a higher proportion between the ages of 25-49. This population may benefit from housing assistance coupled with workforce development, legal assistance, and anti-discrimination efforts.
- A high proportion of Latine Californians were adults living in homeless families or reported being separated from minor children. In addition to a focus on housing and services for homeless families and supports and services for children, there needs to be a focus on efforts that promote family reunification.
- Nearly half (48%) of Latine Californians reported being in their first episode of homelessness. There should be an expansion of homeless prevention efforts focused on the Latine population including eviction prevention and evidence-based culturally tailored homelessness prevention services. Due to the short window between notification and eviction in Latine populations, eviction prevention efforts should be proactive, providing Latine communities with information about their housing rights, legal services and financial support. Policymakers should consider requiring connections to programs (including eviction prevention funds) as a mandatory part of eviction proceedings. As a high proportion of Latine adults enter homelessness from non-leaseholder housing situations, non-leaseholders should be eligible for homelessness prevention services.

■ Roughly one third (31%) of Latine Californians reached out for help prior to housing; the majority who did so reached out to family or friends (63%) or religious institutions (52%). Programs should partner with community-based organizations that can identify people who would benefit from prevention resources. Programs and policymakers should create flexible prevention funds that can be used to create monthly stipends to support households that take in additional community members who are at risk of homelessness. These can be modeled after kinship placement programs used for child welfare placements.

■ Seventy-nine percent of Latine respondents spent most of their nights in unsheltered locations; either outdoors (54%) or in vehicles (26%). Continuum of Care leadership should look at using state-level flexibility created through 1115 waivers and other mechanisms to integrate Medicaid models of behavioral health support, particularly peer navigation and other peer support services, which can provide more support than traditionally funded outreach. These should provide services that are linguistically and culturally appropriate for Latine populations.

■ A high proportion of Latine Californians reported unmet physical or behavioral health needs. There is a need for culturally tailored programs to meet these needs. These should be available at all points of a person's housing journey (i.e., while housed, during either sheltered or unsheltered homelessness, or after regaining housing).

■ Nearly half (48%) of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness rated their health as either fair or poor and roughly one-third (32%) reported difficulty with one activity of daily living (ADL). Over a third (41%) of Latine Californians born outside of the United States were uninsured, in part reflecting the lack of eligibility at the time of the study. As undocumented Californians are currently eligible, homeless providers who work with the Latine population should assist clients to enroll in Medi-Cal. Enrollment provides access to healthcare, support for health related social needs through CalAIM, and long term services and supports, including help with ADLs. Given the volatility of the policy landscape surrounding Medicaid and documentation status service providers should also partner with local street

medicine programs to help people access care regardless of Medi-Cal enrollment.



■ Over a quarter (27%) of Latine people capable of pregnancy between the ages of 18 and 44 reported experiencing a pregnancy during their current episode of homelessness. Programs serving this population should be integrated with pregnancy supports. Continuum of Care (CoC) and program leaders should ensure that staff at any shelters, drop-in programs, or transitional housing programs support Latine people to connect to full spectrum reproductive health services. Medi-Cal now covers doula care and can support access to other forms of culturally specific care. Street medicine teams and mobile clinics should integrate care for pregnant people.

■ More than one third (37%) of Latine Californians experienced physical or sexual violence during their current episode of homelessness. CoC leaders and local homelessness system leadership should work to integrate violence screening and support into homelessness service settings. CoC leadership should create culturally connected violence intervention supports, including ensuring that these supports are offered in Spanish.

■ Almost two thirds (63%) of Latine respondents reported that they had experienced mental health symptoms in the prior month. Thirty-three percent reported using methamphetamine regularly; 11% reported regular use of non-prescribed opioids and 1% reported regular use of cocaine. Policymakers and program leaders should design and fund programs to respond to the high prevalence of anxiety and depression and invest in low-barrier, evidence-based substance use treatment programs, with a focus on treatment for methamphetamine use and polysubstance use of methamphetamine and opioids.

■ Behavioral health programs serving Latine Californians and other historically marginalized communities should be culturally and linguistically responsive. Services should be available in Spanish, incorporate culturally specific models of care, and, where appropriate, include peer support. Community members should be directly involved in both the design and implementation of programs to ensure they reflect the lived experiences and needs of the populations they serve.

■ IN CALIFORNIA: Medi-Cal is currently available to cover traditional healthcare practices. State and local leadership responsible for the implementation of Prop 1 Behavioral Health Services Act dollars and other behavioral health initiatives should invest in programs that can provide cultural and language specific care for all communities.

■ Latine Californians born outside the United States had several differences from those born in the United States. They were more likely to be an adult in a homeless family, be in their first episode of homelessness, and have entered homelessness from a non-leaseholder housing status. CoC leadership should ensure that programs supporting Latine Californians born outside the United States should focus on providing support for families and supporting households in stabilizing in housing with formal tenancy.

■ Latine Californians born outside the United States were less likely to have received assistance from a case manager or housing navigator. Program leadership should ensure that case management staff are culturally and linguistically equipped to connect with and support this population. Programs should

expand peer supports with these characteristics wherever possible. Program leadership should integrate Medi-Cal enrollment and billing where possible, as these supports are available through Medi-Cal.

## Latine Homelessness: A Deeper Look

### Study Overview

The California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness (CASPEH) is the largest representative study of homelessness in the United States since the mid-1990s. Researchers at the University of California, San Francisco Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative (UCSF BHHI) recruited a representative sample of adults experiencing homelessness; all respondents (3,200) completed an administered questionnaire. A subset participated in in-depth interviews. UCSF BHHI has released a series of reports, including a [comprehensive report](#), a report on [intimate partner violence and homelessness](#), [racial equity](#) and Black people experiencing homelessness, [older adults experiencing homelessness](#) and [behavioral health](#). BHHI released several shorter topic briefs, including one on [pregnancy and homelessness](#) and [unsheltered homelessness](#). This report looks at Latine Californians' experiences of homelessness.



To measure the lived experience of race for CASPEH respondents, our team used a different race and ethnicity measure than used in the United States Census or the biennial homelessness Point-in-Time Demographic Survey. The US Census and the Point-In-Time Demographic Survey ask two separate questions about race and Hispanic origin: a five-category measure of race ([1] White, [2] Black or African American, [3] American Indian or Alaska Native, [4] Asian, and [5] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) and a two-category measure of Hispanic origin ([1] Hispanic or [2] Non-Hispanic.) However, scholars note that Latino/Latina/Latine, Hispanic, or Latin American are ways that people racially identify and differentiate themselves from other racial groups. Therefore, we used a single nine-measure race domain that treats those who identify as Latine/Hispanic as a racial group and includes expanded racial categories.<sup>35</sup> While these changes make it difficult to compare our race data one-to-one with the Point-In-Time Count, we believe it reflects the daily lived experience of race in California and elsewhere more accurately.

While this report focuses on Latine Californians' experiences of homelessness, we note where their experience may differ from members of other racial identities. To do so, we compared those who are Latine to those who are Black non-Latine, white non-Latine and non-white non-Latine.

Due to concerns about placing participants at legal risk and concerns about decreasing participant's willingness to participate, we did not ask any participants in CASPEH about their immigration or legal status (e.g., permanent residency, citizenship, asylee, visa holder, DACA). We did ask participants whether they were born in, or outside of, the United States. Many who were born outside of the United States have legal immigration status, but not all do. In qualitative interviews, some participants self-disclosed their lack of legal status and how that has impacted them. When relevant, we share this information.

## Who in the Latine Community Experiences Homelessness?

### Race

In this report, we include both those who identify Latine as their sole racial identity (26% of homeless Californians) and those who identify Latine as one of their racial identities (9% of homeless Californians); 35% of Californians experiencing homelessness do so. Fourteen percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness elected to take the CASPEH survey in Spanish, suggesting that this was their preferred language.

**TABLE 1. Racial Identities of People Experiencing Homelessness in California (4 Categories)<sup>36</sup>**

Latine	35%
Black Non-Latine	25%
White Non-Latine	27%
Non-White Non-Latine	13%

### Gender and Sexual Orientation

Sixty-eight percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness identified as cisgender men, 31% identified as cisgender women and 1% as transgender, non-binary, or gender expansive like those of other racial identities. Seven percent identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, queer, or another non-heterosexual sexual identity.

### Age

Latine Californians experiencing homelessness ranged in age from 18 to 87.<sup>37</sup> The median age of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness was 42. This is younger than other groups: the median age of both Black non-Latine and white non-Latine Californians experiencing homelessness is 50 years. Five percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness were between the ages of 18 and 24, 62% were between the ages of 25 and 49 (compared to 43% of Black non-Latine and 48% of white non-Latine Californians experiencing homelessness), and 33% were 50 years or older. Among Latine homeless

Californians 50 or older, 43% first experienced homelessness after the age of 50.

**Family Structure**

Eighty-five percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness were single adults (i.e. adults 25 years of age and older not living with minor children), 12% were adults in families (i.e. adults currently living with minor children).<sup>38</sup> Latine Californians experiencing homelessness who were born outside of the United States were more likely than those born within the US to report being an adult in a homeless family (19% versus 10%).

**TABLE 2. Family Structure, Latine Californians Experiencing Homelessness by Country of Origin**

	Single Adults	Adults in Families
All	85%	12%
US Born	86%	10%
Non-US Born	79%	19%

Thirty-three percent of Latine Californians had minor children who were not staying with them currently (36% of those born in the United States and 26% of those not born in the United States). There are several reasons why someone might not be living with their minor children. They may have had a child removed by Child Protective Services (CPS), they may have asked friends or family to take over custody of a child out of fear of CPS involvement or impending homelessness, or they may not be the child’s custodial parent. Among Latine adults who reported that their children weren’t staying with them. Twenty-four percent reported being separated from their children voluntarily because of their homelessness.

**Education**

Latine Californians had the lowest high school completion rate among homeless Californians. Half of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness had not completed a high school degree or a GED, compared with 32% for Black non-Latine, 24% of white non-Latine, and 36% of non-white non-Latine

Californians experiencing homelessness. An additional 26% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness had a high school diploma or GED; 16% had some college education and 8% had attained a college degree.

**Birthplace, Language and Where People Lived Prior to Homelessness**

Latine Californians experiencing homelessness were more likely than other racial groups to be born outside of the United States. Twenty-four percent of Latine Californians reported being born outside of the United States compared to 3% of Black non-Latine, 5% of white non-Latine, and 16% of non-white non-Latine Californians experiencing homelessness. Two thirds (68%) of Latine Californians were born in California, similar to other racial groups. Ninety-three percent of Latine Californians reported that they were last housed in California; 78% were interviewed in the same county where they were last housed.

**Prior Experiences of Homelessness**

A higher proportion of Latine Californians (48%) than Black non-Latine (28%), white non-Latine (38%), or non-white non-Latine (39%) reported that this episode was their first episode of homelessness. Latine Californians who took the survey in Spanish were more likely to be in their first episode (71%) than those who took it in English (44%).

**Pathways to Homelessness for Latine Californians**

To better understand the pathways to homelessness for everyday Californians, we asked CASPEH respondents to reflect on their lives during the six months before they lost their last stable housing.

Immediately before this episode of homelessness, 52% of Latine Californians were housed in the community without the legal protections of a lease, such as living with friends, family, or acquaintances. This is a similar proportion as found in other racial groups. Latine respondents who were born outside the United States were more likely to enter homelessness from a non-leaseholder arrangement (70%) than those born in the United States (46%). As one Latine participant described, “Before 2008 I rented a house

with some friends, but the house was foreclosed, and we had to leave. The county didn't want anyone to live there anymore and so we had to go out. And they knocked down the house. And we were left outside... the house was in bad conditions. It wasn't for people to live in there... About 10 people [lived there]. We did not live comfortably."

Non-leaseholders lack legal protection and live, for the most part, in overcrowded and stressful situations with others who face similar economic pressures. In these situations, tensions may rise, and situations become untenable quickly. One Latine participant shared with us, "[I received] very little notice, I had to leave quickly. That was not nice, but what could I do. A little unfair but I had no choice. That's when I moved to my car... The problem is that everything is very expensive here. The rent for a small room is \$850... Too much. There is no way to pay for that if you don't have a job."

Twenty-nine percent of Latine Californians were on a lease, mortgage or other formal written agreement prior to losing their housing. Nineteen percent entered homelessness directly from an institutional setting, similar to those in other racial groups. Most of these institutional entrances were from carceral settings including prisons or long-term jail stays.

Latine Californians had extremely low incomes. In the six months prior to losing their last housing, Latine Californians experiencing homelessness reported a median monthly household income of \$1,000 and median housing costs of \$400, similar to other homeless Californians. Latine Californians who were not on a lease prior to homelessness reported a median monthly household income of \$950 and median housing costs of \$200. Latine Californians who were leaseholders prior to homelessness reported a median monthly household income of \$2,000 and median housing costs of \$600.

At the time of the study, the median rent for a one-bedroom apartment in California was \$1,767.<sup>39</sup> Once Latine Californians lost housing, they did not make enough money to re-enter the housing market. This mismatch between income and housing costs was a major precipitant to homelessness. Latine respondents were given a median warning time of two days before losing their housing. For those on a lease,

the median warning time was three days, shorter than the median for Black non-Latine and white non-Latine Californian leaseholders, who reported a median warning time of seven days. For those not on a lease, it was one day, similar to other homeless Californians. In California, most leaseholders have rental protections that should lead to more warning time prior to leaving. But many renters are either unaware of these protections, lack legal protections to exercise their rights, or are understandably concerned about having an eviction on their record and leave when threatened with an eviction.

**TABLE 3. Median Monthly Household Income, Housing Costs, Warning Before Housing Loss, by Leaseholder Status Among Latine Participants**

	All Latine	Latine Non-Leaseholders	Latine Leaseholders
Median Monthly Income	\$1,000	\$950	\$2,000
Median Housing Costs	\$400	\$200	\$600
Median Warning	2 days	1 day	3 days

We asked CASPEH respondents to share what they considered to be the primary reason that they left their last stable housing. Among Latine Californians experiencing homelessness, the most frequent primary reasons for leaving their last housing included lost or reduced income (12%), wanting their own space or not wanting to impose on others (10%), conflict between residents (7%), and conflict with a landlord or property owner (7%). Among non-leaseholders, the primary reasons for leaving last housing included wanting their own space or not wanting to impose on others (14%), experiencing conflict between residents (10%), experiencing conflict with a landlord or property owner (8%), being asked or encouraged to leave (8%), and leaving due to their own substance use or drinking (8%). Among leaseholders, the most frequent primary reasons for leaving their last housing were lost or reduced income (22%), moving or leaving the area

(10%), experiencing violence or abuse in the household (10%), and someone else becoming sick or disabled or dying (9%).

In in-depth interviews, Latine participants described situations in which they had to leave their housing. One participant described having to vacate their home due to the home being sold after their grandmother died. “I was under the impression that we had a year from my grandmother's death to the house being cleared. But, you know, when money comes into the picture, family can get really crazy. So we ended up having to be out in six months. And we didn't know that until four months had already passed. So we had two months [to] get rid of everything in the house, get all of your stuff out, and you have to be gone. And, at the end of that two months, the house was already sold.”

Others reported losing their housing due to falling behind on rent because either they or someone else had lost a job or become ill, or someone else had been incarcerated, became sick, or died. As one Latine participant explained, “(In) 2019 I had a pacemaker put in. That slowed me down for a long time and then I got...liver cancer. And they're still watching that, and I had to go and get chemo treatments. That knocked me down for a long time. I had no income. I worked for IHSS<sup>40</sup> the last sixteen years taking care of my mother. And before that I worked for [a furniture store] for ten years, and before that I worked for my mother[s] cleaning company from high school. There's no way I can work [now]. I walk a little ways, sometimes I walk to the bathroom, and I have to lay down. I can feel my heart pounding in my throat.”

Latine men who were employed prior to homelessness discussed having worked in construction, landscaping, farmwork, and the service sector, without having received any employment related health insurance. Some discussed having experienced work-related injuries but did not receive workers compensation. A few participants discussed having lost their jobs due to their injuries, which led to a cascade resulting in homelessness. Other Latine workers reported having been employed in the service sector, working in restaurants, retail establishments, or as delivery drivers, and then losing their jobs related to the

COVID-19 pandemic, either because of COVID-19-related closures or because they left their job due to fear of contracting COVID-19.

Latine farmworkers, who are an essential workforce across California's more than 63,000 farms, faced particular housing challenges throughout the year as farm work was only available during growing seasons. One Latine farmworker shared how the absence of work during farming “off-season” had detrimental effects on his housing, resulting in bouts of homelessness:

**TABLE 4. Primary Reason for Leaving Last Housing for Latine Californians Experiencing Homelessness**

All	Non-Leaseholders	Leaseholders
Lost or reduced income (12%)	Wanting their own space or not wanting to impose on others (14%)	Lost or reduced income (22%)
Wanting their own space or not wanting to impose on others (10%)	Conflict between residents (10%)	Left the area (10%)
Conflict between residents (7%)	Conflict with a landlord or property owner (8%)	Violence or abuse in the household (10%)
Conflict with a landlord or property owner (7%)	Imposing, asked/ encouraged to leave (8%) / Own substance use or drinking (8%)	Someone else was sick, disabled or died (9%)

Approximately one third (31%) of Latine Californians reached out for help prior to losing their housing. We asked those who had reached out for help whom they reached out to; among those who had reached out, the most common sources were family and friends (63%) or non-profit institutions and religious organizations (52%). Twenty-one percent of Latine Californians received any help to stave off homelessness; 58% of them from family or friends and 47% from non-profit institutions or religious organizations. Only 16% of those who received help

received it from a government agency. This help was not enough to keep them in housing. However, Latine Californians discussed their social networks as an important source of both emotional and spiritual support. They discussed receiving support from family, friends, and their church communities.

One participant shared how his church community provided needed emotional support. “We have to go back to church because when we were in church, we had support there. It's like family. And they know what's up. Sometimes they call and they check on us to see how we're doing.” This support helped keep Latine Californians going during hard times even if it couldn't prevent them from becoming homeless. As we spoke only to those who were experiencing homelessness, it is possible that those who had received help did not become homeless.

Latine Californians indicated that financial support could have prevented homelessness by either allowing them to stay in their current housing situation or moving into other housing.

Eighty-two percent thought that a one-time subsidy of \$5,000 to \$10,000 would have prevented their homelessness and 73% believed that a monthly shallow subsidy of \$300-\$500 would have. Ninety percent thought that a housing voucher that limits their rent to 30% of their income (such as a Housing Choice Voucher) would have prevented their homelessness. These were similar to adults experiencing homelessness from other racial groups.

## Experiences of Homelessness for Latine Californians

In this section, we focus on Latine Californians' experiences while homeless. We discuss where people stayed, access to shelter, length of homelessness, physical health and use of healthcare systems, behavioral health, experiences of violence, interactions with carceral systems, experiences of discrimination, and barriers to finding housing.

### Where Did People Stay?

People experience homelessness in a variety of unsheltered and sheltered settings. Unsheltered locations include vehicles and places not meant for

human habitation such as public parks and abandoned buildings. Sheltered locations include emergency shelters, friends' or family members' homes, treatment programs, hotels or motels. We asked respondents where they had slept most often during homelessness. Similar to all Californians experiencing homelessness,<sup>41</sup> most (79%) Latine respondents slept most frequently in unsheltered locations either outdoors (54%) or in vehicles (26%). In in-depth interviews, Latine Californians described a variety of unsheltered locations, including staying outdoors, in abandoned buildings, or in unfurnished garages without electricity or running water. Nineteen percent reported that they slept most often in a sheltered setting, including short stays with families or friends. Latine Californians described brief stays with family or friends (i.e. “couch-surfing”) interspersed with other forms of homelessness. These brief stays were marked by overcrowded conditions, with the participants reporting that they slept on the floor or a couch. They reported that the stays were short due either to the lack of feasibility of their staying there, overcrowding, or by the risks their stays posed to their hosts, whose landlords did not allow guests. As one Latine participant shared,

**“ My friend brought me [to the shelter]. I told her I didn't want to sleep on the street because I was pregnant and because it was cold during that time. I stayed with her for one week, but the owner of that place told her I couldn't stay there.”**

### Shelter Access

Latine Californians experiencing homelessness were more likely than white Californians to report that there was a time during their current episode when they wanted shelter but were unable to access it: 47% of Latine respondents reported this compared to 35% of white non-Latine Californians and 37% of non-White, non-Latine Californians. Forty three percent of Black Californians reported this, similar to that of Latine Californians. We found that Latine Californians who were born in the United States (50%) were more likely than those who were not born in the United States (36%) to report this. Latine interview participants reported encountering long wait times for shelter beds.

As one participant explained, “When I first experienced needing shelter in the area that I was in, there just wasn't – unless you were domestic violence, there wasn't shelter available. And then if there was a shelter available, if you had anything on your record, some places you couldn't stay there because of a felony or whatever. A lot of places are just crowded, and they just couldn't – they couldn't take you.”

### Length of Homelessness

Similar to other groups, Latine Californians reported lengthy episodes of homelessness. The median length of their current episode was 22 months. Chronic homelessness is defined as both (1) experiencing homelessness for at least 12 months or having four or more episodes of homelessness in the prior three years that together total more than 12 months and (2) having a disabling condition. Twenty-eight percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness met the criteria for chronic homelessness; a further 41% met the time criteria but did not meet the disability criterion.



### Health

Similar to the overall homeless population, nearly half (48%) of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness rated their health as fair or poor. This finding is significantly higher than would be expected in the general population.<sup>42</sup> Almost one third (32%) of Latine Californians reported having a difficulty with one of the five main activities of daily living (bathing,

dressing, toileting, transferring, or eating); this was similar to our findings in other racial groups. Latine Californians 50 and older were more likely to have an ADL difficulty (44%) than those 18-49 (26%). Fifteen percent of Latine Californians reported having difficulty with three or more ADLs; 25% of those 50 and over and 9% of those 18-49.

Fifty-eight percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness were living with one or more chronic health condition; 8% reported three or more. Latine Californians 50 years of age and older were more likely to report at least one chronic health condition (69%) compared to those ages 18 to 49 years (53%). The most common chronic health conditions among Latine Californians experiencing homelessness were hypertension, lung conditions (asthma or COPD), and diabetes. We asked Latine Californians experiencing homelessness whether they had health insurance. Eighty-one percent reported that they had a form of health insurance, mostly through California’s Medicaid program known as Medi-Cal (74% received Medi-Cal – similar to Californians experiencing homelessness overall). Almost one in five (19%) reported that they were uninsured. Latine respondents who were born outside the United States were more likely to be uninsured (41%) compared to those born in the United States (12%).

Half (50%) reported having a regular source of health care other than the Emergency Department (ED); 36% reported having a primary care provider. Nineteen percent of Latine Californians reported that they had an unmet medical need and 23% said that they were unable to access a medication that had been prescribed to them. Similar to other racial groups, 36% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness had visited the emergency department (ED) in the last 6 months but were not admitted and 21% reported an in-patient hospitalization for a physical health reason in the prior six months.

Latine in-depth interview participants found the healthcare system difficult to navigate while experiencing homelessness. They noted barriers including finding transportation and identifying physicians. One Latine Californian shared: “I’m not [doing any teaching now or working or anything]. I’m sick right now. My liver is doing something. I got blood

clot[s]. I'm taking three medicines. I don't see a doctor because I don't know who my primary doctor is. And I haven't seen a doctor for five years. And I keep asking my social worker who my primary doctor is and they don't tell me anything." Waiting to get connected to care, some participants told us that they used the ED as a place to get care. Another Latine Californian explained how their difficulties accessing primary care impacted other facets of their life. As one said, "to get SSI, I have to have your doctor's paperwork. I haven't been able to go see the doctor yet. My primary doctor doesn't start until the 8th of this month [because that's when my appointment is]. So you just keep going back to the hospital. They're going to say, "Well, we can't do nothing for you. You got to go to your primary doctor for that." So, I said I'll wait."

### Pregnancy

Over a quarter (27%) of Latine women between the ages of 18 and 44 reported experiencing a pregnancy during their episode of homelessness. This is similar to Black non-Latine women (26%) but higher than white non-Latine women (18%). As we reported in the Topic Brief on Pregnancy,<sup>43</sup> pregnancy increases the risk of homelessness and the conditions of homelessness create increased risks of having pregnancy complications.

### Behavioral Health

Almost two thirds (63%) of Latine respondents reported that they had experienced mental health symptoms in the prior month. Similar to those of non-Latine Californians, the most common mental health symptoms were depression and anxiety symptoms. Fifty percent noted having had severe depressive symptoms and 47% reported anxiety symptoms, 11% reported experiencing hallucinations and 35% reported trouble concentrating or remembering. Latine Californians experiencing homelessness who were born in the United States were more likely to note any mental health symptoms than those who were not born in the United States (66% for those born in the United States; 52% for those born elsewhere). While fifty-four percent of Latine respondents born in the United States reported symptoms of depression, 38% of those born elsewhere did; 50% of Latine Californians born in the United States reported anxiety, 36% of those not born in the United States did.

In the prior six months, 5% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness had a psychiatric hospitalization.



Similar to other racial groups, thirty-five percent reported regular illicit drug use of either methamphetamine, non-prescribed opioids, or cocaine three times a week or more. One third (33%) of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness reported regular use of methamphetamine; 11% reported regular use of non-prescribed opioids and 1% of cocaine. These were similar to other racial groups. Over one in ten (11%) reported heavy drinking weekly or more often. Among those who either used drugs regularly or had weekly heavy drinking, twenty-seven percent reported that there was a time during this current episode of homelessness when they sought out substance use treatment but were unable to access it.

As we reported in the Behavioral Health Report, many Latine Californians began using substances after they became homeless to manage the challenges of homelessness, including helping them stay awake at night or assuaging symptoms including pain or despair. As one Latine Californian shared, "In 2017, I had my own place, and at that time a truck hit me, and they put two bars on my neck and six pins. So, from that point on, everything went downhill, and I lost everything. I started using [meth] when I became homeless. I would do it by myself in the streets to stay awake at night. It just kept me awake and I would go

look to make money, to get aluminum cans, collect money, so I could support me to get something to eat or whatever. Not to go buy more drugs or nothing but if I collect enough for three days of aluminum cans and I can get my food and a room for a day, you know.”

Other Latine participants revealed how they started to use substances as a way to cope with the stress of becoming homeless. Through tears, a Latina participant shared how she started using fentanyl after becoming homeless: “now I do a drug that I've never done in my life - [Fentanyl]. I started using it a month after I became homeless. Now I've been using for a year [multiple times throughout the day]. I feel like my days pass much faster because I sleep a lot more. I don't have to think about what I'm going through and just stress about it. It makes it easier for me to numb what I feel or anything I'm going through and less things for me to feel emotionally. I feel like that's how I have been able to go through everything I've been through in this past year because before that I was not a user at all. I would barely even smoke weed.”

To estimate the proportion of Californians experiencing homelessness who likely need enhanced behavioral health supports to thrive, we designed a measure indicating complex behavioral health needs. We defined this as having any one of these four criteria: regular illicit drug use, heavy episodic alcohol use at least weekly, a recent psychiatric hospitalization, or hallucinations. Over half (51%) of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness meet these criteria, similar to that of non-Latine Californians.

## Experiences of Violence

Latine Californians experienced high rates of interpersonal violence during homelessness. More than one third (37%) reported physical or sexual violence during this episode: 37% experienced physical violence and 13% experienced sexual violence. Of those who experienced physical violence, over half (55%) reported that the violence was perpetrated by a stranger and 17% reported that it was perpetrated by an intimate partner. Latine cisgender women were more likely to report experiences of sexual violence (22%) compared to Latine cisgender men (9%). Of those who reported sexual violence, 60% reported that the violence

was perpetrated by a stranger and 15% by an intimate partner.

**“ They treat us like we're nothing, like dirt. We're already down in the dumps. And they think, by giving us a ticket and kicking us in the gut one more time, it's going to help us.”**

## Criminalization

In the previous six months, 35% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness had their belongings taken at least once by the police or other government workers in a forced displacement.<sup>44</sup> Almost half (45%) of Latine Californians reported being roughed up by the police during this episode of homelessness, similar to other racial groups. In in depth interviews, Latine participants explained that they encountered police harassment based on being both homeless and Latine. As one Latine participant said: “The police is always harassing – 'Oh, you can't park here.' I mean they'll try to find anything to get you out and harass you, especially if you're Hispanic.” Experiences with law enforcement were stressful and dehumanizing. As another Latine Californian shared, “The cops were all day long sitting across the way. And like they knew what they were going to do. And I knew what they were going to do... And, at 2:00 in the morning, they blocked us in. And then, all these parking enforcement ladies just started putting tickets on everybody's car. The next day, everybody had tickets.

Similar to members of other racial groups, one third (33%) of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness spent time in jail during this episode of homelessness, this was more common amongst those born in the United States: 35% of those born in the United States and 27% of those not born in the United States reported a jail stay.

## Attempts to Exit Homelessness

The vast majority of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness (91%) named affordability as a major barrier to exiting homelessness, like other homeless Californians. In in-depth interviews, Latine Californians described the disconnect between their potential income and housing costs. As one Latine participant explained, “I mean the biggest thing is just like the pay

that everybody gets is just – it's not possible to live off of. I mean, for me, personally, I have about \$10,000 in savings, which could pay for first/last rent and the deposit. But my monthly income is not enough to maintain a one-bedroom apartment, often not even enough to maintain a studio.”

Similar to other homeless Californians, almost two thirds (62%) mentioned not receiving help from a case manager or housing navigator as a major barrier to regaining housing. Several barriers to housing were more commonly cited by Latine Californians than white Californians, including lacking documents and facing discrimination. Sixty percent of Latine Californians cited lacking documents (e.g., proof of identification or income) as a major barrier, higher than Black non-Latine Californians (48%), non-white non-Latine Californians (47%), and white non-Latine Californians (50%). Forty-six percent of Latine Californians indicated that discrimination that they faced while attempting to regain housing was a major barrier, similar to Black Californians (50%) but higher than white non-Latine Californians (31%). Over half of Latine

respondents noted distance or safety of affordable housing (52%) and the long waitlists for housing (51%) as being major barriers to exiting homelessness. One in-depth interview participant described the process of waiting for housing. “[At the shelter] they're supposed to be [helping me get housing]. I'm just waiting for my name to come up [with] Section 8. [I've been waiting] about three years. I've been homeless since 2017. I don't have a navigator.”

**Language Access**

In-depth interview participants reported that language barriers and the complicated process of applying for housing and housing subsidies made it challenging to access and use services successfully. Some participants experienced challenges accessing housing related services due to limited English language skills. "I don't speak the language, I am unable to understand and explain things," one Latine participant explained “I understand and speak some but not enough, and sometimes people assume I am undocumented.” This was particularly true for older Latine participants. Others found it challenging to

**TABLE 5. Barriers to Housing**

	Latine	Black Non-Latine	White Non-Latine	Non-White Non-Latine
I can't afford any housing.	91%	82%	91%	89%
I don't have enough help from an organization, such as a case manager or housing navigator, to help me navigate paperwork or find housing.	62%	62%	64%	65%
I don't have the documents I need to apply for housing.	60%	48%	50%	47%
I experience discrimination when I try to rent a place.	46%	50%	31%	47%
The housing I can afford is too far away or unsafe.	52%	58%	64%	52%
I am on a waitlist for housing and it's taking a long time.	51%	59%	48%	44%

navigate online housing applications or did not know where to apply. One Latine participant shared how language acted as a barrier to obtaining assistance identifying housing opportunities: “there was a person who was speaking with me...but I couldn’t manage the language, English. A person was contacting me [to tell me] that the government offers housing for homeless people. But that person gave up because of how we talked.”

### Help Finding Housing

Forty-one percent of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness reported that a housing navigator or case manager had tried to help them find housing at any time during their current episode: 59% of Black non-Latine and 45% of White non-Latine respondents reported this. Those born outside of the United States were less likely to report help from a housing navigator or case manager (31%). Only 16% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness said that they received help from a housing navigator at least once per month in the prior six months, the same as the overall population. Many Latine in-depth interview participants who received help from a housing navigator or case manager reported positive experiences. They shared that their housing navigator or case manager helped them to secure documents needed to secure housing and employment, and motivated them to apply for housing, housing subsidies, and other social services. Others reported that housing navigators or case workers were too busy to provide adequate support, which created barriers to returning to housing and securing services. Participants reported signing up wait lists for housing choice voucher (sometimes referred to as a Section 8 voucher) either on their own or with the help of a case manager. However, many of these participants experienced long wait times. As one participant shared, “I signed up for Section-8 and it's a mandatory two year wait, waiting list back then. I don't know if it's worse now or what, but. I was on there two years right before we lost, lost the house I came off the two-year waiting list and I was eligible for three apartment complexes. But before I could go look at them somebody raided our, our carport, took a bunch of our boxes of stuff, including my paperwork, so they threw me back on the waiting list.”

Latine Californians experiencing homelessness discussed their hesitancy to reach out to family or friends for help. They expressed that they felt a sense of shame for being homeless and felt that they needed to resolve it on their own without burdening their families. One participant shared: “I'm very closed about what I'm going through. None of my family knows I'm homeless, none of my friends. I just don't want to tell anyone. I want to be able to get out of this alone. It feels like I'm stuck in this, and it sucks.”



### Benefits Utilization

Similar to other racial groups, 68% of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness received California’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) CalFresh. Despite high enrollment in CalFresh, Latine Californians’ enrollment in other social safety net benefit programs was low. This could be due to factors such as language barriers, immigration status, and the younger age of Latine Californians experiencing homelessness compared to other groups.<sup>45</sup> Only 7% received SSI, 3% received SSDI and 5% received Social Security. Twenty-seven percent of Latine Californians aged 62 years and older reported that they received SSI.

Lack of citizenship status created barriers for receiving eligible public benefits, including SNAP, Medicaid, unemployment insurance, and Housing Choice Vouchers. One Latine Californian explained how without having a permanent resident card, they could not get a job that issues a paystub, which they need to

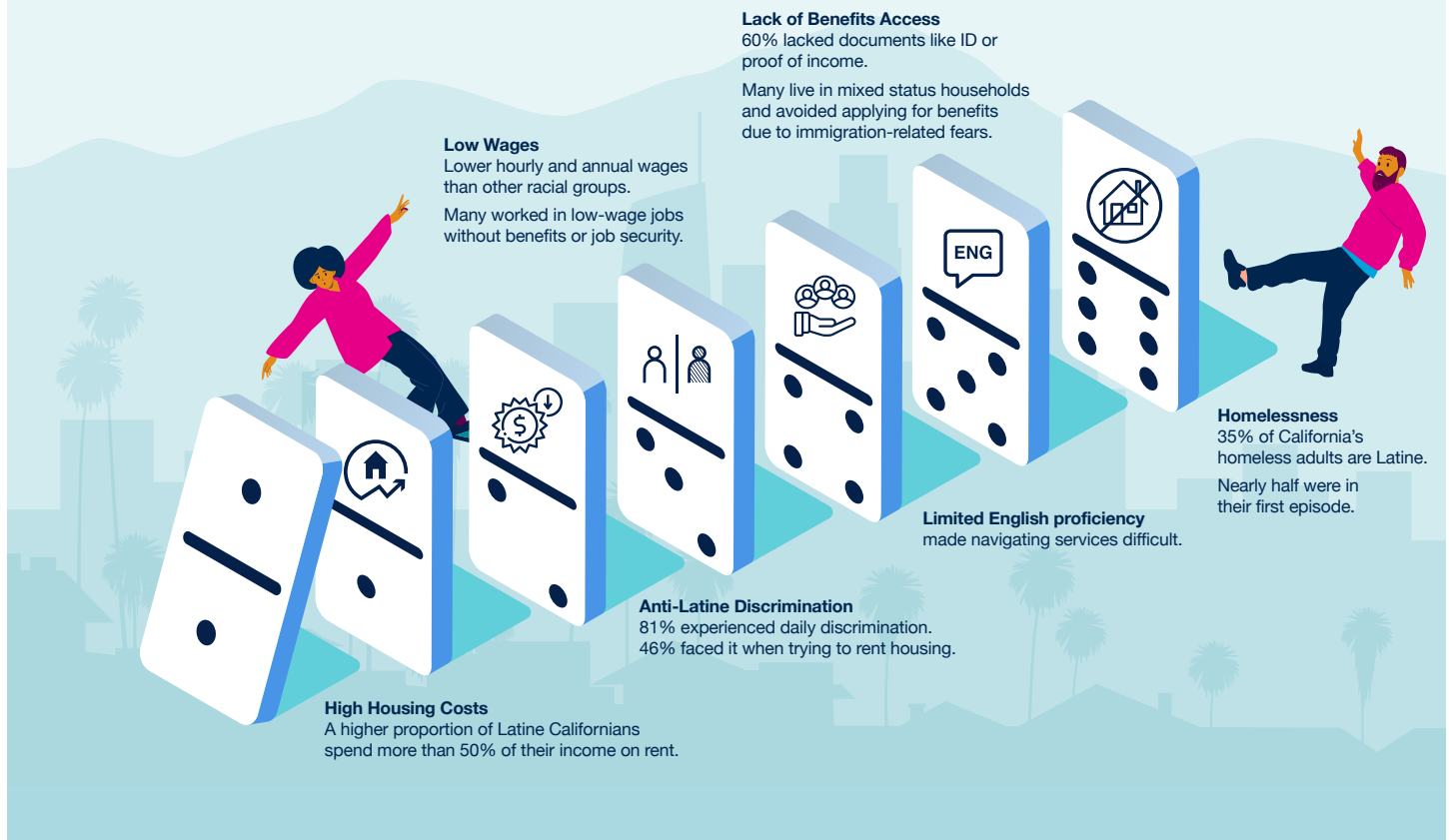
get on a waiting list for Section 8 housing. They explained, “I applied for Section 8, and I received the voucher, but I can’t go because they want a paystub to charge me 30% or something like that, but since I don’t have my green card I still can’t get paid with a check. [The woman] from Social Services called, and they told her it can take up to three months to send the green card. If someone else hires me to do work, like the people from the church, it is not enough, just small assignments.” Those with immigration status that made them eligible for public benefits faced other barriers to secure housing. Many reported losing or being unable

to renew documents needed to secure housing, such as permanent resident cards or other forms of identification, due to their homelessness. They experienced long wait times to receive replacements.

**Discrimination**

Due to structural racism and prejudice against perceived immigrant communities, Latine Californians experience high levels of discrimination in their everyday lives. Eighty-one percent of Latine respondents reported that they experienced any discrimination in their daily lives: 30% said it was due

**Compounding Challenges:  
Structural Drivers of Homelessness for Latine Californians**



Latine Californians face a compounding set of structural challenges—beginning with unaffordable housing and low wages, and deepened by discrimination, language and immigration barriers, and lack of shelter access. These interconnected barriers increase the risk of homelessness.

to ancestry or national origin and 28% said it was due to the color of their skin. As noted above, nearly half of Latine Californians (46%) reported that they had faced discrimination when trying to return to housing—a significantly higher proportion of Latine Californians reported this than white non-Latine Californians. In in-depth interviews, Latine Californians spoke of discrimination in trying to obtain housing or services, during interactions with police, and when talking to others in their community. Like Black Californians experiencing homelessness, Latine Californians shared how they experienced an intersectional, compounding type of discrimination based on being both Latine and homeless. One Latine Californian shared about her experiences of discrimination when trying to rent an apartment. "I thought it was going to be easier. I thought I would just be able to save some money and knock on the front door of a place and ask, 'Can I rent this place?' But no, it is hard. I have gone around, asking for places to rent but they tell me 'No Spanish' and I wonder 'Do they really not speak Spanish or are they discriminating against me?'. I think 'Do I need to put on makeup and dress well, so they treat me well?'" Another Latine Californian shared their experience: "It is hard sometimes. They treat you like they are assuming you won't pay the rent, like you are irresponsible... When you ask them for a place to rent, they look at you and ask you, how are you going to pay for this place? How am I going to pay if I don't have a job? But I can work, I can make money and pay. But the answer is no, we are full."

## Conclusion

Homelessness among Latine populations is rising. Latine Californians' experience of homelessness is similar, in many ways, to those of all Californians experiencing homelessness—high housing costs coupled with low incomes set Californians up to become homeless, and once homeless—everything else falls apart. Like other Californians experiencing homelessness, most Latine Californians experience homelessness in unsheltered settings. Many sought shelter, but were unable to access it. Latine Californians experiencing homelessness, despite being younger than other homeless Californians, experience similarly serious health challenges. Latine Californians experience additional barriers not faced

by all homeless Californians, including barriers created by anti-Latine discrimination, by lack of language access, and by lack of access to services due to either undocumented or mixed-status households. Those born outside the United States—with or without legal status—experience different challenges than those born in the United States. Like other Californians experiencing homelessness, Latine adults report cost as the main barrier to re-entering housing, but they note additional discrimination barriers in the housing market and lack of access to key benefits. As homelessness among Latine populations increases in tandem with increased political hostility toward those who are immigrants or perceived to be, there must be renewed efforts to prevent and end homelessness in the Latine community. While Latine Californians facing homelessness share many experiences with others who experience homelessness, there is a need for increased recognition of the specific challenges faced by the Latine community and responses that meet these challenges. Doing so will allow all to enjoy the safety and security of home.

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35. These categories are: Black, African-American, African; White, Caucasian, or European-American; Native American or Alaskan Native; Pacific Islander, Samoan, or Hawaiian; Asian or Asian-American; Latino/Latina/Latinx, Hispanic, or Latin American; Indigenous from Mexico/Central/South America; 'Mixed/Multiracial'; or 'Other.'
36. For the purpose of this report, we define Latine as those who identify "Latino/Latina/Latinx, Hispanic, or Latin American" as their sole or one of their racial identities. Black non-Latine category includes those who identify "Black, African-American, African" as their sole or one of the racial identities, with the exception of those who identify as Black and Latine. These respondents are placed in the Latine category. The white non-Latine category includes those who identify "white, Caucasian, or European-American" as their sole racial identity. The non-white non-Latine category includes those who identified as "Native American, or Alaskan Native", "Pacific Islander, Samoan, or Hawaiian", Indigenous from Mexico/Central/South America", "Mixed/Multiracial", or "other".
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