

People experiencing homelessness

About the Census

Every five years, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) counts every person and household in Australia. This is called the Census of Population and Housing. This year, the Census is on **Tuesday 10 August**.

The Census provides critical information about the people in Australia and is the only national estimate of the prevalence of homelessness. Government, service providers, community organisations and businesses all use Census data to plan services and support programs for people experiencing homelessness. This includes emergency shelters, domestic violence programs, transitional housing and programs for young people.

Approach for different types of homelessness

Everyone in Australia on Census night, except foreign diplomats and their families, is included in the Census.

The Census makes sure people experiencing all forms of homelessness can participate. This is achieved through customised approaches that reflect the types of homelessness.

On Census night	Type of homelessness	Approach
People experiencing homelessness who are not in a dwelling .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People who are in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out Referred to as 'rough sleepers'	The ABS gathers intelligence from the sector to help plan the rough sleeper count. Trained Community Field Officers will talk to rough sleepers and ask a subset of Census questions to capture the essential details.
People experiencing homelessness who are in a non-private dwelling .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. People in supported accommodation for those experiencing homelessness 3. People staying in boarding houses 4. People in other temporary accommodation Referred to as 'people in supported accommodation'	<p>The ABS gathers intelligence from the sector to identify supported accommodation where residents may need additional support to respond to the Census.</p> <p>Where the accommodation address is sensitive (such as domestic violence refuges) we have processes to make sure we provide residents with support while protecting the confidentiality of the address.</p>
People experiencing homelessness who are in a private dwelling .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. People staying temporarily in other households Referred to as 'couch surfers' <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. People living in 'severely'* crowded dwellings * four or more additional rooms required to accommodate people living in the dwelling.	The ABS works with the sector to target messages to couch surfers and people living in 'severely' crowded households, including through social media. They participate in the Census as part of the household they are staying in, or they can request a personal form.

