



Specialist homelessness services 2020–21: Northern Territory

Homelessness can profoundly affect a person’s mental and physical health, their education and employment opportunities, and their ability to fully participate in society. Governments across Australia fund a range of specialist services to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) deliver services for specific groups (such as people experiencing family and domestic violence and young people) as well as more generic services for people in housing crisis.

How many people were assisted?

One in 24 people in the Northern Territory (NT) received homelessness assistance, higher than the national rate (1 in 92). The top 3 reasons for clients seeking assistance were:

- family and domestic violence (53%, compared with 39% nationally)
- Inadequate or inappropriate dwelling conditions (23%, compared with 27%)
- financial difficulties (21%, compared with 39%).

On average, 22 requests for assistance went unmet each day.

Quick facts

- 10,100 clients were assisted in NT—4% of the national SHS population (278,300 total clients).
- Of NT clients:
 - 31% were homeless on first presentation, lower than the national rate (43%).
 - 9 in 10 (87%) who were at risk of homelessness were assisted to maintain housing.
 - 1 in 4 clients (27%) who were homeless were assisted into housing.

Client characteristics, 2020–21

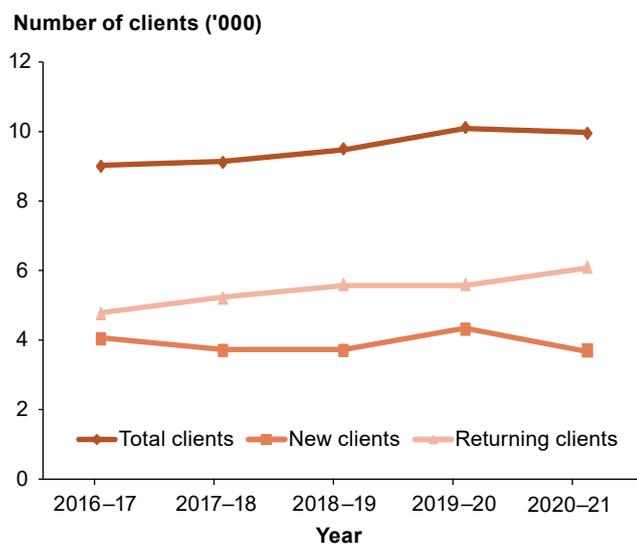
	NT	Australia	
Sex (%)	Male	37	40
	Female	63	60
Indigenous (%)	87	28	
Remoteness (%)	Major cities	1	60
	Inner regional	–	23
	Outer regional	33	11
	Remote and very remote	67	6
Living arrangements (%)	Living alone	17	32
	One parent with child/ren	26	33
	Couple with child/ren	18	12
	Couple without child/ren	6	5
	Other family or group	32	18
	Employed	9	13
Labour force (%)	Unemployed	56	53
	Not in labour force	35	35
	Education/training	19	21
Education status (%)	Not in education/training	81	79
	Median length of support (days)	43	51
Median nights of accommodation	10	31	
Proportion receiving accommodation (%)	48	31	

– nil or rounded to zero

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SHSC supplementary tables 2020–21.

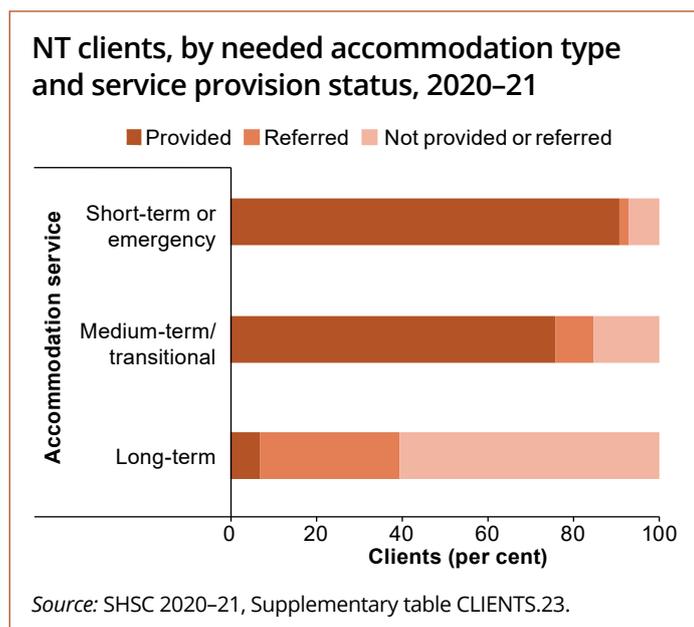
Trends in NT client numbers



Source: Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) unpublished data**.

Accommodation services

A smaller proportion of clients in the NT than nationally needed accommodation (55% and 60%, respectively).



Client groups of interest

The overall client rate was lower in the NT in 2020–21 compared with the previous year, lower rates were reported for most interest groups apart from older people and clients with a mental health issue.

Clients per 10,000, by interest groups

	NT		Australia	
	2019–20	2020–21	2019–20	2020–21
All clients	417.5	411.5	114.5	108.3
Indigenous	1,020.3	972.0	799.9	810.6
Young people presenting alone (15–24)	72.2	59.6	16.7	16.2
Older people (55 and over)	26.7	33.1	9.6	9.3
Family and domestic violence	183.3	201.3	47.0	45.2
Disability	8.5	7.6	2.6	2.7
Mental health	43.6	42.6	34.8	34.3
Exiting custodial arrangements	9.3	8.5	3.7	3.5
Leaving care	11.0	11.0	2.7	2.5
Children on protection orders	13.9	12.5	3.5	3.2
Drug/alcohol use	33.6	30.0	11.2	10.6

Notes:

- Crude rates are used except for Indigenous rates which are directly age-standardised (see online technical information).
- Minor adjustments in rates may occur between publications reflecting revision of the estimated resident population by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Source: SHSC, Supplementary tables 2019–20 to 2020–21.

Housing outcomes

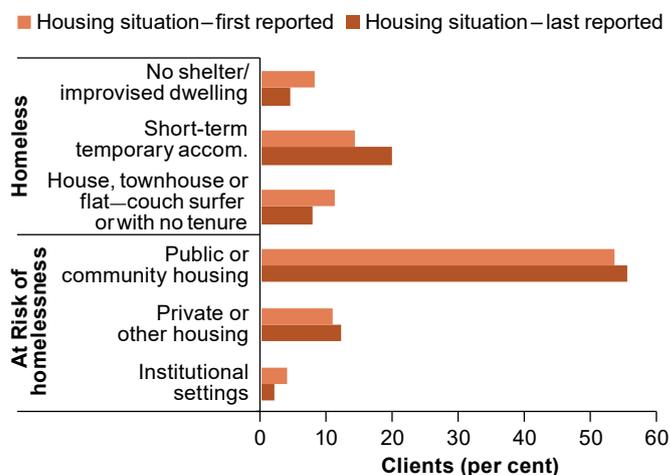
Housing outcomes are described for clients whose support ended in the financial year and detailed information about housing situation was known at the start and end of support.

Of the more than 1,500 clients who began support homeless in 2020–21, 27% (around 410) were assisted into housing. Of these 270 clients were housed in public or community housing, around 120 clients were housed in private or other housing.

Of the around 3,200 clients who began support housed, but at risk of homelessness, 9 in 10 (87% or 2,800 clients) were assisted to maintain housing. Of these clients at risk:

- 9 in 10 (87% or 2,200) of those in public or community housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 60 clients were assisted into private or other housing.
- two-thirds (67% or 340) of those in private or other housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 80 clients were assisted into public or community housing.

NT clients, by housing situation at beginning and end of support, 2020–21



**Note: Data for 2011–12 to 2016–17 have been adjusted for non-response. Due to improvements in rates of agency participation and SLK validity, 2017–18 data onwards are not weighted. The removal of weighting does not constitute a break in time series and weighted data from 2011–12 to 2016–17 are comparable with unweighted data for 2017–18 onwards. For further information, please refer to the Technical notes.

More information

More information on NT and national SHS data is available from [Specialist homelessness services annual report](#).