



# Specialist homelessness services 2017–18: Victoria

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 domestic and family violence and young people) as well as more generic services for people in housing crisis.

## How many people were assisted?

One in 54 people in Victoria (Vic) received homelessness assistance, higher than the national rate (1 in 85).

The top 3 reasons for clients seeking assistance were:

- domestic and family violence (47%, compared with 39% nationally)
- financial difficulties (40%, compared with 39%)
- housing crisis (37%, compared with 39%).

On average, 90 requests for assistance went unmet each day.

## Quick facts

- **116,872 clients** were assisted by services located in Victoria, representing 40% of the national Specialist Homelessness Services population (288,795 total clients).
- **37% were homeless on first presentation**, lower than the national rate (43%).
- **9 in 10 clients (91%) at risk of homelessness** were assisted to maintain housing.
- **3 in 10 clients (29%) who were homeless** were assisted into housing.

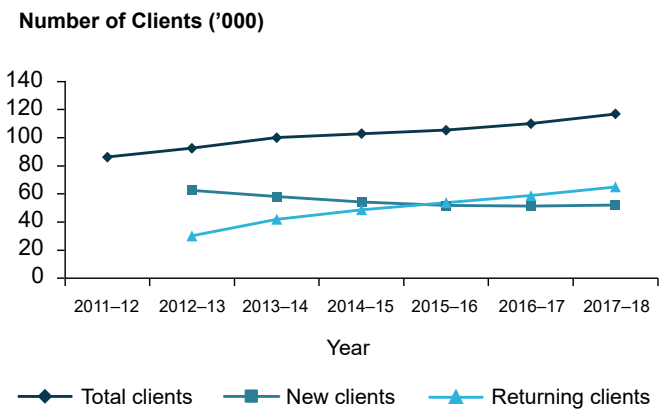


Table 1: Victorian client characteristics, 2017–18

		Vic	Australia
Sex (%)	Male	36	39
	Female	64	61
Indigenous (%)	Major cities	75	62
	Inner regional	21	23
	Outer regional	4	11
	Remote and very remote	—	5
Living arrangements (%)	Living alone	31	30
	One parent with child/ren	34	35
	Couple with child/ren	12	12
Labour force (%)	Couple without child/ren	6	5
	Other family or group	17	18
	Employed	14	12
Education status (%)	Unemployed	40	48
	Not in labour force	47	40
Education status (%)	Education/training	19	22
	Not in education/training	81	78
Median length of support (days)		26	39
Median length of accommodation (nights)		21	32
Proportion receiving accommodation (%)		22	29

— nil or rounded to zero  
Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.  
Sources: SHSC National and Vic supplementary tables 2017–18.

Figure 1: Trends in Victorian client numbers



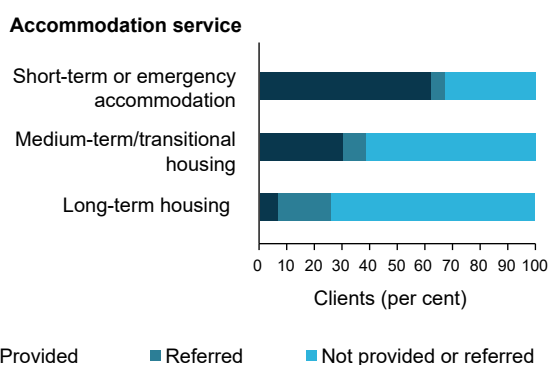
Source: Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) unpublished data\*\*.

\*\*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 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. For further information, refer to the Technical notes.

## Accommodation services

A smaller proportion of Victorian clients needed accommodation compared with the national SHS population (44% and 56%, respectively).

**Figure 2: Victorian clients, by most needed accommodation type and service provision status, 2017–18**



Source: SHSC 2017–18 Vic supplementary table CLIENTS.27.

## Client groups of interest

Service use rates in Victoria were higher in 2017–18 than the previous year, except for children on protection orders and clients with disability groups.

**Table 2: Client rate per 10,000, by priority group**

	Victoria		Australia	
	2016–17	2017–18	2016–17	2017–18
All clients	177.9	184.8	119.1	117.4
Indigenous	1,664.0	1,693.0	813.9	802.7
Young people presenting alone (15–24)	22.7	24.2	17.4	17.6
Older people (55 and over)	18.2	18.9	9.7	9.8
Domestic and family violence	81.0	89.7	47.4	49.2
Disability	6.4	5.1	4.5	3.2
Mental health	47.7	50.6	32.0	32.9
Exiting custodial arrangements	5.5	5.8	3.4	3.4
Leaving care	3.5	3.5	2.9	2.8
Children on protection orders	5.5	5.3	3.6	3.5
Drug/alcohol use	14.0	14.2	11.3	11.0

### 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.

Sources: SHSC National and Vic supplementary tables 2016–17 and 2017–18\*\*.

## Housing outcomes

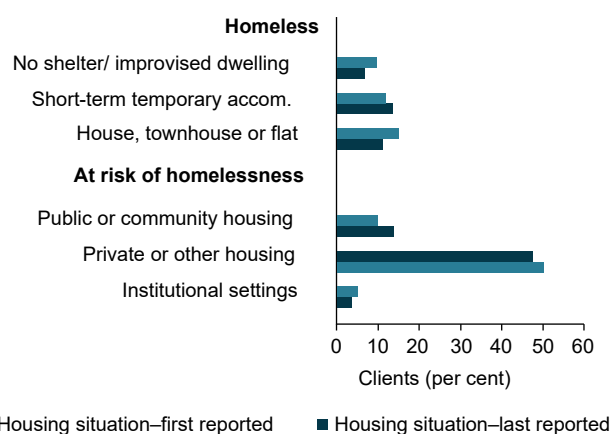
Housing outcomes are described for clients whose support had ended and housing situation known.

Nearly 21,600 clients began support homeless; 29% (almost 6,300 clients) were assisted into housing. Of these, 61% (3,900 clients) were housed in private or other housing while 34% (2,200 clients) were housed in public or community housing.

Of the nearly 38,400 clients who began support housed but at risk of homelessness, 9 in 10 (91%) were assisted to maintain housing. Of these clients:

- about 5,300 (86%) of those in public or community housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 6% (around 400) were assisted into private or other housing
- almost 26,000 (89%) of those in private or other housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 3% (almost 900) were assisted into public or community housing.

**Figure 3: Victorian clients, by housing situation at beginning and end of support, 2017–18**



Source: SHSC 2017–18 Vic supplementary table CLIENTS.22.

### More information

More information is available from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/contents/contents>.

Specific information on Victoria is available from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/data>

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