Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (Miskwaagamiiwi-Zaagaiganing)

This summary provides results for Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians from the 2023 survey of homelessness on American Indian reservations sharing geography with Minnesota. Wilder Research worked with participating tribes to collect information in October 2023. We conducted 423 interviews with people experiencing homelessness or near-homelessness at Red Lake reservation (Miskwaagamiiwi-Zaagaiganing).

Overall counts and demographics at Red Lake

At Red Lake

Number of people experiencing <u>homelessness</u>

627

Number of people experiencing <u>near-homelessness</u>

68

Total number of people experiencing <u>homelessness</u> or <u>near-homelessness</u>

695

Average age of respondents

38

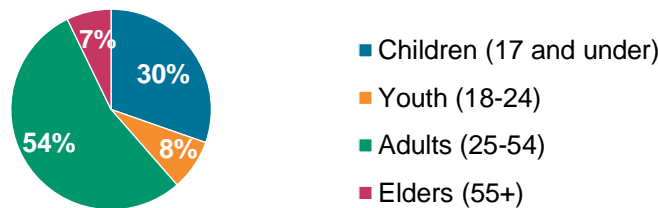**Percentage of respondents** experiencing long-term homelessness

81%

Meeting the federal definition of homelessness: In October 2023, 423 people were interviewed at Red Lake reservation. Counting all respondents, plus their partners and children, there were 627 people who met the federal definition of homelessness - that is, at the time of the survey, they were staying in a shelter, outside, in another space not intended for habitation, or temporarily staying with others (doubled up) if their situation was precarious. For more information on the federal definition of homelessness, please visit: mnhomeless.org.

Number of people experiencing homelessness and near-homelessness:
In addition to the 627 people who met the federal definition of homelessness, 68 people were experiencing near-homelessness on Red Lake at the time of the study – that is, they were staying with others (doubled up) in relatively more stable conditions. Figure 1 shows the ages of these 695 people.

1. **Ages of people experiencing homelessness and near-homelessness at Red Lake, October 2023 (N=695)**

- Children (17 and under) — 30%
- Youth (18-24) — 8%
- Adults (25-54) — 54%
- Elders (55+) — 7%

Note: Because respondents are not asked the specific age of an accompanying spouse, this chart assumes that respondents and their spouses are in the same age category.

Families experiencing homelessness *and* near-homelessness: 23% of respondents were parents of any age who had a child with them at the time of the study. In total, there were 207 children (ranging from under 1 to 17 years old) with their parents; 4 unaccompanied children (ranging from 14 to 17 years old) and 51 unaccompanied youth (age 18 through 24) were also interviewed as a part of the study.

Long-term homeless: Of the 423 respondents, 344 (81%) met Minnesota's criteria for long-term homelessness: those who have been without a permanent residence for at least one year, or four or more times during the last three years. A total of 111 respondents (26%) met the HUD definition of chronic homelessness.

Homelessness on Red Lake reservation

Homelessness and doubling up

Doubling up (living with another household/family unit) has historically been a common form of homelessness on reservations. However, Red Lake members who responded to the 2023 survey were more likely than in prior years to report being literally homeless (living in a shelter, outside or in places not intended for human habitation), versus being doubled up ("near homeless").

▸ In all, 90% of Red Lake respondents and their accompanying family members were literally homeless at the time of the survey and 10% were doubled up.

▸ Among Red Lake respondents who were literally homeless, 48% spent at least one of the last 30 nights outside, in a car or vacant building, or in some other place not intended for housing.

Finding shelter and housing

There are substantial barriers to finding shelter and housing for people experiencing homelessness.

▸ Difficulty finding shelter space was common among Red Lake respondents, 23% of whom were turned away from a shelter in the last three months because there was no space available.

▸ 35% of respondents said that housing affordability was an obstacle to finding housing. Other common barriers included: lack of transportation (32%), lack of rental history or reference (22%), criminal background (19%), credit problems (18%), alcohol use by the respondent or someone in their household (16%), and eviction action or bad rental history (15%).

American Indians in the statewide study (not including reservations)

The reservation survey is conducted every three years with Wilder's statewide study of homelessness, which occurs on the third Thursday in October. Unlike the reservation study, the statewide study only interviews people who meet the federal definition of homelessness and does not include those who are doubled up long-term.

While the homeless study is usually conducted every three years, there was a five-year gap between the 2018 and 2023 studies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

▸ In the 2023 statewide homeless study, **20% of adults identified as American Indian**, either alone or as part of a mixed-race heritage. This is despite the fact that American Indians make up only 1% of the total population in Minnesota.

▸ 18% of people interviewed in the Twin Cities metro area identified as American Indian; 24% of people interviewed in greater Minnesota identified as American Indian.

▸ Similar to respondents on reservations, long-term homelessness was a challenge for American Indian respondents in the statewide survey: **75% of American Indians had been homeless for at least one year, or four or more times during the last three years**, compared with 63% of respondents who did not identify as American Indian.

Although the statewide study and reservation study target slightly different populations, the statewide data can be useful for providing a broader context for the reservation numbers. Statewide survey data are available at mnhomeless.org.

Additional information on the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study

Seven Native nations participated in the 2023 Reservation Homeless Study, including Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, Upper Sioux Community, and White Earth Nation. Wilder is publishing a detailed report on data collected by six of these reservations. Due to differences in timing and methodology, data from Upper Sioux Community will be used for their own internal planning purposes with the intention that the reservation will be fully integrated into the next study cycle.

In-depth 2023 data from **Red Lake** are in the accompanying data tables, organized under the topic areas listed here.

Data Table Topic Areas

- Demographics and education
- Current episode and history of homelessness
- Housing history
- Out-of-home placements
- Incarceration
- Income and benefit/service use

- Employment
- Military service
- Homeless families with children
- Physical and mental health
- Tobacco, alcohol, and chemical dependency
- Adverse childhood experiences and exposure to violence

Before using the tables, please review the attached "Guide to reading data tables."
If you have any questions, please contact Nicole MartinRogers at nicole.martinrogers@wilder.org.
Chi'Miigwech! We appreciate everyone who contributed to the study.