

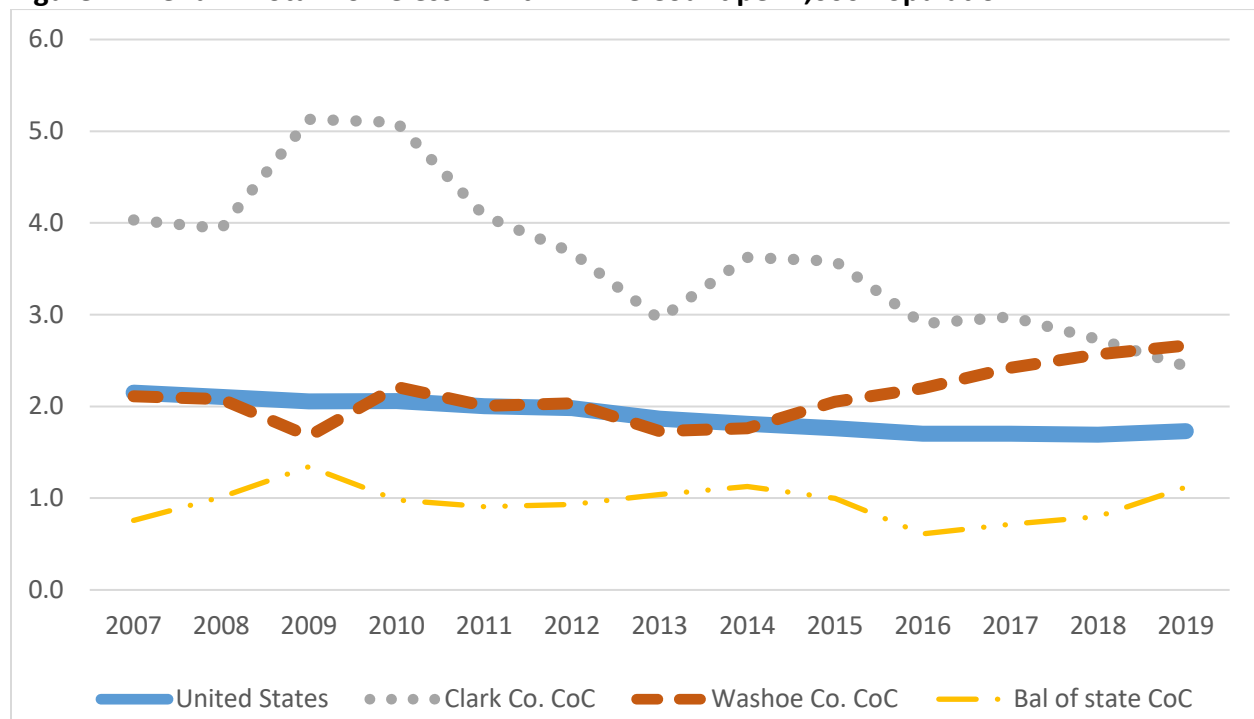
## PIT Homeless Count Trend Graphs

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires each Continuum of Care (CoC) in the country to carry out the Point-In-Time (PIT) count of the homeless sometime in the last week of January. The count is of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless as of a single night.<sup>i</sup> The HUD requirements allow each CoC to choose amongst several different methods of counting and some changes in definition and count protocol have occurred over the years the count has been carried out. By its nature, it is difficult to obtain a comprehensive count of people who do not have an established home and the numbers must be understood in that context. Nevertheless, looking back at the data over time and across regions is beneficial in understanding the bigger picture.<sup>ii</sup>

### Nevada Continuum of Care PIT Homeless Trends

Figure 1 shows the time trend for total homeless PIT counts per 1,000 population by each of the Nevada CoCs, (Las Vegas/Clark County CoC (Clark County CoC), Reno/Sparks/Washoe County CoC (Washoe County CoC) and Nevada Balance of State CoC (Rural Nevada CoC) and for the U.S. from 2007 to 2019. Using a rate of Point-in-Time homeless count per thousand population helps to account for population increase or decrease and helps facilitate comparisons across regions.

**Figure 1. Trend in Total Homeless Point-in-Time Count per 1,000 Population<sup>iii</sup>**



Clark County’s rate of homeless PIT count varied from 2.4 to 5.1 homeless per thousand population. There was a decrease in the Clark County rate of PIT homelessness from 2007 to 2019 of 40%. This was a faster rate of decrease than occurred in the U.S. as a whole which had a decrease of 20%. Throughout the period, rates of PIT homelessness were high in Clark County as compared to the national rate. For example, Clark County CoC’s rate of PIT homelessness was 2.4 per 1,000 population in 2019 as compared to the national rate of 1.7 per thousand.

On the other hand, Washoe County roughly matched the U.S. PIT count per thousand until recently. From 2015 to 2019 the PIT count per thousand in Washoe County increased with the result being a rate of 2.7 per thousand, higher than the national average and for the first time, higher than the rate in Clark County. In the Rural Nevada CoC, PIT count per thousand has been lower than the national average. However, not all rural counties have enough staffing or volunteers to carry out the PIT count, so for this and other reasons the Rural Nevada CoC PIT may undercount homeless at a greater rate than the urban CoCs.

Rural areas of the state face even greater challenges in obtaining an accurate count of the homeless. Resources for carrying out the count over a large land area with small population are limited. Some rural counties are unable to carry out a count every year.<sup>iv</sup> For these reasons the Rural Nevada CoC numbers are even more likely to underestimate the extent of homelessness than urban areas.

### Southwestern States PIT Homeless Trends

**Figure 2. Trend in Total Homeless PIT Count per 1,000 population for Southwestern States**

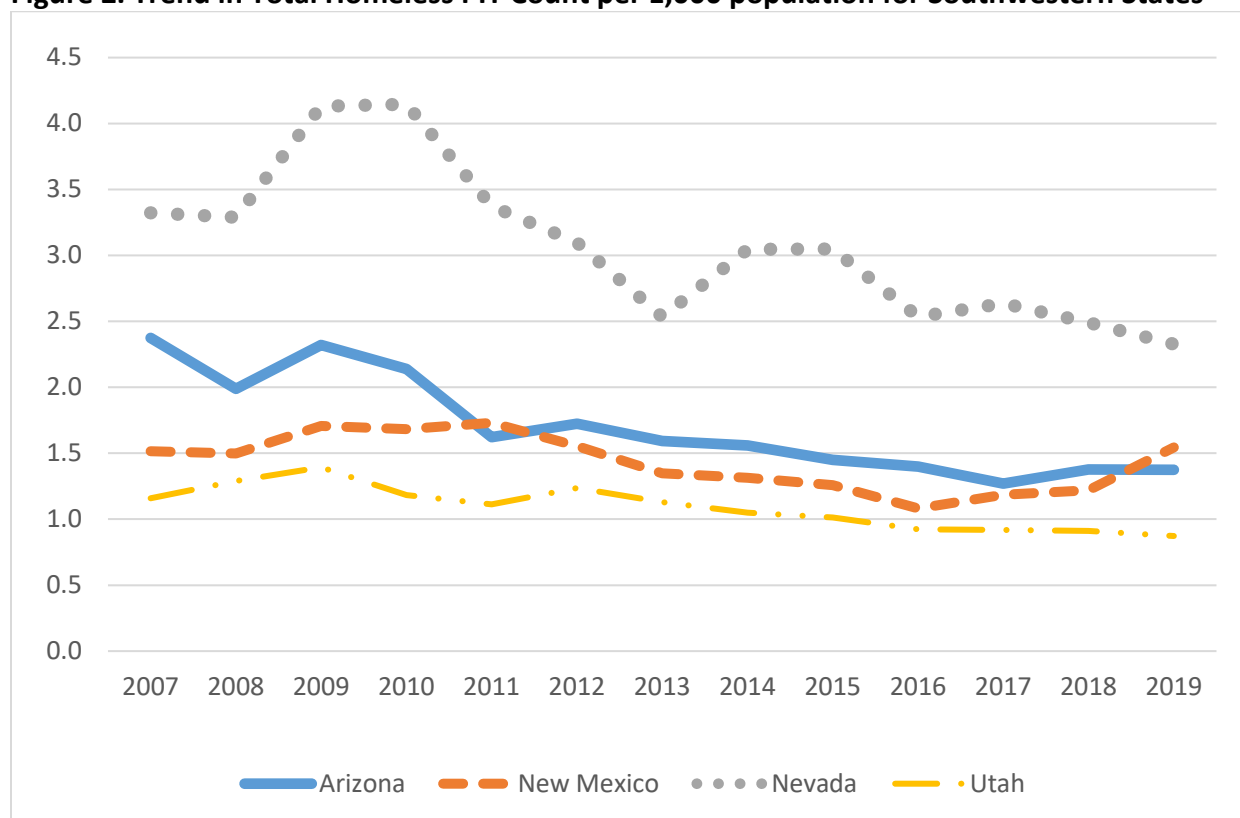


Figure 2 compares Nevada’s trend in PIT homelessness rates to nearby southwestern states. As can be observed, rates were high in Nevada as compared to other southwestern states. All regions experienced decreases in PIT homelessness rates over the period except for New Mexico. Arizona decreased 42%, Nevada 30% and Utah 25%. New Mexico’s rate increased by 2% with a 27% increase in rate of homelessness from 2018 to 2019. Utah’s overall rate of PIT homelessness was the lowest throughout reaching 0.9 per 1000 in 2016 and remaining so through to 2019.

### Veteran Homeless Trends

Veteran homelessness has been targeted for complete elimination by the Federal government.<sup>v</sup> As a part of that effort, nationwide over 100,000 VASH vouchers have been issued since 2008. The VASH vouchers are a joint program between U.S. Housing and Urban Development and Department of Veterans Affairs that provide rental assistance and wrap around supportive services to homeless or at-risk veterans. A total of 1,419 VASH vouchers were awarded to the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority, 318 to the Reno Housing Authority and 97 to the Nevada Rural Housing Authority. The target date for functional zero veteran homelessness was 2015 with the bulk of the vouchers issued in 2015 or before.<sup>vi</sup>

Functional zero homelessness was defined to mean that a system is in place to house any veterans that might be homeless almost as soon as they become homeless. The system may be different in different communities. It does not necessarily imply that there would be zero homeless veterans in the PIT count. Las Vegas has become one of the communities that reduced veteran homelessness to functional zero.<sup>vii</sup> In 2015 Las Vegas was able to place nearly 1,400 homeless veterans in permanent housing. Over a ninety-day period the city was able to place more veterans in permanent housing (510) than were identified as newly homeless (396) during the same period.<sup>viii</sup>

From 2011 to 2019 the rate of veteran PIT homelessness per 1,000 veterans decreased 52% in Clark County as compared to 32% decrease in the U.S. The rate of veteran PIT homelessness in Washoe County fluctuated, increasing by 132% from the low 2011 baseline (1.7 per 1,000) to 3.2 per 1,000 and by 124% in the Rural Nevada CoC. The rates throughout were higher in Clark Co. as compared to US rates. In 2019, 2.1 veterans per thousand were found to be homeless at a given point in time at the national level, 3.8 per 1,000 in Clark County and 3.2 per 1,000 in Washoe County.

**Figure 3. Homeless Veteran PIT Count per 1,000 Veterans for Nevada CoCs<sup>ix</sup>**

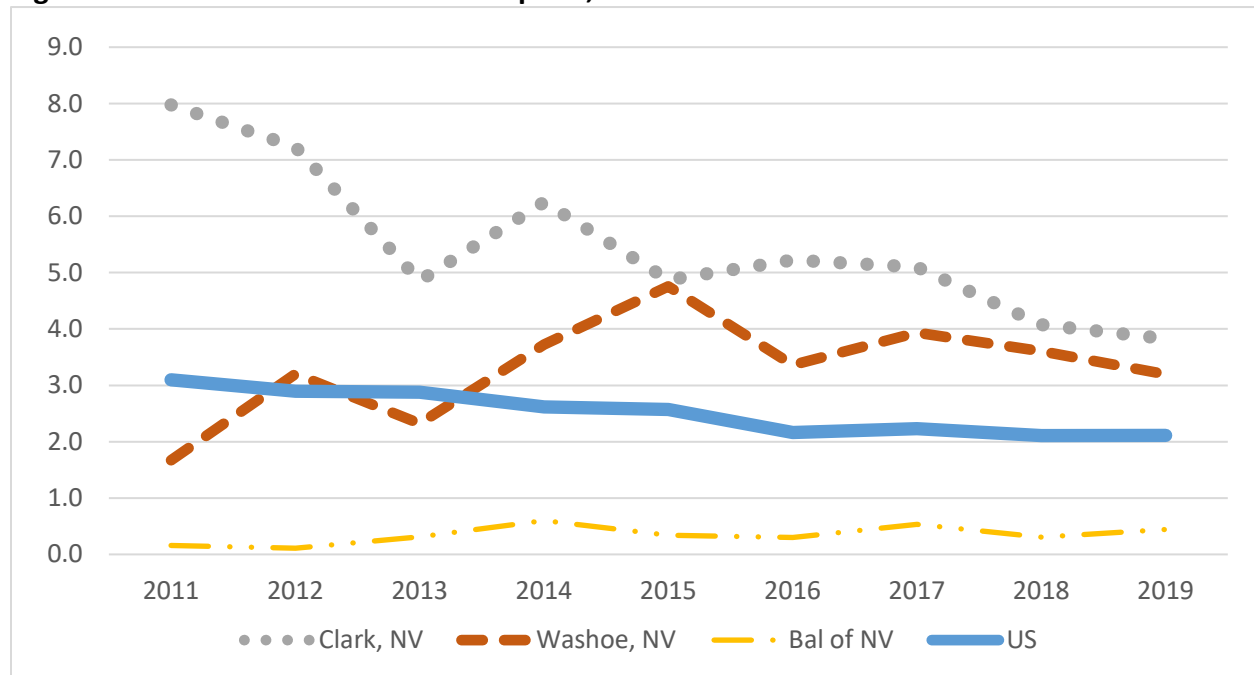
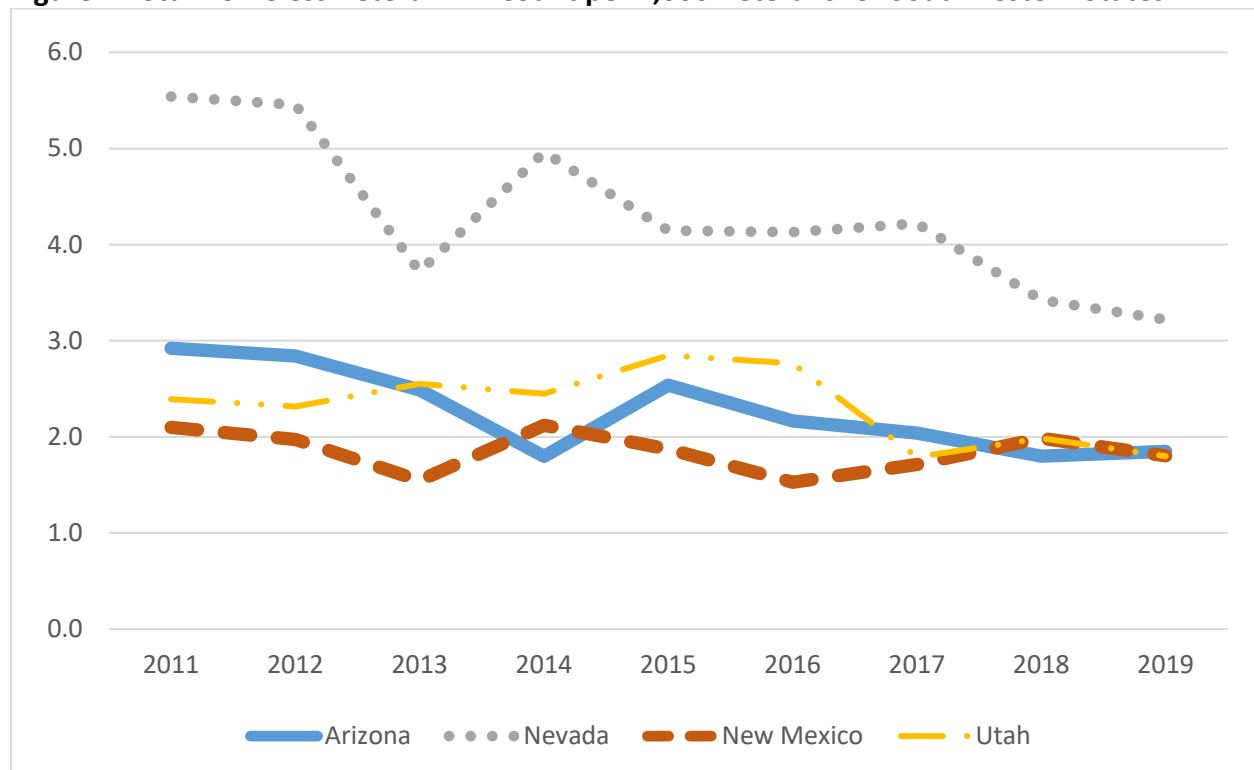


Figure 4 below compares the rate and trend of veteran PIT homelessness across southwestern states for the period 2011 to 2019. The highest rates were experienced in Nevada at 3.2 per 1,000 while all three other states had approximately the same rate at 1.8 per 1,000. Over the period, rates decreased the most for Nevada (42% decrease) and Arizona (37%).

The reader is cautioned that estimates of the number of veterans from the American Community Survey have a wide confidence interval which in turn influences the rate of homelessness giving those estimates a wide confidence interval as well. The 2019 total veterans number is extrapolated.

**Figure 4 Total Homeless Veteran PIT Count per 1,000 Veterans for Southwestern States<sup>x</sup>**



**Chronic Homelessness Trends**

Chronic homelessness is defined by HUD as an individual who is currently homeless, and has been continuously homeless for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years where the combined length of time homeless on those occasions is at least 12 months; and has a disability or as a family whose household head meets this definition.<sup>xi</sup>

Research has shown that chronic homelessness is more expensive for communities than providing permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families.<sup>xii</sup> In the previous presidential administration, strong effort has been aimed at reducing chronic homelessness and rates had been decreasing. Since 2016 rates increased in almost every jurisdiction examined

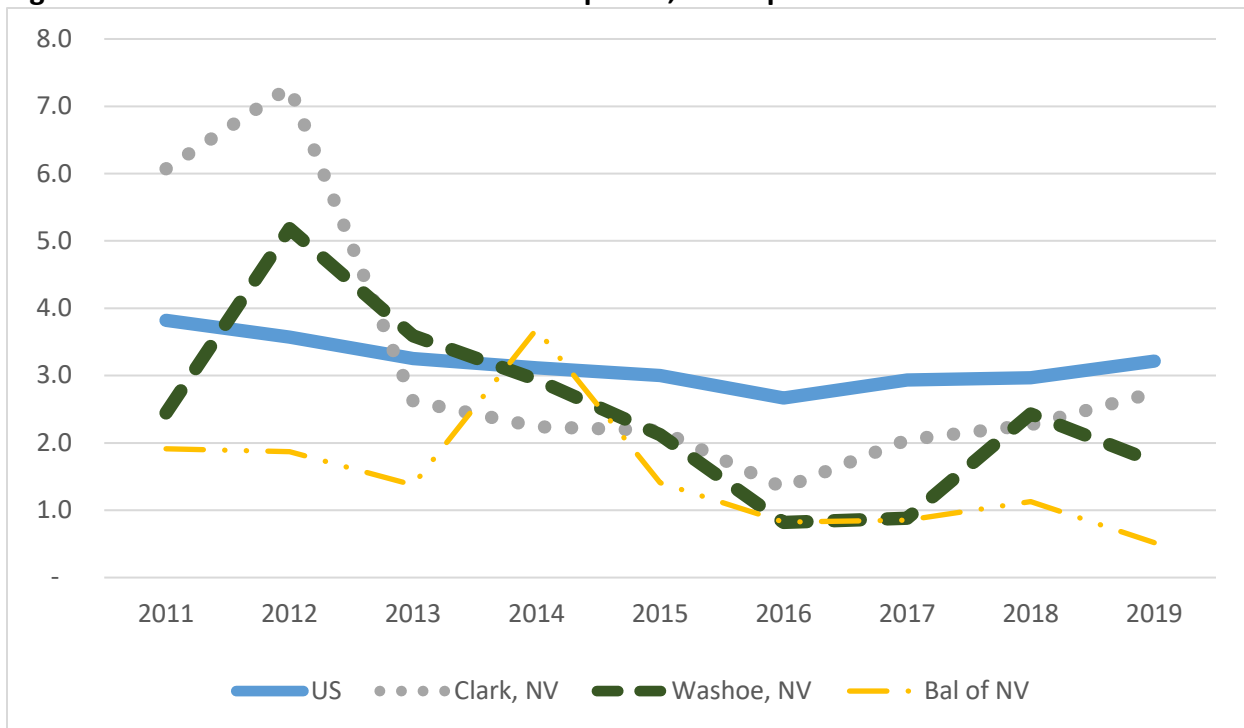
The rate of chronic homeless in the PIT count has decreased 55% from 6.1 per 10,000 population in 2011 to 2.7 per 10,000 population in 2019 in Clark Co. CoC. Washoe CoC’s rate fluctuated but ended at 2.4 per 10,000 in 2019, approximately 30% lower than it was in 2007 at 2.4 per 10,000 population. The

U.S. rate decreased modestly by 16% from 3.8 per 10,000 to 3.2 per 10,000 population. Almost all the decreases occurred before 2016 and lower rates have since eroded.

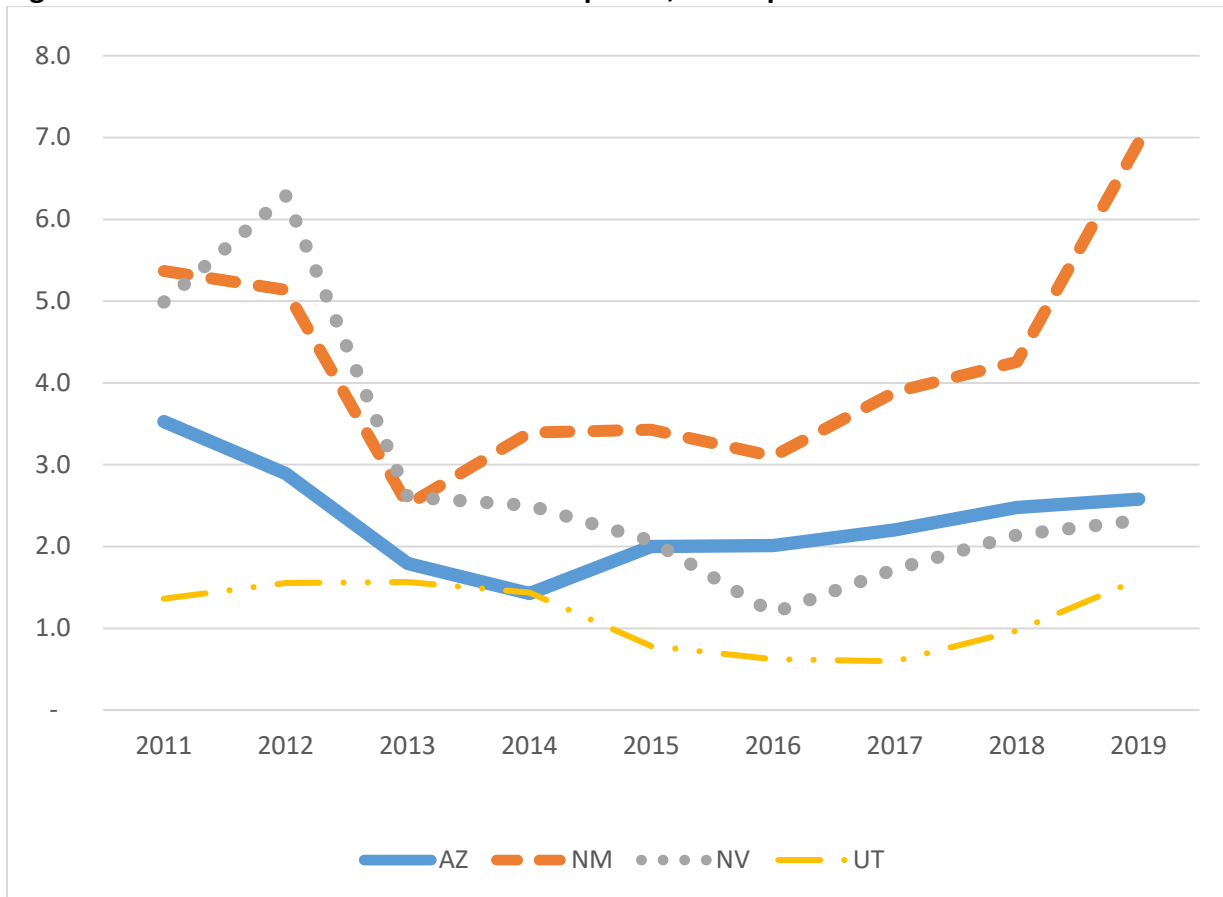
In comparing southwestern states, Nevada had the second lowest rate of chronic homelessness in 2019 with a rate of 2.3 per 10,000 population. Utah had the lowest rate at 1.6 per 10,000 population. Over the period from 2011 to 2019, Nevada experienced the largest decrease in its rate at 53%. Arizona’s rates decreased by 27%. New Mexico’s rate increased 29% and Utah’s increased by 17%.

For both Figure 5 and Figure 6, a strong pattern seems to have developed of increasing chronic homeless rates since 2016. The only region that has not increased its rate since 2016 is rural Nevada.

**Figure 5. Total Chronic Homeless PIT Count per 10,000 Population for Nevada CoCs**



**Figure 6. Total Chronic Homeless PIT Count per 10,000 Population for Southwest States**



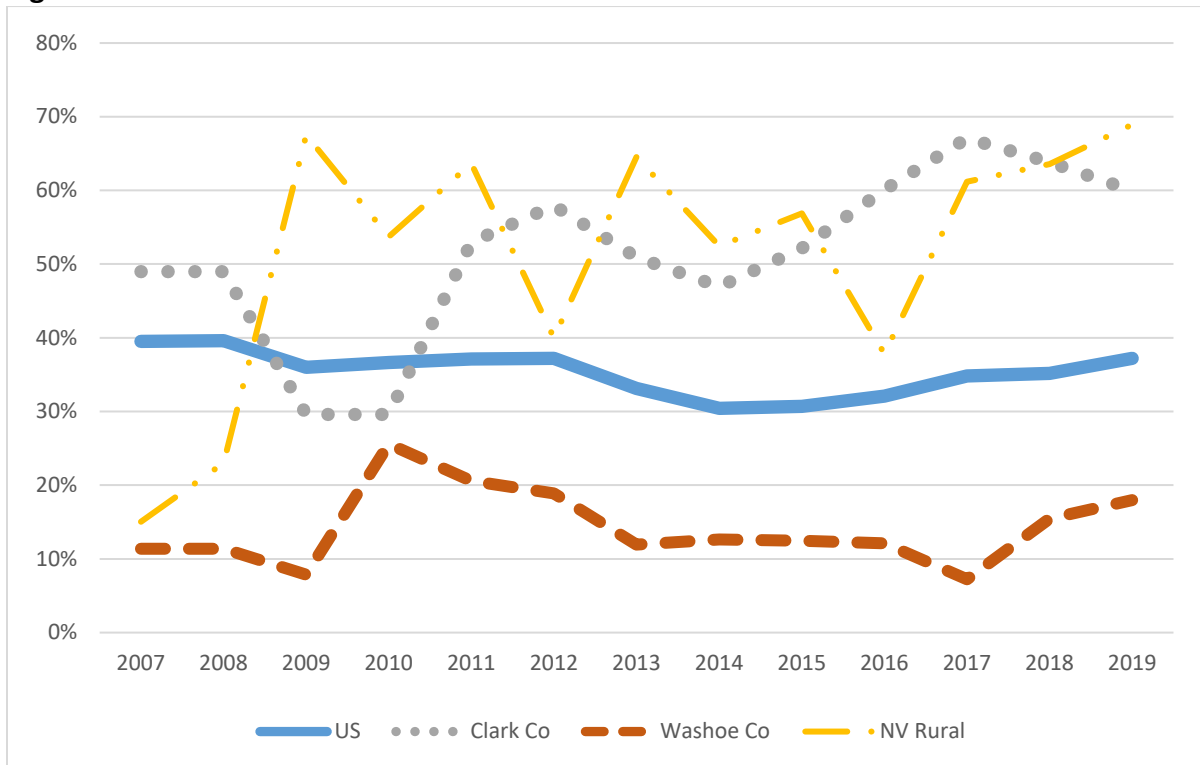
**Percent Unsheltered**

Sheltered homeless are those living in shelters for temporary living including homeless shelters, transitional housing and hotels and motels paid for by non-profit organizations or governments. Unsheltered homeless are people spending the night in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.

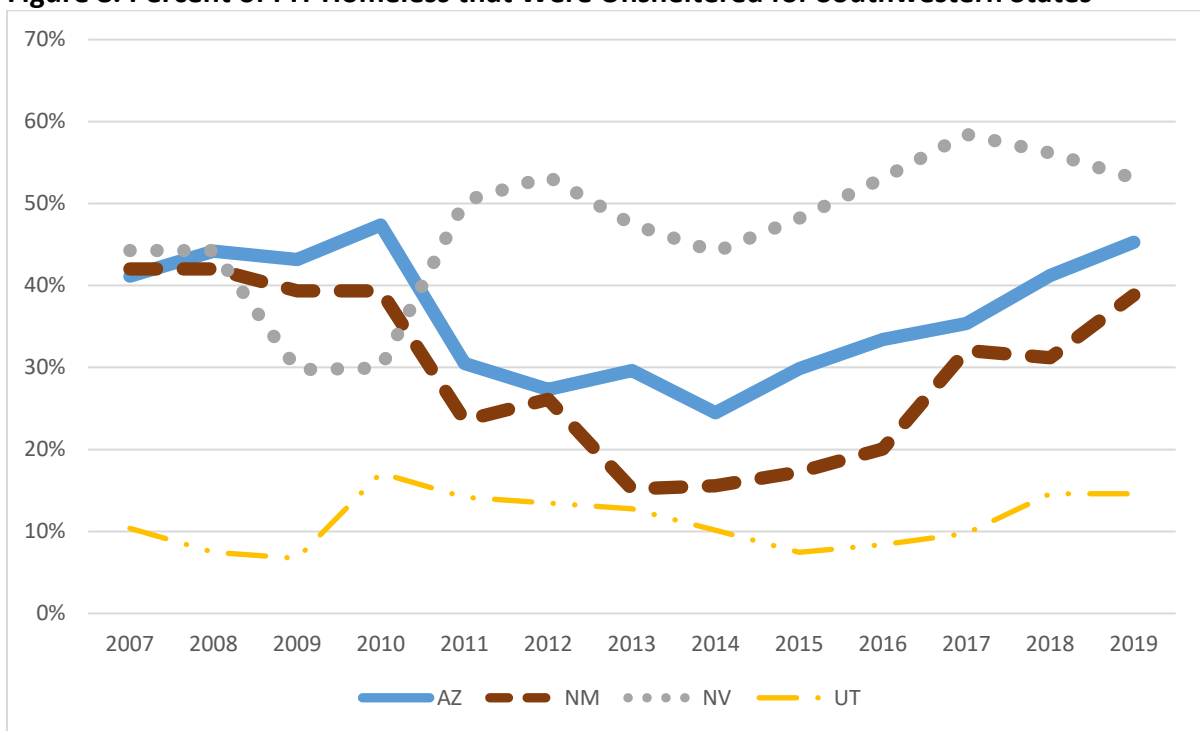
Nationally, the proportion of homeless found to be unsheltered on the night of the point in time count decreased from 40% to 37% from 2007 to 2019. Nevada CoCs proportion of unsheltered homeless increased over the same period. Clark County CoC proportion of unsheltered increased from 49% to 60%, Washoe County CoC from 11 to 18% and rural Nevada CoC from 15% to 69%. In Washoe County, overflow shelters due to inclement weather are often open during the January PIT count.

Comparing the percentage of homeless who were unsheltered in various southwestern states, Utah had the lowest ranging from 7% to 17% over the 2007 to 2019 period. Nevada’s proportion of unsheltered homeless started at about the same level as Arizona’s and New Mexico’s with 44% but increased to 53%. Arizona’s proportion increased to 45% and New Mexico’s decreased to 39%.

**Figure 7. Percent of PIT Homeless that Were Unsheltered for Nevada CoCs**



**Figure 8. Percent of PIT Homeless that Were Unsheltered for Southwestern States**





Further detail on the components of homelessness in Nevada are available in the HUD PIT counts online at HUD Exchange Homeless Population and Subpopulation Reports and in the reports published by the CoCs, for example, see Homeless PIT Reports. Links to these resources are in the endnotes.



## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> The PIT count is not the same as the estimate of total population that has experienced a bout of homelessness over the entire year. For annual estimates, the PIT count is adjusted upward by two factors, according to a standard HUD prescribed method. First, the number of homeless who became homeless in the last seven days is multiplied by 51. Then the proportion of currently homeless who have experienced more than one homeless episode in the past year is used to adjust this number downward. These factors also vary.

<sup>ii</sup> Bitfocus, Inc. for Help Hope Home. 2016. Homeless Census and Survey 2016 Southern Nevada Comprehensive Report and U.S. Housing and Urban Development. 2014. Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide. <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/PIT-Count-Methodology-Guide.pdf> accessed May 8 2017.

<sup>iii</sup> Unless otherwise noted the sources of data for the graphs are as follows: U.S. Housing and Urban Development Point in Time Counts 2007 to 2019: [CoC Homeless Populations and Subpopulations Reports](#) downloaded 1-9-2020, U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/data/tables.html> accessed 4-27-2020 and calculations by author.

<sup>iv</sup> For example, see page 4 to 8 in A Study of Homeless in Rural Counties in Nevada: Rural Nevada Continuum of Care 2015 Point in Time Report.

<sup>v</sup> See United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2015, Opening Doors , Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, Washington D.C.

[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/USICH\\_OpeningDoors\\_Amendment2015\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> U.S. Housing and Urban Development [https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/HUD-VASH\\_Vouchers\\_2008-2019.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/HUD-VASH_Vouchers_2008-2019.pdf)

<sup>vii</sup> United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. "Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness" <https://www.usich.gov/solutions/collaborative-leadership/mayors-challenge>

<sup>viii</sup> Bond, Alison. January 2016. "How Southern Nevada Achieved and End to Veteran Homelessness." [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Case\\_Study\\_Southern\\_Nevada.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Case_Study_Southern_Nevada.pdf) Department of Veterans Affairs

<sup>ix</sup> Sources are as noted in endnote 4 but add Table B21003 VETERAN STATUS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER. 2019 estimates of veteran population were extrapolated using compound annual growth rates.

<sup>x</sup> Sources are as noted for Figure 3.

<sup>xi</sup> Bitfocus, Inc. for Help Hope Home. 2016. Homeless Census and Survey 2016 Southern Nevada Comprehensive Report

<sup>xii</sup> United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. "Ending Chronic Homelessness in 2017" [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Ending\\_Chronic\\_Homelessness\\_in\\_2017.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Ending_Chronic_Homelessness_in_2017.pdf)