

2026 REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS ANALYSIS

Orange County + Los Angeles County



Current official Point-in-Time estimates, comparative interpretation, and a practical navigation response.

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ORANGE COUNTY	LOS ANGELES COUNTY	COMBINED SNAPSHOT
6,321	73,040	79,361
2026 PIT total	2026 PIT estimate	Analytical sum

2026 Point-in-Time Homelessness by County and Living Situation

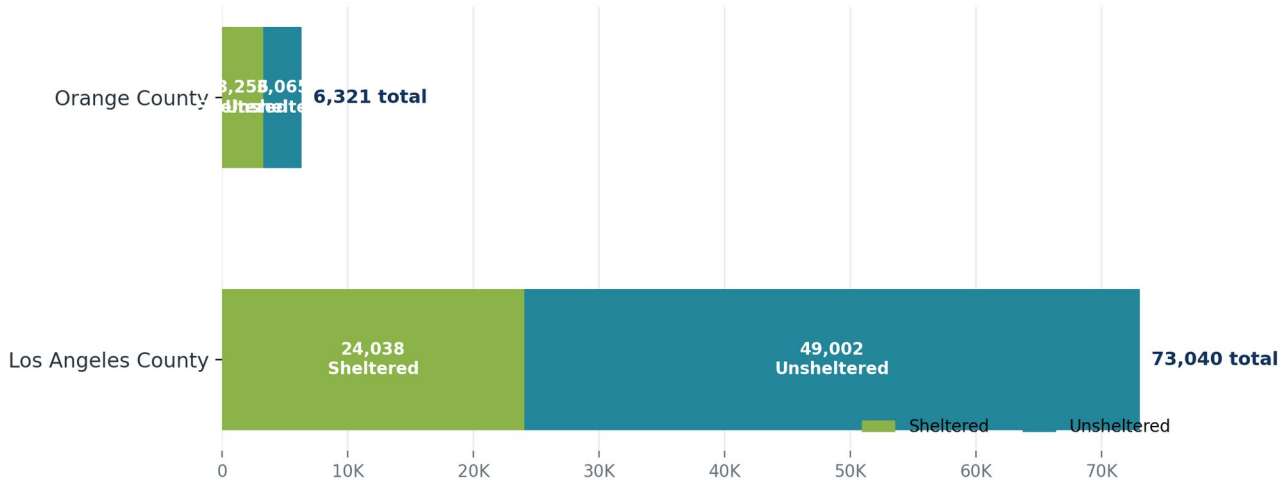


Figure 1. Official 2026 county PIT totals. LA sheltered count is calculated as total minus unsheltered.

What the comparison shows

Los Angeles County accounts for 92.0% of the two-county total, but scale alone does not define the service strategy. LA’s 49,002 unsheltered residents represent 67.1% of its count. Orange County’s 3,065 unsheltered residents represent 48.5%, and for the first time its sheltered count exceeds its unsheltered count. Orange County is moving more people indoors; Los Angeles is experiencing a regional throughput bottleneck that leaves more people outside.

CRITICAL INTERPRETATION

A PIT Count estimates homelessness on one night. It is essential for comparison and planning, but it understates the number of people who cycle through homelessness during a full year.

Expert Comparative Analysis

Measure	Orange County	Los Angeles County	Two-County View
Total homelessness	6,321	73,040	79,361
Sheltered	3,256 (51.5%)	24,038 (32.9%)	27,294 (34.4%)
Unsheltered	3,065 (48.5%)	49,002 (67.1%)	52,067 (65.6%)

Combined Orange + Los Angeles County Snapshot



Figure 2. Analytical sum of the two independently administered 2026 PIT Counts.

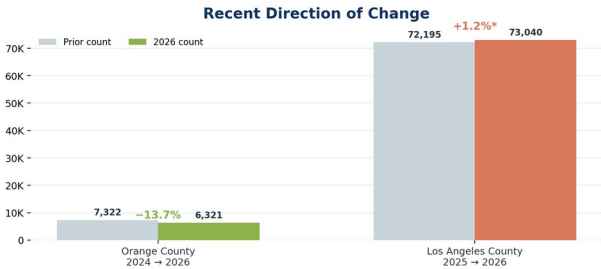


Figure 3. OC uses 2024; LA uses finalized 2025. *LAHSA says 1.2% is not statistically significant.

Three findings that matter

1. Unsheltered homelessness dominates the combined burden.

52,067 people—65.6%—were unsheltered, increasing the need for street engagement, document recovery, transportation, and persistent follow-up.

2. The counties are moving in different directions.

Orange County decreased 13.7% from 2024, including a 26.6% unsheltered decline. Los Angeles increased 1.2% from 2025; LAHSA says the total change is not statistically significant, but unsheltered homelessness rose 3.3%.

3. System flow—not simply referral availability—is the decisive issue.

LAHSA links reduced Time Limited Subsidy activity with fewer permanent placements, less movement through interim housing, and more returns to the street. A referral matters only when a person can complete it.

How 2 Steps Away Can Deliver a Viable, Measurable Response

2 Steps Away, Inc. is best positioned as a high-touch community resource navigator—not as a replacement for county coordinated entry, shelters, housing authorities, health plans, or clinical providers. Its comparative advantage is converting fragmented information into completed connections for people who face practical, behavioral-health, recovery, and justice-involved barriers.

THE SERVICE GAP

Large systems hold the housing, healthcare, treatment, benefits, and employment resources. 2 Steps Away can help participants successfully reach, understand, and remain connected to those systems.

Five-part solution model

ENGAGE	Use low-barrier outreach and lived-experience-informed trust building to reach people who are disconnected or have experienced repeated referral failure.
ASSESS	Complete a concise whole-person screening covering housing, behavioral health, substance use, benefits, identification, transportation, reentry, and immediate safety.
NAVIGATE	Create an individualized action plan, verify eligibility and provider availability, prepare documents, support calls, and arrange warm handoffs.
FOLLOW THROUGH	Track referral status at 30, 60, and 90 days; troubleshoot missed connections; update plans when capacity, eligibility, or participant circumstances change.
MEASURE	Report enrollment, referral completion, service connection, benefits progress, participant confidence, satisfaction, equity, and unresolved system barriers.

Recommended six-month demonstration targets

- Enroll 25 eligible participants and complete 25 individualized service plans.
- Provide a verified housing referral to at least 80% of participants.
- Connect at least 60% of participants identifying a need to behavioral-health or substance-use resources.
- Support at least 50% of participants needing benefits with an application or eligibility action.
- Confirm at least one completed service connection for 60% of all participants.
- Complete a 90-day follow-up with at least 80% of participants who remain reachable.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

2 Steps Away can become a reliable bridge between people and systems—providing accurate screening, verified referrals, supported introductions, barrier resolution, documented follow-up, and honest outcome reporting.

Sources and methodology

County of Orange. (May 18, 2026). 2026 Point In Time Count Results. <https://www.ocgov.com/press/county-orange-announces-2026-point-time-count-results>
LAHSA. (July 24, 2026; updated July 30, 2026). 2026 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Data. <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=1078>
LAHSA. (July 24, 2026). 2026 Homeless Count Results and System Bottleneck Analysis. <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=1079>
Method note: The combined total is an analytical sum, not an official regional count. LA sheltered count (24,038) equals LAHSA’s total (73,040) minus its unsheltered estimate (49,002). Percentages may vary slightly due to rounding.