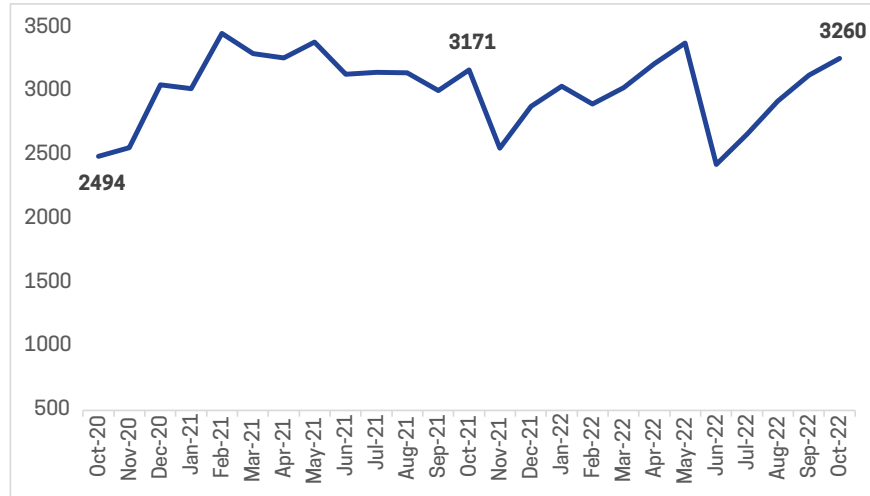# Key Findings: Homelessness

## The number of people experiencing homelessness increased between October 2021 and October 2022
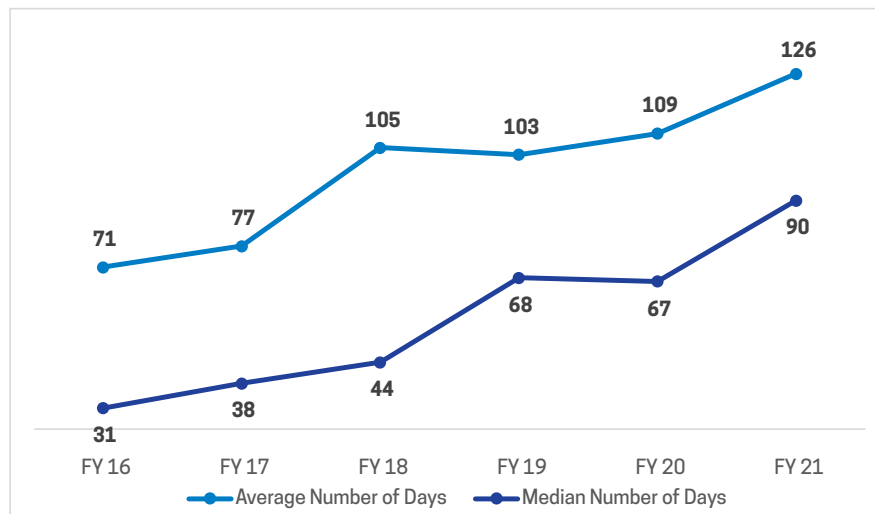
As of October 2022, there were 3,260 people in Mecklenburg County actively experiencing homelessness, a 3% increase (from 3,171 people) from October 2021. Although there was a decrease in June 2022, it was temporary. The One Number has risen steadily since Fall 2022. Households currently experiencing homelessness are primarily adults ages 25 to 54 (45%) and Black or African American (76%). The One Number includes individuals experiencing homelessness in shelters and unsheltered locations.



See page 51 for more.

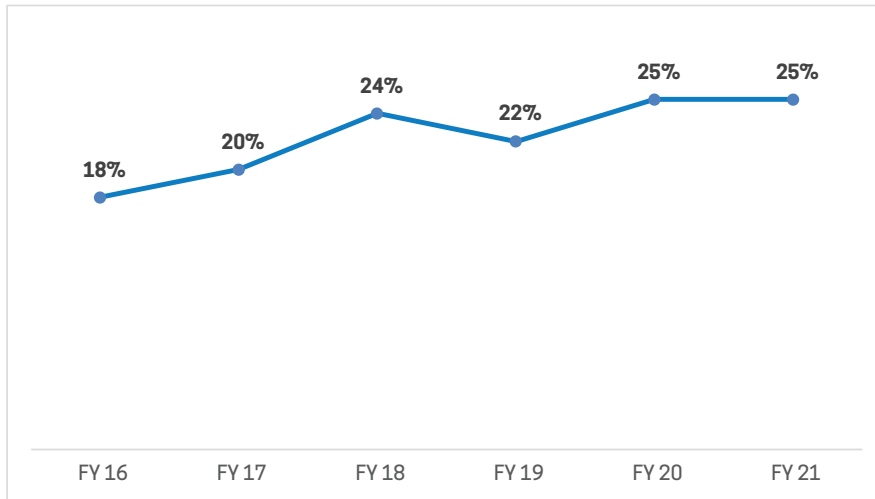## The average length of emergency shelter stays is increasing

The average length of time that people spent in emergency shelter before exiting to permanent housing increased by 17 days from FY20 to FY21. Average time in emergency shelter has increased 63% (60 days) over the past seven years; from 66 days in FY15 to 126 days in FY21. The increased time in shelter is due to numerous factors, primarily a lack of affordable and available housing.



See page 57 for more.

## Total returns to homelessness have increased 7% since 2016

The percent of people who returned to homelessness after exiting to permanent housing increased from 18% (or 202 returns) in FY1 to 25% (or 634 returns) in FY21. The overall increase in returns to homelessness is primarily due to the increase in the number of returns from people who exited to permanent housing from emergency shelter. Despite overall increases, most people who exit to a permanent housing program (RRH, PSH, OPH) do not return to homelessness within two years. This suggests that permanent housing programs (which include a rental subsidy and/or supportive services) reduce the likelihood that an individual will return to homelessness. Even with the low rate of return to homelessness after exiting to a permanent housing program, there are opportunities to strengthen permanent housing placements to ensure that there are fewer returns.