



Quarterly Housing Report

Q2 July, August, September 2022



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Overview

This report gives an overview of housing and homelessness data from programs provided or funded by the Social Supports Branch (SSB) for Q2 2022-2023 (July, August and September). Data from the following programs is included:

1. Emergency shelters,
2. Transitional and supported housing,
3. Social Assistance (including Yukon Supplementary Allowance), and
4. Community Outreach Services.

Context

There is unmet demand for housing with services, including emergency shelters, transitional housing and housing with supports, as highlighted in the May 2022 [report on Yukon Housing](#) from the Office of the Auditor General (OAG). In response to recommendations from the OAG, the Quarterly Housing Report is intended to support analysis and decision-making pertaining to housing needs.

This report shows an increase in emergency shelter use over the past 18 months (Figure 3). The Whitehorse Emergency Shelter reached capacity on a couple of nights in early September and several guests were turned away due to being full. Multiple factors likely contributed to this increase in shelter use. Many hotels ended monthly rentals for the summer tourist season resulting in loss of provisional accommodation for vulnerable Yukoners and displacement to shelters. Easing COVID restrictions may have also been a factor as shelters were able to increase the number of beds available. Data from the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter appears to show shelter use so far for 2022-2023 returning to pre-pandemic levels (Figure 2).

All Yukoners are feeling the pinch with inflation continuing to rise and housing becoming more unaffordable. The [Consumer Price Index for Whitehorse](#) shows that shelter costs have increased 8.7% between October 2021 and October 2022. According to the Yukon Bureau of Statistics' [Real Estate Report](#), home prices in Whitehorse reached record highs last quarter, at over \$700,000 for a single-detached house. Rental costs also continue to increase, with the most recent [Rent Survey](#) showing median rent increasing by 5.2% to \$1,300 between October 2021 and April 2022 for rental units in all types of buildings in the Yukon. The vacancy rate dropped from 2.5% to only 1.6%, meaning it is more difficult for renters to find a home that is affordable and meets their needs.

In response to the increasing demand for emergency shelter, SSB collaborated with Safe at Home Society in September to cross-reference the By-Name List with data on current housing status of SSB clients accessing the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, Social Assistance, and Community Outreach Services. This identified 14 individuals in Whitehorse experiencing unsheltered homeless, 19 individuals who may soon be unsheltered homeless, as well as a

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

number of clients who access Whitehorse Emergency Shelter but have alternate accommodation and may be diverted from shelter stays. SSB is working alongside Yukon Housing Corporation and Safe at Home Society to examine several options to address homelessness in Whitehorse for the winter months.

1. Emergency shelter use

Looking at all shelters together, the total number and average number of guests per night has increased month-to-month over Q2 (Tables 1 and 2, Figure 1).

Table 1: Total shelter use per month (total bed nights per month)

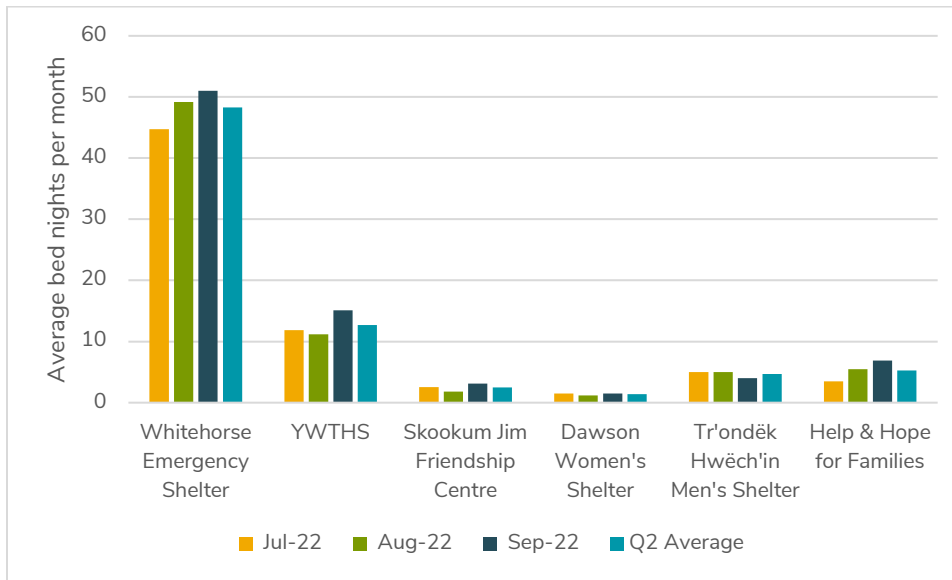
	JUL-22	AUG-22	SEP-22	Q2 TOTAL
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter	1387	1524	1530	4441
Yukon Women's Transition Home Society (YWTHS)	367	347	453	1167
Skookum Jim Friendship Centre – Youth Shelter	78	56	93	227
Dawson Women's Shelter	47	37	45	129
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Men's Shelter	155	155	120	430
Help & Hope for Families – Women's Shelter	108	169	207	484
TOTAL	2142	2288	2488	6878

Table 2: Average number of shelter guests per night (average bed nights per month)

	JUL-22	AUG-22	SEP-22	Q2 AVERAGE	CAPACITY (TOTAL BEDS)
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter	44.7	49.1	51.0	48.3	54 (30 are overflow)
Yukon Women's Transition Home Society (YWTHS)	11.8	11.2	15.1	12.7	15
Skookum Jim Friendship Centre – Youth Shelter	2.5	1.8	3.1	2.5	11
Dawson Women's Shelter	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.4	5 (1 is overflow)
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Men's Shelter	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.7	5
Help & Hope for Families – Women's Shelter	3.5	5.5	6.9	5.3	11
TOTAL	69.1	73.8	81.6	74.8	101

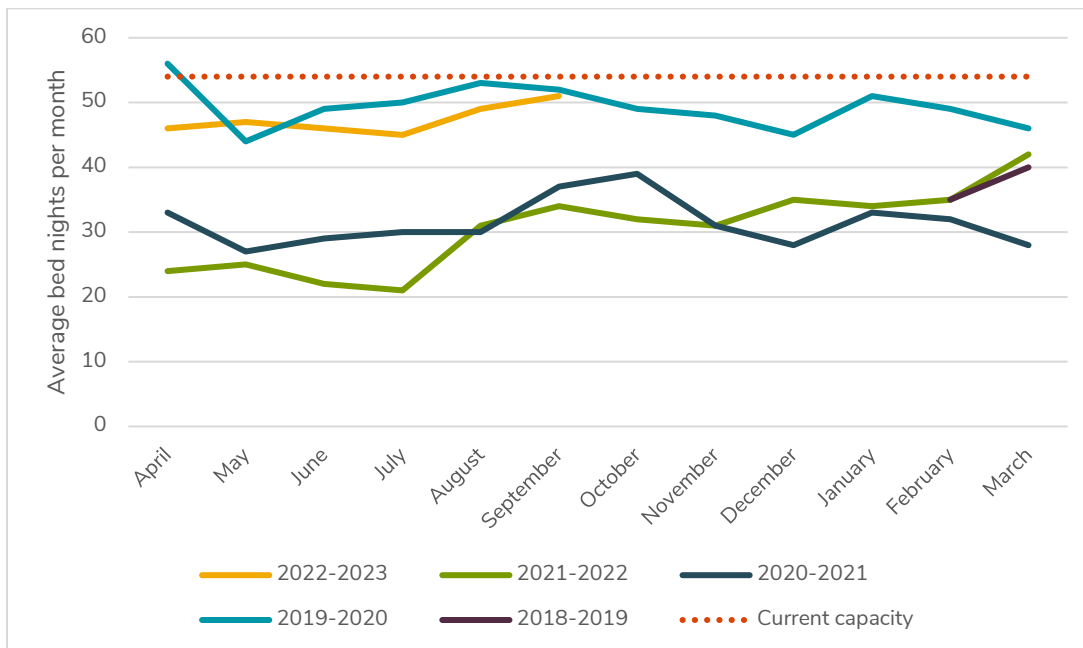
Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Figure 1: Average number of shelter guests per night (average bed nights per month)



Shelter use data is available for the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter going back to February 2019, when SSB assumed operations. Figure 2 shows the average bed nights per month over the last five years. It appears that shelter use so far in 2022-2023 is returning to levels seen in 2019-2022, pre-pandemic.

Figure 2: Year-over-year average bed nights per month, Whitehorse Emergency Shelter (February 2019 to April 2022)



Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Across all shelters, usage data is available for the last 18 months from April 2021 onward. Figure 3 and Figure 4 show that shelter use has trended upward during this timeframe.

Figure 3: Total bed nights per month, all shelters (April 2021 to September 2022)

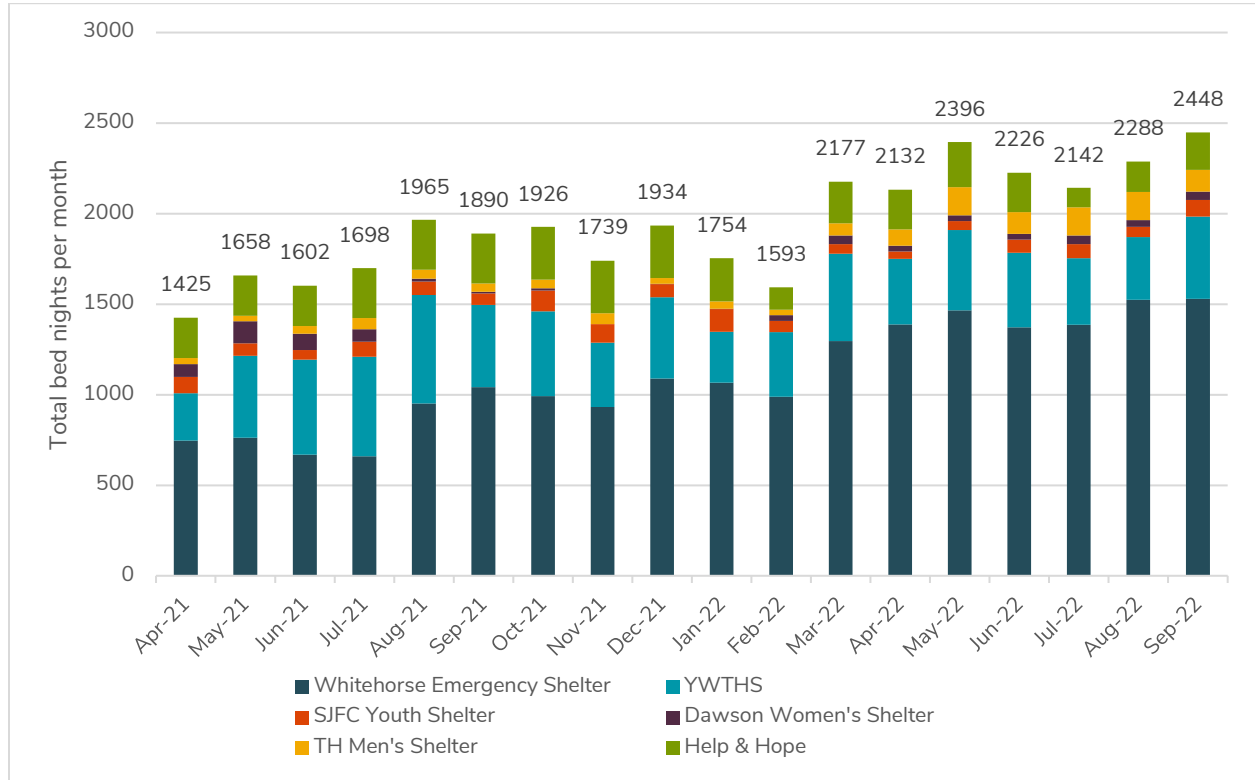
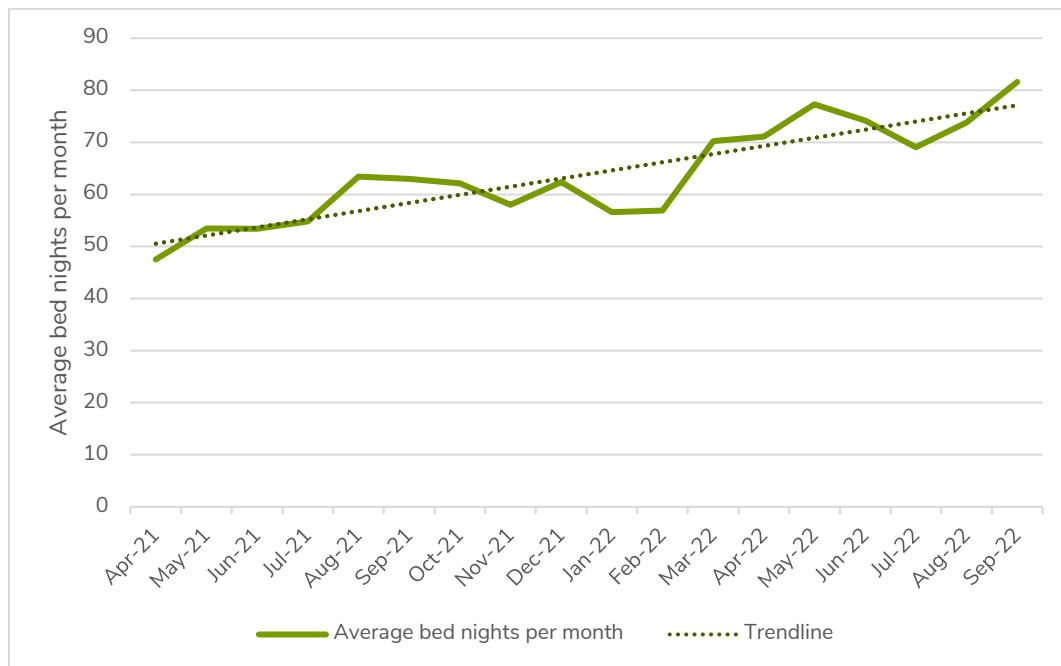


Figure 4: Average bed nights per month, all shelters (April 2021 to September 2022)



Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

2. Transitional housing and housing with supports

In addition to emergency shelters, transitional housing and housing with supports are essential parts of the housing continuum. The total number of residents living in these housing programs remained consistent month-to-month over Q2 (Table 3). Overall, these housing programs were near or at capacity for Q2, with one program over capacity.

Table 3: Number of residents per month in transitional housing and housing with supports

	JUL-22	AUG-22	SEP-22	CAPACITY	NOTES
Disabilities Services – Clients in residential placements ¹	69	68	68	Varies	Capacity varies depending on number of approved homes and out of territory placements
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter – Housing First	20	20	20	20	20 units, all single units
Connective – Housing First	17	17	17	16 to 18	16 units, including 14 studio-style and 2 one-bedroom units, can accommodate 16 to 18 individuals
Cornerstone – Supported Independent Living (SIL) ²	21	21	21	21	45 units total, all single units, 21 units have supports funded by HSS
YWTHS – Second Stage Housing (transitional)	15	14	14	15	15 units, 10 at Betty's Haven and 5 at Kaushee's, can accommodate 15 adult women plus their children
Help & Hope for Families – Second Stage Housing (transitional)	5	6	6	4	4 units, can accommodate 4 adult women plus their children
TOTAL	147	146	146	Varies	

Notes:

1. Disabilities Services residential placements include Group Homes (Aspen, St. Elias, Granger Haven, Aurora, Max's Place, and Connective YRB client), Approved Homes, Out of Territory Placements, and Options for Independence (a supported apartment program).
2. Cornerstone is a new SIL residence operated by Opportunities Yukon, which opened in June 2022. There are 45 SIL units in the building, 21 of which have support services provided and funded by HSS. The remaining SIL units have supports provided and funded by other organizations.

New projects are planned that will increase the availability of housing with services in the Yukon (Table 4).

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Table 4: Planned housing with services projects

Project	Community	Housing Supports	Timeline
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Men's Shelter new building	Dawson City	Will provide 10 new shelter and transitional units that can accommodate 14 beds for men experiencing homelessness	Planned completion December 2022
Watson Lake Housing First building	Watson Lake	Will provide 10 low barrier permanent housing units for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness	Project delayed, no timeline confirmed for completion
Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) Women's Shelter	Whitehorse	Will provide 15 units that can accommodate 32 beds for Yukon First Nations women and children escaping family violence	Federal funding awarded June 2021, no timeline confirmed for completion
Safe At Home renovation of High Country Inn	Whitehorse	Will provide 67 supported apartment units for women, youth and Indigenous Yukoners experiencing or at risk of homelessness	Funding awarded January 2022, project delayed, no timeline confirmed for completion

3. Social Assistance clients & Yukon Supplementary Allowance clients

The Social Assistance program supports Yukoner's in meeting their basic needs, including providing payments towards shelter expenses. Table 4 and Figure 5 show a breakdown of the Social Assistance caseload by shelter payment type, and includes the number and percentage of Yukon Supplementary Allowance (YSA) cases across each category. YSA is an additional monthly benefit for recipients who are excluded from the labour force, due to either a disability or being age 65 and older. For Q2, 55% of the Social Assistance caseload was in receipt of YSA on average.

Shelter payment data for this quarter shows there was a decrease in cases staying in hotels, a decrease in cases not receiving any shelter payments, and a slight increase in cases receiving payment for Additional Shelter. Compared to the overall caseload, YSA cases are more likely to be receiving shelter payments towards rent, including rent in subsidized housing and long-term care facilities, and more likely to be receiving Additional Shelter payments. YSA cases are less likely to be receiving payment towards home ownership expenses and Emergency Shelter.

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Table 4: Housing status of Social Assistance (SA) paid cases and Yukon Supplementary Allowance (YSA) paid cases¹ as a percentage of SA paid cases, as per monthly shelter payment data

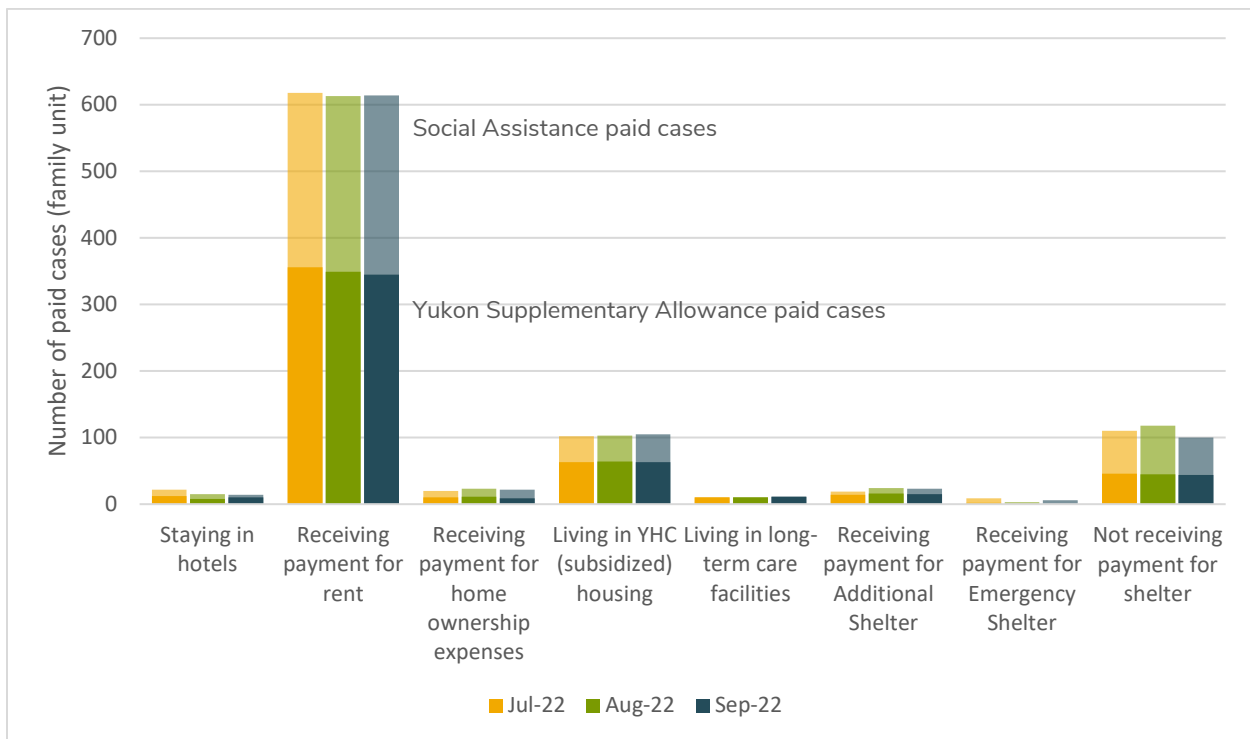
SHELTER PAYMENT TYPE	JUL-22		AUG-22		SEP-22	
	SA	YSA (%)	SA	YSA (%)	SA	YSA (%)
Staying in hotels	22	12 (55%)	15	8 (53%)	14	10 (71%)
Receiving payment for rent ²	618	356 (58%)	613	349 (57%)	614	345 (56%)
Receiving payment for home ownership expenses	20	10 (50%)	23	11 (48%)	22	9 (41%)
Living in YHC (subsidized) housing	102	63 (62%)	103	64 (62%)	105	63 (60%)
Living in long-term care facilities	10	10 (100%)	10	10 (100%)	11	11 (100%)
Receiving payment for Additional Shelter ³	19	14 (74%)	24	16 (67%)	23	15 (65%)
Receiving payment for Emergency Shelter	9	2 (22%)	3	0 (0%)	6	0 (0%)
Not receiving payment for shelter	110	46 (42%)	118	45 (38%)	100	44 (44%)
Caseload total⁴	870	483 (56%)	870	474 (54%)	861	467 (54%)

Notes:

1. YSA paid cases includes all family units with at least one family member who is receiving Yukon Supplementary Allowance.
2. Payment for rent includes payment towards hotel stays (includes cases staying in hotels).
3. Additional Shelter is a top-up payment issued in addition to regular monthly shelter allowance (includes cases receiving payment for rent and cases living in YHC (subsidized) housing).
4. Values do not sum to caseload total because categories are not mutually exclusive.

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Figure 5: Housing status of Yukon Supplementary Allowance caseload as a proportion of Social Assistance caseload by number of paid cases (family unit), as per monthly shelter payment data



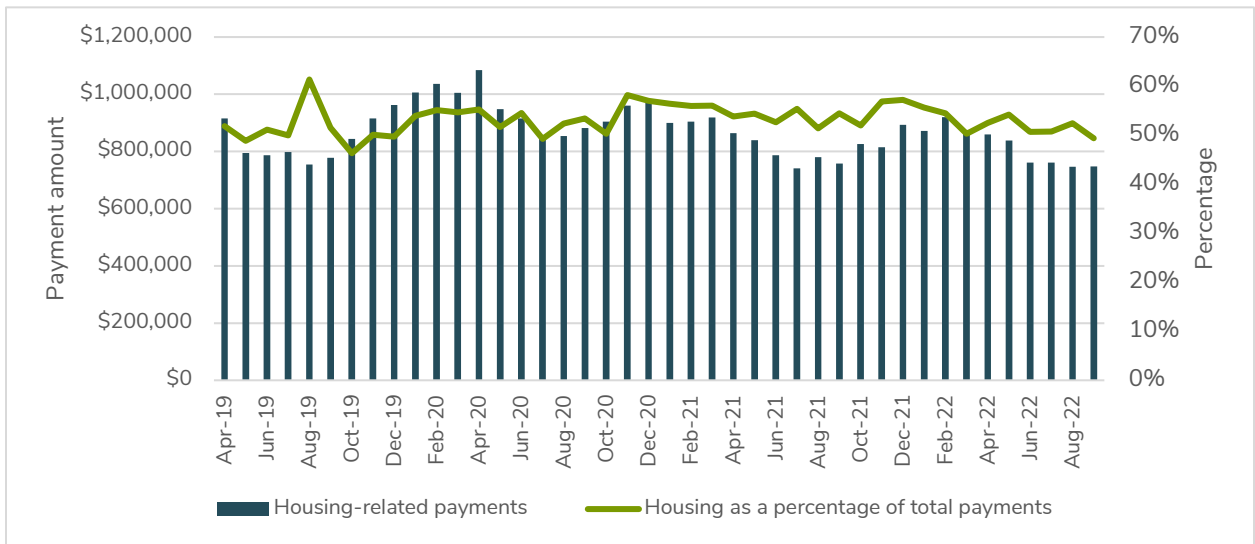
This version of the Quarterly Housing Report includes a new category, “not receiving payment for shelter”, which replaces the previous categories “housed but not receiving payment for shelter” and “homeless”. These previous categories were not based on payment data, but rather were based on social worker populated fields, which may be inaccurate if not manually updated as a case’s housing status changes. For example, in early September all social workers reviewed their caseloads and identified 32 cases experiencing homelessness. Comparatively, filtering by “homeless” identified 47 cases for September, demonstrating that this field is inaccurate.

Longer-term housing trends for the Social Assistance caseload include:

- Housing-related payments (including for shelter and fuel and utilities) accounted for 50.6% of total Social Assistance payments on average from April 2019 to September 2022. This percentage remained relatively consistent over the last three and a half years, as can be seen in Figure 6.

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

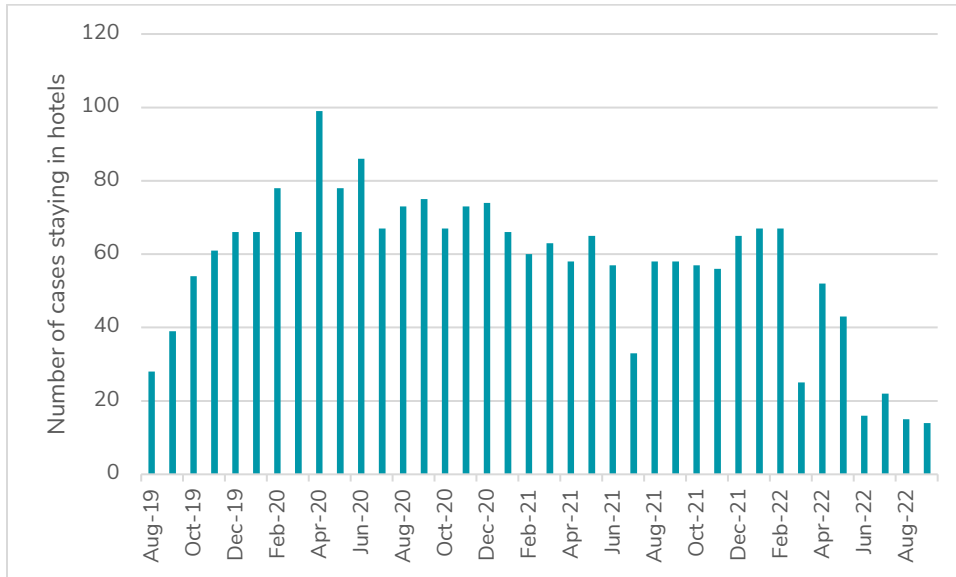
Figure 6: Monthly housing-related payments and housing payments as a percentage of total Social Assistance payments (April 2019 to September 2022)



- 11.6% of Social Assistance cases lived in subsidized housing on average from April 2019 to September 2022. This ranged month to month, with a high of 14.1% of cases in August 2019 and a low of 10.6% of cases in March 2021. As of September 2022, 12.2% of cases lived in subsidized housing.
- The number of cases staying in hotels was 57.0 on average from August 2019 to September 2022, as seen in Figure 7. There was a peak in April 2020 with 99 cases staying in hotels, presumably due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and hotel rooms being made available to provide accommodation for isolating and social distancing. Over the last six months, the number of cases staying in hotels has decreased substantially, with a large decrease in March 2022 due to the closure of the Chilkoot Trail Inn and a second decrease in June 2022 due to other hotels ending monthly rentals for the summer tourist season. As of September 2022, only 14 cases were staying in hotels.

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Figure 7: Number of Social Assistance cases staying in hotels (August 2019 to September 2022)



- Additional Shelter and Emergency Shelter are discretionary aid payments issued to Social Assistance recipients or ineligible applicants to help cover the cost of housing due to unanticipated or urgent needs. These are one- or two-time payments and are not intended to be ongoing benefits. From April 2018 to September 2022, 42.5 cases on average received Additional Shelter payments and 17.6 receive Emergency Shelter payments (Figure 8). There was a peak in the number of cases receiving both types of payments in December 2020, with 73 cases receiving Additional Shelter and 33 cases receiving Emergency Shelter. As of September 2022, 23 cases received Additional Shelter and 6 cases received Emergency Shelter.

Quarterly Housing Report – Q2 July, August, September 2022

Figure 8: Number of cases receiving payment for Additional Shelter and Emergency Shelter (April 2019 to September 2022)

