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National Homelessness May Have Declined in 2025, but Most States Saw Increases

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Headlines from HUD's latest point-in-time count report a national drop, but a closer look at the data shows that two states (New York and Illinois) account for most of the decline. Across the rest of the country, homelessness largely held flat or continued to rise.

HUD's 2025 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress shows **745,652** people experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2025 — a decrease of **25,828** (−3.3%) from 2024. After two years of sharp increases, any decline is a welcome change, but the state-level picture gives reason for concern.

−25,828	−23,715	92%	28
National change from 2024 to 2025	From New York and Illinois alone	Of the national decline from NY and IL	States saw an *increase*

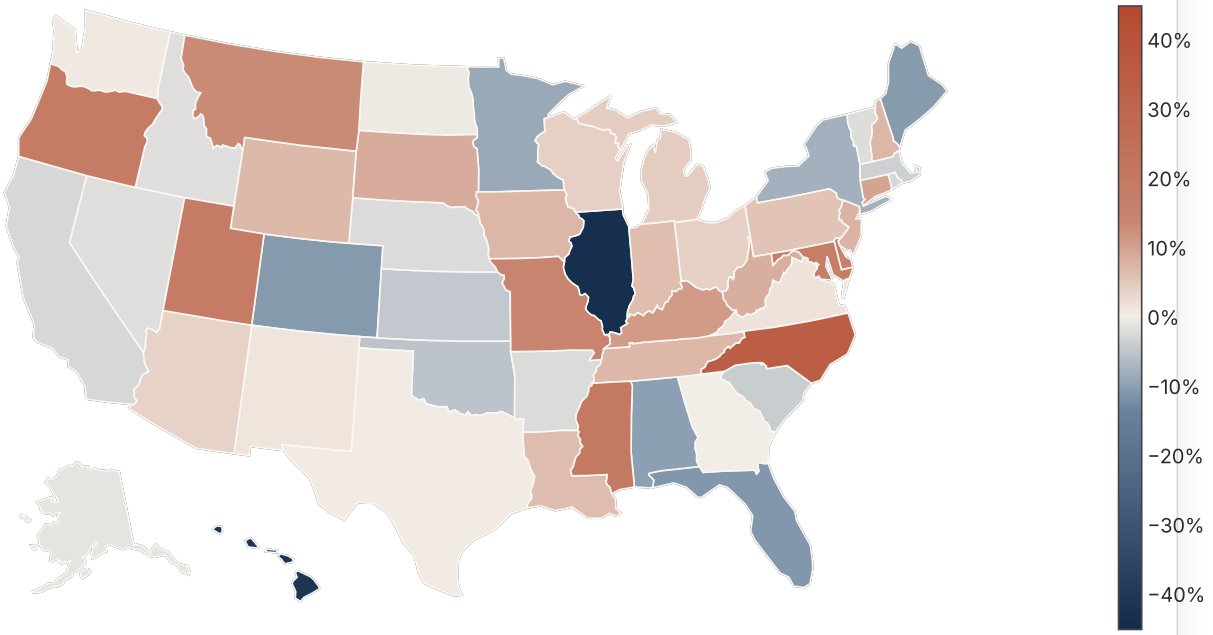
Two states account for almost the entire decrease

New York fell by 12,459 individuals and Illinois by 11,256. Together that's **23,715** — 92% of the entire national decrease. Both states had posted the *largest increases* in the country the year before, much of it tied to emergency shelter for asylum seekers; the 2025 numbers largely unwind that one-time surge rather than signal a durable trend.

> When we exclude New York and Illinois, the national change was **−2,113 people — a 0.4% decrease**. Still a decrease, but essentially flat.

Beneath the national average, the typical state moved the other direction. **28** states saw homelessness rise in 2025, with a median state change of **+1.1%**. Several increases were steep: Oregon (+4,327, up 19%), North Carolina (+3,886, up 33%), Maryland (+1,051, up 17%), and Missouri (+1,033, up 14%) had the largest increases in terms of raw numbers.

Percent Change in Overall Homelessness, 2024–2025, by State



Percent change in total homeless population by state. Blue = decrease, Red = increase. Source: HUD 2025 AHAR Part 1 (PIT Counts).

Why this matters

While we should celebrate any reduction in homelessness, the national headline should not distort local reality. For most communities, 2025 was a year of continued or growing need — and a "homelessness is declining" narrative can quietly undercut the case for sustained funding. An honest read of the data is that two states rebounded from a one-time spike while the underlying national trend stayed essentially flat at a near-record high. Program, policy, and advocacy efforts need to be informed by state and local trajectories, and the field needs to further dig in its heels in the face of rising needs and potential funding cuts.

Source: HUD 2025 AHAR Part 1, PIT Counts (May 2026). Territories excluded.
Analysis by DBH Consulting.