



Homeless Outreach Population Estimate 2026 Results

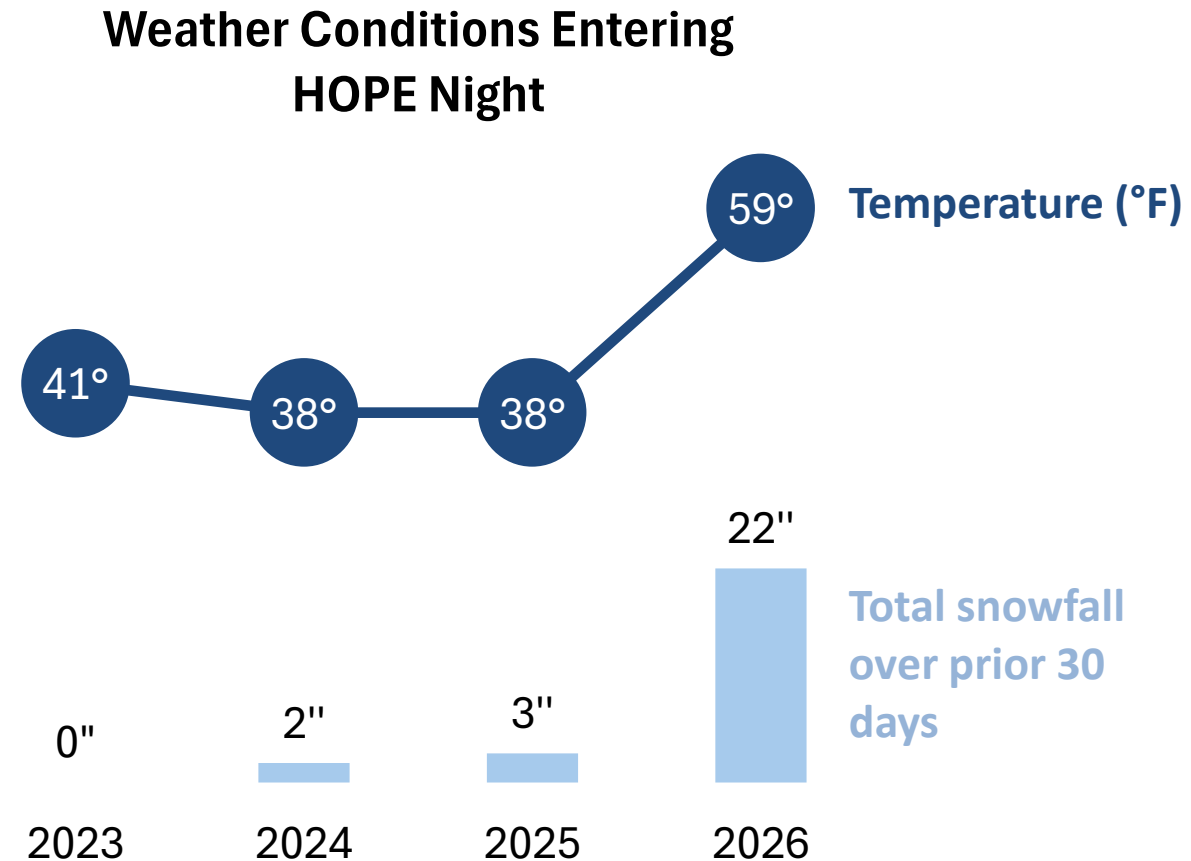
Office of Evaluation and Research
DSS OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND POLICY INNOVATION

What is the Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE)?

- HOPE is an estimate of the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and sleeping in public places such as streets, parks, and subways on a single night during the last week of January.
- Fulfills the “point-in-time” survey of unsheltered individuals, as required for every odd year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Conducted annually since 2005, using the same sampling methodology:
 - High Density areas: all areas of the city where individuals experiencing homelessness are known to stay, based on prior years’ data and observations from outreach staff. Results from these areas are *counted*.
 - Low Density areas: a random sample of areas in the rest of the city. Results from these areas are *extrapolated* to estimate the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in areas not surveyed.

HOPE 2026 Context

- HOPE 2026 was postponed from January to March due to a historic spell of snowfall and subfreezing weather. Despite the harsher winter, the weather on March 10 was much warmer, with the temperature averaging 20 degrees above recent years.*
- Even with the shifted timeline, HOPE 2026 successfully replicated its hybrid survey approach, deploying 1,155 volunteers and 331 outreach staff to canvass 1,515 areas on a single night.



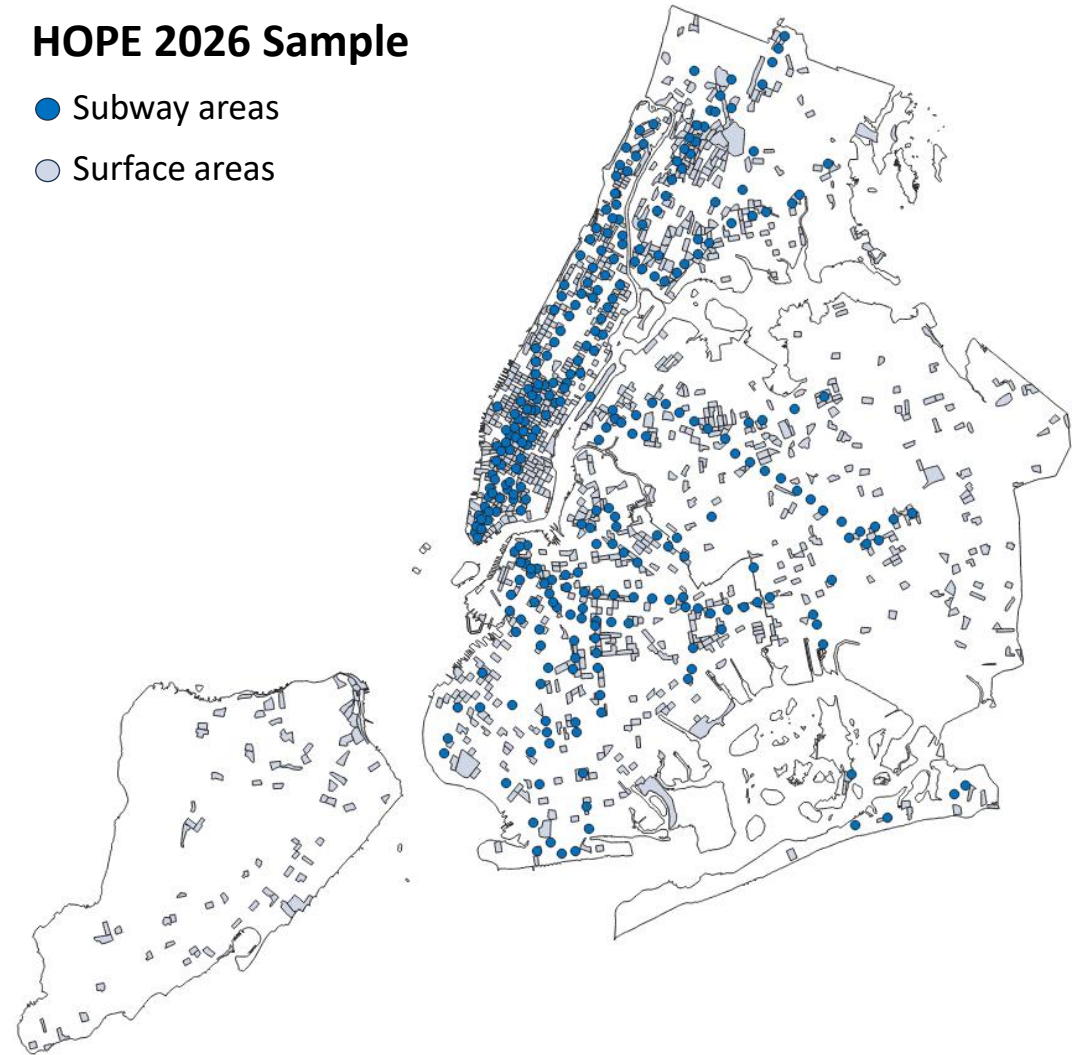
Overall HOPE 2026 Results

An estimated 4,991 individuals experienced unsheltered homelessness on the night of March 10, 2026.

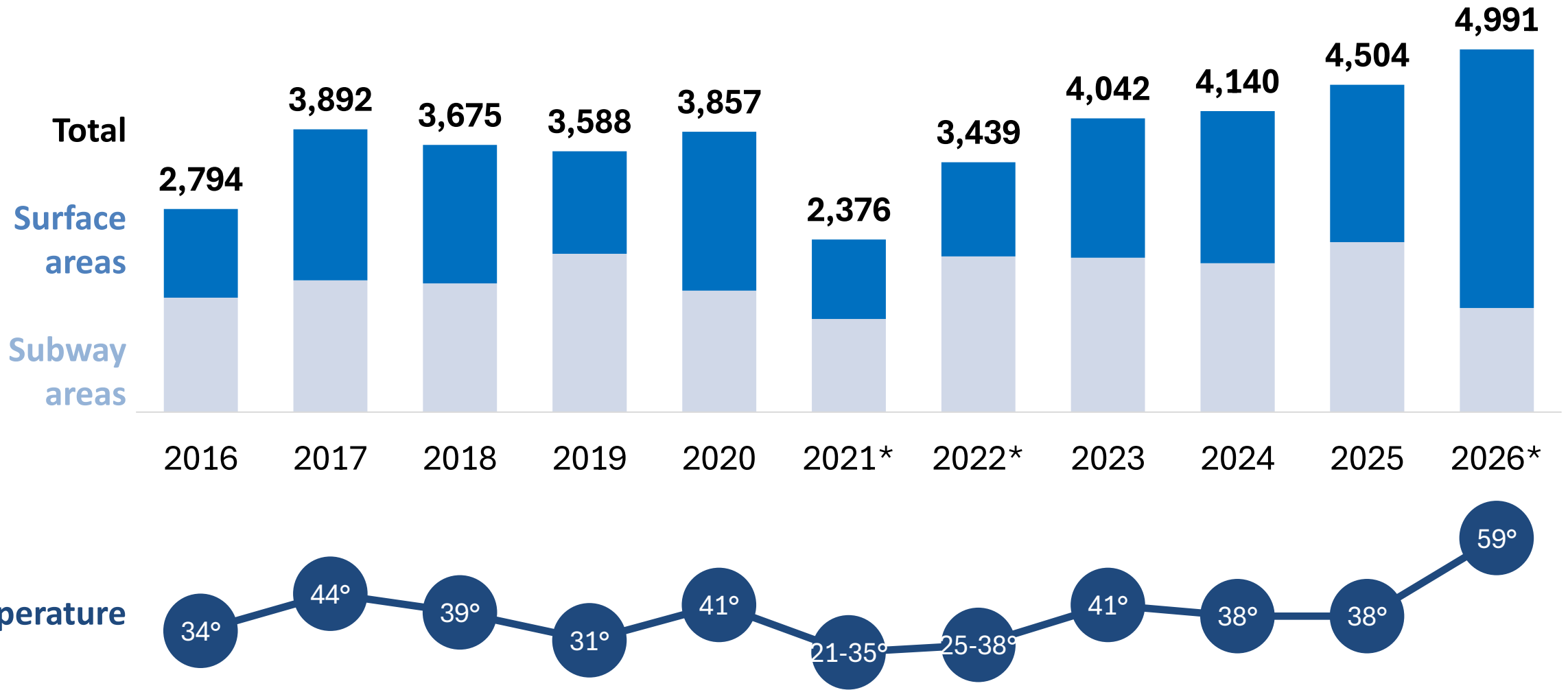
- This is an increase of ~500 from last year (+11%).
- The warmer weather contributed to a dramatic shift in the scale and spread of unsheltered homelessness:
 - Subway areas recorded the lowest total since the pandemic, whereas surface areas jumped by the largest margin in a decade.
 - 714 areas counted one or more unsheltered individual(s), up from 589 areas last year.

HOPE 2026 Sample

- Subway areas
- Surface areas

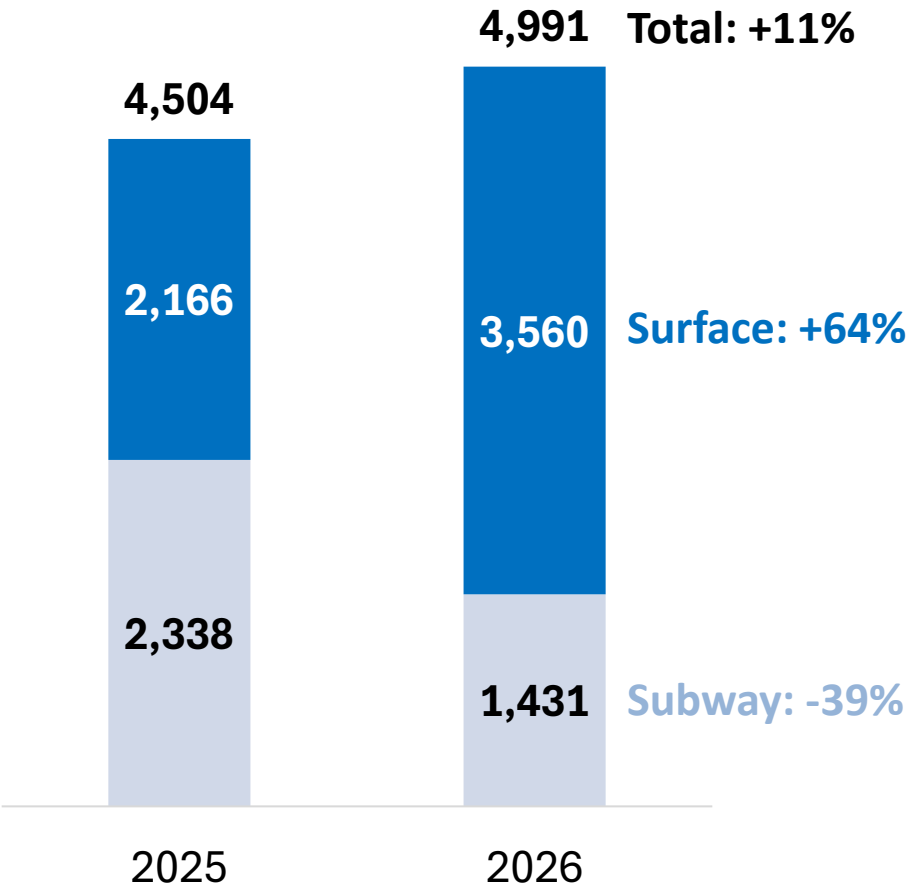


HOPE Estimates, 2016-2026



Change in HOPE Estimates, 2025-2026

Change in HOPE Estimates,
by Surface and Subway Areas



Change in HOPE Estimates,
by Borough (Surface Areas)

