



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Department of Housing
and Community Development

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Statewide Point-In-Time Count of Homeless Persons takes place Jan. 29

Richmond, VA – A statewide Point-In-Time Count of Homeless Persons will be conducted this week, with most counts happening on Thursday, Jan. 29.

The Point-In-Time Count is a census of unduplicated homeless persons in sheltered and unsheltered locations throughout the state. It is conducted each year by service providers and volunteers, and is coordinated through Virginia's 30 Continua of Care (COC). The count is conducted each year during the last seven days of January as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In 2008, the Point-In-Time Count identified 8,610 homeless individuals either sheltered or unsheltered, down from 9,644 in 2007 and 9,817 in 2006.

“With the current housing crisis and economic situation, we are unsure what this year’s count will show us,” said Shea Hollifield, deputy director of Housing for the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). “The data collected will not only tell us about changing numbers but also any changes in the composition of Virginia’s homeless population.”

The count does not represent the total number of Virginians who experience homeless throughout the entire year, it is merely a snapshot of those experiencing homelessness in a specific 24 hour period. It is estimated that more than 40,000 Virginians experience homeless at one point in a given year.

The 2008 count revealed that of those surveyed: 23 percent were substance abusers; 19 percent were chronically homeless; 13 percent had severe mental illnesses; 12 percent were victims of domestic abuse; 10 percent were veterans; and the rest were persons with HIV/AIDS or unaccompanied youth.

DHCD will release statewide results for the 2009 count in late summer, 2009.

“The count provides crucial information for us in determining the size and scope of homelessness throughout Virginia – from the urban areas to the rural areas – that we can use in planning services to address the specific needs that we see,” said Hollifield.

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DHCD is currently in the process of implementing a statewide database - the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) – that will make additional data and information more readily available in the future.

DHCD provides financial support to 119 emergency and transitional shelters throughout the state, which combined served nearly 30,000 of Virginia's homeless during the 2007 – 2008 program year.

The count is conducted by service providers and volunteers who survey homeless in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and, through help from law enforcement and social services agencies and partners, manually identify and count unsheltered homeless persons throughout their communities.

Information collected throughout the state about homelessness in Virginia is available [online](#).

For more information about the count in your area, contact your local [Continuum of Care](#) Point-In-Time Count of Homeless Persons Coordinator.

DHCD is committed to creating safe, affordable, and prosperous communities to live, work and do business in Virginia. DHCD partners with Virginia's communities to develop their economic potential, regulates Virginia's building and fire codes, provides training and certification for building officials and support for Virginia's homeless, and invests more than \$100 million each year into housing and community development projects throughout the state. By partnering with local governments, nonprofit groups, state and federal agencies, and others, DHCD is working to improve the quality of life for Virginians.

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