



## *H H S A   S T A F F   R E P O R T*

DATE: September 19, 2016  
TO: The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Bekkie Emery, HHSA Deputy Director, Adult and Aging Services  
RE: 2016 Point-In-Time Count (PIT)

### **Background**

The Point-In-Time Count is an annual assessment of Mendocino County's sheltered and unsheltered individuals and families experiencing homelessness. This count allows Mendocino County access to funding and collects information that can be used to identify and track trends related to the County's homeless population. The annual count is a mandate from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in order to receive Continuum of Care Program funding and to be in compliance with the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act.

Per HUD regulations, the definition of homeless, as it relates to the Point-In-Time Count, is individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence. This includes those in Emergency Shelters and Transitional housing, and those having a primary night time residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation. This count does not include those who are couch surfing or are doubled up with friends or family. However, when analysis is completed in conjunction with other data, the Point-In-Time Count provides essential information which is necessary for a more complete understanding of homelessness within Mendocino County.

Mendocino County Community Development Commission and Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency are direct recipients of the Continuum of Care funding for 2016 for a total of \$1,713,940.

### **2016 Point-In-Time (PIT) Summary**

The Point-In-Time Count Committee began meeting a year prior to the count completed on Thursday, January 28, 2016. The committee meetings were held monthly to plan and coordinate the county wide count. Several volunteer trainings were scheduled and held in each geographical area (Coast, North Inland, and South Inland) to ensure accuracy of data collection.

The annual Point-In-Time Count provides a glimpse of how many individuals and families in an area are experiencing homelessness on one night during the last ten (10) days of January.

Mendocino County was evaluated based on three geographical regions as has been done in the past: the Coast, North Inland, and South Inland. The 2016 data suggests that there has been a geographical shift in percentages of individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness and the areas in which they were counted.

Twenty-Eight percent (28%) of the total individuals and families experiencing homelessness were counted in the coast region of Mendocino County (Westport to Gualala, inland to Boonville and Parlin Fork). This region indicated a decrease of sixteen percent (16%) in homelessness from 2015.

Eighteen percent (18%) of the total individuals and families experiencing homelessness were counted in the north inland region (Highway 20 from Redwood Valley north to Piercy and east to Covelo). This is a ten percent (10%) decrease of in homelessness in this region from 2015.

Fifty-four percent (54%) of the total individuals and families experiencing homelessness were counted Inland South region (Redwood Valley south to the county line east to Potter Valley and west to Boonville) This was a twenty-five percent (25%) increase from 2015 for this region.

The 2016 Point-In-Time Count incorporated a few practice/methodology changes from the previous year. These changes included local warming stations, an observation tool, reduction in survey questions, and a five dollar (\$5.00) Safeway Healthy Heart gift card incentive was provided to respondents.

The practice/methodology changes consisted of a physical census on the day of the count and a provided survey for an additional six (6) days after the physical count. The warming stations were implemented as a result of feedback received from individuals experiencing homelessness following the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. Each geographic area had at least one warming station where individuals experiencing homelessness could have a warm beverage and a pastry. Individuals who accessed the warming stations were asked to complete a survey. For 2016, the physical census was completed by using the HUD Observation Tool. In the six (6) days following the physical count, homeless workers and volunteers conducted one-on-one interviews at service agencies. The 2016 surveys contained only the twenty-one (21) HUD mandated questions reducing the number of questions asked in prior years.

Workers, who were currently experiencing or had formerly experienced homelessness, were paid \$10 per hour on the day of the count. In addition, these workers received a five dollar (\$5.00) Safeway Healthy Heart gift card for every survey they completed with an individual experiencing homelessness in the six (6) days after the physical census count. The Healthy Heart gift cards are restricted and may not be used for tobacco, alcohol, or lottery tickets.

A combination of 61 participants, which included volunteers as well as individuals experiencing homelessness, participated in conducting the 2016 count. A total of 234 surveys were completed between the North and South Inland area which was an increase from the 175 completed surveys from the 2015 count. A total of 87 surveys were completed in the coastal region, a decrease from 150 completed surveys from the 2015 count.

The allocated budget for the 2016 Point-In-Time Count was \$6,000. The allocation to each geographical area was based on the 2015 expenditures. The Coast received 50% for a total of \$3,000; North Inland received 19% for a total of \$1,150; and the South Inland received 31% for a total of \$1,850. A total of \$5,610 was spent on mileage, labor and incentive cards.

Observations that were made from the 2016 Point-In-Time Count included: warming stations were effective; new fencing in many areas limited access; and volunteers are essential to conducting a thorough count.

The organizations that participated in the 2016 Point-In-Time Count are: The Arbor; City of Fort Bragg; Community Development Commission; Ford Street Project; Love In Action; Manzanita Services; Mendocino Coast Hospitality Center; Mendocino County AIDS/Viral Hepatitis Network (MCAVHN); Mendocino County Family Resource Centers; Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency; Mendocino County Youth Project; Plowshares; Project Sanctuary; Redwood Community Services; Safe Passage; Ukiah Community Center; Ukiah Methodist Church; Veteran's Administration; Willits Community Services; and Willits United Methodist Church. Each of these agencies provided at least one staff member to ensure the count could be completed. In addition, local agencies donated space for meetings, trainings, launch locations, as well as food and beverages for the warming stations. Many community volunteers not connected to agencies participated in the count. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for all who participated in the 2016 Point-in-Time Count.

## Results

In 2016, the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness that were counted was 1,176, an increase of 144 individuals from the 2015 count. On the day of the count, the number of individuals staying in an emergency shelter was 126, a decrease of 26 from the 2015 count. The total number of unsheltered individuals counted in 2016 was 1050, an increase of 170 from the 2015 count.

Information was also gathered to identify subpopulations which included persons with chronic substance use, domestic violence victims, mental illness, persons with HIV/AIDS, physical disability and Veterans. This data is gathered from answers provided by the individuals on the survey. An individual may be counted in multiple subpopulations based on their survey, but then are only counted once in the sub-population total. The information provided on the survey is self-reported.

The 2016 totals for the sub-populations are:

Chronic Substance Use	75
Domestic Violence Victims	117
Mental Illness	193
Persons with HIV/AIDS	3
Physical Disability	107
Veterans	19

Chronically homeless was recently re-defined by HUD as an individual or family with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for at least 12 months, or on at least four (4) separate occasions in the last three (3) years, where the combined occasions total a length of time of at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least seven (7) nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven.

The 2016 totals for the Chronically Homeless are:

Emergency Shelter	76
Unsheltered	101
Total:	177

### 2015-2016 POINT IN TIME COMPARISON

<b>Sheltered/Unsheltered</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Emergency Shelter	112	84
Transitional Housing	40	42
Unsheltered	880	1050
<b>Total</b>	<b>1032</b>	<b>1176</b>
<b>GENDER</b>		
Female	339	470
Male	690	706
Transgender (M→F)	2	0
Transgender (F→M)	1	0
<b>ETHNICITY</b>		
Non-Hispanic/Latino	897	882
Hispanic/Latino	135	294
<b>RACE</b>		
White	663	845
Black or African American	10	15
Asian	0	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	68	115
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	15	5
Multiple Races	104	11
<b>SUBPOPULATIONS</b>		
Chronically Homeless	124	177
Serious Mental Illness	212	193
Substance Use Disorder	238	75
Physical Disability (new question 2016)	Not Captured 2015	107
HIV/AIDS	8	3
Domestic Violence	168	117
Veterans	39	19