The Yolo County Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition

2009 Homeless Census Data Report

INTRODUCTION

The Yolo County Homeless & Poverty Action Coalition[1] (HPAC) conducted a count of the homeless on January 29, 2009. The count included a survey component and was a collaborative effort of community volunteers, including homeless and formerly homeless individuals, and HPAC member and partner agencies.

The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that a point-in-time homeless count occur within specific guidelines in order to qualify for Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program (SHP) funding. Yolo County homeless services providers currently receive about $415,000 annually in SHP funding. The count also provides information that allows service providers to target services to meet the specific needs of the homeless in our communities.

It is important to recognize that this is a point-in-time count or *snapshot*, reflecting those persons identified as homeless on the day of the count during a limited timeframe; it is not an absolute number. Many individuals and families move in and out of homelessness over the course of a year. The Corporation for Supportive Housing estimates that 5 to 10 percent of low-income households in a community may experience homelessness at some point during a 12 month period. Applying this to Yolo County using data from the 2000 U.S. Census, between 1,119 and 2,238 people in our community may experience homelessness over the course of a year.

METHODOLOGY

Administration and Survey Development

The survey included both sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families. A Coalition subcommittee oversaw development of the surveys and count protocol. The surveys were developed to capture the information required to complete HUD's Continuum of Care application. Surveys were limited to one page due to the limited timeframe allowed for the count and to encourage participation. Questions were included to identify possible duplication (i.e., a person counted more than once).

Separate surveys were developed for the sheltered and unsheltered counts due to differences in the information required to complete the Continuum's application (see attachments for the surveys). Additionally, HUD requires that the following definitions be used in collecting data to complete the application.

- A person is considered **homeless** only when he/she is:
  - living in places not meant for human habitation
  - living in an emergency shelter
  - living in transitional housing for the homeless but originally came from the streets or an emergency shelter

[1] HPAC is an affiliation of public sector groups and private, non-profit agencies. Its mission is to provide leadership on homelessness and poverty in Yolo County with the vision to create and sustain a comprehensive, coordinated and balanced array of human services for homeless and low-income individuals and families within Yolo County.

- A **chronically homeless person** is:
  - an unaccompanied homeless individual
  - who has either been continually homeless for at least a year, or
  - has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years, and
  - has a disabling condition, including:
    - diagnosable substance use disorder
    - serious mental illness
    - developmental disability, or
    - chronic physical illness or disability such as the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions

Designated subcommittee members became the count coordinators for their respective communities as follows:

Davis: Bill Pride, Davis Community Meals

West Sacramento: Sharon Wagner, Broderick Christian Center

Winters/Unincorporated Areas: Amara Pickens, Dept. of Employment and Social Services

Woodland: Leona Jull, Yolo Wayfarer Center

Coordinators were responsible for local volunteer recruitment and training. In selecting volunteers and creating teams, the coordinators considered needs such as cell phones and transportation. Each of the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, and Woodland recruited twelve volunteers (six teams of two). Ideally, teams consisted of a homeless/formerly homeless individual and another volunteer. Homeless/formerly homeless volunteers each received a $20 gift certificate.

Local law enforcement was determined to have the best knowledge of locations that homeless persons frequent in the City of Winters and the unincorporated areas. The Housing Programs Manager partnered with the police officer on patrol to conduct the count in the City of Winters and volunteers from the Department of Employment and Social Services went out with on-duty Sheriff's deputies to conduct the count in the unincorporated areas.

Unsheltered (*Street*) Count Protocol

Volunteers arrived at their coordination site at 6:00 a.m. to receive their materials and area assignments and review instructions. Materials included a map designating their area assignment, pencils, clipboards, surveys, and a copy of the count protocol and safety information.

Each team designated a Counter and a Recorder. The Counter called out information for each homeless individual sighted so that the Recorder could complete the first two questions on the survey, which was the minimum information required for the count of each individual. The Recorder then approached the individual to complete the interview portion of the survey (with exceptions for sleeping individuals and safety concerns).

Volunteers were instructed to use their best judgment as to who was potentially homeless and to survey all willing participants to validate their observation. Teams had until 12:00 p.m. (noon) to cover their assigned area, at which time they returned to their coordination site, reviewed their surveys for accuracy, and turned in all materials to the site coordinator.

Sheltered Count Protocol
The sheltered count occurred on January 28th, the night before the unsheltered count, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. It was conducted by staff at each agency with qualifying programs, which included emergency shelters, transitional housing, and hotel/motel voucher programs. It did not include waiting lists or those staying in motels the night of the count. While an in-person interview was preferred, providers were allowed to complete surveys using case-file information to ensure an accurate count of all program participants.

RESULTS

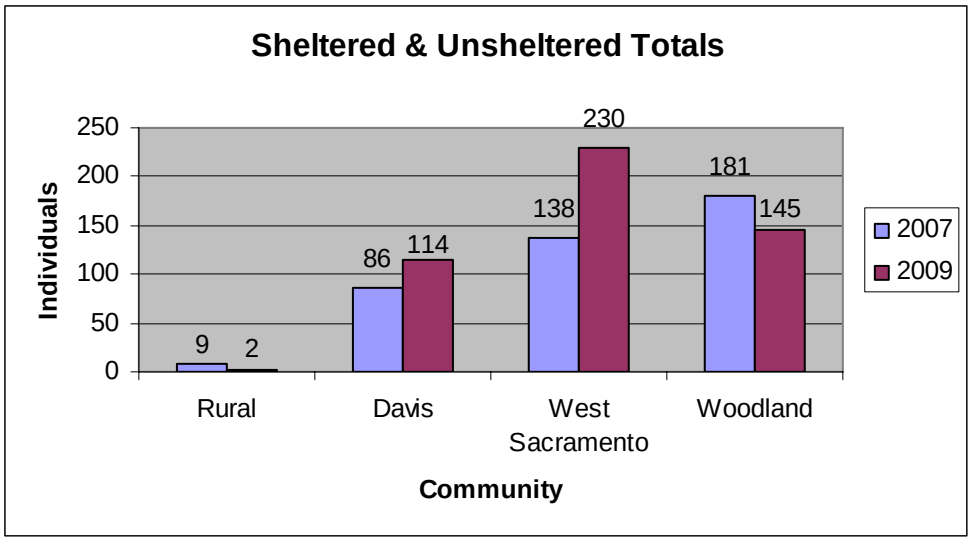
Results of this survey do not directly correlate with the need for services as individuals and families move in and out of homelessness over time. Situations resulting in homelessness are complex and linked to issues of poverty.

Tables do not include the City of Winters because there were no homeless persons identified there on the day of the count. Those in the *Gender Unknown* category were observed and thought likely to be homeless, but were not interviewed due to logistical concerns (e.g. sleeping in a car, tent, doorway, etc. or in a location known to be frequented by homeless individuals, but at some distance and not approachable due to safety concerns).

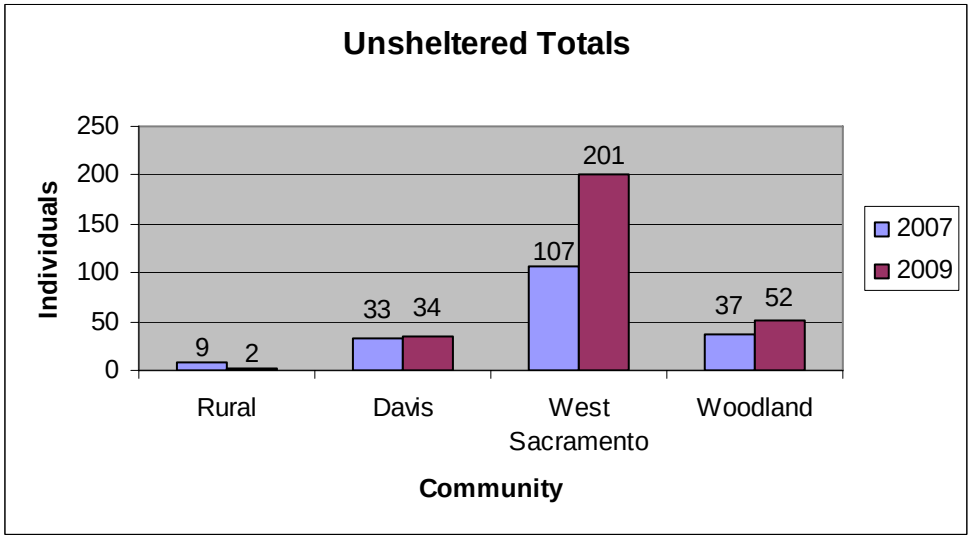
Summary
The following table gives combined totals for both the sheltered and unsheltered counts.

	Rural	Davis	West Sac.	Woodland	Total
Men	2	60	137	75	274
Women	0	31	67	35	133
Gender Unknown	0	0	0	3	3
Children (under 18)	0	23	26	32	81
Total	**2**	**114**	**230**	**145**	**491**
Families with Children	0	9	16	16	41
Number of Persons in Families with Children	0	32	45	49	126

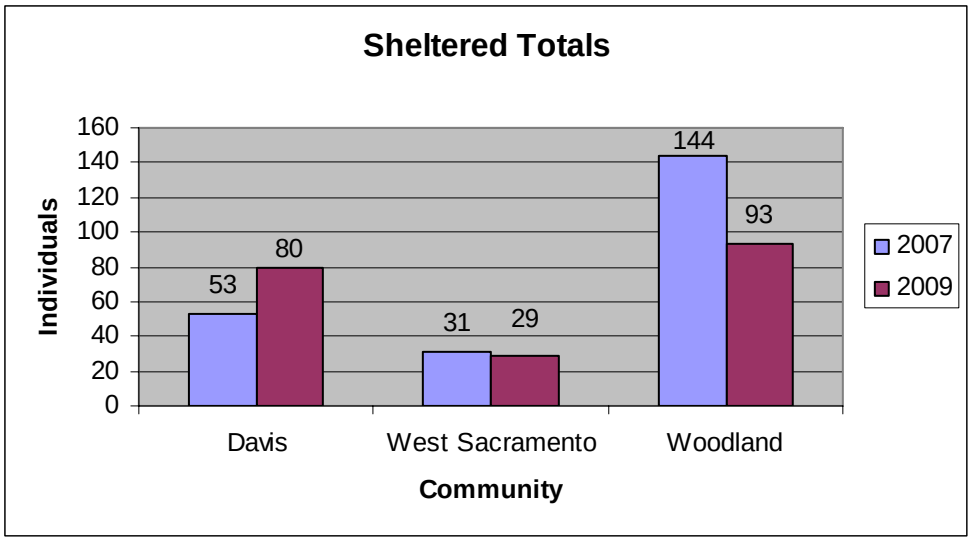
The overall count is up about 19% from 2007 by 77 individuals. There was an increase in the number of homeless in Davis and West Sacramento by 28 and 92 individuals respectively. There was a decrease in Woodland by 36 individuals. The following graph compares the 2007 and 2009 sheltered and unsheltered combined totals.



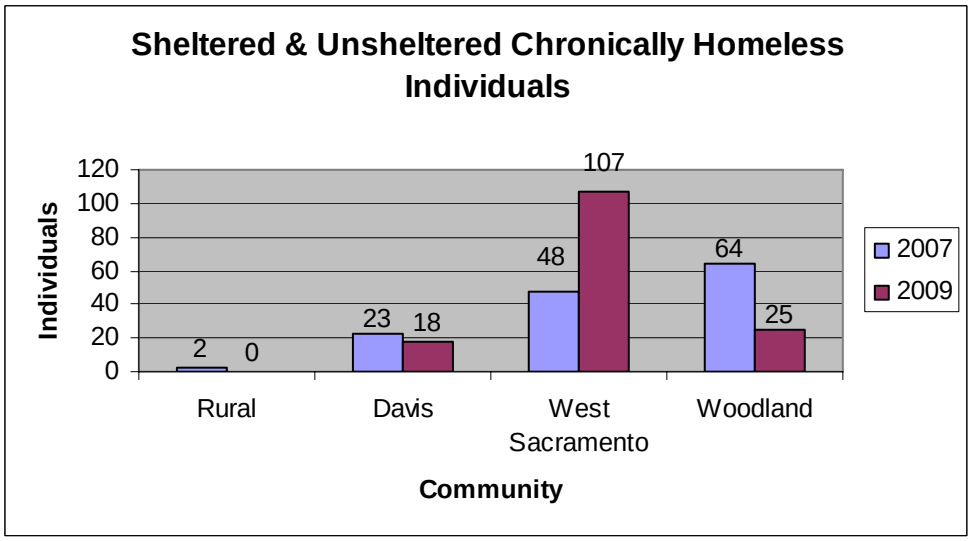
Notable in the unsheltered count was an increase in the West Sacramento count from 107 to 201 individuals and in Woodland from 37 to 52 individuals. The following graph compares the 2007 and 2009 unsheltered totals.



In the sheltered count, Davis increased from 53 to 80 individuals and Woodland decreased from 144 to 93 individuals. The primary reason for the decrease in the number of sheltered individuals in Woodland was program cuts due to reductions in funding for the transitional housing programs at the Yolo Wayfarer Center. There were 111 individuals counted in 2007 and 52 individuals in 2009. The following graph compares 2007 and 2009 sheltered totals.



HUD places an emphasis on services for chronically homeless individuals (defined on page three). The following table compares 2007 and 2009 chronically homeless totals.



Data Tables

SHELTERED & UNSHELTERED COUNT

	Rural	Davis	West Sac.	Woodland	**Total**
Households with Dependent Children	0	9	16	16	**41**
Number of Persons in these Households	0	32	45	49	**126**
Households without Dependent Children	2	82	177	95	**356**
Number of Persons in these Households	2	82	185	96	**365**
Chronically Homeless Individuals	0	18	107	25	**150**
Men	2	60	137	75	**274**
Women	0	31	67	35	**133**
Gender Unknown	0	0	0	3	**3**
Children	0	23	26	32	**81**
Total	**2**	**114**	**230**	**145**	**491**

UNSHELTERED COUNT

	Rural	Davis	West Sac.	Woodland	**Total**
Households with Dependent Children	0	0	7	0	**7**
Number of Persons in these Households	0	0	16	0	**16**
Households without Dependent Children	2	34	177	51	**264**
Number of Persons in these Households	2	34	185	52	**273**
Chronically Homeless Individuals	0	4	107	12	**123**
Men	2	25	135	37	**199**
Women	0	9	58	12	**79**
Gender Unknown	0	0	0	3	**3**
Children	0	0	8	0	**8**
Total	**2**	**34**	**201**	**52**	**289**

Data Tables, continued

SHELTERED COUNT

		Rural	Davis	West Sac.	Woodland	**Total**
Emergency	Households with Dependent Children	0	3	0	4	**7**
	Number of Persons in these Households	0	7	0	12	**19**
	Households without Dependent Children	0	37	0	26	**63**
	Number of Persons in these Households	0	37	0	26	**63**
Transitional	Households with Dependent Children	0	6	9	12	**27**
	Number of Persons in these Households	0	25	29	37	**91**
	Households without Dependent Children	0	11	0	18	**29**
	Number of Persons in these Households	0	11	0	18	**29**
	Chronically Homeless Individuals	0	14	0	13	**27**
	Severely Mentally Ill	0	9	6	13	**28**
	Chronic Substance Abuse	0	14	7	28	**49**
	Veterans	0	1	0	3	**4**
	Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0	0	**0**
	Victims of Domestic Violence	0	15	4	24	**43**
	Unaccompanied Youth (Under 18)	0	0	0	0	**0**
	Men	0	35	2	38	**75**
	Women	0	22	9	23	**54**
	Gender Unknown	0	0	0	0	**0**
	Children	0	23	18	32	**73**
	Total	**0**	**80**	**29**	**93**	**202**

Chronically Homeless Individuals in Families

The current federal definition of a chronically homeless person does not include persons in families. Many service providers believe that the definition should be expanded to include persons that meet the other conditions of chronic homelessness but are part of a family unit. These family members may face many of the same challenges as single individuals, while also dealing with family maintenance issues. The following table identifies the number of chronically homeless individuals in families. It is intended for use within Yolo County. It was not included in the figure reported to HUD.

Chronically Homeless Individuals in Families

	Rural	Davis	West Sac.	Woodland	**Total**
Unsheltered	0	0	2	0	**2**
Sheltered	0	4	4	8	**16**
Total	**0**	**4**	**6**	**8**	**18**

REVISIONS SUGGESTED FOR THE 2011 CENSUS

- Revise methodology and survey tools to maintain compliance with HUD guidelines and best practices as needed.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Unsheltered Survey
2. Sheltered Survey

Unsheltered Point-in-Time Count	Location (circle): Davis / West Sacramento / Winters
January 29, 2009 from 6:00am – noon	Woodland / Unincorporated

Instructions: Complete one form per individual or family that you believe is homeless. Questions 1and 2 should be completed based on your observation. The remainder should be completed based on an in-person interview with willing adult participants. Interview questions are reprinted on the back for two-adult families (with or without children; married or not). Print to be read aloud is in bold.

1. Record the count (number):

Male	
Female	
Gender Unknown	
Children (under 18)	
TOTAL	

2. Record the location (check):

Street/Walking Around		Park	
Car/Camper		Roadways/Bridges	
Shelter (Service Provider)		Doorway/Alley	
Hand-Built Structure		Field/Rural Area	
Other (list):			

If the individual is awake and approachable, complete the following interview.

Introduction: **Hello, my name is (NAME) and I am a volunteer for the Yolo County Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition. We are asking everyone a few questions about their housing situation and service needs. Your answers are confidential.**

3. Did someone else already ask you to participate in this survey today (circle)?

a. Yes (conclude interview) b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

4. Would you like to participate (circle)?

a. Yes b. No (stop interview)

5. Is the place that you consider to be your home or the place where you live a room, an apartment, a house, a shelter, or a spot in some public place (circle best fit)? (Conclude if not homeless.)

Vehicle / Tent / Garage / Church / Apartment / Motel / Outside / Public Place / Refused/Don't Know

6. Have you been continuously without a home 12 months or more (circle)?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

7. Where did you sleep last night (circle best fit)?

Vehicle / Tent / Garage / Church / Apartment / Motel / Outside / Public Place / Refused/Don't Know

8. In the past three years, have you been without a home at least four times (circle)?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

9. Do you consider yourself to have or has someone else such as a close friend, relative or health care professional told you that you have (circle):

a. A substance use disorder? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

b. A serious mental illness? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

c. A developmental disability? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

d. A chronic physical illness or disability? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

10. Do you have any children under the age of 18 years living with you? If so, how old are they?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know Age(s): ____ ____ ____ ____

11. What is your first and last initial (record)? _____ _____ Refused/Don't Know

Conclusion: **Thank you for your participation. Here is a brochure for services in your area.**

Exact Time (record): _____ For two-adult families, is this an adult male or female (circle)? M F

Reprinted interview questions for two-adult families (with or without children; married or not).

Introduction: **Hello, my name is (NAME) and I am a volunteer for the Yolo County Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition. We are asking everyone a few questions about their housing situation and service needs. Your answers are confidential.**

3. Did someone else already ask you to participate in this survey today (circle)?

a. Yes (conclude interview) b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

4. Would you like to participate (circle)?

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5. Is the place that you consider to be your home or the place where you live a room, an apartment, a house, a shelter, or a spot in some public place (circle best fit)? (Conclude if not homeless.)

Vehicle / Tent / Garage / Church / Apartment / Motel / Outside / Public Place / Refused/Don't Know

6. Have you been continuously without a home 12 months or more (circle)?

b. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

7. Where did you sleep last night (circle best fit)?

Vehicle / Tent / Garage / Church / Apartment / Motel / Outside / Public Place / Refused/Don't Know

8. In the past three years, have you been without a home at least four times (circle)?

b. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

9. Do you consider yourself to have or has someone else such as a close friend, relative or health care professional told you that you have (circle):

b. A substance use disorder?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
f. A serious mental illness?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
g. A developmental disability?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
h. A chronic physical illness or disability?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know

10. Do you have any children under the age of 18 years living with you? If so, how old are they?

b. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know Age(s): ____ ____ ____ ____

11. What is your first and last initial (record)? _____ _____ Refused/Don't Know

Conclusion: **Thank you for your participation. Here is a brochure for services in your area.**

Exact Time (record): _____ For two-adult families, is this an adult male or female (circle)? M F

Observational Comments:

Homeless Census	January 28, 2009
Sheltered Point-in-Time Count	6:00pm – 8:00pm

Instructions: Complete one survey per individual or family that you believe is homeless. Questions 1and 2 should be completed based on your observation & knowledge of individuals. The remainder should be completed based on an in-person interview with willing adult participants. Interview questions are reprinted on the back for two-adult families (with or without children; married or not). Print to be read aloud is in bold.

2. Record the count (number):

Male	
Female	
Gender Unknown	
Children (under 18)	
TOTAL	

2. Record the location (check):

BCC – Transitional		SADVC – Transitional	
DCM – Emergency		YCCC – Safe Harbor	
DCM – Transitional		YWC – Emergency	
SADVC – Emergency		YWC – Transitional	
Other (list):			

Introduction: **Hello, my name is (NAME) and I am a volunteer for the Yolo County Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition. We are asking everyone a few questions about their housing situation and service needs. Your answers are confidential.**

4. Did someone else already ask you to participate in this survey today (circle)?

a. Yes (conclude interview) b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

5. Would you like to participate (circle)?

i. Yes b. No (Stop Interview)

6. Have you been continuously without a home 12 months or more (circle)?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

7. In the past three years, have you been without a home at least four times (circle)?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

7. Do you consider yourself to have or has someone else such as a close friend, relative or health care professional told you that you have (circle):

c. A substance use disorder? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

j. A serious mental illness? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

k. A developmental disability? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

l. A chronic physical illness or disability? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

m. HIV or AIDS? Yes No Refused/Don't Know

8. Are you a military Veteran (circle)?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

9. Are you or have you been a victim of Domestic Violence (circle)?

b. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

10. Do you have any children under the age of 18 years living with you? If so, how old are they?

c. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know Age(s): ____ ____ ____ ____

11. What is your first and last initial (record)? _____ _____ Refused/Don't Know

Conclusion: **Thank you for your participation. Here is a brochure for services in your area.**

Exact Time (record): _____ For two-adult families, is this an adult male or female (circle)? M F

Reprinted interview questions for two-adult families (with or without children; married or not).

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a. A substance use disorder?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
10. A serious mental illness?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
11. A developmental disability?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
12. A chronic physical illness or disability?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know
13. HIV or AIDS?	Yes	No	Refused/Don't Know

a. Are you a military Veteran (circle)?

i.Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

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a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know

10. Do you have any children under the age of 18 years living with you? If so, how old are they?

a. Yes b. No c. Refused/Don't Know Age(s): ____ ____ ____ ____

11. What is your first and last initial (record)? _____ _____ Refused/Don't Know

Conclusion: **Thank you for your participation. Here is a brochure for services in your area.**

Exact Time (record): _____ For two-adult families, is this an adult male or female (circle)? M F

Observational Comments: