



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County Homeless Census

(Woodland, CA) – The Yolo County Homeless & Poverty Action Coalition (HPAC) – formerly known as the Yolo County Homeless Coalition – conducted a count of the homeless in Yolo County on January 30, 2007. 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.

Preliminary results are shown below. 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 Yolo County may experience homelessness over the course of a year.

	Rural	Davis	W. Sac	Woodland	Total
Men	5	47	82	95	229
Women	1	21	36	45	103
Gender unknown	3	1	0	0	4
Children (under 18)	0	17	20	41	78
Total	9	86	138	181	414
Families with children	0	10	9	18	37
Persons in families with children	0	27	31	64	122

While it is difficult to compare results from the 2005 count because of significant differences in methodology that occurred due to revised U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines and community needs, it does appear that the numbers are down in Davis and Woodland and remain about the same in West Sacramento. Accounting for some of the methodological differences, in 2005 the total number of individuals in Davis, West Sacramento and Woodland was 103, 139 and 258 respectively.

Suggested reasons for the overall decline include:

- The success of community programs for the homeless that have helped individuals and families transition through the continuum of shelter programs and into permanent housing.
- Revised HUD guidelines, including more precise definitions of those that qualify as homeless. There are many individuals and families without a permanent place to live that are not considered homeless under HUD’s definition, such as those “couch-surfing,” staying the night in a motel or sleeping on the floor of a friend’s apartment and those staying temporarily with family.

- The very cold weather this winter may have driven some to find temporary shelter with friends, relatives, or service providers in Yolo and neighboring counties. The minimum temperature in January 2005 was 41°F, while the minimum in January 2007 was 27°F.
- Community improvement projects, such as those along the river and railroad tracks, may have displaced the homeless from traditional camping spots.
- Use of a survey rather than an observational count provided a means to screen-out those that appeared to be homeless, but did not qualify under the federal definition used for the count.

Overall, count organizers agree that the count was a success. There was a significant improvement in the count of the unincorporated area with five volunteers from the Yolo County Department of Employment and Social Services teaming up with Yolo County Sheriff's Deputies to cover the area. The result was a more comprehensive and accurate count. Local law enforcement in West Sacramento and Woodland also assisted with the count, as well as representatives from the Board of Supervisors.

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 \$412,000 in SHP funding. Additionally, the count provides information that allows service providers to target services to meet the specific needs of the homeless in our communities.

The survey included both sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families. The survey of sheltered individuals occurred the night before the street count and included emergency shelters, transitional housing, and hotel/motel/apartment voucher programs. It did not include waiting lists or those staying in motels the night of the count. The unsheltered homeless count included those sleeping in places not meant for human habitation according to HUD guidelines.

The HPAC will be hosting one more Continuum of Care planning session in Woodland on March 8, followed by the Homeless Summit on March 14 in West Sacramento. Information gathered at all the planning sessions will facilitate discussion topics for the Homeless Summit, and will become part of the annual Continuum of Care Plan which directs efforts to meet the needs of the homeless, and those at risk of homelessness. The purpose of these sessions is also to facilitate coordination between non-profit organizations, businesses and governmental agencies providing services to low income and homeless individuals and families in the community. Input from the community is critical in evaluating how the HPAC is meeting the needs of the homeless and very low-income, and what is or is not working in the community.

Final Continuum of Care Planning Session

Thursday, March 8, 2007, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Woodland Police Department Community Room
1000 Lincoln Avenue, Woodland

Homeless Summit

March 14, 2007, 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
West Sacramento Civic Center, Galleria Room
1110 West Capitol Avenue, West Sacramento

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. For more information, contact Bill Pride, HPAC Chairperson, at (530) 756-4008.

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