

Press Release
Sunday, January 20, 2013

Regional Homeless Count Set for January 22

Social service organizations in Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, and Vinton will be tallying the number of homeless persons in their counties from sunset January 22nd to sunrise January 23rd.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that communities receiving Continuum of Care (COC) Homeless Assistance Grant funding to complete an annual sheltered and biennial unsheltered Point-In-Time (PIT) Count during the last ten days of January. The data collected during this count assists our COC locally and across the state to plan future services geared toward ending homelessness, understand changes in trends among homeless populations, comply with reporting requirements from HUD, other funders, and local stakeholders, and justify the need for continued resources to aid the homeless.

The PIT Count of homeless men, women, and children living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, on the streets, and other places not meant for human habitation is being coordinated by the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) and the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care locally. The count is done by asking social service organizations, churches, and other service providers to distribute Homeless Questionnaires to persons who present at their locations throughout the week of January 21st. Completed questionnaires are returned to the COC and the data tallied as part of the state-wide effort.

The information collected during this count directly impacts our ability to identify gaps in services and compete for funding.

“Before I started working with the homeless, I was completely unaware of the homeless population in our small community,” one volunteer said. “It was something that just didn’t cross my mind because it’s not something you see when you stop at a red light or go to the grocery store. Most people, like me, have this preconceived notion that a homeless person will be standing on the street corner holding a sign or pushing a grocery cart down the street, wearing layers of clothes. This isn’t something we see here in our rural community, but they are out there.”

COHHIO produces an annual Homeless Report which can be found at www.cohhio.org. More information is available at the local COC website at www.gimhousing.org.