



Tiffany Taylor-Minor
Director of Community & Corporate Relations
(804) 343-2045 Ext. 10: Ofc.
(804) 551-0788: Cell
ttaylor-minor@homewardva.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New Data on Homelessness Sheds Brighter Light on Economic Indicators, Seasonal Differences

Homeward releases full data from summer 2009 Point-in-Time count

Richmond, VA – Homeward, the Greater Richmond region’s planning and coordinating agency for homeless services, today released the full results from the regional summer 2009 point-in-time count of area residents experiencing homelessness. Preliminary results released in August found 1,061 people in the region experiencing homelessness during the one day count conducted this past July. Compared to last year’s summer count, this overall number reflects just over a 10% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness. Specific highlights from today’s announcement include:

Economic Indicators

- This July, 47 people indicated owning properties which had been foreclosed, with 27 experiencing foreclosure as renters
 - Of these, 18.5% experienced foreclosure within the past year
- 11.8% of people surveyed indicated they had declared bankruptcy at some point in their lives
- 44.1% of respondents had been laid off. Of those, 45.5% had been laid off within the past year
- The employment rate is lower (25.8%) among those surveyed. In addition, the number of people working full-time is lower (50.0% vs. 61.0%)
- 17.8% reported that they had income from panhandling or asking strangers for money in the past year.

Children

- 12.7% of adults surveyed have children living with them
- From July 2008 to July 2009, the number of children held steady with just a slight (1%) increase.

Last Permanent Housing

- Richmond – 52.8% (July 2008, 50.2%)
- Chesterfield – 6.7% (July 2008, 9.0%)
- Henrico – 12.0% (July 2008, 10.6%)
- Hanover – 1.8% (July 2008, 2.0%)

The median length of homelessness is ~150 days, which is consistent with findings from the point-in-time count conducted in July 2008.

	January 2007	January 2008	January 2009
OVERALL POPULATION			
Total point-in-time	1,150	1,073	1,150
<i>Total children in Point-in-time count</i>	<i>139</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>136</i>
UNSHelterED POPULATION			
Unsheltered	149	166	184

	July 2007	July 2008	July 2009
OVERALL POPULATION			
Total point-in-time	940	958	1,061
<i>Total children in Point-in-Time Count</i>	<i>138</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>155</i>
UNSHelterED POPULATION			
Unsheltered	138	146	135

“While the overall number of those experiencing homelessness is slightly down from the winter, we do see from this most recent survey that the numbers are up from last summer,” said Kelly King Horne, Executive Director of Homeward. “These seasonal differences are critically important as agencies prepare for the upcoming winter months.”

The twice yearly point-in-time count reveals a snapshot of the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single day and collects detailed information on their service usage and service needs. The data gathered during this process allows for analysis of the barriers surrounding housing stability in the region and what it would take to end homelessness. The point-in-time count is primarily conducted in the City of Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover and Henrico in cooperation with area social services and law enforcement agencies and emergency and transitional shelter staff. The data includes sheltered and unsheltered families, children and unaccompanied adults.

About Homeward

With more than 1,000 homeless children, single adults and families at a given point in time in Greater Richmond, Homeward is the regional catalyst to research, report and coordinate resources for people experiencing homelessness. In collaboration with regional partners in the City of Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, New Kent, Powhatan, Charles City and Goochland, Homeward facilitates service provider trainings, client resource fairs, and conducts twice yearly ‘point-in-time’ counts of those at-risk and who are currently in the sheltered and unsheltered population. In 2008 Homeward launched the Ten Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the Richmond Region. For more information on Homeward, visit www.homewardva.org.

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