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COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS COUNT RESULTS SHOW 57% REDUCTION IN HOUSTON, HARRIS COUNTY, FORT BEND COUNTY HOMELESSNESS SINCE 2011

Houston, Texas (May 25) - The [Coalition for the Homeless](http://www.homelesshouston.org) conducted the annual Point-In-Time Homeless Count & Survey from Jan. 25-28 of this year on behalf of the local Continuum of Care (CoC), known as The Way Home. This year's results show The Way Home continuing a five-year trend in reducing homelessness, marking a one-year reduction of 21 percent since 2015 and a 57 percent cumulative reduction since 2011. The annual Count is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for The Way Home's federal funding process. The Way Home encompasses Houston, Harris County, Pasadena, Baytown and Fort Bend County.

On Jan. 25, 2016, there were 3,626 total sheltered and unsheltered homeless people, compared to 4,609 on a given night identified in the 2015 Count and 8,538 identified in 2011. There were no unsheltered families with minor children noted on the night of this year's Count. There were 1,050 individuals identified as unsheltered, showing a 73 percent reduction in unsheltered homelessness from 2011.

The full Point-in-Time Homeless Count & Survey Executive Summary is available online at: <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2016-PIT-Executive-Summary-v4.pdf>. A one-page fact sheet is available online at: <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2016-Digital-PIT-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

The 2016 Count & Survey was conducted using an enhanced methodology. It was led and organized by the Coalition for the Homeless in consultation with Dr. Cathy Troisi, associate professor, University of Texas School of Public Health. This new methodology was approved by HUD before execution.

As in years past, the 2016 Count references data from a single night – Jan. 25. In previous years, both the sheltered and observational unsheltered count took place in the evening, with surveys conducted the morning after at certain local homeless programs to gather demographic data about the homeless population. This year, the sheltered count took place on the evening of Jan. 25; while the unsheltered count and survey portion were combined and carried out during the day from Jan. 26-28. Coalition staff, partner agency staff, and community volunteers conducted brief, conversational surveys with individuals who slept on the street on the night of Jan. 25, allowing us to verify their homeless status and gather additional information about what their housing needs may be.

This new methodology also allowed Coordinated Access Housing Assessments to be offered on the spot to priority populations, and will provide additional data to assist The Way Home in continuing to right-size its homeless response system. Due to the increase in effort in 2016, as

well as the level of expertise needed to conduct surveys with homeless individuals, the participation of The Way Home partner agency staff members was critical to the Count's success.

"HUD's approval of this new methodology was a huge vote of confidence in our system," said Daphne Lemelle, Chair of The Way Home Steering Committee. "We've seen results: more than 3,000 chronically homeless individuals and more than 4,500 Veterans have been housed since 2012. This is due to the unprecedented collaboration of our more than 60 partners. They have helped transform our homeless response system from managing to solving homelessness."

The Point-in-Time Homeless Count results come on the heels of a recent funding award announcement from HUD. [The Way Home](#) was awarded 100 percent of its funding requests in the most recent competition, totaling \$32,098,014. This funding will go to 45 local housing and service program partners, adding 295 new units of housing for chronically homeless individuals, a new youth/young adult Rapid Re-housing program, as well as a new Rapid Re-housing program for survivors of Domestic Violence.

"The 2016 Count and Survey results support our other system-wide research and data, reinforcing that we have made and continue to make progress in the greater Houston area," said Marilyn L. Brown, President & CEO with the Coalition for the Homeless. "Our community is in the spotlight because we continue to execute proven strategies to solve homelessness and refine our response to those who may fall into homelessness in the future — no matter who they are or why.

"HUD's approval of the enhanced Count methodology, as well as the funding award for The Way Home, a 25 percent increase (\$8.4 million) from the previous award, is an acknowledgment of our progress and also a tremendous responsibility. We know that we must continue to work together as a system and get it right, and we will."

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For more information on the Coalition, including a snapshot of efforts from 2012 to present, please access our [Press Kit](#).

The Coalition for the Homeless is a non-profit, 501(c)3 whose mission is to provide leadership in the development, advocacy and coordination of community strategies to prevent and end homelessness. Learn more at www.homelesshouston.org.