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COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS 2018 COUNT RESULTS REFLECT HURRICANE HARVEY IMPACT

The Way Home system has permanently housed more than 14,500 individuals since 2012, including Veterans and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness

Houston, Texas (May 23, 2018) – The Coalition for the Homeless announced results for the Point-In-Time Homeless Count & Survey, which took place January 23-25, 2018 on behalf of the local Continuum of Care (CoC), known as The Way Home. The annual Count provides a snapshot of the state of homelessness in the Houston area on a given night and 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 CoC encompasses Houston, Pasadena, Harris County, Fort Bend County, and Montgomery County.

On the night of January 22, there were 4,143 total sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals in Houston, Pasadena, and Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties. 1,614 of those individuals were unsheltered, and 2,529 of them were living in shelters. The sheltered Count was conducted on the night of January 22 and was based on reports received from providers and data entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Details of specific interest from the Count results include:

- 23% of the total homeless population on the night of the Count met the definition of chronically homeless, meaning they have been homeless for more than a year and have a mental and/or physical disability.
- One-third of the homeless population self-reported suffering from a Serious Mental Illness.
- 30% of the homeless population self-reported substance use disorder.
- 18% of unsheltered homeless individuals reported that they became homeless due to Hurricane Harvey, whether it was their first time homeless or not.
- In statewide comparisons, Houston had a higher uptick in results but all major cities in Texas showed Count increases.

The Coalition announced the Count results as part of a “State of Homelessness” panel discussion at a breakfast event on Wednesday, May 23 at the Junior League. Bob Pulster, Regional Coordinator for the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), served as part of the panel.

“The Way Home continues to prove itself a ‘can do’ collaborative that is opening new doors and solving homelessness in really innovative ways,” Pulster said. “Other communities from across the country are consistently looking to the Houston area to learn from its progress.”

According to Marilyn Brown, President & CEO of the Coalition for the Homeless, “Hurricane Harvey was a major disrupter to the work of The Way Home both in terms of diverting resources and

contributing to the increase in unsheltered homelessness. Partners of The Way Home shifted resources to successfully prevent homelessness for nearly 1,000 people who had nowhere to go after the storm. In just 41 days, The Way Home partners housed and supported these vulnerable households. But it was a major disruption to the homeless services already in place and a devastating distraction from our planned work in 2018. Further, we are not surprised that our most recent Count shows self-reported instances of serious mental illness hit the 33% mark. Now more than ever, the work of our 100 plus partners needs to be augmented by other systems, such as mental health advocacy and services.”

Montgomery County Results

In 2016, Montgomery County became a part of The Way Home Continuum of Care and it was included in the 2017 Homeless Count & Survey planning and execution. However, data from Montgomery County was not included in comparisons and trends last year; 2017 was a “benchmark” year for gathering data in that area. Montgomery County data is included in historic trends and comparisons this year and will continue to be included in future years.

The 2018 Count & Survey data was again analyzed by the Coalition for the Homeless in consultation with Dr. Cathy Troisi, associate professor, University of Texas School of Public Health. The full Point-in-Time Homeless Count & Survey Executive Summary is available online [here](#) and a one-page fact sheet is available [here](#).

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For more information on the Coalition, including a snapshot of efforts from 2012 to present, please access our Press Kit: bitly.com/CFTHPressKit.

The Coalition for the Homeless is a 501(c)3 nonprofit 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.