

Fairfield County Housing Coalition
Point-in-Time Homeless Survey
1/31/06
Summary

Purpose:

The purpose of the Point-in-Time Homeless Survey is to determine the number of unduplicated homeless individuals in Fairfield County on a given day. The results are reviewed by the Fairfield County Housing Coalition. Gaps in the homeless services continuum of care are identified and plans are developed and implemented to close those gaps. The Survey results also help to identify the overall need for homeless services in the County. With diminishing resources and an increased demand for services, most funding sources in the State of Ohio are moving to a competitive process. Demonstrating the need for these services helps Fairfield County service providers remain competitive in efforts to renew existing funding and obtain funding for new projects.

Definitions:

Homeless

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has a very specific definition of who is homeless. A person is considered homeless only when he/she resides in one of the places described below:

- In places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings (on the street).
- In an emergency shelter.
- In transitional or supportive housing for homeless.
- Is being evicted within a week from a private dwelling unit and no subsequent residence has been identified.
- Is being discharged within a week from an institution, such as a mental health or substance abuse treatment facility or a jail/prison, in which the person has been a resident for more than 30 consecutive days and no subsequent residence has been identified.
- Is fleeing a domestic violence housing situation and no subsequent residence has been identified.

(For more details see attachment A)

Chronically Homeless

HUD defines chronically homeless as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

At-Risk

HUD does not consider individuals homeless even if they pay an excessive amount for their housing, their housing is substandard and in need of repair, or the housing is overcrowded. Fairfield County Housing Coalition believes it is important that these individuals be counted even though they do not meet HUD criteria. These individuals face significant housing obstacles and require a number of services in our community. For the purpose of this survey they are defined as at-risk of being homeless.

Method:

The Fairfield County Housing Coalition Point-in-Time Survey was completed using the following primary data sources:

- Agency Survey (See Attachment B)
- Field Outreach

The agency survey was completed by community service providers who work with homeless individuals. The survey contains sections for emergency shelter providers, housing providers and supportive services providers. In order to avoid duplication, providers were given specific instructions on when to count and not to count individuals.

Volunteers and agency representatives conducted a field count and outreach. Visits to areas/parks/buildings where homeless have been known to reside were completed throughout the day. In order to avoid duplication, volunteers were instructed to ask each homeless individual they encountered, "where did you sleep last night?" If the individual responded that they slept in a shelter then they were not counted. (The shelter provider would have counted this individual)

The following is a list of the locations visited by volunteers:

- Public Library
- Maple St. Area and bridge
- United Methodist Church Free Meal
- Hospital ER and Lobby
- Pugh Trucking
- Producer's Livestock
- YMCA
- Mt. Pleasant Area
- Cinci Park
- Ewing St. Area and bridge
- Sheriff's Department
- Police Department
- River Valley Mall Area
- Community Transitional Center

Summary of Results:

On 1/31/06, 268 individuals in Fairfield County were identified as being homeless according to the HUD definition. This is a 21% increase over the number of homeless individuals found in 2005. In addition, 54 individuals were found to be at-risk of becoming homeless.

Of the 268 individuals meeting the HUD definition, 201 were sheltered in community homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters or transitional housing facilities for the homeless. The remaining 67 individuals are unsheltered and on waiting lists for shelter. Unsheltered individuals also increased 11% over 2005 results. 32 of the unsheltered individuals are single adults. The remaining 35 were members of homeless families. This data confirms previous gaps analysis conducted by the Housing Coalition identifying a significant need for increased family and single adult shelter capacity.

Sheltered individuals were assessed to identify the primary issue/special need that led to their homelessness:

Issue/Special Need	Total	% of Total
Mental Health	20	10%
Drug/Alcohol Abuse	22	11%
Dual Diagnosis	24	12%
Domestic Violence Victim	27	13%
Low Income	94	47%
Chronically Homeless	14	7%

The high incidence of individuals that are homeless due to mental health or substance abuse issues or both (33%) indicates a shelter plus care model of permanent housing could have a significant impact on reducing homelessness in Fairfield County. Shelter plus care participants are moved directly into permanent housing and are provided individualized, home-based supportive services to help them transition to stability and independence.

Fourteen individuals in Fairfield County were identified as chronically homeless. These individuals tend to have multiple obstacles to obtaining and maintaining permanent housing, require intensive service coordination and utilize a disproportionate percentage of community resources available for homeless services. These individuals would also benefit greatly from a shelter plus care model. (For all survey data see attachment C)