July 9, 2020

**Results of 2020 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Released**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires communities across the country to conduct an annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of persons experiencing homelessness who are unsheltered, sleeping in an emergency shelter or transitional housing. The PIT Count is conducted on a single night during the last ten days of January and is led by the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA) in collaboration with the Metropolitan Homeless Impact Division and the Homelessness Planning Council.

The 2020 PIT Count for Nashville-Davidson County was conducted on the evening of Jan. 23 and in the early morning hours of Jan. 24. More than 100 volunteers from 27 different agencies and universities took part in this year’s Count. Room In The Inn and Nashville Rescue Mission operated their shelter programs and counted people staying with them during that night. No Metro overflow shelters were opened on the night of the count, and the community’s cold weather plan was not activated.

The 2020 PIT Count found a total of 2,016 individuals experiencing homelessness – 1,432 (71.0%) people living sheltered and 584 (28.9%) people living unsheltered – in Nashville-Davidson County. These results reflect a 15.0% total decrease in overall homelessness since 2016 and a 1.5% increase in the number of people experiencing literal homelessness since 2019 (30 people).

“Nashville’s Point-in-Time Count is a vital resource that helps Metro serve our unsheltered and unhoused neighbors,” said Mayor John Cooper. “Our office will continue to work closely with MDHA and our community partners to serve Nashvillians experiencing homelessness as part of Metro’s ongoing commitment to one of our most vulnerable communities and throughout our city’s coordinated COVID-19 response.”

Additional key findings from the 2020 Homeless Count include:

* 73% of the adult population experiencing homelessness on the night of the Count were men, compared to 48% of Nashville’s population.
* 45% of the adult population experiencing homelessness on the night of the Count were Black or African American, compared to 28% of Nashville’s population.
* 82% of unsheltered individuals said that lack of income was their primary barrier to finding housing. Other reasons included health problems, past evictions and legal issues.
* There was no increase in Veterans identified from 2019 to 2020.
* There was a 14% increase in people experiencing chronic homelessness identified from 2019 to 2020.
* There was a 7% decrease in families with minor children identified from 2019 to 2020.
* There was an 11% decrease in unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 identified from 2019-2020.
* 41% of unsheltered individuals and 31% of sheltered individuals reported problems with substance abuse.
* 38% of unsheltered individuals and 25% of sheltered individuals reported mental health problems.
* 22% of unsheltered individuals and 14% of sheltered individuals reported being survivors of domestic violence.

“The annual PIT Count is a reminder of why we do the work we do, and the information we are able to gather allows us to better direct our efforts to reduce homelessness in our city,” said MDHA Executive Director Jim Harbison. “I’m extremely grateful to MDHA staff for their continued work on these efforts, the Metropolitan Homeless Impact Division and the Homelessness Planning Council for their partnership and the volunteers who participate each year.”

**2020 Homeless Count Notes**

Although a PIT Count is important in establishing some dimension of homelessness, the method is not without its limitations. It is one of a variety of sources of data needed to tell the whole story of homelessness. The PIT Count numbers represent a point-in-time snapshot and do not reflect the homelessness problem over an entire year. To that end, an annualized count that accounts for all types of homelessness over the course of a year will be invaluable to painting a complete picture of the state of homelessness in Nashville-Davidson County.

“The PIT Count provides one piece in our data approach, which, together with our improved data collection through Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), will help us measure effective interventions with the goal of moving people from homelessness to housing quicker,” said Judith Tackett, director of the Homeless Impact Division. “Our city has received a $150,000 grant from HUD to help improve our HMIS, which will provide us with a full picture of how people move in and out of homelessness in our city.”

The PIT Count does not capture individuals and families defined as homeless under federal statutes other than HUD. For example, the U.S. Department of Education employs a broader definition of homelessness that includes children in families who are doubled up (the bottom of the pyramid in the following graphic), or living in area motels without a voucher due to economic hardship or housing loss. The graphic, adapted from the 2011 Portland/Multnomah County Oregon PIT Report, illustrates the populations that are not included in the PIT Count. As indicated, the Count does not include those who meet the broadest definition of homelessness.

 Levels of

 Homelessness

Adapted from *2011 Point-in-Time Count of Homelessness in Portland/Multnomah County, Oregon*,

Kristina Smock Consulting, June 2011

**Here’s How You Can Help:**

Volunteer with a community partner who serves people experiencing homelessness. To find information about homeless services providers, please visit [www.wttin.org](http://www.wttin.org).

Donate items such as water, sunscreens, new underwear, socks and non-perishable food items to help people experiencing homelessness. There is a great need for water during the summer months. Contact the Metro outreach team by emailing troy.jenkins@nashville.gov to find out where to drop off donations.

Consider a financial contribution to pay for move-in costs, including first-month rent, security and utility deposits. How’s Nashville assists people with up to $1,000 in move-in costs per household, and there is an urgent need to replenish the community’s fund. Donations are tax-deductible. For more information, email judith.tackett@nashville.gov.

MDHA needs landlords willing to accept Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. This program provides low-income individuals and families an opportunity to find affordable housing in the private market. Currently, 784 landlords accept the more than 7,000 vouchers administered by MDHA, but the number of such landlords has been declining. If you are a landlord and would like more information about the program, please email section8@nashville-mdha.org.

Join a listserv of more than 500 interested agencies and individuals who want to end homelessness by emailing stolmie@nashville-mdha.org. Attend a meeting of the Nashville Coalition for the Homeless & the Continuum of Care, from 9 to 11 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the Nashville Rescue Mission (due to the COVID pandemic, these meetings are currently held virtually. Email stolmie@nashville-mdha.org for more information).

**About the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency**

Established in 1938, MDHA provides affordable housing opportunities to more than 13,000 families primarily through Project-Based Rental Assistance and Section 8 vouchers. It also manages federally-funded community development and homeless assistance programs on behalf of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. To foster urban growth, MDHA oversees 12 redevelopment districts that guide development through design and land-use zoning controls. Additional information about MDHA can be found on [www.nashville-mdha.org](http://www.nashville-mdha.org/), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NashvilleMDHA), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/NashvilleMDHA), [Instagram](http://instagram.com/nashvillemdha) and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/metropolitan-development-and-housing-agency/?viewAsMember=true).

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