

Media Advisory – Jan. 20, 2010

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Volunteers needed for annual homeless count

Volunteers are needed for the annual Point In Time homeless count, which will be conducted Thursday, Jan. 28.

The annual count is an important tool in the community's efforts to assess the number of homeless in Snohomish County as well as to determine ways of ending homelessness.

The Snohomish County Executive Office and the county's Homeless Policy Task Force, as well as numerous human services providers, will participate in the annual count. The results of the count help ensure that vital federal and state money continues to fund local programs that work to end homelessness.

"Ending homelessness is an issue that should be foremost on all of our minds," said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon, who has participated in past annual counts. "The annual count gives us excellent data that can be used to help understand how widespread homelessness in Snohomish County is and who is most affected."

More than 200 volunteers participated in last year's count, which found more than 2,300 people identifying as homeless, including more than 800 children under the age of 18.

Volunteers are needed for each part of the count between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Volunteers are asked to commit to a three-hour period. All training and materials will be provided at each of the four gathering sites in Arlington, Everett, Lynnwood and Monroe. For more information or to volunteer, contact one of the area leads below:

- **East County:** Take the Next Step, 202 S. Sams St., Monroe; Bill Humphreys – (425) 259-3191; bhumphreys@voaww.org;
- **South County:** Trinity Place Apartments (YWCA), 19321 46th Ave. W., Lynnwood; Maria Bighaus – (425) 774-9843 ext. 236; mbighaus@ywcaworks.org;
- **Central County:** Salvation Army, 2525 Rucker Ave., Everett; Jerry Gadek – (425) 259-8129; jerry.gadek@usw.salvationarmy.org;
- **North County:** Smokey Point DSHS Community Services Office, 3704 172nd St. NE, Arlington; Nate Greenland – (425) 347-6556; nategreenland@housinghope.org.

“The Snohomish County Point in Time Count allows us to identify the scale of local homelessness, to measure our progress and to put a face to the issue,” Reardon said.

Emphasis on the Point in Time count began in 2006, with the county’s approval of the “Everyone At Home Now” report, a strategy for ending homelessness here by 2016. The plan calls for the expansion of affordable housing and homeless prevention services as well as for the development of programs geared toward specific groups.

During the 2009 count, 2,356 individuals and 1,469 households were identified as being homeless. This count did not include 316 incarcerated individuals with no identified residence upon release. Additionally, an estimated 849 homeless individuals were homeless children under the age of 18.

For more detailed information about the PIT Count, contact Nate Marti at 425-388-3268 or nate.marti@co.snohomish.wa.us.

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