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For Immediate Release
May 17, 2019

***2019 POINT IN TIME COUNT OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS IN CLARK COUNTY UP 21%***
Increasing number of people experiencing homelessness outpaces housing efforts.

The 2019 Clark County Point in Time (PIT) Count was conducted on January, 24, 2019.

A total of 958 people experiencing homelessness were identified during the one-night count, an increase of 21%, compared with the 2018 count. Local agency staff and volunteers located 487 persons, an increase of 30% from 2018, sleeping unsheltered (in tents, cars, on streets and in places where people are not meant to sleep). People sheltered sleeping in emergency and transitional housing units totaled 471, an increase of 12% from 2018, which is attributable to an increase in motel vouchers and severe weather beds offered that night.

The PIT count represents a one-night estimate of the local scope of homelessness. Over the full calendar year of 2018, 4,708 people representing 3,106 households identified as experiencing homelessness, according to the Council for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which provides a much more robust and accurate count of homelessness. The amount of households experiencing homelessness according to HMIS grew by 20% from 2017 to 2018, confirming the trend seen in the PIT data.

What is the Point in Time Count?

Annually, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Washington State Department of Commerce require communities to conduct a one night Point in Time (PIT) Count snapshot of people experiencing homelessness during the last two weeks of January. The PIT Count represents one approach to helping communities better understand the trends related to homelessness and specific populations in the community.

This year over 30 volunteers, elected officials, government employees and staff from local agencies helped Council for the Homeless facilitate surveys with people experiencing homelessness throughout the community. While the PIT Count is widely considered an undercount of those experiencing homelessness, the methodology continues to improve. The 2019 count included outreach efforts targeting known areas where people might be sleeping and county-wide canvassing to identify the most people possible, and those calling into the housing hotline for housing assistance. New this year was the use of a mobile app which provides a convenient and coordinated way to gather unduplicated information directly from individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The total count was calculated from the mobile app and HMIS system for emergency shelter and transitional housing numbers.

Additionally, people experiencing homelessness were invited to the same day Project Homeless Connect at St. Joseph's Catholic Church to be included in the PIT Count. This seventh annual one-day resource and service event welcomed a record high number of people experiencing homeless.

The PIT Count is a planning tool among many that helps to inform the local Clark County/City of Vancouver Continuum of Care (CoC). The CoC works to address needs and progress the Clark County Homeless Action Plan. To learn more about Clark County's Homeless Action Plan and homelessness, visit the Council for the Homeless website at <https://www.councilforthehomeless.org/homeless-action-plan/>.

PIT Definitions:

“Unsheltered” means living in a place not meant for human habitation such as a car, a tent, or a trailer with no running water or electricity. People staying in an emergency or transitional shelter are counted in the “sheltered” count. People who are doubled-up with friends or family are not counted in these numbers.

Additional Information and Analysis:

Analysis including a blog, additional data, and infographics is available at <https://www.councilforthehomeless.org/data-system-numbers/>

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Council for the Homeless is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide community leadership, compelling advocacy, and practical solutions to prevent and end homelessness in Clark County, WA.

www.councilforthehomeless.org