

Overview

On the night of January 28, 2015, and into the early morning hours of January 29, 2015, the Chester County Department of Community Development (DCD) facilitated the **2015 Point-in-Time Count**, a national effort sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The purpose of this initiative is to determine the number of people currently experiencing homelessness in Chester County on a given night. This includes people who are *sheltered* in emergency shelters, transitional housing or possess a Homeless Motel Voucher, as well as *unsheltered* individuals on the street or in places not meant for human habitation. Data from the count is included in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), which is presented annually to Congress. The Point-in-Time Count is one component of understanding homelessness in Chester County, Nationwide and part of the proactive strategy in ***Decade to Doorways: The Community’s Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Chester County***.

Below gives the methodology for collecting unsheltered and sheltered individuals, which shows a breakout of the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Chester County on January 28, 2015.

Unsheltered Count

DCD verifies how the *unsheltered* homeless population identified in the count, as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 of the **Homeless Definition Final Rule**:

“An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

To collect *unsheltered data*, volunteer teams canvas the County, visiting locations where people who are experiencing homelessness may seek shelter. These teams reach out to individuals they find, offering access to available services. Building on the successes of previous years the geographical coverage areas were better defined with exact locations to canvas. The count took place in two shifts from 10:00PM-12:00AM and 12:30AM-2:30AM with volunteers participating on one of 16 regional teams disbursed across Chester County.

As another method of collecting *unsheltered data*, DCD staff handed out a “One Night Survey Reporting Form” to many agencies that serve this population, but may not report into the Chester County Client Information Management System (CCCIMS). Agencies were asked to fill out whether or not they saw or interacted with anyone experiencing homelessness on the night of January 28. Agencies include libraries, peer support center, hospitals, etc.

2015 Unsheltered Count

Regions	Kennett Square	Phoenixville	West Chester	Exton	Devon	Total
Total Individuals	1	1	7	5	1	15

Sheltered Count

DCD verifies how the *sheltered* homeless population identified in the count, as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 of the **Homeless Definition Final Rule**:

“An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals).”

As part of the effort to obtain accurate *sheltered* data on the night of January 28, 2015, DCD has pulled a report generated from our Chester County Client Information Management System (CCCIMS) and then confirmed with the emergency shelters and transitional housing providers their numbers reported in the system. For provider agencies that do not collect data using CCCIMS a one night reporting spreadsheet is collected to determine the correct count of individuals sheltered at their programs.

92% of the total available beds in Emergency Shelters were occupied in 2015

85% of the total available beds in Emergency Shelters were occupied in 2014

87% of the total available beds in Transitional Housing were occupied in 2015

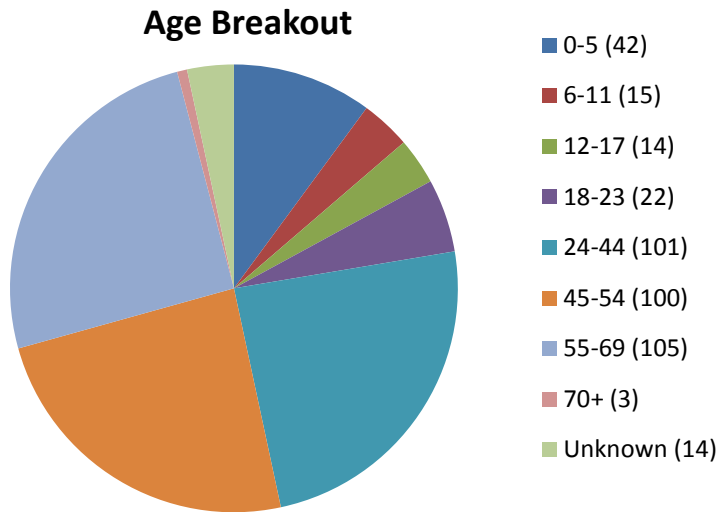
85% of the total available beds in Transitional Housing were occupied in 2014

2015 Sheltered Count

	Emergency Shelter (General Population)	Emergency Shelter (Veterans Only)	Transitional Housing (General Population)	Transitional Housing (Veterans Only)	Motel Subsidy	Total
Total Individuals	146	87	135	211	21	600

What We Found

On the night of January 28, 2015, there were **615** people experiencing homelessness in Chester County compared to 2014 where 684 people were identified as experiencing homelessness.



The following providers are not included in the age breakout: Veteran Affairs-Domiciliary, Open Hearth (Gateway - Motel Subsidy Program), Kennett Area Community Services (Motel Subsidies), Domestic Violence Center of Chester County, The House (Transitional Housing for Single Women in Phoenixville) and City Gate Mission

The reason that the number of people identified as homeless is lower in 2015 from 2014 is due to the eligibility criteria as defined at 24 CFR 578.3. In 2014 we were able to account for those who were in a *doubled up* living situation with family or friends, as well as unaccompanied youth in this living situation. In 2015 the guidance provided by The Department of Housing and Urban Development did not allow us to count these sub-populations' living situation.

We would like to thank all 88 volunteers and community agencies who assisted with this community effort. The Point in Time Count is not possible without your help and dedication.

Thank you!

For more information on Decade to Doorways visit our website at www.decadetodoorways.org

CONTACT:

Lauren Hutzel, Decade to Doorways Administrator
 PH: (610) 344-6900
 Email: lhutzel@chesco.org