



For Immediate Release

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CITY OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCES A 13 PERCENT DECREASE IN HOMELESSNESS SINCE 2015

2016 Point-in-Time Count Reveals Citywide Homeless Population Down by 13 Percent; Lowest Count in More than a Decade

The City of Chicago today released its annual [Homeless Point-in-Time \(PIT\) Count and Survey Report](#), revealing a 13 percent decrease in both sheltered and unsheltered populations during 2015-2016, compared to the 2015 PIT count done in the previous year. The 2016 PIT count revealed 5,889 homeless persons in January, down from 6,786 last year, and marking the lowest observed count of homeless individuals citywide in over a decade.

The 2016 PIT Report more closely analyzes trends in homeless subpopulations in the city than has been done in previous years, with noted decreases among homeless Veterans, chronically homeless individuals, and homeless youth over last year.

“We as a City cannot thrive until each and every one of our residents can thrive, which is why we are committed to addressing homelessness in a holistic, comprehensive and compassionate manner,” said Mayor Emanuel. “While we are encouraged that we have fewer residents impacted by homelessness this year, our work to address homelessness is not done until every Chicagoan has a place to call home.”

With overall homelessness down over last year, the 2016 PIT demonstrates progress toward the city’s broader goal of reducing homelessness through success with the following subgroups:

- Veteran homelessness has decreased for the second consecutive year and by 22 percent since last year;
- Chronic homeless is down by 68 percent;
- Unaccompanied youth has dropped by 14 percent;
- Families and families with children living in shelters has decreased slightly (from 677 in 2015 to 661 in 2016), while reaching the city’s lowest number of families in shelters since 2007.

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) conducts the annual Point-In-Time count to assess the city’s homeless population, estimating how many homeless residents reside in

shelter and in public spaces on any given night. Mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the PIT count requires municipalities and homeless service providers to demonstrate their needs every two years at a minimum. Though 2016 is not a year in which the City is required to report, DFSS conducts the PIT to better monitor and allocate resources to homeless individuals.

“Through our large network of partners, delegate agencies and advocates, we as a city are committed to a compassionate and consistent approach to ending homelessness,” said DFSS Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. “While we have made progress in helping many residents across the city, we will use the results of the latest PIT to inform our work moving forward so that every Chicagoan can get the resources and the services they need to sustain permanent housing.”

This year’s PIT count also used improved methodology on the CTA with roving teams stationed on both the Red and Blue Lines, which run 24 hours, to count riders typically sleeping on CTA vehicles. In previous years, the count was conducted on a smaller subset of CTA vehicles. The more comprehensive CTA methodology is another example of how DFSS continues to improve surveying techniques implemented by PIT each year.

Under the leadership of Mayor Emanuel, the City of Chicago has made important progress in improving outreach and service to homeless residents, and in decreasing the overall number of residents impacted by temporary and chronic homelessness. These improvements and the overall decline in homelessness are due in large part to lessons learned by the city’s participation in the Ending Veteran Homelessness Initiative (EVHI), a national campaign to end homelessness among Veterans. Through participation in EVHI and application of the “One List” coordinated access system, the city has improved its ability to identify and match homeless individuals to housing resources—housing more than 2,400 veterans since 2015 and exceeding the city’s initial goal for the project.

Implementation of the One List has proven efficient in preventing homelessness by matching individuals who become homeless with the right resources as soon as they enter the system, and by coordinating outreach efforts for any residents who are sleeping on the street or in public spaces to ensure they have a path to housing. To replicate its success in preventing homelessness more broadly, DFSS is currently working to expand this approach to address chronic, family and youth homelessness.

This year’s PIT count took place on the night of January 26th, 2016, based on projection of the point in time with the coldest temperatures of the year because that is typically when shelters see their highest intakes. The collaborative effort included coordination with local governmental entities, local policy and advocacy groups, service providers, other essential partners, and over 400 volunteers and staff. The needs identified in previous PIT counts contribute to the city’s Plan to End Homelessness – Plan 2.0, which establishes funding priorities based on where the needs exist.

Since Mayor Emanuel took office in 2011, the City of Chicago has increased funding for homeless initiatives by more than 10 percent and invested in new programs targeting veterans, youth, families, and victims of domestic violence. To ensure that the City has enough affordable housing to support families and residents around the city, Mayor Emanuel has overseen the following

improvements: passed the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) to create approximately 1,200 units of housing and generate \$90 million in funding by 2020; worked with housing advocates to pass the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Preservation ordinance to retain 700 SRO units in gentrifying areas by the end of 2018; and leveraged new revenue through a \$2 million annual surcharge from the house sharing industry to serve as many as 300 homeless individuals with housing and wraparound services each year.

Additionally, the City launched a pilot program aimed at housing residents experiencing chronic homelessness earlier this year. Led by the Mayor's citywide task force on homelessness, the pilot is the first undertaking of its kind by the city to provide permanent housing options and wraparound services specifically for residents who have experienced recurring and extended bouts of homelessness. Using methodology from the Ending Veteran's Homelessness Initiative (EVHI) and the One List, the city will use lessons learned from the pilot to better address the changing needs of this vulnerable population and to inform homeless prevention work moving forward.

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About DFSS:

DFSS' Homeless Outreach Prevention (HOP) teams work daily with residents experiencing street homelessness and chronic homelessness to assist them in securing support services and housing. Through partnerships with delegate agencies, DFSS houses more than 3,000 people per night through a citywide network of overnight shelters and interim housing.