2013 Homeless Point -in-Time Count and Survey

The 2013 Homeless Point-In-Time Count (PIT) and Survey was conducted by the Orange County Commission to End Homelessness, Focus Strategies, OC Partnership (OCP), the Orange County Health Care Agency, and OC Community Services.

Summary of Key Findings:

	2009		2011		2013	
	#	% of total	#	% of total	#	% of total
Unsheltered Homeless People	5,724	69%	4,272	62%	1,678	39%
Sheltered Homeless People	2,609	31%	2,667	38%	2,573	61%
Total Point-in-Time Count	8,333		6,939		4,251	
Change Year to Year	-1,394			-2,688		
Change 2009 - 2013	-4,082					
Annual Estimate	*21,479*		*18,325*		*12,707*	

- Utilizing a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved methodology, the 2013 PIT Count and Survey was conducted on the morning of January 26, 2013 and included sheltered and unsheltered counts of homeless.

- The HUD definition of homelessness for the purpose of a point in time homeless count includes only people who are literally homeless – living unsheltered on the streets, in a vehicle or another place not fit for human habitation or in an emergency shelter or transitional housing program.

- The point-in-time is a one night snapshot of **literal** homelessness as defined by HUD. Many people and families considered homeless or at risk in other arenas – including those in prison/jail, living in hotels/motels or "couch surfing" are NOT included in the HUD Point-In-Time Count.

- Based on the findings from the 2013 Orange County PIT Count and Survey, a total of 4,251 individuals are homeless on any given night. This represents a decrease of roughly 39% from the 2011 PIT Count (or a decrease of 2,688 individuals).

County	2011 PIT	2013 PIT	Difference	Percent Change 2011-2013
Los Angeles*	51,340	*data not yet available*		
Orange	6,939	4,251	2,688	-39%
Riverside	4,321	2,978	1,343	-31%
San Bernardino	2,816	2,321	495	-17.50%
San Diego	9,020	8,900	120	-1.30%
Ventura	1,872	1,715	157	-8.30%

- Orange County's homeless population is proportionally similar to the national homeless population in terms of household type: 37% of homeless people are in family households (including at least one minor child) and 63% are in adult only households.

- Orange County's homeless sheltered and unsheltered populations are also proportionally similar to the national population: approximately forty percent (40%) of homeless persons were unsheltered -- living on the streets, in vehicles or tents and sixty percent (60%) of homeless people counted were sheltered.

- Since 2009, chronic homelessness among individuals has decreased by almost 27 percentage points. This parallels national trends showing declines in the chronically homeless population as more permanent supportive housing units are brought on line.

Methodology:

- In conjunction with OCP, the Orange County Commission to End Homelessness specifically convened an Ad Hoc Committee comprised of multiple stakeholders and partners to advise on the 2013 PIT Count.

- The Ad Hoc Committee's direction included a public places count with sampling methodology (one of two methodologies appropriate for the size and urbanization of Orange County); the integration of the survey with the count to better extrapolate characteristics of the unsheltered population; and a statistical process after the count to account for areas not visited on the morning of the count.

> *Combining the count and survey ensures that characteristic data is representative of the actual population counted.*
>
> *67% of those surveyed were unsheltered homeless; those responses were used to generate population data.*

- The 2013 PIT Count also created a unique opportunity to engage and educate the community in collecting, analyzing, and understanding information supporting the goal of homelessness.

- In total, 919 people signed up as volunteers and more than 750 volunteers committed to a 2 hour training.

- 127 homeless persons and 623 homeless service providers and community volunteers were deployed from centers located in each of the 5 Supervisorial Districts of the County to conduct the street count by canvassing 118 pre-identified map areas throughout the County including the Santa Ana Bike Trail.

Limitations of Point in Time Counts:

- There are many challenges in any homeless count, especially when implemented in a community as diverse and large as Orange County (798 square miles).

- Methodologies vary from community to community. Numbers may vary based on methodology used or changes in methodology.

- A Point-in-Time Count is just a one night "snapshot" and does not capture all those who are cycling in and out of homelessness.

- Not everyone becomes homeless on the same night.

Successful Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness Strategies and Key Local Initiatives:

- In recent years, Orange County has implemented policy and program changes aimed at ensuring homeless persons in Orange County are rapidly housed and that local resources are invested in programs with **proven impacts** on reducing homelessness.

- Programs in Orange County have re-tooled and shifted their focus to moving people quickly into housing. By embracing **rapid re-housing** as a strategy, the length of time that a family experiences homelessness is shorter, also allowing programs to serve more people.

- Over the past two years, Orange County has dramatically increased permanent supportive housing for the most vulnerable populations, including program shifts and additional capacity including:

    - The development of 62 permanent supportive housing units funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

    - 470 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers, providing homeless veterans with housing and supports in permanent housing.

    - Additional housing opportunities such as the Shelter Plus Care program currently serving approximately 650 people who are homeless and disabled.