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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anoka County, Community Partners Record Homelessness Numbers

Each year, the Heading Home Anoka Housing Collaborative (HHAHC), with support from Anoka County, conducts a Point-In-Time (PIT) count of people who are experiencing homelessness — both sheltered and unsheltered.

This information, which is solicited by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is important when it comes to procuring both federal and state funding that is used to reduce homelessness in Anoka County.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the PIT count being conducted differently over the last several years. Last year, the unsheltered portion of the count was not completed. Recognizing the importance of having that data for this year's count, HHAHC and its partners decided to modify how this portion of the count is accomplished, while keeping volunteers as safe as possible from COVID-19.

This year's PIT count is scheduled for Jan. 26. Instead of having volunteers fan out across the county at several locations to survey individuals experiencing homelessness, HHAHC and Anoka County will leverage already-existing resources and partnerships to complete surveys that are as accurate as possible, given the circumstances.

Anoka County Human Services staff, area police departments, homeless shelter providers and other participating entities will review their caseloads and identify individuals and families who are homeless at the time of the PIT count. Experienced outreach teams will be surveying those individuals who may be living outside. Those participating in the count have been trained on how to fill out surveys, and some individuals have also agreed to be point persons to do surveys with individuals who call in to receive services Jan. 26.

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HHAHC and Anoka County would like to thank everyone who has agreed to participate in the 2022 PIT count. Conducting this survey amid a pandemic is complicated and challenging but it's vitally important to accurately assess the amount of people experiencing homelessness in the area so Anoka County receives adequate funding to help those who are struggling to find and retain stable, affordable housing.

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