

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



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**Louisville Homeless Numbers Drop For Third Year:  
2015 Louisville Homeless Census and 2016 One-Night Count Released**

*LOUISVILLE, KY* (May 16, 2016) – The Coalition for the Homeless, together with their member agencies, is announcing the results of Louisville’s annual homeless census for 2015 and the one-night 2016 point-in-time count. The reports indicate that the overall number of homeless people has dropped yet again.

The annual homeless census tallies the number of unduplicated homeless people who are served in Jefferson County throughout the year. The 2015 census counted 6,737 homeless people, compared with 7,697 people in 2014. This represents a 12% decrease in overall homelessness this year over last. Since 2012, the census has shown a 23% drop in overall homelessness in Louisville.

While the census counts the number of homeless people throughout the year, the annual point-in-time (PIT) count is meant to indicate how many people sleep on Louisville’s streets and shelters on any given night. The PIT is conducted on a January night annually. On that night, the Coalition conducts a Street Count and also requests emergency overnight shelters to report the number of clients they each have. This year’s Street Count had an unprecedented 300 volunteers, so they were able to cover more ground and count more people—and the weather was also warmer, which meant fewer homeless people left their camps to find shelter indoors. As a result, the one-night homeless Street Count increased by 38% (from 81 in 2015 to 112 in 2016), but the one-night shelter count was down 27% (from 1,385 in 2015 to 1,004 in 2016). In total, the one-day count decreased by 24% this year, from 1,466 last year to 1,116.

One of the reasons for these decreases is the successful implementation of the Common Assessment system, administered by Family Health Center’s Phoenix Health Center. The Common Assessment ensures that every homeless individual and family receives the same evidence-based assessment to determine who has the greatest need and who has been homeless for the longest time. Helping these chronically homeless persons to access permanent housing first has the greatest impact on the numbers of persons homeless in the community.

Natalie Harris, Executive Director of the Coalition, stated, “We know what to do and we are making a difference by working together on the issue of homelessness, but the only way to truly end homelessness is begin to address the community’s need for an additional 65,000 affordable housing units, especially for Louisville families experiencing homelessness.”

Last year the Coalition, Metro Louisville, and key partners including the Robley Rex VA Hospital, Volunteers of America Mid-States, and Family Health Centers joined forces through an effort called Rx: Housing Veterans and became one of only a handful of cities to reach “functional zero” in the fight against veteran homelessness. In doing so, they housed almost 800 homeless veterans during the year and continue to house approximately 30 newly homeless veterans each month. In 2016, Rx: Housing partners are also working to end chronic homelessness by housing everyone in the city who has been homeless for a year or longer.

**About the Coalition for the Homeless**

The Coalition for the Homeless, located at 1300 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 250, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission to prevent and eliminate homelessness in Louisville through advocacy, education, and coordination of 30 local member agencies who provide services for the homeless. For more information, visit [www.louhomeless.org](http://www.louhomeless.org), call (502) 636-9550, or find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LouHomeless](https://www.facebook.com/LouHomeless).