

December 15, 2015

The Kern County Homeless Collaborative announces the kickoff of the annual Homelessness Census, (aka the Point-in-Time Count or PIT).

The 2016 Homelessness Census of Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Persons will take place throughout Kern County during A 24-hour period **Wednesday, January 27 through Thursday, January 28.**

CENSUS WORKERS ARE THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL CENSUS!

The help of approximately 250 volunteers/workers are needed. (Must be 18th years or older, and training will be required.)

January 27, for the Sheltered Homeless Count...

...Help is needed to count people who are homeless and who will be staying in shelters.

January 28, for the Unsheltered Count...

...Teams of workers (who we group into three or four people) span out throughout Kern all day long *to count people who are homeless who sleep outdoors, in parks, alleys, by the river, under bridges, etc.* or in places not meant for human habitation--cars, abandoned buildings, garages or other structures without electricity or running water on:

The participation of new volunteers from the community are eagerly encouraged and welcome! Those experienced with the Homelessness Census are especially needed.

Executive directors and supervisors of Homeless Collaborative member agencies: Please free up staff to assist in the effort. The Homelessness Census is mandatory for those who receive CoC funding from US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and also serves those who work to end homeless even though they are otherwise funded. Pooling our efforts is a win-win for the entire community.

The Homelessness Census is an **educational opportunity** for all involved. The process helps to identify new local trends in homelessness among vulnerable populations such as families with children, unaccompanied youth, chronically homeless, veterans; and identifies the magnitude of challenges such as drug use or mental/physical health issues. This survey process also helps to ensure annual funding to our community for crucial housing and supportive service projects for people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. Most recently the Collaborative applied for federal funds in the amount of more than \$5 million for 20 grant programs aimed at ending homelessness in Kern County.

Census Committee meetings (open to the public) are scheduled on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 3:30pm at one of California Veterans Assistance Foundation's offices: 4200 Easton Drive Suite 13 (for directions call 784-2848).

WILL YOU HELP?

KERN COUNTY HOMELESS COLLABORATIVE (KCHC)
C/O United Way of Kern County | 5405 Stockdale Highway 200 | Bakersfield, CA 93309
661 834 2734 | 661 834 2952 FAX | Christine.L@UWKern.org
www.kernhomeless.org | <http://www.facebook/kerncountyhomelesscollaborative>
United Way of Kern County is the home of the Kern County Homeless Collaborative.

We hope you will participate and ***we extend a great big thank you in advance!***

Involvement entails:

- Participating in a required training either January 13, 9am to noon; or January 14, 1 to 4pm. These options are provided to best accommodate varying schedules.
- Rural trainings may only be offered once in a rural town or through Skype. Rural workers are welcome to attend Bakersfield trainings as well.
- Assisting in the Census process during the 24 hour period. Individuals will not be asked to serve longer than an eight hour period ***and those who finish surveying their assigned area will be assigned to another area.***
- Participating in the area of greatest need. The Census Committee will make every effort to keep volunteers within their region of residence or employment. However, due to the geography of our county some individuals may be asked to assist in areas where more volunteers or skill sets are needed (such as individuals who are bilingual). Unfortunately we will not be able to reimburse travel expenses.
- The possibility of being selected as a team leader is based upon prior Census experience, availability and initiative.
- Receiving a certificate of appreciation; and most usually a letter of gratitude from Mayor Hall for the valued investment in the Census, for each worker who participates.

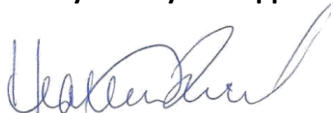
Volunteer Profiles/Applications are required for all participants (even if you've participated in the past). A profile must be on file for any volunteers or staff (*members, executives, Census Committee, volunteers, government staff, past volunteers*). Here are some important tips towards a most efficient form:

1. Visit: www.KernHomeless.org.
2. Click the green "VOLUNTEER" button (upper right corner of the home page).
3. Complete the profile (aka "Applicant Form") paying special attention to these sections.
 - SECTION 1: An email address and at least two phone numbers (preferably a cell and home – or cell and work). Three phone numbers are even better!
 - SECTION 2: Enter your date of birth and special skills. Special skills include fluency in other languages i.e. Spanish and American Sign Language. ***Also please tell us here if you can be a team leader and if you have a car that can transport 3 or more people.***
 - SECTION 3: Check *only* the "Homeless Census" box under "Special Events"; and list any physical limitations that we should be aware of; and
 - SECTION 4: An emergency contact (required).

Finally, type the shown security letters or numbers that appear in the "photo box" and select the "Submit" icon.

Please contact Heather Kimmel, if you have questions: 661-695-3626 or heather.kimmel@cavaf.org.

Thank you for your support!



Heather Kimmel
2016 Census Committee Chair