



**WINTER SANCTUARY  
2012-2013 Community Report**

Winter Sanctuary is a seasonal emergency-shelter program for homeless men and women provided by Sacramento Steps Forward, Volunteers of America and members of the faith community

Each winter, cold and wet weather conditions threaten the lives of nearly 1,000 homeless men and women who live on Sacramento-area streets. The Winter Sanctuary Program was founded to meet the needs of these individuals with nowhere to go. Comprised of a network of religious congregations under the leadership of Volunteers of America and Sacramento Steps Forward, Winter Sanctuary is the only winter shelter option for single, homeless adults. The goal of this privately funded program is to help these individuals, who all too often fall through the cracks.

## Program Basics *(data from HMIS)*

- 133 nights of shelter, hot meals, and simple breakfasts provided *(November 19, 2012 to March 31, 2013)*
- An average of 89 guests sheltered nightly
- 536 unduplicated guests served
- Average length of stay: 24 days
- Median length of stay: 10 days

## Guest Demographics and Subpopulation Characteristics *(data from HMIS)*

- **Gender:** The majority of Winter Sanctuary guests are male. Male 63%, Female 37%, less than 1% Transgendered (n=1)
- **Age:** 70% of Winter Sanctuary guests are between the ages of 25 and 54. Less than 10% of guests are Transition Age Youth age 18-24 or Seniors 62 and older, 7% and 5% respectively.

AGE RANGE	%
18-24 <i>(Transition Age Youth)</i>	7%
25-34	20%
35-44	22%
45-54	28%
55-61	17%
62+	5%

- **Race:** There is no racial majority in the Winter Sanctuary Program. The largest racial group is White (46%), followed by African American (39%). African Americans are over-represented in the program population compared to the general population *(Sacramento County 2011 Census: 11% of County residents are African American)*.
- **Ethnicity:** 10% of Winter Sanctuary guests are Hispanic/Latino.
- **Living situation before Program Entry:** The majority of Winter Sanctuary guests were unsheltered prior to entering the program (55%). Another 20% reported coming to the program from an Emergency Shelter. Only 2% of participants came directly to the program from stable housing *(house or apartment)*.

LIVING SITUATION BEFORE PROGRAM ENTRY	%
Place not meant for human habitation/Unsheltered	55%
Emergency Shelter	20%
Staying or Living with Family or Friends	10%
Institutional Settings	4%
Hotel	3%
House or Apartment	2%
Other	6%

- **Veterans represent** 11% of the Winter Sanctuary population.

## Outcomes

### Housing Assistance

With help from a grant from the Sacramento Region Community Foundation, Sacramento Self Help Housing (SSHH) worked with Winter Sanctuary guests regularly, to help those with adequate income obtain permanent housing. Staff met with 160 individuals over the course of the winter and were able to assist approximately 41 households secure housing. The number of individuals who were able to find housing due to SSHH's assistance may be higher, as this population can be difficult to track when they leave the program.

### Consumer Survey

**Destination at Exit:** SSF staff surveyed 55 guests on the last night of Winter Sanctuary, asking them where they would stay the following night when the program was closed. The most frequent response was a place not meant for human habitation, such as “outside,” “river,” or “car.” Six (6) guests reported that they would have stable housing. The table below summarizes the responses. Please note that some respondents listed more than one possible destination.

DESTINATION AT EXIT	%
Place not meant for human habitation/Unsheltered	35%
Unsure	24%
Emergency Shelter	20%
Stable Housing	11%
Family or Friends	< 1%
Hotel	< 1%
Other	< 1%

**Consumer Satisfaction:** The survey also evaluated consumer satisfaction with the program. The overwhelming majority of guests agreed or strongly agreed that (a) they were satisfied with the program overall, (b) they were treated with respect, (c) the sleeping arrangements were adequate, (d) the food was satisfying, and (e) they would use the program again for shelter needs. The average scores on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 meaning “strongly agree”) are summarized in the table below.

SATISFACTION QUESTIONS	AVERAGE SCORE
Satisfied overall	4.4/5
Treated with respect	4.3/5
Adequate sleeping arrangements	4.0/5
Satisfying food	4.4/5
Would use the program again	4.4/5

When guests were asked if they would use the program year-round if available, 45 people or 82% of respondents, said that they would.

## Faith Community Partners

Winter Sanctuary would not be possible without the generosity and compassion of our faith community partners, the churches, synagogues, and mosques that graciously open their doors to welcome homeless guests in from the cold to a hot meal and a safe place to sleep. Sacramento Steps Forward thanks the following 2012-2013 Winter Sanctuary host congregations:

Arcade Church	St. Luke's Lutheran Church
Atonement Lutheran Church	St. Mark's United Methodist Church
Bayside of South Sacramento Church	St. Paul's Baptist Church
Capital Christian Center	St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Christ Temple Apostolic Church	Sun River Church
Congregation B'nai Israel	The House Church
First Baptist of Elk Grove	The Rock of Roseville
First Covenant Church	The Table United Methodist Church
Lutheran Church of the Master	This Is Pentecost Ministries
New Life Community Church	Town and Country Lutheran Church
Real Life Church	Trinity Life Center
Sacramento Area League of Associated Muslims Center	Westminster Presbyterian Church
Seventh-Day Adventist Church	

## Community Partners

Winter Sanctuary is the only winter shelter option in our community supported entirely by the private sector. The program is one of lowest cost shelter options at approximately \$11 per person per night. In addition to the tremendous contributions of space, food, hospitality, and fellowship provided by our faith community partners, financial and in-kind support has been provided by the following organizations and individuals:

Wells Fargo  
Sacramento Region Community Foundation  
Margaret Deterding Fund  
The River District  
Downtown Sacramento Partnership  
Petcher's Foundation Inc.  
Sierra Health Foundation  
Loaves & Fishes  
Moe Mohanna  
Individual Donors throughout Sacramento

Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson has also been a big supporter of the program, helping us garner the support of these many private sector partners. Sacramento Steps Forward thanks all of these contributors that have helped us make the Winter Sanctuary Program a success in our community!