

January 2022

## SACRAMENTO AREA

# HOMELESSNESS PROGRESS REPORT

## Volunteers needed to help with Point-in-Time count of people experiencing homelessness

By Ya-Yin Isle and Gregg Fishman

Volunteers are needed to help with Sacramento's Point-in-Time (PIT) count of people experiencing homelessness.

Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF), the non-profit organization that coordinates the count, recently postponed the PIT, originally planned for late January, due to the surge in COVID-19 cases from the Omicron variant.

The count now will take place Feb. 23-24 to create safer conditions for participants, including unhoused residents, volunteers and staff, said Lisa Bates, chief executive officer for SSF.

"A full and accurate count of people experiencing homelessness is critical to determining effective local responses as well as the level of future state and federal resources," Bates said. "To be able to get that robust count, we need hundreds of volunteers with many different skills and abilities."



If you are interested in volunteering, [please visit this link.](#)

Bates said that other cities in California also have moved their PIT counts to February.

Sacramento Steps Forward oversees the Sacramento Continuum of Care, a coordinating organization for government agencies and service providers who serve people experiencing homelessness. SSF organizes the PIT count every two years as required by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The previous count was in 2019; the count did not take place in 2021 because of the pandemic.

More than 800 volunteers helped to conduct the 2019 PIT count, which found that 5,570 people experience homelessness in Sacramento County on any given night. That was a 19% increase from the 2017 count. Most people working with the local homeless population believe the number of unsheltered people in Sacramento has increased significantly over the past three years, in part because of the pandemic. The results from the 2022 PIT count, likely to be released by early summer, will bring more clarity to the issue.

The City and County of Sacramento and their partner agencies remain committed to creating positive outcomes for unsheltered residents. Since 2017, the City and County have collectively moved 13,449 people from homelessness to permanent housing.

### About this Report

The City of Sacramento, Sacramento Housing and Development Agency, Sacramento Steps Forward and the County of Sacramento are publishing this monthly report to keep the community informed about our collaborative work to address homelessness in Sacramento.





The City of Sacramento in January [announced the purchase of 102-acres](#) of surplus federal property at 3100 Meadowview Road. The property is large enough to serve multiple uses, including affordable housing and as an additional temporary safe parking site. The purchase price was \$12.3 million.

As part of implementing the [Comprehensive Siting Plan to Address Homelessness](#), the City has expanded the North Fifth Street shelter, adding 40 beds to the 122 that were already there. The total capacity is now 162. The 40 new beds will be filled by referrals from [Sacramento Steps Forward](#).

Several City departments are working together to implement the siting plan and create new spaces for people experiencing homelessness. The city already operates spaces for [approximately 1,000 people](#), but they are typically full.

City Hall served as an overnight respite center on Dec 31 and Jan 1, welcoming approximately 60 people each night as the temperature dipped into the low 30s. The City of Sacramento has provided overnight emergency shelter to more than 400 people this winter. The City is working to open a dedicated respite center that would be open regardless of weather conditions.

### Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency

The Sacramento Housing Authority has extended the Tenant Based Voucher (formerly Section 8) waiting list deadline to Feb. 9 at 11:59 p.m. “We want to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to apply for the waiting list, especially households that may be struggling during the pandemic and need extra time to complete the paperwork,” said Deputy Executive Director Sarah O’Daniel.

Applicants can apply online at [www.sacwaitlist.com](http://www.sacwaitlist.com). The website can translate the information into multiple languages. There is no charge to apply. Online applications are recommended; however, applicants can receive a paper application at the following Sacramento locations:

- California Black Chamber of Commerce, 1600 Sacramento Inn Way, Suite 232
- La Familia Counseling Center, Inc. at 5523 34th St.
- Rose Family Creative Empowerment Center, 7000 Franklin Blvd., Suite 1000

For reasonable accommodation, call (916) 440-1390/TTY 711 or 1 (800) 855-7100.

Waiting-list preferences are given to households experiencing homelessness or that are rent burdened, have a member who is a veteran, or someone who is disabled, and who live or work or was hired to work in Sacramento County.

The Housing Authority of the County of Sacramento’s housing programs serve very low income families and individuals. Eligible families will receive rental assistance as funds are available.

### Sacramento Steps Forward



Homelessness is complex. Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) is here to help connect the dots. We are a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit leading multi-sector, system-level change to compassionately end homelessness. We focus on strengthening our community’s ability to help people experiencing homelessness by bringing together our partners in housing, healthcare, local government, and other community organizations.

SSF is also the federally designated lead agency for the Sacramento City and County Continuum of Care (CoC). The Sacramento CoC is responsible for managing community planning, coordination and evaluation to ensure that the system of homeless assistance resources are used effectively and efficiently to rapidly and permanently end people’s homelessness. The CoC is actively recruiting for members to join the [CoC Board](#) and a few of our subcommittees. Read more [here](#) to learn how you can participate with the CoC!

### County of Sacramento

In response to growing concern about unsheltered community members being exposed to severe weather events, Sacramento County created a [response program](#) that has weather-related triggers for activations. This program first activated in January 2021 and has activated several times over the past year.

The County also uses pop-up weather respite centers, but this approach, which involves motel vouchers, offers several advantages: It relies on outreach partners to identify unsheltered people who would not otherwise be reached; it offers a minimum three-day stay (compared to 6-12 hours at a weather respite center); and it allows people, pets, and partners to shelter together in privacy, which is critical during COVID.

This program is activated when there are nighttime lows of 37 degrees or lower for two or more days within a five-day span; or rain for two or more consecutive days (forecast 60% or more); or one day or night of rain combined with nighttime lows of 32 degrees or lower. It also has heat thresholds.

The program has capacity for about 100 motel rooms on any given night. In the most recent activation (Dec. 9 – Jan. 4), the program served more than 400 people and nearly 270 households.

Sacramento County Weather Specific Response (Dec. 9 - Jan. 4)

MORE THAN  
**400**  
PEOPLE

NEARLY  
**270**  
HOUSEHOLDS