

**DC**DEPARTMENT of  
HUMAN SERVICES

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

January 27, 2021

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### **DHS and TCP Execute Annual PIT Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness With COVID-19 Protocols in Place** *This Year's Count Data Intended to Inform Resources and Services More "Critical" Than Ever*

(Washington, DC) – Tonight, the District, in partnership with the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP), will complete the 2021 Point in Time (PIT) Count, the annual census of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Each winter, the PIT Count is conducted by TCP and community volunteers to engage residents experiencing homelessness and connect them to resources and services available in the District. This year, due to the Covid-19 public health emergency, TCP will conduct the count with District Government employees and employees of local non-profit homeless service providers. In May, a final 2021 PIT Count report will be released by the Council of Governments, alongside count results for other jurisdictions in the region.

"Throughout the public health emergency, we have had outreach teams in the community to continue building relationships and connecting unsheltered residents to the services, shelter, and housing opportunities they need to stay safe during this difficult time," said DC Department of Human Services Director, Laura Zeilinger. "This work is critical to our efforts to reduce the risks of Covid-19 infection for our neighbors experiencing homelessness, and will continue, especially during this time, until every person in our city has a place to call home."

Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year 2021 budget includes more than \$91 million for new and upgraded emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing facilities including \$40 million to rebuild the 801 East Men's Shelter; \$36 million to build the Harriet Tubman replacement shelter; \$11.5 million to complete enhancements to the New York Avenue Men's Shelter; and, \$4.1 million for critical upgrades to low-barrier shelters in the District. The last of the Short-Term Family Housing sites, Ward One, will open early spring, 2021.

"It is more critical than ever that we continue to have informed data on the services and supports our neighbors experiencing homelessness need throughout the pandemic," said TCP Director, Sue Marshall. "People experiencing homelessness are at an increased risk during a public health crisis, so we are very grateful to move ahead with conducting the PIT Count in partnership with the District this year, with recommended Covid-19 precautions in place, to gather this extremely critical information."

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The 2020 PIT Count results indicated a 2.2% reduction in the overall number of persons experiencing homelessness in 2019, and a 48.5% decrease in family homelessness since 2016. Chronic homelessness in the District has declined by 16 percent, a 15-year low.

Since the launch of Homeward DC – Mayor Bowser’s strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness – 6,500 individuals and 6,000 families have exited homelessness to permanent housing in the last five years; Mayor Bowser has increased investments in Permanent Supportive Housing by 60% and expanded year-round access to shelter for families; and, the Homelessness Prevention Program has diverted approximately 8,000 families from experiencing a shelter stay.

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