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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*San Diego County's 2012 Homeless Count  
Preliminary Results – Approximate Increase of 8.6%*

**SAN DIEGO – Tuesday, March 13, 2012**

The Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH) conducted the County's annual homeless count, the 'WeALLCount Campaign', on January 27, 2012. This year more than 700 volunteers (550 in 2011) participated, including many [community and elected leaders](#).

In addition to counting those who are unsheltered, the RTFH also compiles a count of people who slept in one of the region's homeless shelters on January 27, 2012. Demographic data regarding those sheltered is derived from the region's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is administered by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH). Demographic data for those unsheltered is derived from follow-up surveys conducted by the volunteers. This data, along with an assessment of the shelter bed capacity for the region, is used to evaluate the unmet need in the County. Once completed, this analysis is reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and used, along with Point-In-Time Count (PITC) data from communities across the country, to produce the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.



Analysis of the data is ongoing and there may be adjustments upon further review. Final counts are expected by the end of April. The following are preliminary estimate counts of homeless persons in San Diego County **on January 27, 2012** and change since the prior count (January 28, 2011)

- **The 2012 unsheltered: 5,300 (4,981 in 2011) - approximate increase of 6.4%**
- **The 2012 sheltered: 4,500 (4,039 in 2011) - approximate increase of 11.4%**
- **The 2012 total: 9,800 (9,020 in 2011) - approximate increase of 8.6%**

**From Peter Callstrom, RTFH Executive Director...**

This year's count is the most comprehensive since the inception of this HUD mandate in 2005. What are the reasons for the increase? Many factors contribute. For one, we had 20% more volunteers than in 2011. This may account for some of the increase, but we also know that many more people are now homeless due to the economy, lack of affordable housing, and the myriad personal issues that contribute to homelessness. It is important to note that [WeALLCount](#) is not a definitive count or representation of all persons experiencing homelessness in our region. [WeALLCount](#) is a snapshot of what we can best assess around the same time each year. Locally, it provides us with invaluable insights into trends, density, demographics, needs, and more. The results enable HUD to better understand the national scope and to allocate funding to address solutions.

While we have made demonstrable progress at alleviating and preventing homelessness for many, we know that the challenge ahead is daunting. Thanks to innovative solutions throughout our region, thousands of people are being served and empowered to no longer be homeless. We need to keep this in mind and continue to support progressive solutions and invest in a myriad of approaches that do work. Solving homelessness benefits our entire community. We also know it costs far more to do 'nothing'. Those who are homeless access public services (i.e., health care, police, etc.) which results in real costs to our entire community. When people are housed, [overall costs go down significantly](#).

The data from WeALLCount allows our community and Continuum of Care (CoC)<sup>1</sup> to understand and accurately report key information. This data enables the CoC to qualify for millions in federal funding to implement programs that prevent, alleviate, and address homelessness. Solving homelessness requires consistent and stable funding – a crucial investment that benefits our entire community.

### **Progress In Downtown San Diego:**

Despite the increase in the count, there is progress being made throughout our region. Many innovative and collaborative efforts are making a real difference. For more information on other efforts, please [review this publication](#) of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless. One example of progress...

*"The epidemic of homelessness affects many San Diegans. More than one-fifth of America's homeless call California's streets, parks and shelters home. We're proud that the [Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Campaign](#) recently achieved its initial goal of helping 125 of the most medically-vulnerable people to get off the streets and into housing. Campaign leadership and the downtown business community remain steadfast in ending homelessness through various efforts, such as our [Movin' Home](#) program." - Kris Michell, President and CEO of the [Downtown San Diego Partnership](#)*

### **About WeALLCount (a.k.a. Point-In-Time Count):**

The PITC identifies the number of homeless individuals (sheltered and unsheltered). Due to the inherent challenge of finding, identifying, and counting every person who is homeless during the PITC, this count cannot account for every single person experiencing homelessness. Many persons are hidden from view, may be residing temporarily with friends or family, or are simply inaccessible during the PITC.

1. **The Count:** January 27, 2012 – between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. HUD mandates that the count occur (throughout the Country) in the last ten days of January.
2. **Unsheltered Count:** Volunteers conducted a visual count throughout the County of people sleeping in places not meant for human habitation (i.e., on the street, in parks, riverbeds, canyons, beaches, etc.)
3. **Sheltered Count:** people living in Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, Safe Havens, and Hotels/Motels (with voucher). Compiled from data that is managed by local service providers.
4. **In-depth Surveys/Questionnaire:** In February, trained volunteers administered hundreds of questionnaires to unsheltered homeless persons, which provides a wealth of data on homelessness in our region.
5. **Reporting:** The data will be confirmed and analyzed by the RTFH. Results will be shared via our website ([www.RTFHSD.org](http://www.RTFHSD.org)), periodic publications, and press releases.

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<sup>1</sup> The Regional Continuum of Care Council (RCCC) is San Diego region's collaborative community working group consisting of nonprofit service providers, representatives of the cities within the County, County representatives, and other interested parties. Continuums of Care (CoC) are identified by HUD throughout the country for purposes of coordinating regional efforts, technical assistance, funding, evaluation, and more. The RCCC meets monthly to establish funding priorities, identify gaps in homeless services, and to pursue an overall systemic approach to addressing homelessness.

## Why **WeALLCount** is critical to San Diego County:

- **People:** No one should be homeless
- **Funding:** Results lead to millions in federal funds for local agencies
- **Understanding:** Data leads to targeted services and measurable results
- **Knowledge:** To provide agencies with data - critical for federal, state, and local grant applications
- **Action:** Awareness of the scope of the problem leads to the knowledge needed to act
- **Results:** Ending homelessness benefits EVERYONE

## About The Regional Task Force on the Homeless:

- *The Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.*
- *Our mission: To provide comprehensive data and trusted analysis that empowers the entire community to identify, implement, and support efforts to prevent and alleviate homelessness*
- *We support, empower, and collaborate with San Diego County's homeless service providers on a myriad of issues, planning, measurement, and more. The RTFH is the data center and technical resource for information on homelessness throughout San Diego County.*
- *The RTFH administers the region's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) on behalf of the Regional Continuum of Care Council (RCCC). The HMIS is used by dozens of service providers who manage hundreds of distinct programs. Data gathered enables us to provide analysis of demographics, trends, and more. Services include training, help desk, and critical data reports to many: service providers, cities, the County, elected officials, HUD, and the U.S. Congress.*

## Additional Resources:

<a href="http://www.RTFHSD.org">www.RTFHSD.org</a>	Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH)
<a href="http://1.usa.gov/AEmsPx">http://1.usa.gov/AEmsPx</a>	San Diego Regional Continuum of Care Council (RCCC)
<a href="http://keystohousing.org/">http://keystohousing.org/</a>	Keys to Housing: Ending Family Homelessness
<a href="http://bit.ly/zYSCfB">http://bit.ly/zYSCfB</a>	San Diego County Office of Education
<a href="http://assembly.ca.gov/homelessness">assembly.ca.gov/homelessness</a>	California State Assembly Select Committee on Homelessness
<a href="http://www.hudhre.info">www.hudhre.info</a>	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
<a href="http://bit.ly/wTu3lf">http://bit.ly/wTu3lf</a>	Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) - 2010
<a href="http://www.endhomelessness.org">www.endhomelessness.org</a>	The National Alliance To End Homelessness
<a href="http://www.usich.gov">www.usich.gov</a>	The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

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