



Enriching Lives

NEWS RELEASE

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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EVENT CONNECTS HOMELESS WITH NEEDED SERVICES

The County of Los Angeles today (Thursday, Dec. 6) hosted Project Homeless Connect Day, part of a national initiative designed to bring together service providers, agencies and organizations to provide assistance to the homeless.

It's estimated there are approximately 74,000 homeless people on the streets of Los Angeles County on any given night. Project Homeless Connect Day 2007 served to connect individuals and families with service agencies that can provide housing, health care, cash aid, food, child care and shelter assistance.

"Too often, the people most in need of services don't know what programs may be out there to help them," said Garrison Smith, Homeless Services Coordinator for the Chief Executive Office. "Project Homeless Connect Day unites government, volunteers, nonprofits, business organizations, civic leaders and faith-based organizations in creating a one-stop shop of local health and human services to assist homeless families and individuals."

Project Connect Day centers were set up at four different locations: Downtown Los Angeles, South Los Angeles, West Hollywood and Pomona.

Each site had solicited attendees by distributing fliers and through local media releases. In addition, homeless outreach teams had been working to identify potential clients and invited them to attend. In some cases, transportation for those in-need was provided by outreach teams, including the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).

Once on site, homeless individuals and families were interviewed to assess their needs and eligibility. Clients were then escorted by volunteer staff to a series of service and information booths. Participating county agencies included the Department of Public Social Services, Department of Mental Health, Sheriff's Department, Probation Department, Public Defender's Office, Department of Public Health, and Los Angeles County Office of Public Safety. Participating non-county government and community-based organizations included the City of Los Angeles, City of Pomona, City of West Hollywood, LAHSA, Tri-City Mental Health, Union Rescue Mission, EIMAGO, HOPICS,

PATH and JFS/SOVA Food Pantry. Services included legal support and advocacy information, along with identification cards, birth certificates, flu shots, dental screenings, pre-screening for CalWORKs, General Relief, Medi-Cal and Food Stamps.

After clients had been escorted to all booths, a discharge interview was conducted to ensure that their needs were met and to encourage ongoing connection with health and human service providers, both government and community based. Follow-up appointments were made for clients who were interested. Lunch was also provided to participating clients.

In the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (an interconnected system of housing and social service providers), there are an estimated 68,600 homeless people, including approximately 10,100 homeless children on any given night. The cities of Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach, which provide their own assistance network, have an estimated 5,100 homeless individuals on any given night.

Each continuum of care network has a range of services including, but not limited to, outreach, intake and assessment, emergency shelters and appropriate services, transitional housing with support services and permanent housing or permanent supportive housing to meet the long-term needs of individuals and families.

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