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PRESS ADVISORY

NJ Counts 2014 Reaches Out to Homeless Families, Youth and Veterans Will Identify Those at Greatest Risk to Harsh Winter Weather

All twenty-one New Jersey counties will participate in NJ Counts conducting a state---wide Point in Time count of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless. The Count's results will guide planning efforts to end homelessness across the state.

When: Tuesday, January 28 -Wednesday, January 29, 2014 (Exact times will vary by county)

Where: Across New Jersey's twenty-one counties (individual county contacts available at this link: <http://goo.gl/vt6Sf9>)

Who: Networks of organizations, agencies and others that plan community efforts to end homelessness

Given the recent harsh and unusually cold winter weather, it is difficult to think of anyone experiencing homelessness. Factors that will contribute to this year's count of homeless families, youth and veterans include:

- A shortage of rental housing driving up demand and costs,
- A failure to create more affordable housing and supportive housing,
- Foreclosures causing many to lose homes,
- Shortage of jobs that pay a living wage, and
- Families and individuals still living without homes even one year after Superstorm Sandy.

Recent figures show that homelessness is decreasing across the country. But recent cuts to funding through sequestration threaten this progress.

NJ Counts is designed to understand the nature and needs of New Jersey's homeless population so that those needs can be successfully met. Between January 28-29, 2014, volunteers will seek out homeless residents in shelters, woods, under bridges, in vacant buildings and other locations where they are forced to live because there is insufficient affordable or supportive housing and/or other suitable living arrangements for them.