

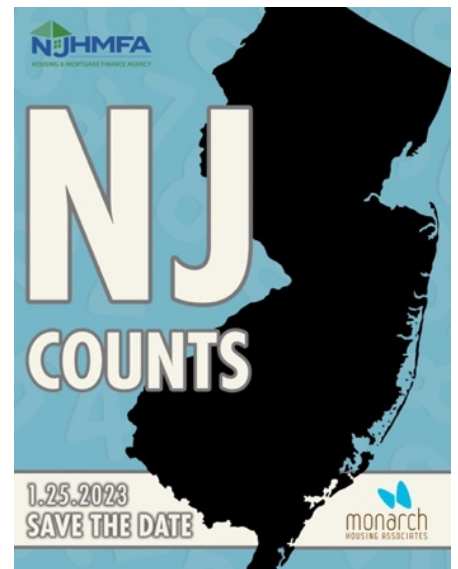
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#NJCounts 2023 Critical as Homelessness Rises Post-Pandemic

January 23, 2023 - On Wednesday, January 25th, 2023, #NJCounts 2023, the statewide Point-in-Time count of individuals and households who experience homelessness will take place. NJCounts 2023 will provide critical information as post-pandemic life becomes the new normal and communities see the true impact of the affordable housing crisis. Exact times for the count may vary by county. Local press contacts are available [here](#).



NJCounts is commissioned by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency and, for the tenth consecutive year, Monarch Housing Associates is coordinating the annual statewide count. Local government, non-profit agencies, community advocates, volunteers, and others that plan community efforts to end homelessness will conduct the counts throughout New Jersey.

Homeless service providers and volunteers will interview people experiencing homelessness on the night of January 24, 2023, who stayed in shelters, transitional housing programs, hotels paid for by agencies, in the woods, under bridges, in vacant buildings, and at other non-housing locations where they are forced to live because there is insufficient affordable or supportive housing. On January 25, 2023, many communities will canvas the streets to survey persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness, inquiring about where they slept the night before.

“For the 2023 Point-In-Time count we are excited about the updates to the survey, training and engagement process,” shared Taiisa Kelly, CEO of Monarch Housing Associates. “This year we collaborated with individuals directly impacted by homelessness to create a tool and a process that honors the dignity of those who will be interviewed and helps us collect critical information that can be used in creating effective solutions.”

The 2022 statewide Point-in-Time count found 8,754 homeless men, women, and children, in 6,631 households, across the state of New Jersey, a significant increase of 657 persons from 2021. NJCounts 2022 also saw a 257 person increase in those who are experiencing chronic homelessness, meaning the state’s most vulnerable are staying homeless for longer. The statewide NJCounts 2022 report is available [here](#). In 2023, communities are monitoring to determine whether this concerning trend continues. Monarch Housing expects to make the final report available in spring 2023.

According to Monarch Housing Associates, NJCounts 2023 is critical in the context of current state and federal conversations:

- The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released [All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#) in December 2022 with an ambitious national goal to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness by 25% by January 2025. The Federal Strategic Plan can be found [here](#). NJCounts 2023 will serve as a valuable gauge to measure New Jersey’s progress toward that benchmark.
- When the CARES Act was signed into legislation in March 2020, the state received an influx of federal funding to prevent, prepare for, and mitigate the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, with funding set aside specifically for people experiencing homelessness. As certain streams of funding are set to expire in 2023 and new streams, such as HOME-ARP, begin to be utilized, it is important to understand the current state of homelessness, and how effectively we have been using existing funding for homelessness prevention and housing persons currently experiencing homelessness.
- NJCounts 2023 will build on five years of analysis on racial disparities around homelessness in New Jersey. Data from 2018 to 2022 identified significant racial disparities in who experiences homelessness. NJCounts 2023 will add to the body of research on racial disparities and disproportionate experiences of homelessness.

- New Jersey Code Blue legislation requires all counties to provide emergency warming centers to persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness when temperatures are below 30 degrees. NJCounts 2023 will continue to provide information about the scope of unsheltered homelessness in each community in preparation for Code Blue warming center activities.

Ending homelessness requires increasing the supply of affordable and supportive housing, improving access to that housing, and ensuring persons experiencing homelessness have a voice in the process. Communities across the state have been working to implement these solutions through best practices such as housing first and rapid re-housing programs. These housing programs expand the supply of affordable and supportive housing through the provision of long-term and short-term rental assistance vouchers, coupled with support services tailored to individual participant needs. They work to address access to housing by eliminating barriers to program entry, such as requiring completion of treatment programs or attaining a specific level of income. These program models have helped communities across the country reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness.

“The 2023 Point-in-Time Count is an annual opportunity to work with communities to refine our understanding of the condition and needs of persons experiencing homelessness here in New Jersey,” said Melanie Walter, Executive Director of the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency. “We are grateful to the staff, volunteers, participants and the public for their support of this important work, and we continue to strive to meet the needs of all individuals struggling with homelessness and housing insecurity.”

For more information about Monarch Housing’s work to ensure that every person has quality affordable, permanent supportive housing that fosters freedom, independence, and community integration, visit <http://www.monarchhousing.org>.