Municipality of Anchorage
Health and Human Services

Homeless Leadership Team and Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness Activities Fact Sheet

Overview

There are currently two parallel efforts in the Municipality of Anchorage to address our community's rising problem of homelessness. Homelessness has a profound impact on our community: in our schools, community gathering spaces, churches and in our business environments. Homelessness is a community problem that requires community collaboration and action. This collaboration is evidenced by the two efforts: the Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness and the Municipality of Anchorage's Homeless Leadership Team.

Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness (ACH)

The Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness is a community wide collaboration actively working on solutions for the entire population of homeless individuals and families in Anchorage,

The mission of the Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness is to be a network of businesses, non-profits and community members who provide a continuum of support to prevent homelessness and connect the homeless to safe, secure and affordable housing. The ACH supports an executive board of 12 members from various sectors of the social service providers to oversee the community's 10 Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness. The full coalition and the oversight board have been active since 2004 in developing the comprehensive safety network needed for homeless individuals and families. Efforts by this group include

- **Oversight and implementation of the Municipality of Anchorage's 10 year plan to eliminate homelessness**.
- Beyond Shelter, a successful community wide case management for homeless families needing shelter. In the time period of November 2009 – February 2010, 1,241 calls from families and adults were received and over 209 households were served by this coordinated effort made possible by the federal stimulus funds to prevent homelessness. (Homeless Prevention and Rapid ReHousing report, Safety Links program, Anchorage)
- Sponsorship of 6 Project Homeless Connect events which connect homeless individuals and families in a one day social services fair setting
- Development and support for supported housing developments in Anchorage after a long period of no applicants
- Agency participation in a shared data base to better assess the needs of the homeless

The Mayor's Homeless Leadership Team (HLT)

The Mayor's Homeless Leadership Team (HLT) was established as part of Mayor Sullivan's Strategic Action Plan to deal with long term homeless individuals with persistent alcohol addictions and/or mental illness in Anchorage who constitute a serious social and public safety issue. The HLT is comprised of numerous social service organizations, government agencies and community/faith based partners. The HLT and community partners are supporting Mayor Sullivan in these efforts to focus on a specific component of a larger social issue.

The purpose of the HLT is to provide the Mayor with short and long term strategies for effectively managing the challenges this population creates and to assist with identifying and leveraging community resources for implementing those strategies.

The HLT has three main objectives:

- **Reduce deaths amongst chronically homeless people with alcohol addictions**
- **Reduce violence to and among the chronically homeless people with alcohol addictions**
- **Reduce neighborhood impacts from chronically homeless people with alcohol addictions**

Problem or community need

- January, 2009 point-in-time counts around the state of Alaska reflect an unduplicated count of 4,623 individuals experiencing homelessness[i]. The bulk of the impact of this problem is felt in Anchorage.
    - Of the people counted in this homeless count, 36% or 1,656 individuals reported a significant mental illness or disabling condition, including an alcohol addiction. This number is likely higher due to the limitations of self report utilized in the intake survey.
- Anchorage's counts for the past two Project Homeless Connect events have seen a 20-25% rise in the number of total participants. Over 80% of the recipients of services indicated that they were first time attendees of the homeless event.
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation indicates that the **wait list for a rental subsidy** voucher is over **5,000 people/families** statewide.
- The Department of Corrections (DOC) estimates there were 8,000 discharges with approximately 40% (3,200) of these individuals being people with disabling conditions and who had no identified housing arrangement at the time of discharge during 2008[ii].
- In Anchorage, 14 individuals who were displaced and without a home died on the trails or in camps and received publicity, however, Bean's Café reported 63 deaths in the larger population of homeless people in 2009. (Bean's Café M*emoriam 2009,*Anchorage)
- 2009 **Costs for Anchorage Fire Department** to respond to calls involving Chronic Public Inebriates: **$1,800,000.00**[iii]
- In 2009, there were **50 individuals who had more than 73 intakes** by the Community Service Patrol.[iv]

For additional information:

- Municipality of Anchorage Health and Human Services Homeless Leadership Team http://www.muni.org/Departments/health/HomelessLeadershipTeam
- Anchorage Coalition on Homeless. http://www.anchoragehomeless.org/

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[i] Alaska Homeless Count January 2009: http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/iceimages/grants/hmls2009w_ak_all.pdf
[ii] 2007/2008 HUD homeless count report, AHFC/DOC calculations
[iii] 2009 Municipality of Anchorage report of services costs, compiled February 2010, Diane Ingle, Department of Health and Human Services, Director.
[iv] 2009 Municipality of Anchorage report.