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Homelessness data now available for each county in Metro Denver

Littleton, Colo. --- Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI), a nonprofit organization that seeks to end homelessness across the metropolitan Denver area, has released homeless data for each of the seven counties and six cities within its Continuum of Care. This January, 8,482 homeless people were counted across the seven-county region.

“Homelessness does not look the same in Adams County as it does in Denver County,” says Jean Tutolo, Executive Director of Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative. “Each county’s homeless population is unique. In some counties, homeless families live “doubled up” with family and friends, while in other counties homeless families pay weekly rents to live in dilapidated motels. Local data tables provide a picture of homelessness in a specific community allowing each community to respond in a meaningful way.”

In Arapahoe County, 687 homeless people were identified. Households with children under 18 comprised almost 74 percent of the homeless persons, almost half of the households were single parents with children, and more than two-thirds were female.

The most common reason for being homeless was loss of job or unable to find work, followed closely by a family break-up or death, and high housing costs. The top places where people stayed were transitional housing, such as the House of Hope, hotels/motels and temporarily staying with family or friends.

“Arapahoe County is partnering with the Aurora Housing Collaborative to address homeless issues and is also working with MDHI to develop a regional plan to address homelessness,” said Commissioner Pat Noonan. “Arapahoe County and the City of Centennial continue to provide funds through grants to many non-profits that directly house or offer services to the homeless.”

Some of these organizations include: House of Hope, Arapahoe Douglas Mental Health Network's new Bridge House and Santa Fe House, Gateway Battered Women's Shelter, Developmental Pathways,

Arapahoe House, Aurora Mental Health Center, COMITIS Crisis Center, as well as Continuum of Care of Homeless supported programs.

Housing for the homeless or those with special needs who might otherwise be homeless has been constructed in the County using federal HOME, CDBG and other funding and includes Arapahoe Green, Willow Street, Lara Lea Apartments and Renaissance at Loretta Heights.

The County's Department of Human Services also provides emergency rental assistance in the form of utility assistance, \$150 toward rent, and motel vouchers for families with children, as well as eligible elderly or disabled residents.

Individual county homeless data tables are derived from the annual "Point-in-Time" study conducted by MDHI during winter 2007. Volunteers conducted interviews with homeless individuals and families in emergency shelters and human service organizations across the metropolitan area on January 29 & 30, 2007.

Individual County and city reports can be found at Metro Denver Homeless Initiative's website at www.mdhi.org under "downloads".

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