



# NEWS

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### **Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Down 33% in Montgomery County Your Way Home Releases Community Impact Report and Awards Champions of Change at Annual Summit**

**Norristown, PA (June 15, 2017)** – There has been a 33 percent reduction in the number of homeless in Montgomery County since 2013, according to the most recent Point-in-Time count conducted by the county. These findings were announced today at the 5th Annual Your Way Home Montgomery County Summit.

From 2011 through 2013, homelessness had been trending upward in the county, peaking at 464 individuals during a count in a single night in January 2013. In the January 2017 Point-in-Time Count, that number was 310 individuals.

“The county is working hard to reduce homelessness and when it does occur, making it rare, brief, and non-recurring,” said Valerie A. Arkoosh, MD, MPH, Chair, Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. “These new findings are moving in the right direction, but we must continue our efforts to support Your Way Home as they work to improve housing stability and economic security for those at risk of losing their homes and re-house those who have lost their homes.”

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that anyone receiving HUD funds conduct a Point-in-Time count annually. The count includes both sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January.

Established in 2014, Your Way Home Montgomery County is a partnership between government, philanthropy, nonprofits, and community partners to address the problem of homelessness in Montgomery County. Your Way Home is Montgomery County’s housing crisis response system, focused on coordinating, leveraging, and maximizing the impact of public and private resources to end homelessness. Nearly 3,000 people have been served by the Your Way Home system in 2016.

In addition to the reductions in the Point-in-Time count, the impact report showed:

- 86 percent of Montgomery County households at risk of homelessness were diverted from entering an emergency shelter, up from 72 percent for the previous year.
- The median length of stay in a shelter in 2016 was 56 days, compared to 49 days in 2015.
- 86 percent of people who exited Rapid Re-Housing to permanent housing have not returned to homelessness within two years.

Your Way Home's efforts to reduce homelessness focus on an evidence-based Housing First approach. Housing First seeks to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements. Additionally, Your Way Home focuses on a number of other strategies to reduce homelessness and help people get and sustain housing:

- coordinating entry into homeless crisis services;
- rapidly re-housing people who are homeless directly into permanent housing of their own;
- providing supportive services and financial assistance through the practice of progressive engagement;
- and diverting people who are about to become homeless to find safe, suitable alternatives to emergency shelter.

Your Way Home Montgomery County is a public-private partnership between county government, regional grant makers, service providers, and community partners.

In addition to releasing the new data, Your Way Home presented four Champions for Change Awards recognizing the outstanding contributions to our cause from key individuals across different sectors of our partnership. This year's Champions for Change are:

- Virginia Frantz, President & CEO, The Montgomery County Foundation, Inc.
- William P. Brown, Jr., President & CEO, Advanced Living Communities
- Kimberly A. Krauter, Chief Operating Officer, Advanced Living Communities
- Felicia Flora, Captain, Salvation Army of Norristown

### **About Your Way Home Montgomery County**

Your Way Home is a public-private partnership that helps working and low-income individuals and families end or prevent their homelessness. For more information, visit: [www.yourwayhome.org](http://www.yourwayhome.org)