



LANCASTER COUNTY

Homelessness Coalition

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Volunteers and County-wide Homelessness Continuum of Care Conduct 2026 Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

Lancaster, PA — The Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition, the local designated PA-510 Continuum of Care (CoC), responsible for measuring the impact of homelessness throughout Lancaster County, conducted its annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count on Thursday, January 22, 2026, as part of a statewide effort to measure homelessness across the nation. This congressionally mandated count provides a critical one-night snapshot of individuals experiencing homelessness—including those in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and those living unsheltered—throughout Lancaster City and County.

To ensure a comprehensive count, teams of over 72 dedicated volunteers and professionals canvassed the community, utilizing a specialized app to guide them through assigned areas and record data in real-time. This year's effort also includes a unique seven-day post-count engagement period, where service providers continue to interface with individuals to ensure no one was overlooked during the initial count.

"We would like to thank every one of the 72 volunteers who went out to survey individuals, during this year's PIT count, who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Lancaster County. We could not have done this without your time and commitment to this work," said Josiah Huyard, Street Outreach and Emergency Shelter Programs Coordinator.

In an approach unique to Lancaster, the CoC provided a \$10.00 voucher, bus passes and Goodwill gift cards to individuals participating in the survey process. This voucher serves to compensate neighbors for their time and provides immediate access to a light meal or a few cups of coffee.

The 2026 results will be compared against data from the previous year. During the PIT count held on January 22, 2025—typically the coldest time of the year—Lancaster identified 482 individuals in emergency shelters and an additional 62 individuals living unsheltered. This year's PIT count takes place just prior to the longest Code Blue Alert since 2022.

While PIT Counts are the best standardized national tool available, they are widely understood to be conservative estimates. Because these counts can be heavily influenced

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by weather and temperature, Lancaster officials pair PIT data with year-round insights from Empower Lancaster, the county-wide case management system, to build a more accurate picture of local needs to make data driven decisions for programs and services.

The PIT count information gathered is submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This information, collected nation-wide, is then able to provide a larger picture of the state of homelessness in the US. Providing vital insights for communities to secure federal funding and guide local planning to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Lancaster City and County.

For more information on local housing initiatives, please visit the Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition and for information on the PIT count visit, <https://endhomelessness.org/state-of-homelessness/> .

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About the Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition

The Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition is a collaborative network of more than 75 organizations, coordinated through The Office for the Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition, working in collaboration to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. Through data-driven strategies, partnerships, and community engagement, the Coalition strives to ensure every Lancaster County resident has access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Learn more about their work at LCHRA.com.