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**For release: January 6, 2011**

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## **Arapahoe County will participate in Metro Denver homeless count**

**LITTLETON, CO** – In order to understand and assist Colorado's homeless, Arapahoe County will participate in the Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative's biannual point-in-time survey of homeless individuals on Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2011.

The purpose of the study is to count the number of homeless individuals in the metro area on one day of the year and to educate citizens about the presence of homelessness in their own communities. The count also will help regional governments to understand the causes of homelessness, assist with statewide initiatives to end homelessness and allocate funding for needed services.

During the one-day count, volunteers and homeless advocates will be stationed on the streets, in emergency shelters and soup kitchens, in human services organizations across the metro area. On Jan. 25, volunteers will be stationed at the following county locations to conduct the homeless survey:

- Arapahoe County CentrePoint Plaza, 14980 E. Alameda Drive, Aurora
- Arapahoe County Arapahoe Plaza, 1690 W. Littleton Blvd, Littleton
- Arapahoe/Douglas Works! 5500 S. Quebec St., Suite 175, Greenwood Village
- Englewood Public Library, 1000 Englewood Parkway, Englewood

In addition to taking a head count of the homeless, organizers will ask where a homeless individual or family stayed the previous night and, if possible, their age, gender, race, ethnicity, and reasons contributing to homelessness.

The 2009 MDHI count revealed more than 11,000 homeless individuals in metro Denver. Of those, 676 were counted within Arapahoe County that night, yet more than 1,300 reported the County as their last permanent address. Among the homeless in the County, two-thirds were families, more than half were women and one-third were disabled. The most common reasons contributing to homelessness were the loss of a job, being unable to pay housing costs, or a relationship problem, family break-up or death in the family. Two-thirds of the county's homeless said they spent the previous night in transitional housing, a hotel or motel or an emergency shelter, while 18 percent stayed with family or friends and 7 percent slept outside.

Public school districts also count homeless students throughout the school year. For the 2008-2009 school year, six school districts in the County tracked 952 homeless students. MDHI will work with the school district homeless liaisons to include student data in the 2011 point-in-time survey.

Following the 2009 count, Arapahoe County allocated more than \$100,000 in grant funding to shelters like Family Tree's House of Hope and Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Denver, to food pantries like the Salvation Army and Covenant Cupboard, to Catholic Charities for rental assistance, and to Brothers Redevelopment for foreclosure prevention and housing counseling for citizens. Another county resource is the Arapahoe/Douglas Works! workforce center with locations in Greenwood Village and Aurora, which offers free employment assistance to those who are seeking work.

Arapahoe County also supports the ArapaHOME initiative, a community action group to prevent, respond to and end homelessness in Arapahoe County.

The Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative has coordinated homeless counts in metro Denver since 1998. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires a January count in order for Colorado to receive nearly \$15 million for shelter, care, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing in Colorado.

Arapahoe County's Division of Housing and Community Development Services coordinates the urban county (non-Aurora) portion of the survey and the City of Aurora's Community Development Department coordinates the Aurora portion of the survey. For more information on HCDS, please visit [www.co.arapahoe.co.us](http://www.co.arapahoe.co.us).

For more information or to volunteer for the point-in-time homeless survey, please visit [www.mdhi.org](http://www.mdhi.org).

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