



PRESS RELEASE

FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Franklin County Working to Address Homelessness

January 18, 2019 – Chambersburg, PA – The Franklin County Commissioners oversee several state and federal programs to address homelessness in Franklin County. “Homelessness is a very real problem in any community. The programs we oversee locally have proven to help people get their lives back on track,” stated Commissioner and Chairman Dave Keller.

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count

Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires homeless assistance grant recipients to conduct regular counts of those who are currently homeless and living in the county. Volunteers canvas areas county-wide to count all persons experiencing homelessness on the streets, in shelter, in wooded areas, and in temporary housing in order to estimate the need for housing and supportive services. In 2018, 112 individuals were experiencing homelessness on the night of the Point-In-Time Count in Franklin and Fulton Counties.

This year, the Franklin/Fulton County MH/IDD/EI will be conducting a Point-In-Time Count between January 23rd and 24th. This count will help to identify, understand, and better address the needs of those who are currently experiencing homelessness. The information gathered from this event assists us in helping individuals and families obtain and maintain stable housing.

“Even in the rural areas of our county, homelessness exists. Often it goes unnoticed by the casual observer because it’s more easily hidden in wooded areas, barns, and abandoned cars,” said Commissioner Bob Thomas.

On Thursday, January 24th, individuals with any housing related issues are welcomed to drop in at two sites to complete a ‘Connect to Home’ assessment and be matched to housing resources. Community nurses will be available. The two sites are:

- South Central Community Action Program at 533 S Main Street, Chambersburg from 10am-2pm
- Waynesboro Community & Human Services at 123 Walnut Street, Waynesboro from 1pm-4pm

Request for Community Assistance—If you have information regarding individuals or families residing in locations that are not meant for human habitation (i.e., tents, garages, the street, wooded areas, campgrounds, under bridges, abandoned buildings, in vehicles, etc.), please contact Franklin Fulton MH/IDD/EI at (717) 264-5387.

Access Center – One Stop for Housing Assistance

If you or someone you know is in need of housing support, please visit:

Franklin County Human Services Access Center
425 Franklin Farm Lane
Chambersburg, PA

For additional information on Franklin County visit www.franklincountypa.gov.

Hours of operation: Tuesdays/Wednesdays, 9am – 4pm;
Thursdays, 1pm – 4pm

If you are not available during those times, call 2-1-1 for assistance.

Shelter Operations

Franklin County receives state and federal funding every year for homelessness prevention, unfortunately this amount of funding has continued to decrease. In 2018, the County received approximately \$400,000 and contributed around \$100,000 from local revenue sources. Even still, this amount falls short in meeting the needs of local shelters due to grant allocation limitations for shelter operations.

For example, last month the state announced awards for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) which supports homelessness prevention. Locally, this money allows South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP), Maranatha Ministries, and Waynesboro Community and Human Services to provide services in the following areas: Rapid Rehousing, Street Outreach, Homelessness Prevention and Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) reporting. However, despite requesting funding for Emergency Shelter Operations (food, sleeping quarters, sanitation facilities, medical care, etc.), none was allocated. Regarding Franklin County's award, County Administrator Carrie Gray stated, "We are thrilled and fortunate to receive this funding and are now focused on identifying funds to support a critical component to our housing services continuum—shelter operations."

Without adequate funding for emergency shelter operations, the future of shelters in Franklin County is questionable and a cause for concern. Over the past few years, state funding has shifted allocation priorities from shelter operations to rapid rehousing with the thought that if newly homeless individuals and families are provided rental assistance, it will eliminate the need for shelters. Unfortunately, the practical application of helping people overcome homelessness and addressing the issues related to their homelessness more often than not requires a transition period that only a shelter can provide.

"There are many causes to homelessness. It's Franklin County's goal to provide services to help the residents of Franklin County by meeting them where they are in order to permanently overcome homelessness," said Commissioner Bob Ziobrowski.

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