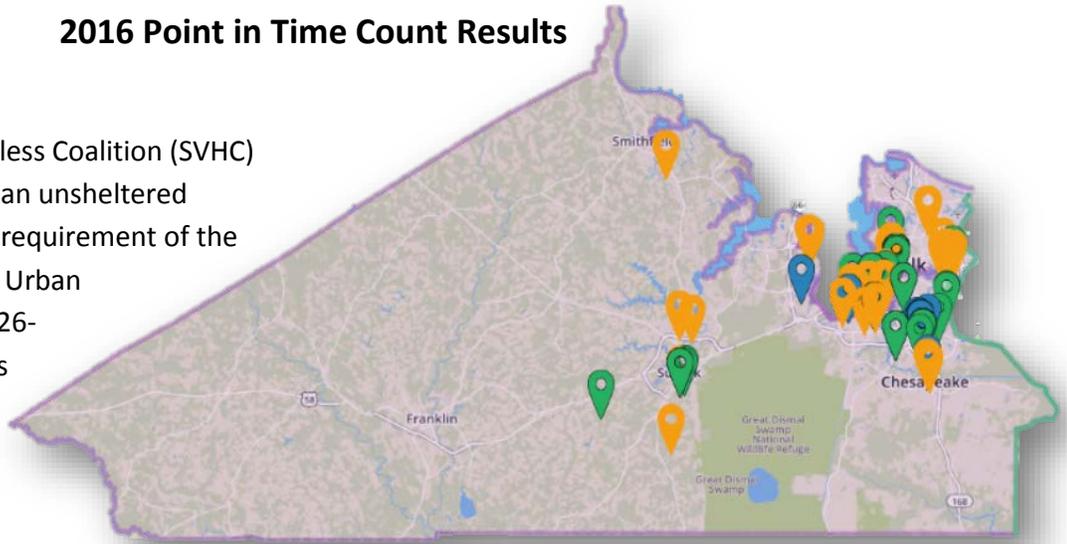## 2016 Point in Time Count Results

Introduction

The Southeastern Virginia Homeless Coalition (SVHC) conducted both a sheltered and an unsheltered Point in Time Count to fulfill the requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on January 26-27, 2016. The 24-hour Count was conducted across the six (6) jurisdictions covered by the SVHC: Norfolk, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Franklin, Isle of Wight County and Southampton County.

For much of the sheltered population, the count was conducted using the Homeless Management Information

Screenshot of interactive map from the Counting Us mobile app data store showing location of SVHC surveys in real time.

System (HMIS), the database that serves as the repository for client level data. The unsheltered street count and the count from programs not covered by the HMIS, including seasonal shelters, domestic violence service providers, hospitals, and several meal sites, was conducted by representatives from Continuum of Care (CoC) funded agencies and teams of volunteers using a comprehensive survey. The survey was administered via the *Counting Us* mobile app developed by Simtech Solutions, Inc. Use of the mobile app was implemented across the entire Hampton Roads region, including the SVHC, the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium (GVPHC), the Portsmouth CoC, and the Virginia Beach CoC. Observation surveys were used for those who were not interviewed for both the sheltered and unsheltered count, increasing coverage; these observation surveys were analyzed from team leads only and used with discretion.

Persons who agreed to respond to the survey were asked for their first and last name or initials and date of birth in order to develop a unique client identifier to eliminate the possibility of duplicate counts, along with questions to determine whether or not they are veterans, unaccompanied youth, or chronically homeless. Respondents were also asked whether or not they have been a victim of domestic violence, are HIV-positive, have a mental or physical disability or a substance abuse problem. People are considered chronically homeless if they are a single adult or an adult within a family, have a disability, and have been homeless for more than one year, or at least four times in the last three years. This report also includes parenting and unaccompanied youth households; youth households include those 24 years of age and younger who are parents of children under the age of 18, or are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.

In accordance with the 2014 *Point in Time Count Methodology Guide* released by HUD, the SVHC used the following definition of homelessness during the count:

- Sheltered- should include all individuals or families who meet the criteria described in paragraph (1)(ii) of the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 of the **Homeless Definition Final Rule**. This includes individuals and families *"living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals)"* on the night designated for the count.
- Unsheltered- should include all individuals or families who meet the criteria described in paragraph (1)(i) of the homeless definition in 24 CFR 578.3 of the **Homeless Definition Final Rule**. This includes individuals and families *"with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground"* on the night designated for the count.

2016 Results

Overall, **723** persons were identified as being homeless in Norfolk, Chesapeake and Western Tidewater during the 24-hour period. This compares to a combined **735** persons counted in January 2015 in the same jurisdictions. In reviewing the results of the count one must keep in mind the following:

- Snapshot—The Point in Time Count is an unduplicated count of persons who are experiencing homelessness, whether sheltered or unsheltered during a specific 24 hour period, once a year. The Point in Time Count provides simply a "snapshot" of what the level of need is on a certain day. Not everyone in need that day is found, and those who are at-risk of homelessness are not counted. It does not demonstrate the total need for the community, but does tell us how the need compares to previous years and the level of representation we have within each subpopulation in the count. This helps the community assess the services we currently provide as compared to the need; the data is also a tool for planning and resource development.
- Family and Friends—Many people approached during the count stated that they stayed with family or friends or in hotels and motels the night of the count (paid for by self) and could not be counted as homeless (since they do not meet the HUD definition of homeless being used for the count), even though they indicated that they had been in and out of homelessness for long periods of time.
- Decreased/Increased Shelter Capacity—Area winter shelters experienced high utilization throughout the season. The Union Mission recently opened a new men's emergency shelter with increased capacity, but the Family Shelter is not operating currently.
- Change in Implementation- The surveys were conducted via the *Counting Us* mobile app. Use of the mobile app improved data quality, report capability, and report validity in the following ways:
  - Reduced possibility of overlap of count teams due to real time updates in the regional Command Center data store.
  - Increased data quality related to legibility issues, challenges with paper forms in inclement weather, and entry of paper forms into databases.
  - Improved validity with access to metadata which provided information about interviewers, date and time the interviews were completed, and the exact geographic location of the interview (precautions were taken to protect the location of Domestic Violence shelters).
  - Report tools provided by Simtech, Inc. allowed for consistent reporting of both the overall population as well as subpopulation data across the region.

The following tables show a breakdown of the 2016 Point in Time Count Results, both regionally and by jurisdiction.

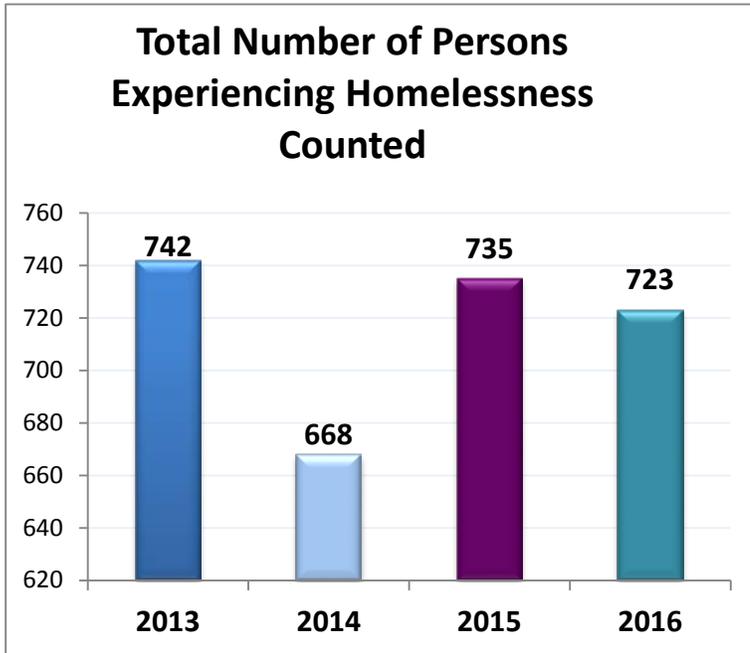| POINT IN TIME COUNT	2016 RESULTS SVHC	2015 RESULTS SVHC	2016 RESULTS NORFOLK	2016 RESULTS CHESAPEAKE	2016 RESULTS WESTERN TIDEWATER
Total Number of Homeless Persons Counted	**723**	**735**	**563**	**107**	**53**
2015 Total Number of Homeless Persons	*735*	*735*	*602*	*95*	*38*
Total Number Sheltered	638	*680*	519	77	42
Total Number Unsheltered	85	*55*	44	30	11
Total Number of Adults	596	*571*	495	65	36
Total Number of Children	127	*164*	68	42	17
Total Number of Families*	58	*77*	32	18	8
Total Number of Persons in Families*	197	*249*	106	64	27
Total Number of Unsheltered Families	7	*1*	1	3	3
Total Number of Unsheltered Children	12	*1*	2	5	5
Total Number of Adult Only Households	523	*485*	456	41	26
Total Number of Persons in Adult Only Households	526	*486*	457	43	26
Total Number of Unsheltered Persons in Adult Only Households	63	*53*	41	20	2
Total Number of Persons in Households with only Children	0	*0*	0	0	0

*Total number of families and total number of persons in families include both sheltered and unsheltered households with at least one adult and one child.

Chart continues on the next page…

Point-in-Time Count	2016 Results SVHC	2015 Results SVHC	2016 Results Norfolk	2016 Results Chesapeake	2016 Results Western Tidewater
Total Number of Chronically Homeless Individuals	34	73	28	3	3
Total Number of Chronically Homeless Families	0	1	0	0	0
Total Number of Veterans	78	82	67	8	3
Total Number of Female Veterans	11	7	6	4	1
Total Number of Parenting Youth	13	16	5	6	2
Total Number of Unaccompanied Youth	29	29	29	0	0
Total Number of Domestic Violence Survivors	76	131	65	5	6
Total Number of Individuals with a Substance Abuse Problem	98	40	89	3	6
Total Number of Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness	123	62	112	2	9
Total Number of HIV-positive Individuals	7	8	6	0	1

A description of the annual Point in Time Count trends from 2013-2016 follows in the next section.

Trends

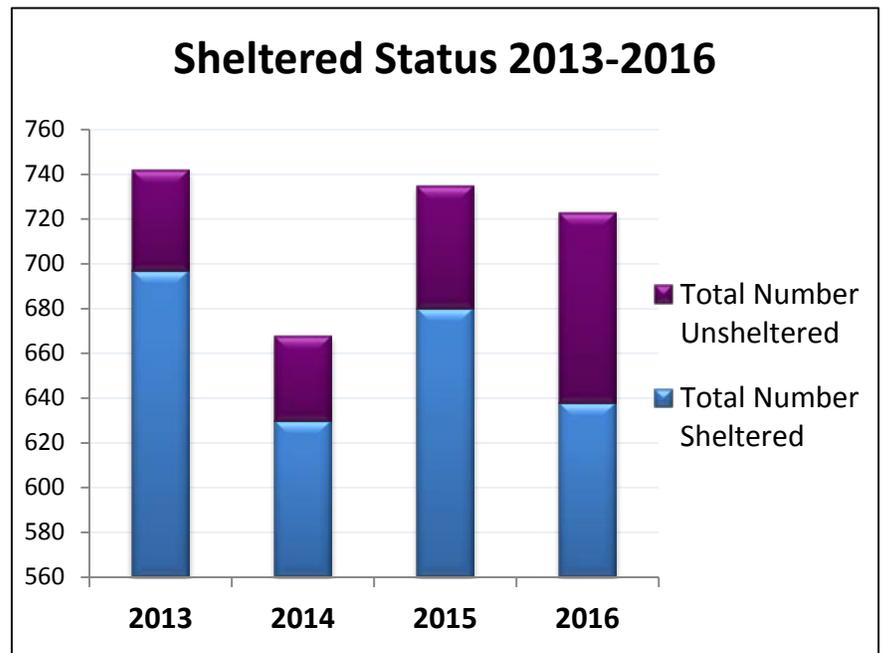## Total Number of Persons Experiencing Homelessness Counted

The following charts show the annual trends across the region for various reporting categories. Although totals increased from 2014 to 2015, it is important to keep in mind the context of the 2014 Point in Time Count: Inclement weather forced logistical changes and impacted the 2014 totals. The data continue to support an overall decreasing trend.

Of the 723 persons identified during the 2016 SVHC Point in Time Count, 439 of those were surveyed using the sheltered and unsheltered surveys via the *Counting Us* mobile app. Those surveys included the question, "Is this your first time homeless?" Of the 439 persons surveyed, 38% indicated it was their first time homeless.
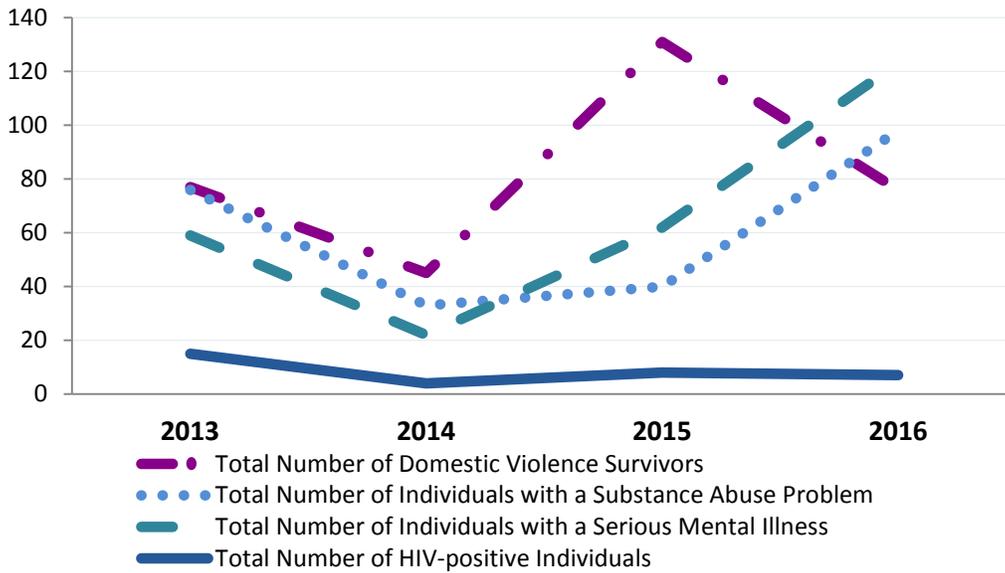
On the day of the Count, the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline reached out to families who had called in recent days leading up to the Point in Time Count to conduct follow up surveys. If those families indicated they were still homeless, they were included in the Count. Several families reported sleeping in their cars or other places not meant for human habitation, and were therefore included in the unsheltered count.

Additionally, this year's Point in Time Count coincided with the City of Norfolk's Project Homeless Connect (PHC), increasing coverage for the unsheltered population, and including needed data points for determining subpopulations.

Sheltered Status 2013-2016

Much of the sheltered count data was retrieved from the Hampton Roads Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Both the HMIS software provider, Bowman Systems, and the developers of the *Counting Us* mobile app, Simtech Solutions, Inc., provided report tools to enable completion of the HUD report requirements.

Homeless Subpopulations 2013-2016:
Domestic Violence Survivors, Substance Abuse,
Serious Mental Illness, HIV/AIDS

Legend:
- ••• Total Number of Domestic Violence Survivors
- ••• Total Number of Individuals with a Substance Abuse Problem
- — — Total Number of Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness
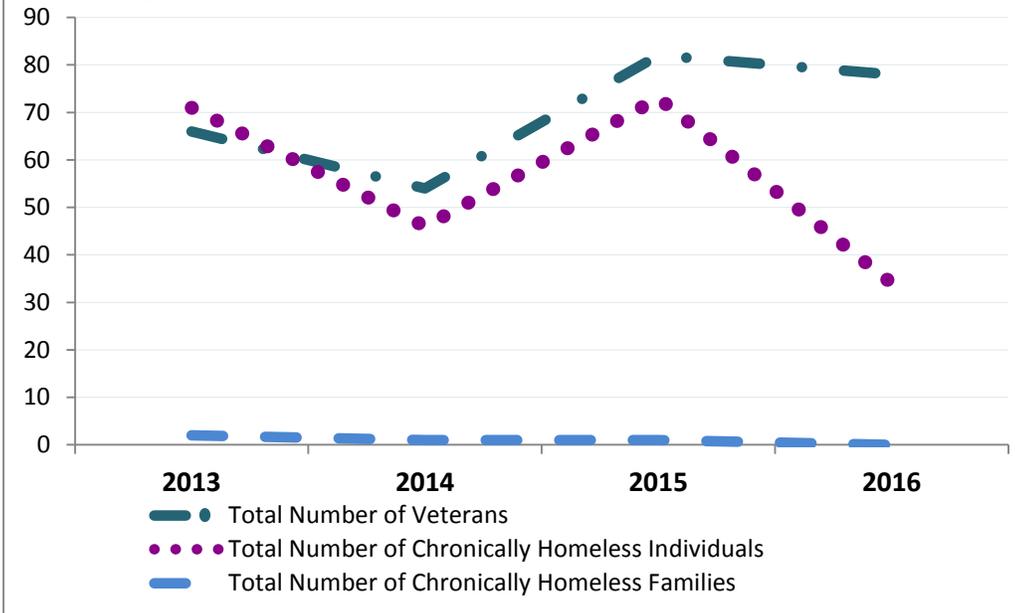- —— Total Number of HIV-positive Individuals

The 2016 Point in Time Count data shows an increase both in the number of individuals with subtstance abuse issues and those with mental health issues. The data supports a need for increased services for these populations; the CoC is addressing this need by implementing new programs and services made available through the Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) grant offered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and locally administered by the City of Norfolk Community Services Board (NCSB) on behalf of the SVHC, as well as continuing to support the implementation of The Healing Place of Hampton Roads.

The SVHC also realized a **53% decrease** in the number of chronically homeless individuals identified between 2015 and 2016; the decrease is due in part to the new definition of chronic homelessness released in HUD's final rule, effective January 4, 2016. The final rule updated previous guidelines to include a requirement that the "4 or more times homeless in the past 3 years" must be separated by at least 7 days of *not* being literally homeless in order to count as a new episode. This added reporting requirement aims to

Homeless Subpopulations 2013-2016:
All Veterans and
Chronically Homeless Individuals & Families

Legend:
- — • Total Number of Veterans
- ••• Total Number of Chronically Homeless Individuals
- —— Total Number of Chronically Homeless Families

improve the identification of the truly chronic population, as defined by HUD. Other contributing factors to the decrease in chronic homelessness include prioritizing the most vulnerable—and often chronic—individuals and families at the CoC's Service Coordination Committees, effective outreach, and access to support services—notably at the regional Single Room Occupancy properties operated and managed by Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH).