

HOMELESS OUTREACH POPULATION ESTIMATE (HOPE) SHOWS FIVE PERCENT DECREASE IN UNSHELTERED POPULATION SINCE 2014

Queens, Bronx, and Staten Island show significant reductions

City to invest additional \$7 million in executive budget to continue fighting street homelessness

MAY 7, 2015 – New York City Department of Homeless Services Commissioner Gilbert Taylor today announced a five percent reduction in the number of homeless living unsheltered. According to the annual HOPE Count, this February there were 3,182 people living on streets, parks, subways, and other public spaces of the city, down from the 3,357 people counted January of 2014.

The most significant drops were registered in Queens, Bronx, and Staten Island. The HOPE count was conducted on Monday, February 9 by over 3,500 volunteers citywide—the highest number of volunteers since the HOPE count started in 2005.

“The HOPE Count provides valuable information in regards to the resources necessary to successfully combat street homelessness in New York City, and while we still have a long road ahead, I am heartened to see an overall reduction in our unsheltered populations over the past year,” said **DHS Commissioner Gilbert Taylor**. “We will continue to work across the city to assist individuals living on our streets, and utilize what we learned from this year’s count to allocate resources and target services in areas in which we saw increases.”

This administration has actively worked to move homeless individuals from the streets into shelter. Today in the Executive Budget, the City announced additional funding to curb street homelessness - \$7 million for FY16, \$9 million for FY17, and \$19 million for FY18 – and expand the number of low intensity shelter beds targeted at chronically street homeless individuals from 800 to 1,400 by FY18. There are an estimated 1,700 chronically street homeless individuals that DHS outreach teams keep regular contact with and work to bring off the streets and into shelter.

Since January 2014, the City has:

- Invested over \$14.2 million for homeless outreach and partnered with the MTA to invest \$6 million to expand homeless outreach in our subways.
- Increased the number of outreach staff working 24 hours per day, seven days a week, to encourage homeless individuals citywide to move into shelter.
- Expanded hours at drop-in centers; the majority are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Added 130 beds at Safe Haven sites, which offer shelter to street homeless clients who are shelter resistant.

The City encourages all New Yorkers to call 311, or use the 311 app to report a homeless individual in need of assistance. Our outreach teams are available 24/7 to help.

HOPE is required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to assess the number of individuals living in New York City's public spaces, and is typically conducted in New York City on the last Monday in January. This year's count was postponed two weeks due to a forecasted blizzard.

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