



Facts about Homelessness in Virginia

- ◆ In January 2007, communities across Virginia counted 9,746 people experiencing homelessness on one night.
- ◆ Between 2005 and 2007, rates of homelessness in Virginia decreased by 6 percent. Chronic or long-term homelessness¹ decreased by 12 percent while rates of family homelessness remained about the same.
- ◆ It is widely expected that rates of homelessness will increase because of the economic downturn. Homelessness is primarily an issue of a lack of affordable housing. Community data is not yet definitive but anecdotal evidence suggests that rates of homelessness are increasing.
- ◆ Of the 9,746 people experiencing homelessness, 4,223 were persons in families including those with young children.
- ◆ For every 10,000 Virginians, 13 experienced homelessness on any given night.
- ◆ 12.93 percent of Virginia households or 379,000 households experience severe housing cost burden² putting many at risk of homelessness.
- ◆ There are 752 homeless veterans in Virginia according to 2007 data. This is a decrease from 870 in 2006 and 911 in 2005.
- ◆ Nationally, veterans make up a disproportionate share of people experiencing homelessness. They represent 26 percent of the population experiencing homelessness but only 11 percent of the civilian population 18 years and older.³

¹ Chronic or long-term homelessness is defined by the U.S. Housing of Urban Development as an individual who experiences homelessness for long periods of time with a disabling condition including mental illness.

² A household experiencing “severe housing cost burden” pays 50 percent or more of income for housing costs. It is generally accepted that housing is affordable if a household pays 30 percent or less of income for housing costs.

³ National Alliance to End Homelessness. *Vital Mission: Ending Homelessness Among Veterans*. Washington, DC, November 2007.