



## NEWS RELEASE

### COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

Clark County– Las Vegas– North Las Vegas– Henderson– Boulder City– Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition– U. S. Department of Veteran Affairs–Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services– Clark County School District– Las Vegas Metropolitan Police– North Las Vegas Police Department

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# Regional Homeless Count Shows More Accurate Picture of Southern Nevada's Homeless Population

## Study Finds 50,400 Instances of Homelessness Each Year

A study presented to the Committee on Homelessness today showed that Southern Nevada has shorter terms of homelessness than most other major cities, but has more instances of people without a home throughout the year.

The results of the Winter Point-in-Time survey, conducted in January, showed that Southern Nevada has an average of 11,369 homeless in shelters or on the street at any given time, but has more than 50,400 instances of people becoming homeless over the course of a year. Homeless experts say that in Clark County people do not stay homeless as long as people in other major cities, but there are more instances of homelessness during the year.

The Winter Point-in-Time study is the most complete and accurate study of this type ever conducted in Southern Nevada, said Shannon West, regional homeless service coordinator for Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC).

"Now we finally have a solid baseline of information to help us craft solutions to homelessness here in Southern Nevada," West said.

The homeless population was previously estimated at 14,500. West said that this year's number differs because of the methodology. Previous estimates were based on a sampling of the homeless population rather than a person-by-person visual count. West said this year's study also does not include 3,300 homeless students identified by the Clark County School District.

The study found that Caucasians accounted for 47 percent of the homeless population. African-Americans accounted for 33 percent, more than twice their percentage of the local population. Hispanics represented 10 percent of the homeless population.

In January, hundreds of service providers and volunteers fanned out to conduct a person-by-person headcount throughout Southern Nevada. At the same time, a survey of 1,359 homeless individuals was taken to explain underlying trends and reasons behind homelessness.

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**Help Hope Home**

*Helping the Homeless in Southern Nevada*

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According to the researcher, the survey dispelled a number of long-held myths dealing with Southern Nevada's homeless population. Of those surveyed, 35 percent cited a loss of job as a reason for being homeless. Only 17 percent cited alcohol or drugs use as reasons. Another 6 percent cited gambling. Five percent of the population cited family domestic violence as a reason. The study also found that 65 percent of homeless people surveyed said they were already residents of Clark County when they became homeless.

Southern Nevada homeless advocates will be using the numbers to get much needed funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Those dollars help pay for housing and aid for the homeless.

West said planning is already underway for follow-up census study this summer. The date has not yet been determined.

**To view the full Winter Point-in-Time study, please visit [www.HelpHopeHome.org](http://www.HelpHopeHome.org).**

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