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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 17, 2015

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Annual Point-in-Time Count Identifies 210 Homeless in Harford County

BEL AIR, Md., (Feb. 17, 2015) – The Harford County Department of Community Services coordinated the annual Point-in-Time Homeless Count in Harford County on the evening of January 29, 2015. Teams of community volunteers, homeless service providers, county government employees and police officer escorts were joined by County Executive Barry Glassman, County Councilman Mike Perrone Jr. and Councilman Chad Shrodes to conduct the street count. Data was also collected from community partners providing services for the homeless.

Overall results from the Point-in-Time Homeless Count showed a total of 210 homeless persons in Harford County, a decrease from the 2014 total of 223. A breakdown of these numbers indicates that 90 adults and 56 children were sheltered and receiving comprehensive support services on the night of the count, 32 adults and 29 children had been temporarily placed in motels and 3 single adults were found living outside.

“While there is still much work to be done in Harford County, we are pleased that our homeless numbers showed a decrease from last year, in line with national trends such as those reported by the National Alliance to End Homelessness,” said Amber Shrodes, director of the county Department of Community Services.

During the count, street outreach teams distributed donated hats, gloves, coats, blankets, personal care items, food and bus vouchers to the homeless people they encountered. Remaining donations were shared with community shelter providers.

The annual homeless count allows Harford County to secure the federal, state and local funding necessary to serve this vulnerable population. The data collected also allows the community to strategically plan for the future needs of its citizens.

Each year, the Harford County Department of Community Services works with community and faith-based agencies to help families avoid homelessness. When tough times happen to families, the Department works closely with its partners to make sure funding can be accessed at various locations throughout the county. Through these partnerships, homeless individuals and families are able to develop life skills, find employment opportunities and achieve self-sufficiency by obtaining safe, affordable housing. The Department also helps divert individuals with mental health issues away from the criminal justice system and into treatment, which reduces recidivism and increases stability.

There are 13 emergency, transitional and permanent supportive shelters in Harford County, offering a total of 241 beds for homeless adults, children and families. In fiscal year 2014, the shelters provided 386 families, or 538 people, with 40,238 emergency shelter or transitional housing bed nights for an average stay of 75 nights per person. In 2014, the Harford County Department of Community Services provided more than a \$1 million in homeless program funding, which assisted such organizations as Alliance, Inc., Faith Communities and Civic Agencies United, Inc. (FCCA), Associated Catholic Charities Inc./Anna's House, the Sexual Assault/Spouse Abuse Resource Center (SARC), Homecoming Project, Inc., and Harford Family House, Inc.

The Harford County Department of Community Services would like to publicly thank all of the community volunteers, homeless service providers and police officers from the Harford County Sheriff's Office, the Havre de Grace Police Department, the Aberdeen Police Department and the Bel Air Police Department who made this year's homeless count respectful, safe and successful.

To learn more about homeless services in Harford County, visit <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/downloads.cfm?FormID=2342>, or call the Department of Community Services at 410-638-3389.

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