



DEPARTMENT OF  
**HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS**  
 COUNTY OF MAUI

RECEIVED

MICHAEL P. VICTORINO  
 Mayor

LORI TSUHAKO  
 Acting Director

2019 APR 31 AM 11:27  
 ANDA R. MUNSELL  
 Deputy Director

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OFFICE OF THE  
 COUNTY COUNCIL  
 April 17, 2019

OFFICE OF THE  
 COUNTY COUNCIL

Ms. Michele M. Yoshimura *M.Y.*  
 Budget Director, County of Maui  
 200 South High Street  
 Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

Honorable Michael P. Victorino  
 Mayor, County of Maui  
 200 South High Street  
 Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

*Michael P Victorino* 5/1/19  
 Mayor

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Keani Rawlins-Fernandez  
 Chair, Economic Development and Budget Committee  
 Maui County Council  
 200 South High Street  
 Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair Rawlins-Fernandez:

**SUBJECT: REQUESTS/QUESTIONS FROM THE APRIL 11, 2019 MEETING (HC-9)  
 (EDB-1)**

This letter is in response to correspondence dated April 15, 2019 requesting the Department's responses to the questions raised at the April 11, 2019 EDB Committee meeting pertaining to the Homeless Program.

- 1. If the Homeless Program were appropriated an additional \$1 million, how would the additional funding be used to address homelessness in Maui County? (KK)**

Our Homeless Division is not a provider of direct social services to the homeless. Our two staff members are facilitators of collaborations among County departments, State departments, private entities, and non-profit groups to address homeless issues in our community, e.g., homeless encampments on County properties, public complaints/inquiries, and management of the Coordinated Entry system that ensures those with the highest vulnerability receive commensurate levels of service/care toward housing and supportive service. County funding for direct services to address homelessness is administered through the Department's Grants Management Division.

HHC Homeless Programs (Index Code 914903B) funds a variety of homeless services including case management, homeless outreach, shelter operations, and legal services to the homeless. If this fund were to be increased by \$1 million, it is likely that additional services will be secured to address homelessness. The Department wants to develop a more robust multi-disciplinary team approach to homeless outreach which may include medical personnel, substance abuse counselors, and behavioral health specialists. Such services are working effectively on Oahu to assist those unsheltered homeless with severe and persistent mental illness or co-occurring disorders. Our community would need corresponding services for psychiatric care, substance abuse, and housing with additional support services. However, development of this type of new program will take planning and development and the Department is not certain that a new program could be developed in time to responsibly utilize a \$1 million allocation.

The Department also feels that additional funding could be used to contract with a vendor for removal and disposal of trash collected during clean-ups of encampments. The Department previously had access to a vendor, but that company has decided to focus their business on other areas and is no longer available to us. Additional funding to the Homeless Program could be used to procure for another vendor for this service or offered to the Department of Public Works (DPW) because DPW has been called upon frequently to assist in the clean-up and disposal of trash during the clean-up efforts at various encampments across the island. Thus far DPW has allowed staff and equipment to be dispatched for these efforts, but compensation may allow for more frequent partnerships that do not undermine DPW's larger objectives.

**2. Recent reports show homeless numbers on the Neighbor Islands, with the exception of Kauai, decreasing. How is the point-in-time county determined by the State? (RH)**

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a snap-shot count of the number of homeless individuals and families on one day of the year. PIT is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be conducted every two years, but for approximately the past 12 years, the count has been conducted annually in Hawaii. The PIT is usually conducted during the last week of January.

HUD allows communities to account for their homeless populations by several categories: 1) sheltered homeless – our data collection system allows us to know how many individuals and families resided in a homeless shelter on the one specific night in question (this year, that night was January 22, 2019); 2) Unsheltered homeless—for approximately 5 days after the designated “day” of the count, agencies’ staff and community volunteers go out at various times of the day and night and encounter homeless individuals. The homeless are asked if they are willing to participate in a survey. If yes, they are asked questions about their names, birth dates, length of their homeless episode, the number of homeless episodes they have had over the past three years, mental health and substance abuse status. These surveys are compiled and, utilizing a comprehensive data base, are unduplicated (in case the same person was surveyed more than once).

Honorable Keani Rawlins-Fernandez  
Chair, Economic Development and Budget Committee  
Maui County Council  
April 17, 2019  
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Although not perfect, the strategies employed over the years to obtain an accurate count of unsheltered homeless individuals have proven to be more and more effective.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. Please feel free to contact me at Ext. 7805 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori Tsuhako", written in a cursive style.

LORI TSUHAKO  
Acting Director of Housing and Human Concerns