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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 98 LCM-27

Date: May 22, 1998

Division: PSQI/A&QC

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Homeless Information Reporting

ATTACHMENTS: February 1996 Informational Letter (available on-line)

The Shelter Services Unit (SSU) within the Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance (OTDA) is responsible for overseeing the provision of shelter care throughout the State. In addition to the licensure and inspection of homeless shelters SSU is tasked with the duty of collecting and analyzing homeless data requested of each of the local social services districts.

In early 1996 a letter was sent to homeless coordinators in each of the districts requesting their assistance in the preparation and submittal of this homeless information (instructions and a form were included). This data was to be submitted by the local districts on a quarterly basis, beginning in April, 1996. Initially (the first 4 reporting periods) the rate of return on this information was respectable, with an average of 85% of the districts reporting. There are some districts that have been submitting this data from the very beginning and should be commended for doing so, yet, there are others who have never reported or who have "dropped out" of the process over time. As of the last three reporting periods the numbers of districts submitting this homeless information has dropped below 50%. Even more perplexing is the fact that in a number of districts with a significant homeless population homeless data are not reported.

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I am requesting your assistance at this time to insure that each local district responds in a timely fashion and with accurate information. With the advent of Welfare Reform, establishing a baseline and tracking the numbers and needs of special populations like that of the homeless is even more necessary in order to insure appropriate oversight.

If you have any questions regarding the submittal of the Quarterly Homeless Statistical Report, please feel free to contact John Barry in the SSU at 518-432-2400.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

David P. Avenius
Deputy Commissioner, Program Support
and Quality Improvement

February 25, 1996

Dear Homeless Coordinator:

I am writing in regards to the Homeless Statistical Report prepared by you and sent to this Department on a monthly basis.

In GIS message 90 IM/DC 041 sent on November 14, 1990, the Department informed all social services districts that we would be collecting certain basic homeless statistical information on a monthly basis. This information is used by the Department for a number of reasons especially in the formation of policy relative to homeless families and adults.

Recent organizational changes within the Department's Division of Temporary Assistance (formerly the Division of Economic Security) has resulted in the transfer of this homeless information collection responsibility to the Office of Housing and Adult Services (OHAS) within the Division of Services and Community Development (OHAS is responsible for overseeing the provision of shelter care throughout the State). However there will be some changes to the submittal times and the types of information provided. Information is to be submitted on a quarterly rather than a monthly basis. Submittal dates will be on the 15th of January, April, July, and October for each calendar year. Additionally, as explained in more detail in the accompanying instruction sheet, we will be requesting specific information to assist the Department in identifying and quantifying the number of "hidden homeless". The purpose of collecting this information is to get a more complete count of the homeless population (singles and families) in each district. We are aware of the fact that social services districts may not have the means to collect all the homeless numbers in the county. In such cases, whatever numbers the district has to support this population will be acceptable. The attachments to this letter include an instruction page and a model form on which to place the required information.

As in the past, social services districts may transmit this Homeless Quarterly Statistical Report either by telefax, E-Mail, or regular mail. The contact person in this office to whom the quarterly reports should be sent is John Barry. His telephone # is 518-432-2997 and his E-Mail access code is OSH040. Mr. Barry will be contacting each homeless coordinator in the near future in order to establish the exact manner in which the information will be submitted to the Department by each district.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Dawes

cc: Stuart Feurerstein
Charles Elioseff
Jane Wagner
Terry Powers
John Barry

INSTRUCTIONS

The enclosed Quarterly Homeless Statistical Report is the document used to identify the total number of homeless families and single adults in each social services district. In addition to the homeless totals there is also a request for information related to the ages of the homeless population and length of stay. This report is to be submitted by each social services district to the Department on January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15 of each calendar year. Keep in mind that all required information to be submitted relates to both the single and family homeless populations.

The information submitted on the report for each period should reflect the data on the homeless as of the day previous to the report date. The requested data for the homeless families is numbered 1-6, while that of the homeless singles, 1-5. Numbers 1 and 3 for both the homeless families and the homeless singles categories have two separate columns on the form in which to place the data. The first is headed "Placed by District" and the second "Non District". Included in the first column "Placed by District" should be the homeless single adults and families the social services district has placed in various temporary housing facilities within the county. In the second column "Non-District" include the numbers of homeless without connection to the social services district, yet, still temporarily housed within the district. Not-for-profit organizations (Salvation Army, Red Cross, etc.) or churches are the sometime providers of temporary housing for this population. For example, a local not-for-profit shelter may accept as a resident a homeless individual that will not approach the social services district for purposes of requesting Public Assistance (PA), or, a homeless individual has been determined ineligible for PA, yet, remains in the district. Both of the individuals cited in these examples are still homeless and need the temporary accommodations the shelter provides. These homeless, although having no real connection to the social services district, should be part of your Quarterly Homeless Statistical Report because of their homeless status. These are categories of the "hidden homeless" population that this report is attempting to capture.

Numbers 2, 4, 5, and 6 in the Homeless Family category and numbers 2, 4, and 5 in the Homeless Single Adults category are to be completed with only one response. These categories require data pertinent to both yet can be captured with a single combined number. The various categories of information requested on the form are self-explanatory. Where there is doubt as to the accuracy of certain information (e.g., length of stay), best estimates will suffice.

To determine the numbers of "hidden homeless" (as well as those placed by the district) the social services district needs to be aware of the various temporary housing accommodations available to the homeless within the district. It is suggested that each district develop a listing of all such facilities and arrange to receive information from them during the 1st week of that month when each quarterly report is due. In this manner the district will still have the time to process the information and submit it on the 15th. Obtaining the required information can be accomplished by having the facilities themselves report the information to you earlier in the reporting period month, or, the district may make quarterly telephone calls to such facilities to obtain the needed statistical information.

Quarterly Homeless Statistical Report

Social Services District _____ Date of Submittal _____
 Homeless Coordinator _____ Telephone # _____

Homeless Families	Placed By District	Non- District
1. Total Number of Families Housed	_____	_____
a. Total Number of Adults	_____	_____
b. Total Number of Children	_____	_____
2. Total Number of Facilities Used by Homeless Families		_____
3. Type of Temporary Housing Used by Homeless Families		
a. Total Number of Families in a Hotel/Motel	_____	_____
b. Total Number of Families in Emergency Shelters	_____	_____
c. Total Number of Families in Emergency Apartments	_____	_____
d. Total Number of Families in Room and Board	_____	_____
e. Total Number of Families in other Accomodations	_____	_____
4. Average age of Adults in Homeless Families		_____
5. Total Number of Children in Homeless Families ages		
a. 0 through 5		_____
b. 6 and over		_____
6. Average length of Stay (in days) for all Homeless Families		_____

Homeless Single Adults

1. Total Number of Homeless Single Adults	_____	_____
a. Total Number of Homeless Males	_____	_____
b. Total Number of Homeless Females	_____	_____
2. Total Number of Facilities Used by Homeless Singles		_____
3. Type of Temporary Housing Used by Single Adults		
a. Total Number of Singles in a Hotel/Motel	_____	_____
b. Total Number of Singles in Shelters	_____	_____
c. Total Number of Singles in Emergency Apartments	_____	_____
d. Total Number of Singles in Room and Board	_____	_____
e. Total Number of Singles in other Accomodations	_____	_____
4. Average age of Single Homeless Population		
a. Male		_____
b. Female		_____
5. Average length of Stay (in days) for Single Homeless		_____