

VENTURA COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

Chronicle

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 6

2026 POINT IN TIME HOMELESS COUNT

The Ventura County Continuum of Care conducted the 2026 Point in Time Homeless Count on Wednesday, January 28, 2026. This count is required for our state and federal grants that fund local rental assistance programs, permanent supportive housing, homeless shelters and street outreach programs. Over 450 volunteers arrived at their assigned check in locations before sunrise to canvas the County and interview members of our community that are experiencing homelessness. The County of Ventura and VC CoC are grateful for every volunteer that shared their valuable time to complete unsheltered count surveys. Our community stepped up to ensure we covered our geographic region. Please scroll below for photos of the day.

CELEBRATING MLK JR.

A champion for housing equality as a fundamental civil right whose advocacy helped lay the groundwork for the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERING

Getting involved in community matters is your chance to move from the sidelines to the front lines of positive change. Learn more about how you can make an impact in your community.

JENNIFER HARKEY RECEIVED INTEGRITY AWARD

Tracy McAulay and Jennifer Harkey were each nominated by fellow team members to highlight their integrity and dedicated service to Ventura County.

HOPENOW VENTURA COUNTY PROGRAM LAUNCHES!

A new program that offers a 15-year deferred loan at just 2% simple interest for first-time buyers earning up to 150% Area Median Income.



VENTURA COUNTY
CONTINUUM OF
CARE ALLIANCE

ENDING HOMELESSNESS
IN VENTURA COUNTY

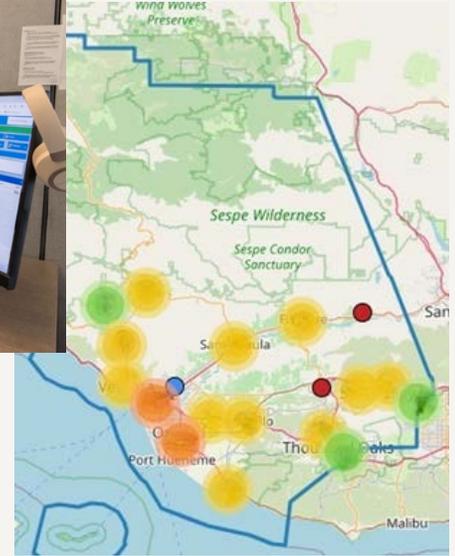
Get involved with us!
<https://www.venturacoc.org/get-involved/>

2026 POINT IN TIME HOMELESS COUNT

THANK YOU to the 450+ volunteers who helped us with the 2026 Homeless Count surveys!

We appreciate the support from our community volunteers, city count leads, county staff, law enforcement partners, service providers, and shelter staff!

Stay tuned for the final 2026 Homeless Count data this Spring.

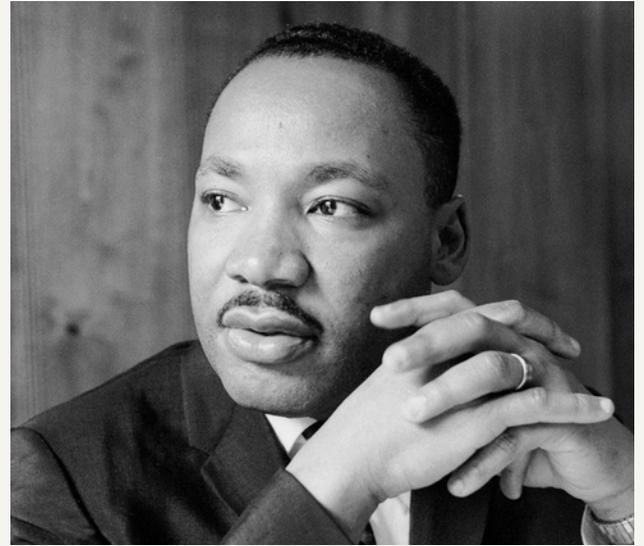


THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS:
Law Enforcement Agencies, City Jurisdictions, County Agencies, Nonprofit Organizations, and CoC staff work together to address homelessness.



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR - AN ADVOCATE FOR HOUSING EQUITY

Martin Luther King Jr. was a powerful and vocal activist for racial and social justice, including advocating for housing equality. King also advocated for fair and dignified shelter as a fundamental civil right that is inseparably linked to racial and economic equality. His deepest involvement in this cause occurred during the Chicago Freedom Movement in the mid-1960s, where he moved his family into a dilapidated apartment in the city's West Side to expose the harsh realities of slum living and housing discrimination that trapped black and brown families in cycles of poverty. King tirelessly advocated for proper rehabilitation of properties and led nonviolent marches through staunchly segregated white neighborhoods to push for "open housing" laws. The movement's progress was slow and met with intense resistance, however, his determined effort directly helped lead to the creation of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which was comprehensive legislation that banned racial discrimination in the sale or rental of housing. The Fair Housing Act was signed into law shortly after his death and housing advocates continue his work and legacy to this day.



"The right to live in dignity, the right to live in decency, the right to live in security - these are basic human rights." - MLK Jr.

GET INVOLVED - THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is more than just giving your time, whether its serving food, delivering donated goods, building houses or counting persons experiencing homelessness. Volunteering is a way of strengthening the social infrastructure of our community while staying grounded in empathy and collaboration.

It is also a means that makes our County strong and vibrant - and gives it heart.

But being a volunteer doesn't mean just giving back, it signifies building a network of compassionate and empathetic individuals that care about their community. Ventura County is known for its strong sense of community and it thrives on the hearts of its members. Find your passion, share that compassion and give of your time and talents in strengthening our community.

There are many ways to participate. Get creative and **Get Involved**

Your involvement today provides the energy and heart our community needs to thrive tomorrow. Be a part of the solution today!

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAMS

(STATE GRANT FUNDED THROUGH VC COC)



HOW TO REFER:

Call: (805) 385-1800

Email: HSA-HSP@venturacounty.gov

HMIS CES Referral

for participating agencies

Homeless Services Program | Homelessness Prevention

The goal of this program is to prevent low-income households from losing their housing. This is part of the homeless response system by providing financial assistance and supportive services to those at risk of homelessness*. Those who may qualify for assistance include:

- Received a notice to vacate or eviction notice
- Moved 2+ times in the past 60 days due to economic hardship
- Living in a motel not paid for by a charitable organization or agency
- Exiting a publicly funded institution without housing upon exit

**Do not have an alternate housing option or financial resources.*

United Way Home Safe Program | Homeless Prevention

- Supporting low-income Ventura County residents who are at risk of homelessness. This program provides crisis response for those who are at or lower than 30% Area Median Income and spend 50% or more of their income on rent. Households up to 50% Area Median Income are also reviewed for eligibility as the next priority.
- Financial incentives are offered to property owners and managers to extend time for payment or reduce rent for a year with no loss of business income. Landlords are supported by a housing navigator while tenants are supported by a case manager.



United Way of
Ventura County

HOW TO REFER:

Call: (805) 485-6288

Email: lepreferrals@vcunitedway.org

TOP 10 CAUSES OF THOSE AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS RESEARCHED BY UNITED WAY OF VENTURA COUNTY

- #1 Job Loss / Reduced Hours
- #2 Disabling Conditions
- #3 Unexpected Expenses (car/medical)
- #4 Domestic Violence / Safety Concerns
- #5 Divorce or Change in Household
- #6 Eviction
- #7 Unaffordable Rent Increase
- #8 Unit No Longer Habitable (flood/fire)
- #9 Discharged from Institution
- #10 Housing Voucher Subsidy Reduction

CASA DE CARMEN AND OXNARD NAVIGATION CENTER NOW OPEN!



Mercy House has welcomed 55 formerly homeless residents into their new homes at Casa de Carmen (2nd and B) in Oxnard. The first floor is now the permanent 24/7 emergency shelter location for the Oxnard Navigation Center with 110 beds. In collaboration with the City of Oxnard, Housing Trust Fund of Ventura County, and Community Development Partners, this beautifully designed property now provides safety, security, and dignity to those experiencing homelessness. Mercy House provides onsite supportive services and connects residents to wrap around supports.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR MIDDLE-INCOME HOMEBUYERS!

My Way Home, in partnership with the County of Ventura, is excited to launch the **HopeNow Ventura County Program!**

This new program offers a 15-year deferred loan at just 2% simple interest for first-time buyers earning up to 150% Area Median Income (e.g., a family of 4 earning under \$196,950). Eligible purchases include homes in Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Thousand Oaks, and unincorporated areas of Ventura County. This program can be combined with other My Way Home programs to maximize your purchasing power! A great boost for your homebuying journey!

Contact My Way Home at 805-273-7800 or visit www.mywayhome.org for additional details and requirements.



\$37,500 TO HELP YOU BUY A HOME IN VENTURA COUNTY!

A New Path for Middle-Income Homebuyers



LEARN MORE:

(805) 273-7800

www.mywayhome.org/lending



Apply Now

My Way Home, en colaboración con el Condado de Ventura, se complace en lanzar el Programa HopeNow Ventura County.

Este nuevo programa ofrece un préstamo diferido de 15 años con un interés simple del 2% para compradores por primera vez que ganan hasta el 150% del Ingreso Medio del Área (por ejemplo, una familia de 4 con ingresos menores de \$196,950). Las compras elegibles incluyen viviendas en Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Thousand Oaks y áreas no incorporadas del Condado de Ventura. ¡Este programa puede combinarse con otros programas de My Way Home para brindarle más apoyo en su proceso de compra de vivienda! ¡Este program es una ayuda clave para avanzar en su proceso de compra de casa!

Comuníquese con My Way Home al 805-273-7800 o visite www.mywayhome.org para obtener más detalles y requisitos.

JENNIFER HARKEY HONORED AS THE 2025 INTEGRITY AWARD RECIPIENT BY THE VENTURA COUNTY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Several County of Ventura leaders were nominated for the **2025 Integrity Award**, presented by the Ventura County Management Council. Two CEO team members were honored: Tracy McAulay and Jennifer Harkey



Jennifer Harkey

As Director of the Ventura County Continuum of Care, Jennifer Harkey leads with compassion, transparency, and a deep commitment to ending homelessness. She oversees complex HUD and State grants, drives strategic initiatives, and consistently puts community needs above personal recognition. Jenn's value-driven leadership, accountability, and lived understanding of homelessness have earned widespread trust making her a powerful and inspiring example of integrity in public service.

Tracy McAulay

Tracy McAulay demonstrates unwavering integrity through her leadership of multimillion-dollar housing projects, her transparent management of public funds, and her commitment to expanding opportunities for unhoused and housing-insecure community members. She consistently centers equity and service over convenience or politics. Tracy's empathy, accountability, and principled decision-making have earned the trust and respect of colleagues, partners, and the community.

Selected from a wonderful group of highly distinguished nominees, Jennifer Harkey was honored with the 2025 Integrity Award.



Leading by example, Jenn inspires and motivates those around her to be proactive, to explore every possible option, and find innovative solutions to keep people safely housed. Her integrity and value-driven leadership have earned her the trust of partners across the community. She is often the first-person people turn to for honest and thoughtful guidance, especially now, as providers navigate difficult changes in federal funding and priorities for homelessness programs.

Jenn's passion and integrity extend far beyond her professional role; they are a part of who she is. Jenn truly lives her values every day. Her strong moral compass, selflessness, tireless and unwavering dedication to serve those most vulnerable in our community make her truly deserving of this award.

"I don't believe I have ever met someone as committed to the cause as Jenn. She has spent so many years building relationships and county-wide collaborations to solve homelessness in Ventura County and this has clearly paid off. Jenn has built a strong committed team, has strengthened the role of the Ventura Continuum of Care to partner with Ventura County cities to advance solutions to homelessness from funding and supporting permanent supportive housing, to supporting street outreach and engaging those with lived experience to guide her efforts and those of the CoC, Ventura cities and all of our community partners. Ventura County can say that it is making a difference to end homelessness due in large part to Jenn's personal and professional commitment. We are better off as a community because of Jenn!"

-Jeffrey Lambert, CEO Ventura Housing

SAVE THE DATE! UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- COC BOARD MEETING | 2/11/2026
- COC DATA COMMITTEE MEETING | 2/25/2026
- COC BOARD MEETING | 3/11/2026
- CESAR CHAVEZ DAY | 3/31/26
- COC BOARD MEETING | 4/8/2026
- COC ALLIANCE ZOOM MEETING | 4/16/2026
- COC PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH (PIO) MEETING | 4/22/2026

MEETING LINKS AND LOCATIONS ARE POSTED
AT COC.VENTURACOUNTY.GOV

We extend our sincere thanks to all of our partners for your compassion and steadfast commitment to serving our most vulnerable neighbors. Your willingness to volunteer for the PIT Count plays a crucial role in expanding funding and strengthening invaluable resources to support those experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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[Ventura CoC Website](#)



[Ventura CoC Youtube](#)



Contact us at
VenturaCoC@venturacounty.gov



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