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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 3, 2020

**TO:** Community Service Providers

**FROM:** Irena Pozgaj-Jones, Program Supervisor, County of Simcoe

**SUBJECT:** 2020 Simcoe County Homeless Enumeration

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Complete and return the [2020 Homeless Enumeration Agency Involvement Form](#) by **November 5, 2020**

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Since 2016, the Simcoe County community has conducted a Homelessness Enumeration every two years. The information collected helps connect people to the appropriate programs and services in the community, informs policy and program development, and raises awareness about homelessness in Simcoe County.

A Homeless Enumeration takes significant planning, collaboration, and support from community partners. The Simcoe County Homeless Enumeration is a coordinated effort, led by the Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness (SCATEH) and the County of Simcoe.

**The 2020 Homeless Enumeration has been rescheduled to November 17-23, 2020.**

The 2020 Homeless Enumeration was originally scheduled for April 21-23, however, based on public health recommendations and with approval from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), the Homeless Enumeration was postponed. Local community discussions have encouraged moving forward with an enumeration this fall, for the following reasons:

- To develop an understanding of the unique and unprecedented situations related to homelessness that people are currently experiencing, to which local responses can be developed;
  - To gain insight into the experience of homelessness among people who are typically underrepresented in enumerations because they are staying with friends/family/acquaintances (the hidden homeless).
  - To protect the safety of enumerators through implementation of safe enumeration guideline and procedures consistent with local public health recommendations which will be emphasized in remotely provided enumeration training sessions.
  - Safety guidelines and procedures will be included in the training, and will be expected to be followed throughout for all those participating in the enumeration process. Neither staff nor survey participants will be asked to participate in any interactions outside of the usual interactions related to service delivery.
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As per their Service Agreements with the County of Simcoe, funded service providers have agreed to participate in the Simcoe County Homeless Enumeration. We recognize that support activities will vary for agencies, based on programs, populations served, and/or location. Given the impact that COVID-19 has had on service delivery interactions, we are asking funded programs to identify specifically how they are able to be involved in enumeration this fall by completing the [Enumeration Agency Participation Form](#). Results will be used for planning and coordination of local enumeration activities.

**At a minimum, shelters and transitional homes are required to provide the number of people that stayed with them on the night of the count (Tuesday, November 17).** Without this information, the sheltered enumeration will be inaccurate. Also, giving your clients the opportunity to participate in a short health and housing survey (VI-SPDAT) will provide us with valuable information about the demographics and service needs of those without permanent shelter. Each survey takes approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

The following changes will be implemented to ensure Enumeration process is safe for staff and participants during COVID-19:

- No magnet events (i.e., no events that would bring together large groups of people);
- No volunteers will be recruited to conduct surveys. Instead, surveys will be conducted by staff at community agencies, who already have an understanding of and experience in safe delivery of services during COVID-19;
- The implementation of a online survey, in addition to having paper surveys available;
- Verbal rather than written survey consent;
- No volunteers for data entry;
- Training will be done virtually through the use of videos;
- There will be no headquarter locations in local communities.

**Click to complete the [Enumeration Agency Participation Form](#).**

Thank you for your agency's efforts regarding Homeless Enumeration. For more information about Homeless Enumeration in Simcoe County, please visit: [www.simcoe.ca/enumeration](http://www.simcoe.ca/enumeration)

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me directly, as the County of Simcoe lead for the 2020 Homeless Enumeration.

Sincerely,  
Irena Pozgaj-Jones  
Program Supervisor, Community and Program Development  
705-722-3132 Ext.1136  
[irena.pozgaj-jones@simcoe.ca](mailto:irena.pozgaj-jones@simcoe.ca)