



SEASONAL HOMELESS EMERGENCY SHELTERS TO CLOSE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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(Santa Ana, CA) - On April 10, 2012 the Armory Emergency Shelter Program will close. The Armory Program, which opened on December 1, 2012, is a seasonal program that provides up to 400 beds for homeless families and individuals. The program provides shelter to the homeless along with a nutritious meal, warm shower, safe place to sleep, warm clothes, a wide variety of supportive services, and a friendly and safe atmosphere. The shelters are located at the National Guard Armories in Fullerton and Santa Ana. To date this season, the Armory Program has served 1,475 unduplicated individuals; however, final figures are not available until after the program closes.

In recent years, Federal, state and local funding available for shelter, especially emergency shelter, has declined. The County of Orange funds over 65% of the program cost. Additional funding was provided by the State of California Emergency Housing and Assistance Program, private foundations, and neighboring cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, Santa Ana, and Tustin.

The Armory Emergency Shelter Program is a vital link in our community's efforts to take care of those who lack proper shelter at night and to provide needed services to the homeless. The 2011-2012 Armory Program marked the 24th consecutive year the County of Orange has assisted the homeless during the coldest and wettest winter months. The California National Guard has partnered with the County to make the Armories available during the winter months.

Although there are some emergency shelters in Orange County, there are only a limited amount of beds and most of those shelters are either full or restricted to specific population groups. For now, there is no permanent emergency shelter like the Armory Program available year round.

An implementation group has been formed around the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness' goal to improve the efficacy of the emergency shelter system and across the system. Within that goal, there is a strategy to develop year round, permanent emergency shelters to replace the seasonal Armory Shelter Program. If you are interested in participating in any of the Ten Year Plan implementation groups or would like more information about the Ten Year Plan, please call Steve Kight at OC Partnership at 714-288-4007 or email steve.kight@ocpartnership.net .

If you or someone you care about needs assistance in Orange County, 2-1-1 can help. 2-1-1 provides free and confidential information and referral. Individuals and families can call 2-1-1 for help with critical issues like shelter, food, housing, employment, health care, counseling, legal and financial assistance, mental health care, and more. Callers seeking assistance can dial 211 (toll free) 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week, and be connected to trained information and referral specialists. This service is available in over 150 languages.