



DC Winter Shelters Bottlenecks in the System - In and Out

Faith communities taking action with and for persons who are homeless in the District of Columbia

National Hunger and Homelessness Week, November 16 - 22, 2013

October 31, 2013

Access to Shelter - the Moral Imperative

These recent chilly mornings are a clear signal that winter is on its way. When the temperature is below freezing, the District of Columbia is legally obligated "to identify vulnerable homeless people living in exposed, unprotected areas and provide immediate access to shelter and services." This mandate seems pretty clear, but the interpretation and implementation often leave many on the streets, unprotected.



In recognition of *National Hunger and Homelessness Week*, Good Faith's November meeting will address shelter issues:

Access to Shelter - Challenges on All Fronts. November 19, 2013 at 7 PM. (Location - in November newsletter).

Patty Mullahy Fugere, Executive Director of the [Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless](#) and WLCH Staff Attorney Marta Beresin will discuss issues and challenges -

- What does it mean when you have "no safe place to stay?" and how do you prove it?
- What happens when the family shelter is full or there are no beds for unaccompanied youth?
- Will there be a place for the 467 families who will be referred for shelter placement this winter? What does motel placement cost?
- Once in shelters, why don't people just voluntarily leave?
- What are the options for sustainable, affordable housing for the extremely poor?

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IMMEDIATE NEED FOR

VOLUNTEERS: The [Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless](#) does outreach and monitoring throughout the winter at the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center where families apply for shelter. In past years the District government and its contractors did not always follow the law in regard to placing homeless families. WLCH volunteers engage families outside the Center and connect them with Legal Clinic attorneys when necessary. Training provided; no need to be an attorney. More information: [Kaitlyn Uhl](#), 202-328-1263.

Calendar

Good Faith meets Council members: Kenyan McDuffie (10/28); Muriel Bowser (10/31); Anita Bonds (11/6). Want to join a delegation? Contact: Ron Castaldi, goodfaithdc@gmail.com.

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As members of the faith communities in a city where the median income is \$66,583, what is the moral imperative for us to work with others to untangle this situation and provide workable solutions? Who owns the problem? The government, the community, the poor?

It is a moral imperative to find workable solutions that respect the rights of the most vulnerable and afford the possibility of a better, more stable, future and to do so NOW. If not NOW, when?

SHELTER CENSUS

October 23, 2013: 269 families with 551 children. 2080 persons in shelter or transitional housing.

You are receiving this newsletter because of your expressed interest in homelessness and affordable housing issues in the District of Columbia.

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