

NEWS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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Homeless to receive services, basic necessities at Project Homeless Connect event

Eugene, Ore. – From medical and eye exams to hot meals and haircuts, Lane County citizens who are homeless—or at risk of becoming homeless—will be offered dozens of free services and basic provisions at this year's Project Homeless Connect (PHC) for Lane County event. The event will be held on Thursday, February 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Lane Events Center at the Fairgrounds.

In its second year, the one-day, one-stop Project Homeless Connect event will connect homeless citizens with critical services and basic needs. At least 75 service agencies and professional service providers will be on site. Services will include basic medical care, dental checkups and vision exams, which will include some on site distribution of glasses. Attendees will also receive information about housing, employment, benefits, addiction treatment, legal counsel, as well as services for youth, families, seniors and veterans. Hot meals, haircuts and bicycle repair will also be provided throughout the day. Giveaways of basic provisions will include items such as coats, blankets, socks, scarves, hats, gloves, clothing and personal hygiene items.

More than 600 local community members, ranging from general volunteers to professional service providers, have already signed up to volunteer at this year's event, doubling last year's volunteer count.

Throughout the day, Lane Transit District will provide free transportation from all its service areas to guests attending the event including Cottage Grove, Junction City, Veneta, Elmira, and Blue River. The City of Eugene will also provide round-trip van shuttles throughout the day from the following Eugene locations: First Place Family Center at 1995 Amazon Pkwy.; Looking Glass New Roads at 941 W 7th Ave.; and the St. Vincent de Paul Eugene Service Station at 450 Highway 99. The Relief Nursery will also transport its clients. Diamond Express will provide free transportation between Oakridge and the Lane Events Center. Last year 1,007 guests received services during the first-ever, one-day homeless outreach. Organizers are preparing for an even greater response this year.

"In addition to the Exhibit Hall, we've expanded this year's event to include space in both the Wheeler Pavilion and the Atrium of the Fairgrounds in order to accommodate the increased services being offered and high need," said Pearl Wolfe, PHC Co-Chair and Supervisor of the Lane County Human Services Department.

In 2007, a one-night homeless count in Lane County, conducted by the Lane County Human Services Department, revealed that nearly 2,300 citizens were living in temporary shelters or on the street. Results of the 2008 one-night homeless count, conducted on Thursday, Jan. 31, will be available within the next few weeks.

Project Homeless Connect is part of a nationwide movement to connect homeless citizens with local services and basic needs, while engaging communities in finding solutions for ending homelessness. Major supporters include United Way of Lane County, the City of Eugene, the City of Springfield, the Lane County Board of Commissioners and Arlie & Company.

For more information about how to volunteer, donate services or make in-kind contributions, visit www.homelessconnect.org. For additional information, contact Sophia McDonald, Project Homeless Connect for Lane County Coordinator, at (541) 682-3770.

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