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For more information contact Press Office at 617-635-4461

## Mayor Menino Announces Results of Homeless Census

*Census shows increase of family and children homeless, decrease of adults in shelters*

Mayor Thomas M. Menino today announced the results from the City of Boston's 29th Annual Homeless Census on December 15th. On the night of the census, Mayor Menino was joined by city officials, leaders of key state agencies and more than 350 volunteers.

The results show an 11 percent increase in the overall number of homeless men, women and children from 6,930 last year to 7,681 this year. The street figure is combined with the one-night census numbers from all residential homeless facilities to aggregate the total number of homeless on that night in the city. The number of homeless families is higher for the fourth year in a row, meaning that children continue to be the fastest growing homeless population.

"This census reflects the growing challenge that low-income families, especially young single mothers, are facing during tough economic times," said Mayor Menino. "The number is higher for the fourth year in a row, and children continue to be our fastest growing homeless population. Although we are relentless in our efforts to prevent homelessness, keeping hundreds housed and out of shelter, we must do more to find federal and state dollars for permanent and affordable family housing."

However, the census also revealed some good news reflecting the city's efforts as there were fewer adults in emergency shelter for the fourth consecutive year, decreasing from 1,396 to 1,335. There was also a reduction in the number of homeless adults in high cost hospital beds, from 249 to 215 and a decrease in the number of elderly individuals on the streets from a high of 77 in 2004 to fewer than 30 in December.

"We have made some progress but there is still more to be done," Mayor Menino said of the reductions. "These reductions reflect that our housing strategy for the long term homeless population is having a positive effect in shelters and on the streets."

"The Mayor continues to be a leading voice calling for housing solutions, and we are working closely with the State and our Federal partners to respond," said Evelyn Friedman, the Mayor's Housing Chief and Director of Neighborhood Development. "Reversing the rise in homelessness will be a priority in our Leading the Way III housing campaign; we want to provide affordable housing in strong, safe and stable neighborhoods."

Every level of government and the private sector must intensify efforts to respond to the homeless crisis. The Boston Housing Authority and Department of Neighborhood Development have made homeless families and individuals a main concern and the Governor's Office, the State Legislature and leaders in Congress must ensure that all housing authorities and rental voucher programs make homeless families a priority.

"The number of people living unsheltered on Boston's streets remains low and the emergency shelter and hospital numbers are trending down," Jim Greene, Director of the city's Emergency Shelter Commission, said. "The Mayor's Common Ground Housing Initiative is a template we should look at for families. But the housing picture for low-income families could be bleak without a greater priority for the homeless for federal and state rental assistance."

More...

<b>Homeless Census Selected Numbers:</b>	<b>07-08</b>	<b>08-09</b>	<b>% change</b>
<b>HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS</b>			
Street Count	184	219	+19%
Adults in Emergency Shelter	1,396	1,335	-4%
Adults in Transitional Housing Programs	919	927	+1%
Adult Detox and Substance Abuse Recovery	728	799	+9%
Adults in Hospitals and Medical Respite	249	215	-14%
Adults in Mental Health Facilities	278	271	-3%
<b>MIX of INDIVIDUAL and FAMILY BEDS</b>			
Domestic Violence	160	169	+6%
Adolescent	44	49	+11%
<b>HOMELESS FAMILIES</b>			
Family Substance Abuse Recovery	43	48	+12%
Persons in Boston Emergency Family Shelter	750	698	-7%
Persons in Boston Scattered Site Shelter	1,113	1,160	+4%
Persons in Boston Transitional Housing	387	470	+21%
Persons in Motel or Shelter Outside Boston	722	1,321	+83%
<b>Total Adult (Street, Shelter, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Health Care, Transitional Housing)</b>			
	3,705	3,811	+3%
<b>Total All Families (adults and children)</b>			
	3,175	3,870	+22%
<b>Total Children in All Homeless Programs</b>			
	1,850	2,288	+24%
<b>Total All Homeless</b>			
	6,930	7,681	+11%

Please note: The City of Boston reports on emergency shelter, transitional housing, domestic violence and unsheltered homeless populations as required by HUD, but also includes homeless individuals and families in hospitals, medical respite, mental health, detoxification and recovery home programs in its comprehensive count. Most of the increase in adult homelessness this year can be attributed to substance abuse recovery home programs reporting on their homeless clients, which resulted in an increase of some 130 adult individuals. Many cities do not include such programs in their counts.