Contact: Taiisa Kelly, Monarch Housing Associates, 973-768-2595 (cell) or 908-272-5363 x 228 (office) or tkelly@monarchhousing.org

PRESS ADVISORY
#NJCounts 2020 critical during Census year

When: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 (Exact times will vary by county)

Where: Across New Jersey's twenty-one counties

Who is counting: Organizations, agencies and others planning community efforts to end homelessness

January 10, 2020 - On January 29, 2020, all twenty-one New Jersey counties will participate in NJCounts 2020 conducting a state-wide Point-In-Time Count of persons experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. NJCounts 2020 will provide critical information to guide efforts to end homelessness across the state.

NJCounts 2019 found 8,864 homeless men, women and children, in 6,748 households, across the state of New Jersey. This number reflects a decrease of 439 persons (5%) from 2018. NJCounts 2019 counted individuals who were homeless on the night of January 22, 2019.

NJCounts 2020 is critical this year as we look forward to strengthening efforts to end homelessness and completion of the Census Count:

- NJCounts 2020 provides us with an opportunity to prepare for the upcoming 2020 Census Count in April and ensure all persons experiencing homelessness and housing instability are included in this year's census count. The 2020 Census plays a critical role in determining electoral representation and how billions of dollars of federal funds are allocated to states and communities. NJCounts 2020 will provide communities the opportunity to encourage census participation, test population surveying methods and identify locations to focus outreach efforts to connect with households experiencing homelessness.
- NJCounts 2020 will provide continue to deepen our understanding of the intersection between race and homelessness. Within the last 3 years the Point in Time Count data has provided information about the impact of racial inequity both on trajectories into homelessness as well as within the homeless service system. As communities work to implement strategies that will successfully end homelessness, it is critical that we understand all the factors impacting homelessness. The racial disparities identified in the 2018 and 2019 count highlight the need for client-centered solutions that address racial justice issues and focus on improving access to critical supports.
- As communities work to end homelessness, the data collected through NJCounts highlights the importance of broad-based community solutions that incorporate a wide variety of stakeholders and systems.   New Jersey is pushing this conversation to a new level with the NJHMFA Hospital Partnership Subsidy Program where the healthcare system is getting involved in developing housing. Through this initiative, apartments will be set aside for persons experiencing homelessness that have high cost healthcare needs. This innovative program has brought healthcare partners to the homeless system planning table in a new way, creating additional resources to assist communities in achieving an end to homelessness.

The point-in-time count is mandated by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development for all communities seeking federal funds to address and end homelessness. In New Jersey, the count occurs on a single day throughout the state, funded by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency. Monarch Housing Associates, celebrating 30 years of working to ensure every person has quality affordable, permanent housing that fosters freedom, independence and community integration, has coordinated the point-in-time count for the past 7 years.

Follow #NJCounts on twitter and like Monarch Housing Associates on Facebook