

RESOLUTION NAMING DECEMBER 21, 2024 NATIONAL HOMELESS PERSONS' MEMORIAL DAY

WHEREAS, December 21, 2024 marks the first day of winter and is the longest night of the year; and

WHEREAS, the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council have designated December 21, 2024 as National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day; and

WHEREAS, thousands of people across the United States die each year without stable housing; and

WHEREAS, homelessness raises one's risk of illness, injury and death; and

WHEREAS, non-elderly people experiencing homelessness have 3.5 times the mortality risk of those who are housed, accounting for differences in demographic characteristics and geography, and that a 40-year-old homeless person faces a similar mortality risk to a housed person nearly twenty years older;¹ and

WHEREAS, the Contra Costa Coroner reported 113 people experiencing homelessness who died during calendar year 2023;²; and

WHEREAS, drug and alcohol related accidental deaths represented the highest cause of death for this group in 2023, followed by natural causes and non-substance related accidents³; and

WHEREAS, 14,002 individuals accessed homeless services in Contra Costa in 2023, a 28% increase from 2019⁴; and

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County encourages all residents to recognize that thousands of people in Contra Costa do not have housing and need support from government, citizens and private/public nonprofit service entities to address the myriad challenges of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the Council on Homelessness is both an Advisory Board to the Board of Supervisors and the planning body for the Contra Costa Continuum of Care and coordinates the community's policies, strategies, and activities toward preventing and ending homelessness in Contra Costa County and welcomes community participation and engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Health, Housing and Homeless Services Division of Contra Costa Health, which staffs the Council on Homelessness, is committed to making homelessness short-lived and non-recurring by ensuring an integrated system of housing and support services for persons experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa County; and

WHEREAS, a Homeless Person's Memorial event coordinated by the Contra Costa Crisis Center, SoS Richmond, NAMI and the Council on Homelessness, will take place on Friday, December 20, 2024 at the Walnut Creek Library from 11 am - 1:30 pm to remember those who died while experiencing homelessness (Registration: <https://forms.gle/UM2iqk7Vux6xTqyS7>); and

¹ Life and Death at the Margins of Society: The Mortality of the U.S. Homeless Population Bruce D. Meyer, Angela Wyse, and Ilina Logani NBER Working Paper No. 31843 November 2023. [w31843.pdf \(nber.org\)](https://www.nber.org/papers/w31843.pdf)

² 2023 Annual Report, Contra Costa Continuum of Care, p.62

³ Ibid., p. 62

⁴ Ibid., p. 4

WHEREAS, by joining together and remembering our neighbors, we can honor their lives by working to provide solutions to end homelessness within the County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CONTRA COSTA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

That December 21, 2024 is hereby named National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day in Contra Costa County, to remember those who have died while experiencing homelessness, to encourage residents to come together to celebrate their lives, and commit to working to resolve factors that lead to homelessness within the County.