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Homeless programs get federal money

\$672,612 will assist nonprofit agencies in a 5-county region

JUSTIN VICK

jvick@charlotteobserver.com

Federal funding could help local agencies assist the region's growing homeless population.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded \$672,612 to the Piedmont Regional Continuum of Care for programs that will serve the homeless in Union, Cabarrus, Rowan, Stanly and Davidson counties.

The consortium of nonprofits, housing developers and financial groups was created in February to attract federal money for the five-county area.

A January 2005 tally put the Union County homeless population in Union at 49 people, said Jim Curtin, chairman of the continuum. Of those 49 people, 22 of them were individuals. The other 27 were parents and children -- many of them women caring for multiple relatives and children.

The money has been earmarked for specific purposes, including \$132,500 to be used to buy residences to house veterans and homeless in Salisbury and East Spencer.

Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare will receive \$271,200 to administer two voucher programs to help homeless and disabled people offset the cost of rent, enabling them to spend more money on food and other necessities, Curtin said.

Community Link, a Charlotte-based organization that serves Union, will use its \$238,912 to employ a social worker and housing counselor to provide case management for clients in transitional housing.

Finally, the N.C. Housing Coalition will receive \$30,000 on behalf of the continuum's agencies to have access to its Homeless Management Information System.

-- Staff writer Emily S. Achenbaum contributed to this report.

-- Justin Vick; (704) 786-2185