

Toronto to pay \$10K to fake homeless

by UPI

TORONTO -- The city of Toronto will pay 100 individuals \$100 each to sit on streets posing as homeless people when it conducts its headcount of street people next month.

An e-mail message sent to city agencies said the volunteers will have to attend a 30-minute training seminar to be "decoys," have their locations assigned and then be given a \$100 prepaid Visa card, the Toronto Sun reported.

In 2006, the city did its first Street Needs Assessment that also included decoys as a control measure and estimated there were 5,052 homeless people living on the streets and in shelters across the city, the newspaper said.

Homeless advocate Michael Shapcott of the Wellesley Institute told the Sun the \$10,000 the city is giving away to decoys would be better spent going directly to shelters.

"The decoys are supposed to look like homeless people but a lot of homeless people don't look like homeless people because it's a survival strategy," he said.

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