

# 2019 Point in Time Homeless Count



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## What we've learned from previous counts

- During the 2017 PIT Count in the BoS CoC, 2,989 surveys were collected.
  - Nearly half of these surveys (48%) completed were for respondents who were considered stably housed.
  - Only 19% of the surveys collected were for unsheltered homeless households.
- Of the 91 counties covered, 43 counties were considered by count coordinators to be well covered
  - 23 of those counties found 0 people unsheltered homeless
  - Data for 20 counties was useable- 394 surveys
  - 87% of the data collected in the 2017 PIT Count was unusable for the prediction model
- What can we do differently to improve these results?

## Date of the Count

January 28, 2019

*All surveys will need to determine where the person was sleeping on the night of the count!*

*Based on HUD definition, "night of the count" means sunset on January 28, 2019 through sunrise on January 29, 2019.*

## How the 2019 Count Will Work

- ❑ Similar to our unsheltered PIT counts in the past, housing screening surveys administered at service locations and other places where homeless people congregate or live
- ❑ Surveys can be collected during the night of the count (a night count is not required), and should also be collected the following week in order to ensure that all those who are experiencing homelessness in the coverage area are surveyed (this is required)
  - ❑ Street outreach efforts are required
- ❑ Completed surveys are submitted via the Counting Us app
  - ❑ No paper surveys should be collected this year
- ❑ Results will establish the number of persons experiencing homelessness in each county covered

## Objective for 2019

Comprehensive coverage of each county is essential to accurately enumerate homelessness

- Target population: Unsheltered Homeless Persons, People who reside in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or encampments
- Emphasis on the use of street outreach to engage this population

## Changes for 2019

- Outreach and Comprehensive County Coverage
  - Street outreach is a crucial component to the count and must take place in order to ensure accuracy
- Data collection method
  - PIT Count App – Counting Us
    - Geolocation features
    - Technical support during the count
    - Easy data submission for surveyors
    - Quicker turnaround

## Populations

- Reported to HUD via the PIT Count
  - Sheltered Homeless Persons
    - People who reside in an emergency shelter or in transitional/supportive housing for homeless persons
  - Unsheltered Homeless Persons
    - People who reside in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or encampments
- Captured in other enumeration methods outside of the scope of this project
  - Precariously Housed Persons
    - People who are facing loss of housing within the week, staying in dilapidated housing (not fit for human habitation), or doubled up
  - Other Homeless Persons
    - People who are in jail, a hospital, or a detox program, but may otherwise have been homeless

## Coordinator To-Do List

- Develop a plan for your count according to what you feel is best for your county
- Contact local government and law enforcement officials regarding the count
- Recruit service organizations to participate in the count
- Develop contact list of local participating organizations
- Identify service sites for data collection
- Download and become familiar with the Counting Us App
- Recruit and schedule volunteers for survey administration and privacy training
- Provide training to volunteers and staff of participating organizations in administering surveys via the Counting Us app and collecting sensitive and personal identifying information
- Monitor data collection throughout the count and address problems and issues as they arise
- Ensure that all surveys are submitted, including transferring any paper surveys into the Counting Us app for submission
- Coordinate request for and administration of funding from DCA or other sources

## Potential participating organizations and survey locations

- ❑ DFACS
- ❑ Housing Authority
- ❑ Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens
- ❑ Clothing Programs
- ❑ Laundromats
- ❑ Libraries
- ❑ Shelters
- ❑ Community Service Boards
- ❑ Health Department or Clinics
- ❑ Nonprofits
- ❑ Day Labor Sites

## Possible Community Partners

- ❑ Local government
- ❑ Police Chief and Sheriff
- ❑ Family Connections
- ❑ School homeless liaisons and hospital social workers
- ❑ Churches
  - ❑ Rural service providers – might know folks who are struggling with housing
  - ❑ Existing mission and service projects might involve helping the homeless
  - ❑ Volunteers, transportation, food supplies, other resources

## Volunteer Recruitment

- ❑ Advertising in the local newspaper or on a local radio station may be useful for getting information out to the community.
- ❑ Contact churches, charities, colleges, police departments, DFACS to see if they have volunteers who are willing to help out.
- ❑ Partner with other service providers in your area so that you can get the most coverage

## Volunteer Safety

- ❑ ID badges
- ❑ Flashlights
- ❑ Notify police that you will be counting
- ❑ Work in teams → NEVER have volunteers go out alone
- ❑ Clip boards including emergency contact info and information about services

## Funding

- ❑ Limited funds are available to offset the costs of conducting the count. Funding will be determined by the population size of the county being covered.
- ❑ Acceptable costs:
  - ❑ Small incentives for survey respondents (gift cards, hygiene packs, packed lunches, etc. \$5 or less per respondent)
  - ❑ Printing for flyers and radio or newspaper advertisements
  - ❑ Meals, gas, and supplies for volunteers

## Additional Resources

- ❑ Make use of your connections (service clubs, churches, charities)
- ❑ Pursue corporate sponsorships
- ❑ Costco, Kroger, and Home Depot specifically strive to support the local community, so be sure to contact them for possible sponsorship or donation of materials needed (flashlights, clip boards, snacks, hygiene kits, etc.)
- ❑ The United Way in your area may be able to donate materials that you could give to survey respondents (care packages, hygiene kits, etc.)

## Confidentiality

- Our priority is to preserve and protect the privacy and integrity of the people we are surveying
- We will be collecting private, sensitive information, there are some additional measures in place to accomplish this.
- All volunteers (and anyone else who will be completing surveys with participants) **MUST** sign the confidentiality agreement

## Confidentiality

- Please remember:
  - The survey should be administered in as private a setting as possible.
  - A respondent may choose to skip any questions he or she does not feel comfortable answering.
  - Try not to ask the questions in a setting where the person's answers can be overheard by others.
  - Do not under any circumstances share private information about someone surveyed with anyone else



## 2019 Georgia Housing Status Survey

- ❑ Designed to be administered by homeless service agency staff or by trained volunteers via the Counting Us app
- ❑ No more than 10-15 minutes
- ❑ Questions included:
  - ❑ Location – please provide exact locations
  - ❑ Information to determine homeless status
  - ❑ Chronic homelessness
  - ❑ Veteran status
  - ❑ Disabilities

## Resources for Participants

- ❑ If there are resources available in your area, feel free to share information with those who complete the surveys
- ❑ Facilitate access to services and housing IMMEDIATELY, if possible
- ❑ If available, please refer populations not eligible for HUD programs to other services

## After the Count

- All surveys submitted through the app or the Counting Us website
- Debriefing survey for all count coordinators to ensure we get feedback and ways we can improve the count for 2021
- DCA will send each count coordinator a report summarizing data that was collected for their coverage area

## Further Resources

- HUD Point in Time advertising materials
  - <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5770/2019-pit-count-poster/>
- Counting Us App – Tools to Automate the Point in Time Count
  - <http://pointintime.info/support/instructional-videos/>



# Questions?



## Contact Information

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