Unsheltered Surveys & Non-HMIS Reports

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE 2024 POINT IN TIME COUNT

# River Valleys Continuum of Care

WHAT WE ARE:

Community-based coalition dedicated to working together to prevent and end homelessness in southern Minnesota

And,

A Continuum of Care region recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the purposes of the HUD Continuum of Care funding program.

The CoC's formal name with HUD is Rochester/Southeast Minnesota CoC (MN-502).

WHERE WE WORK:
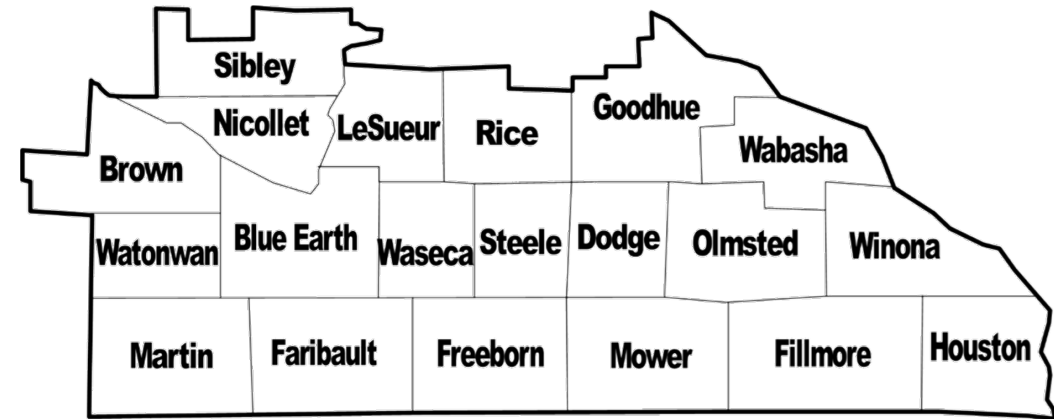
What we'll cover today

The basics

Knowing where you plug in

Timelines to collect & submit data

Guidance for surveyors and housing programs
- Forms
- Training resources
- Links for data collection

Conducting the survey

When is the Count?

Night of

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

What happens during the Count?

Point in Time Count
- Count people and households

Housing Inventory Count
- Count program capacity
  - Beds
  - Units

How are the PIT and HIC Related?

The number of sheltered people counted in the PIT must equal the number of sheltered people counted in the HIC.

All projects where people are counted in the sheltered PIT must be included in the HIC.

Connecting the two allows us to understand how shelter and housing resources are being used.

Point in Time Count (PIT)

Housing Inventory (HIC)

PIT + HIC
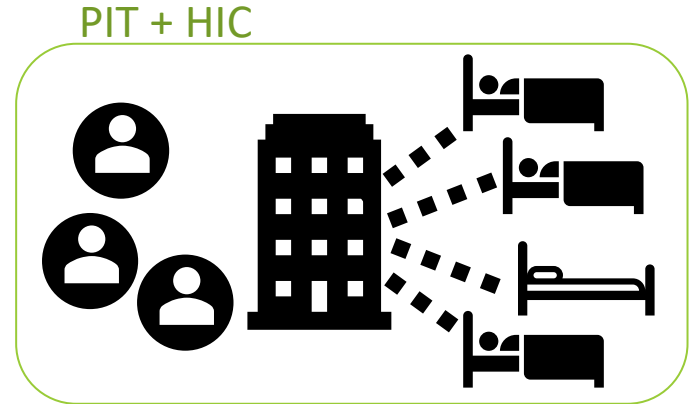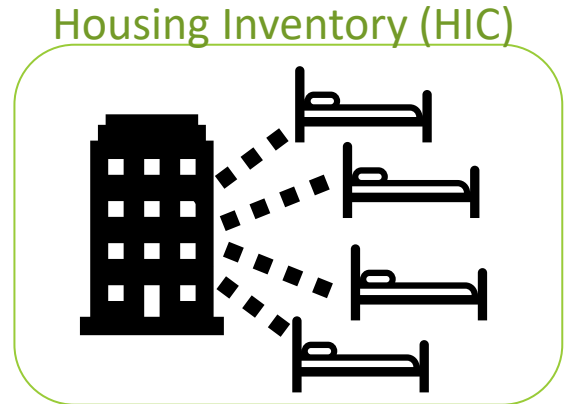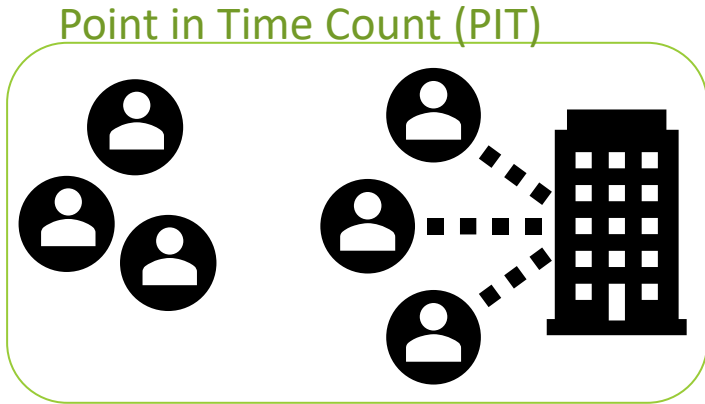
Why do we do a Count?

To measure and monitor trends and changes in homelessness on local and national levels

To help our community understand what resources we have and need, and to strategize best ways to use them

To comply with federal regulations and requirements

Knowing Where You Plug In

What roles do you have in the count?

Poll

You may have more than one role

Which of these roles do you have related to the count?

- Surveyor for unsheltered count
- Staff or volunteer of host agency for unsheltered count surveys
- Partner agency in the community helping to connect people to resources and unsheltered survey locations
- Manager or staff of a day shelter or outreach team
- Manager or staff of a nighttime shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, or supportive housing program
- HMIS user or data manager for a housing program
- Coordinated Entry provider or assessing agency staff doing List Outreach
- Member of local Homeless Response Team
- Something else?

Basic roles

Housing Provider ⭐

- Program using HMIS
- Program NOT using HMIS

Surveyor ⭐

- Outreach team
- Event or agency-based
- Coordinated Entry List Outreach

Connector

- Other community agency
- Event lead
- Volunteer coordinator

Housing Provider: ES/TH NOT in HMIS

Tool
Your agency intake/records forms
(NEW) PIT Reporting Appointment with CoC

Process
Document all stayers on PIT Count night using regular agency process
Request a PIT/HIC Report appointment

Timeline
Gather & submit data: January 25 – February 9

Resource
For information only: Aggregate form template

Housing Provider: PSH/RRH NOT in HMIS

Tool

PIT email request – no form
Housing Inventory (coming in February)

Process

PIT: Document all stayers on PIT Count night using regular agency process
HIC: Confirm or correct program beds, units, etc.

Timeline

Housing Inventory: Now through January 20
Gather & submit data: January 26 – February 3

Resource

PIT: None. Respond to email ☺
HIC: Online report form

Housing Provider: Using HMIS

Tool

HMIS
Housing Inventory (coming in February)

Process

PIT: Complete regular data entry & corrections
HIC: Confirm or correct program beds, units, etc.

Timeline

HMIS data entry: January 25 - February 2
Housing Inventory: February 5 - 12

Resource

Forms and Instructions for your project type
HMIS data corrections guide
PIT/HIC Data corrections guide

Housing Providers

WHAT OTHER COUNT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD KNOW

Remember…

◦ Housing Programs that are <u>designated</u> for people experiencing homelessness are included.

◦ Housing Providers participate in the Count even if they don't use HMIS for their program(s).

◦ Housing Providers are responsible to count and report data for stayers in their program(s).

◦ Housing providers do not use surveys. This means participants will likely answer "No" when asked if they've already been surveyed.

◦ Clear IDs and housing program names on surveys can help with preventing double-counts.

Surveyor: Outreach activity

Tool

PITLIVE Online form

Process

Approach all people to conduct survey
Enter directly online or use paper form if helpful
Backup when survey declined: Observation Tool

Timeline

Survey collection: Sunset Jan 24 – sunrise Jan 25 (or before shelters close for daytime)
Data reporting: January 25 – February 2

Resource

Surveyor Guide / One-page Survey Guide
Household ID Quiz
Training Videos: Paper Survey / Interview Techniques

Outreach activities

WHAT OTHER COUNT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD KNOW

Remember...

◦ Outreach-based counts are conducted during the time when folks staying in shelter for the night are already there. This prevents double-counting.

◦ Outreach-based counts depend on knowledgeable and trusted volunteers. Additional training may be provided by regular outreach workers.

◦ Sharing information about key locations now with your local outreach team can be helpful.

◦ Informing law enforcement, security services, and downtown districts before outreach occurs can be helpful.

◦ Services, small incentives that are part of normal outreach, or other assistance may be provided along with count activities.

Surveyor: Service- or Event-based

Tool

PITLIVE Online form

Process

Approach all people to conduct survey
Enter directly online or use paper form if helpful
Backup when survey declined: Observation Tool

Timeline

Survey collection: Service-based January 25-30; Event based January 25 or 26 (during event only)
Data reporting: January 25 – February 2

Resource

Surveyor Guide / One-page Survey Guide
Household ID Quiz
Training Videos: Paper Survey / Interview Techniques

Agency- and Event-based Counts

WHAT OTHER COUNT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD KNOW

Remember…

◦ Agency- and event-based counts use surveys conducted over several days as people enter agencies or events for services.

◦ No matter when the survey is completed, all surveys reflect where someone stayed on the night of January 24, 2023 (not "last night").

◦ Event-based counts depend on trusted and trained volunteers so that they can integrate surveys into other services being provided.

◦ Agency- and event-based counts are most complete when all critical access points participate AND when combined with outreach activities.

◦ Oftentimes, schools need assistance to ensure students and families and included in the count. Even if you have another role, you may participate when agencies and events request volunteers to assist with surveys.

Surveyor: Coordinated Entry Outreach

Tool

PITLIVE Online form and List Outreach Contact List

Process

During List Outreach, survey those who are unsheltered
Enter directly online or use paper form if helpful

Timeline

Survey collection: January 25-30
Data reporting: January 25 – February 2
List Outreach: January 25- February 16

Resource

Surveyor Guide / One-page Survey Guide
Household ID Quiz
Training Videos: Paper Survey / Interview Techniques
List Outreach Procedures: given with contact list

Coordinated Entry Outreach

WHAT OTHERS SHOULD KNOW

Remember…

◦ List Outreach happens twice per year with the Winter List Outreach always happening around the Point in Time Count

◦ All CE Assessing agencies and Housing Providers participate in List Outreach

◦ All households active in CE are contacted to either have their assessment updated or they are exited from CE if they are housed

◦ Anyone contacted who is unsheltered receives a PIT survey during January 26- 31

Housing programs using HMIS	Housing Programs NOT using HMIS	Surveyors with local homeless response team	Coordinated Entry Providers
❑Review data correction resources ❑Make a PIT data entry plan with HMIS user(s) to quickly update records ❑By February 2, ensure data in HMIS is correct and complete for PIT Count night ❑Look for a Housing Inventory update request January by January 25 and response as soon as possible.	PSH/RRH: ❑Between January 25 and February 2, expect email request for program info ES/TH: ❑ Review the paper Aggregate Report form to help with data collection ❑Make a PIT data reporting plan with your team ❑Request PIT Report time with CoC staff between January 25 and February 9	❑Confirm process and sites for conducting the unsheltered count ❑Secure volunteers to conduct surveys and promote the count ❑Connect surveyors to training and materials ❑By February 2, ensure survey data is submitted to PITLIVE	❑Attend CE Provider meeting January 19 to review List Outreach and PIT procedures ❑Conduct List Outreach as usual ❑If households meets threshold for completing a PIT survey, conduct survey ❑By February 2, ensure survey data is submitted to PITLIVE ❑Collect and report updates for CE referrals as instructed

>> Action Checklist <<

Links to keep handy

CoC Point in Time Count page:

https://www.rivervalleyscoc.org/point-in-time-count.html

HMIS Point in Time training page:

https://www.hmismn.org/point-in-time-count

Questions on roles and timelines?

Five-minute break

Materials to gather before we move on:
- PIT Survey (Short)
- Surveyor Guide
- Observation Form tool

https://www.hmismn.org/point-in-time-count

Conducting the Survey

Guide to Conducting Surveys

Step 1: Approach & Introduction

Approach the person and introduce yourself

Ask if the person has a few minutes to answer some questions

Keep in mind:
- Individuals sleeping outside may be dealing with active addiction, mental health concerns, and significant trauma histories. Do not startle people. Never shine flashlights in people's faces.
- Maintain eye contact (if possible) and an open stance with your hands visible. Use a tone of voice that's approachable. Speak slowly, be polite, and don't shout.

> Hi, my name is [name]. We're out here trying to talk to folks who might not have a safe place to sleep tonight. Do you have a safe place to sleep tonight? Do you know where I might find some people around here who don't?

Guide to Conducting Surveys

Step 2: Explain what you're doing & get consent

Explain why you're there

If they consent to answering your questions, continue with the interview. If they don't, thank them for their time, and use the observation form.

> We're conducting a survey, and your participation will help the community provide better services and resources for people who might not have a safe home to sleep at night. It'll take about 4-5 minutes, you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to answer, and it's all anonymous – meaning your name won't be used. Are you willing to answer these questions?

Guide to Conducting Surveys

Step 3: Conduct the survey using the form

Go through each question in the survey form
- Remember: people have the right not to answer all questions!

Add any notes that may be helpful
- Example: If a person says that they have their own apartment, but they're sitting on a bench outside of a 24-hour grocery store at 2:00 am with what appear to be all of their belongings, write down that you think there may be a discrepancy in what they are saying vs. where they will sleep that night.

Remember, the survey is for people in UNSHELTERED locations.
- If the person is not in an unsheltered location, it is okay to wrap up the survey, thank them for their time, and connect them with other resources if desired.
- Surveys from other locations <u>do not</u> need to be entered into PITLIVE.

Using the Survey form

For our CoC:
- We have a large region- **Your contact info, agency/team, and county where you conduct the survey is SUPER important**
- CoC Code is "**SEC**"
- All surveys must be entered into **PITLIVE**

New or important notes:

DO NOT do the survey with persons who are doubled-up or who are staying in a shelter

Household IDs are critical – DO THE QUIZ to check your understanding

Demographic categories are more detailed this year

Observations should only be used
- In a street outreach setting, OR
- For people who identify being unsheltered, but do not consent to survey

Reviewing the tools

Paper survey   Observation tool   PITLIVE demonstration

Guide to Conducting Surveys

Step 4: Closing the interview

Thank the person for their time

Refer them to any services or resources they may have asked about or may need. Offer everyone a resource sheet / contact card if this is something your community provides.

Guide to Conducting Surveys

Step 5: Recording what you heard and observed

Walk away from the person interviewed to a safe place

Take a few minutes after your conversation to double check that you've completed the whole survey form

Include any additional notes or details

If on paper: Make sure everything you have written is readable

Submitting the Surveys

All Surveys are submitted using PIT LIVE
◦ Online form is used statewide
◦ A survey doesn't have to be 100% complete to be entered
◦ You receive a confirmation that the form was submitted, but not a copy of form
◦ Questions may be in a slightly different order online than on the paper form
◦ PIT LIVE is open for training and testing now

If you are an agency, team, or event lead: You will need to provide direction regarding:
◦ Who will collect paper surveys
◦ Who is doing data entry into PIT LIVE
◦ Whether you want a tally of surveys for local use or to confirm submission into PIT LIVE

If you are part of CE List Outreach:
◦ Submit surveys via PITLIVE
◦ Follow List Outreach instructions to update CE records

After Submitting Surveys

CoC and ICA work together to identify any issues with data

- ◦ Possible duplicates in surveys
- ◦ Conflicting counts of household members
- ◦ Observations that aren't complete or indicate uncertainty

We may reach out to you to resolve questions as best as we can

- ◦ This is not a failure or gotcha. It's part of the process.

Questions about the Survey & next steps?

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Thank you!