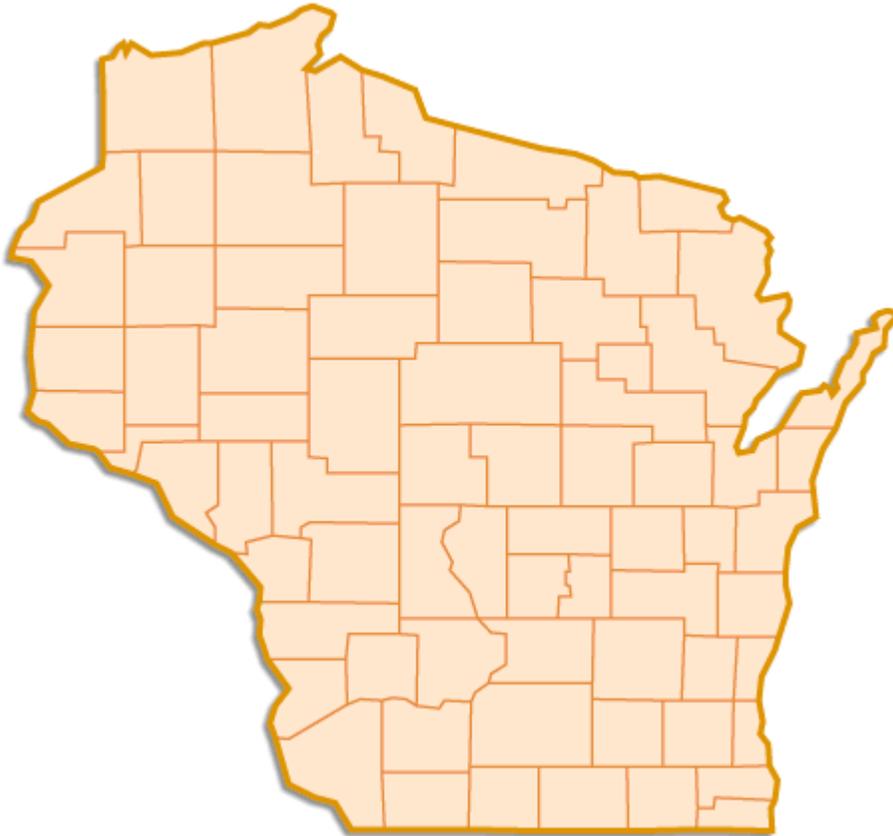


Wisconsin Statewide Homeless Point-In-Time Count



A Guide for Wisconsin Communities

Developed by:
The Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care

Wisconsin Point-in-Time Manual
Revised January 2014

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PART 1: Overview of the Point-in-Time Count

What is a Point-in-Time Count?

A Point-In-Time, or PIT, count is a statistically reliable, unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness during a designated one-night period. Wisconsin conducts this count twice per year. This count is intended to include persons that are homeless and are living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, safe havens for the homeless, domestic violence shelters, or who are unsheltered living on the streets or any other place not meant for human habitation. A PIT is intended to capture a minimum amount of information on the homeless population in order to create a “snapshot” of what homelessness looks like in a neighborhood, city, or state. The data collected through the Point-in-Time process is reported in the Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) that is provided to the U.S. Congress. Homeless information is also reported to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, and is utilized to develop the Housing Inventory Chart for the Balance of State Continuum of Care.

What is the Purpose of a Point-in-Time Count?

Sheltered Count¹

The most important reason to collect information on the number and characteristics of sheltered homeless people is for program and system planning. To be responsive to the needs of people experiencing homelessness in a community, the continua need to understand how many and what the needs are of individuals, families, and children being served. In addition, local continua from different regions of the country emphasize the varied benefits of gathering point-in-time data, including:

- Collecting important data for program planning and reporting to funders.
- Promoting the count to focus public attention on the issue of homelessness.

Unsheltered Count²

Collecting good data on the number, characteristics, and service needs of unsheltered homeless individuals, families, and children is a critical component of local homeless planning and program development. From a Continuum of Care (CoC) perspective, data can be used for:

- Service planning;
- Demonstrating a need for resources in the Continuum of Care application;
- Raising public awareness;
- Accurately measuring and identifying the needs of populations that are the hardest to serve; and
- Measuring performance in eliminating homelessness.

Data collected on unsheltered homeless people can help individual service providers and local continua:

- Justify requests for additional resources;
- Plan future services geared toward meeting the needs of unsheltered homeless people;
- Allocate resources across jurisdictions, service providers, or programs for different subgroups of the homeless population within the community;
- Understand changes in trends among the homeless populations in the community; and
- Comply with reporting requirements from HUD, other funders, and local stakeholders.

¹ HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People, Third Revision, January 2012

² HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People, Second Revision, January 2008

Who is Responsible for Conducting the Point-in-Time

The Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care (BOSCO) conducts the PIT two times per year on the last Wednesday in January and July. The BOSCO Board of Directors has a designated Data Committee, which is chaired by the Vice President of the Board. This committee is responsible for updating and revising documents related to the Point-in-Time, providing training and assistance to homeless providers that use WISP and those that do not use WISP, and ensuring ongoing compliance with HUD requirements for the PIT count. The Chair and the WI Division of Housing (HMIS Lead) work together to ensure that appropriate data is gathered for a successful submission into AHAR.

The BOSCO is comprised of 24 local or regional continuums. Each continuum has a Point-in-Time (PIT) Lead. The PIT Lead is responsible for the following things:

- ✓ Dissemination of forms to providers in their local continuum;
- ✓ Ensuring that best practices are utilized for conducting the count;
- ✓ Following the policies and procedures laid out by the Balance of State and HUD for the count;
- ✓ Contacting providers to ensure accurate bed and units are recorded on the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC);
- ✓ Coordinating with Non-WISP and WISP providers to gather required information for the count;
- ✓ Compiling and tabulating the data collected from both Non-WISP and WISP providers.

The PIT process includes various providers (non-WISP and WISP) within a local continuum. These include Emergency Shelters/Motel Voucher Programs (including those serving victims of domestic violence), Transitional Housing, Safe Haven, and Rapid Rehousing Programs.

When the PIT has been completed, the PIT Lead must collect, enter, and submit the data into the Non-WISP PIT form and the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) located on Google drive. Each PIT Lead will be given two different URLs – one for the Non-WISP PIT form and one for the HIC. The PIT Lead will email the Data Committee Chairperson upon completion. The Data Committee Chairperson reviews the information provided by each PIT Lead. Once the data is complete and due diligence is used to determine accuracy, the Data Committee Chairperson submits to the WI Department of Administration, Division of Housing, the Balance of State report which includes both non-WISP and WISP data for the night of the PIT.

Who Gets Counted in the Point-in-Time

For the **sheltered count**, only those individuals and families who meet the criteria described in the HEARTH Homeless Definition, paragraph 1.ii, can be included.³

The definition includes individuals and families ***“living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters), transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals”*** on the night designated for the count. This also includes people residing in in Safe Haven provider programs.

This includes individuals and families residing in:

- Emergency Shelters
- Transitional Housing
- Safe Havens for the Homeless
- Domestic Violence Shelters
- Residential programs for runaway/homeless youth
- Any hotel, motel, or apartment voucher arrangement paid by a public or private agency because the person or family is homeless

For the **unsheltered count**, only those individuals and families who meet the criteria described in HEARTH Homeless Definition, paragraph 1.i, can be included.⁴

This definition includes individuals and families ***“with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus, or train station, airport, or camping ground”*** on the night designated for the count. CoCs will also need to collect more complete subpopulation information from unsheltered persons than what was collected in previous years.

These persons are commonly found in the following circumstances:

- On the streets
- In their vehicles
- In a tents, shanties, or abandoned buildings
- In parks, campgrounds, or in the woods
- Any other place not meant for human habitation

Homeless Youth and the PIT:⁵

All homeless youth that meet the criteria for sheltered or unsheltered as described above and who are NOT in foster care, wards of the state, or otherwise under government custody or supervision as of the night designated for the count should be included.

Youth who are not in the situations defined above should not be included. This includes youth who are homeless by another Federal definition (such as doubled-up & couch surfing).

³ HUD 24 CFR Parts 91, 582, and 583, Final Rule, Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transitional to Housing: Defining “Homeless,” December 2011.

⁴ HUD 24 CFR Parts 91, 582, and 583, Final Rule, Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transitional to Housing: Defining “Homeless,” December 2011.

⁵ HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Supplemental Guidance on Counting Homeless Youth, December 2012, Version 1.0

Who Does NOT Get Counted in the Point-in-Time

It is important to not include persons who can be considered “precariously housed” or “doubled up” in the count of homeless persons. While these persons may have previously experienced homelessness or are at risk of homelessness, they do not fit the current definition of homelessness as defined by HUD and therefore should be excluded. This includes persons in the following situations:⁶

- Persons temporarily staying with family or friends, “doubled up” or “couch surfing.” This includes youth defined as homeless by another Federal definition.
- Formerly homeless persons living in Section 8 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing, a Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program, Supportive Housing Program (SHP) funded permanent housing, housed using Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers, Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) or any other permanent housing units subsidized or unsubsidized.
- Adults in mental health facilities, chemical dependency facilities, or criminal justice facilities (including jails and prisons).
- Persons counted in any location that is not listed on the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC).
- Persons residing in their own unit with assistance from a Rapid Re-housing Provider (RRH) on the night of the count – including but not limited to Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF).

Reminder, Rapid Re-housing (RRH) is considered a permanent housing provider program. However, homeless households currently residing on the street, in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or Safe Haven, but are also enrolled in a RRH program and awaiting placement should be counted where they resided on the night of the count. RRH assisted households who are still unsheltered on the night of the count should be included as part of the unsheltered count.

When is the Point-in-Time count?

In order to reduce opportunities for duplication, the PIT count must be conducted during the same period. The Balance of State Continuum of Care (BOSCO) works with Madison, Milwaukee, and Racine to conduct the PIT count on the same date – the last Wednesday in January and July. The term “night” signifies a single period of time from sunset to sunrise – spanning two actual calendar dates. The “night of the count” begins at sunset on the date of the count and ends at sunrise on the following day.

For example, the PIT count will be held on the night of Wednesday, January 30th from sundown until the morning of Thursday, January 31st at sunrise.

For the sheltered count, all persons who entered on or before the date of the count AND exited after the date of the count (or have not yet exited) should be included.

For the unsheltered count, all persons turned away from shelter that are otherwise eligible for shelter, or found during the street/known location count during the overnight hours should be included.

⁶ HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Data Collection Guidance, December 2012, Version 1.1.

What Information Must be Collected During the Point-in-Time Count?

The PIT count can be as simple as collecting the basic demographics required by HUD and used to complete the Continuum of Care Collaborative Application. The PIT count can be a complex, research-based project that requires several months to develop and analyze. The purpose of this document is to focus on the basics of the PIT count and the requirements the BOSCO Board of Directors, Data Committee, and HMIS Lead have determined to be important when conducting a PIT count for sheltered and unsheltered individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Conducting further data collection in future counts is a long-term collaborative goal of all Continuums of Care in Wisconsin.

In 2013, HUD published several guidance tools for Continuums of Care to expand the PIT count and required additional information to be gathered. The data collection is broken down into two areas: Homeless population and Homeless sub-population. Within the Homeless population data, HUD requires information on household types, number of households, number of people, and a breakdown of age within each of the household types.⁷

Key Definitions:

- Persons in households with at least one adult and one child
 - This category includes households with one adult and at least one child under the age of 18.
 - The household can include more adults and/or more children.
- Persons in household without children
 - This category includes single adults, adult couples with no children, and groups of unrelated adults residing together.
- Persons in households with only children
 - This category includes persons under the age of 18.
 - The household can include children living alone, adolescent parents and their child(ren), adolescent siblings, or other household configurations that only include children.

In the grid:

- ES stands for Emergency Shelter (or motel voucher program)
- TH stands for Transitional Housing Program

Subpopulation:

To assure accurate data collection, HUD requires that the subpopulation data collected during the PIT be consistent with Federal definitions (see Appendix). This, in turn, allows Continuums of Care and HUD to accurately measure progress against U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, 2010.

⁷ HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Data Collection Guidance, December 2012, Version 1.1.

The following grid was developed for Non-WISP providers to report on the required information:

Homeless Populations Example:

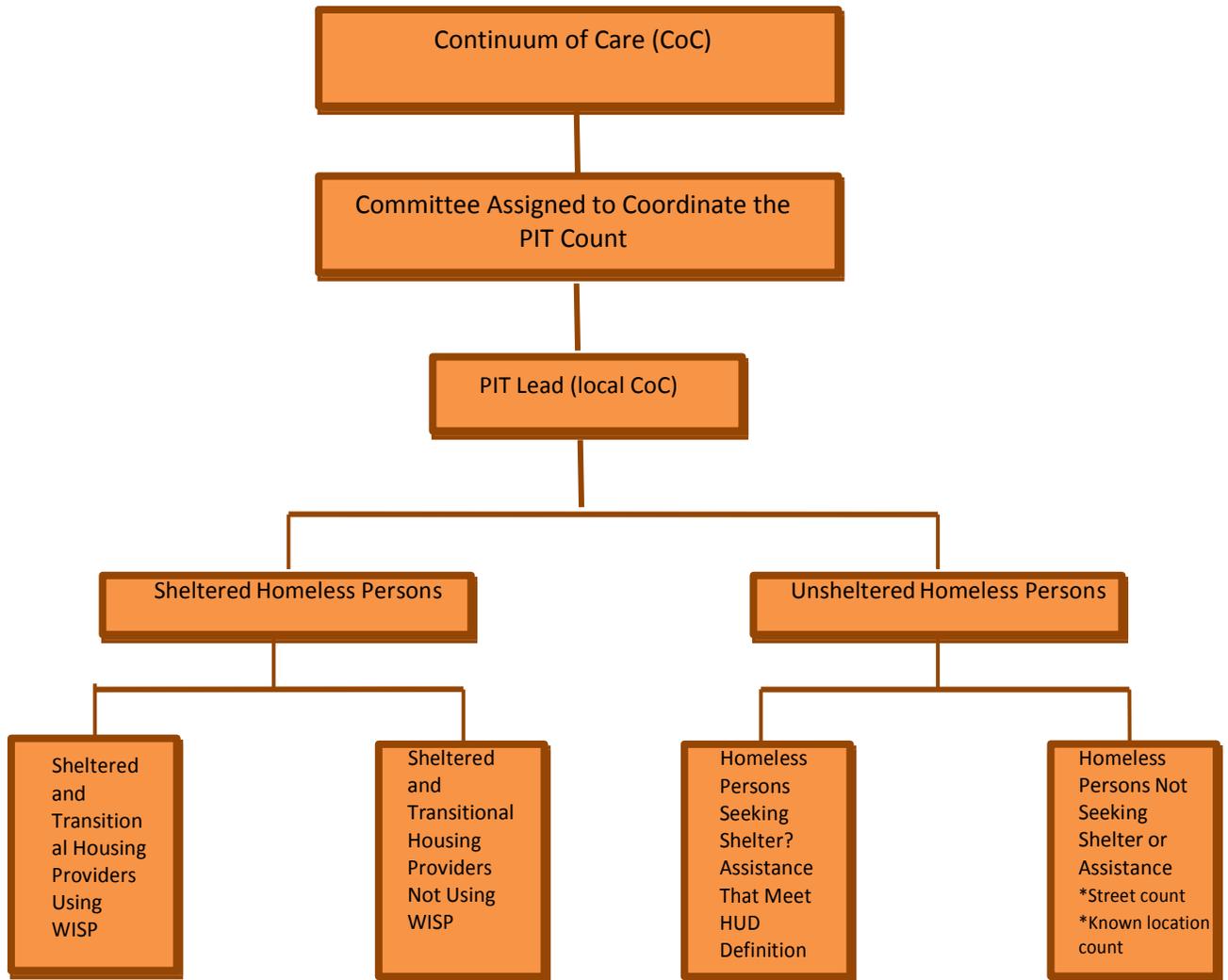
ALL FAMILIES							
Households with at least 1 adult & 1 child							
				Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
				ES	TH		
Total number of HH				0	0	0	0
Total number of people				0	0	0	0
Number of persons (under age 18)				0	0	0	0
Number of persons (age 18-24)				0	0	0	0
Number of persons (over age 24)				0	0	0	0
Gender (Adults and Children)							
				Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
				ES	TH		
Female				0	0	0	0
Male				0	0	0	0
Transgender Male to Female				0	0	0	0
Transgender Female to Male				0	0	0	0
Ethnicity (Adults and Children)							
				Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
				ES	TH		
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino				0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino				0	0	0	0
Race (Adults and Children)							
				Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
				ES	TH		
White				0	0	0	0
Black or African American				0	0	0	0
Asian				0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native				0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander				0	0	0	0
Multiple Races				0	0	0	0

Homeless Subpopulations Example:

Homeless Subpopulations							
				Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
				ES	TH		
Chronically Homeless Families				0	0	0	0
Total Persons in Chronically Homeless Families				0	0	0	0
Male Veterans				0	0	0	0
Female Veterans				0	0	0	0
Severely Mentally Ill				0	0	0	0
Chronic Substance Abuse				0	0	0	0
Persons with HIV/AIDS				0	0	0	0
Youth Under 25 Aged out of Foster Care				0	0	0	0
Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)				0	0	0	0

Organizing Data Collection

Based upon the previous section's guidelines, the Point-In-Time data collection process will be broken into the following areas:



This guide will address each section separately.

Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Providers using WISP

More than 80% of the emergency shelter and transitional housing providers in Wisconsin utilize WISP. Motel voucher programs also use WISP to document services. Unmet needs/shelter turnaways are also highly recommended to be entered into WISP.

Once the data has been entered into WISP, various reports can be run to illustrate agency or provider specific, local CoC, HUD-defined CoC, and statewide trends and statistics. According to HUD, a fully implemented Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) with strong data quality may be a more cost effective and accurate data source for sheltered population and subpopulation than provider or client surveys. Wisconsin is well-suited to successfully meet this expectation.⁸

The PIT data collection expectations for WISP providers are unchanged from the current Data standards. However, there are some areas in which providers will need to make a concerted effort to more accurately collect data. Among the data that will need special attention:

Name, Date of Birth, Gender: These elements seem pretty basic, but any incorrect spelling of a name, missing or incorrect birth date, or missing or incorrect gender will negatively impact the process of de-duplication.

Chronic homelessness status: Utilizing HUD's definition of Chronic Homelessness, agencies must accurately document this status in the files of sheltered homeless individuals and families. As a reminder, the Chronic Homeless definition is as follows:

*An individual **or** family that:*

- *Is homeless and lives/resides in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter;*
- *Has been homeless and living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least 1 year or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years;*
- *Has an adult head of household (or a minor head of household if no adult is present) with a disabling condition.*

HUD recommends use of the following HUD questions to determine whether a sheltered or unsheltered person is chronically homeless.⁹

- Homeless Experience
 - Have you been living in an emergency shelter and/or on the streets (including bus stations, underpasses, encampments, abandoned buildings, etc.) for the past year or more?
 - [If not] How many different times have you had to stay in a shelter or lived on the streets in the past three years?
 - Note: To be considered chronically homeless for HUD's purposes a person must have had four or more episodes in the past three years.
 - In addition to right now, how long would you say that you've stayed in these kinds of places over the past three years?

⁸ HUD's Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People, Third Revision, January 2012

⁹ HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Data Collection Guidance, December 2012, Version 1.1.

- Disability Status
 - Do you have an alcohol or drug problem, a serious mental health problem, a developmental disability, or a chronic physical illness, or other disability?
 - [If yes] Does this limit your ability to get or keep a job or take care of personal matters, such as taking care of yourself, taking medications a doctor has prescribed, taking care of your children, going shopping, or getting around in the community?

Veteran status: Additional diligence must be put towards accurately documenting homeless veterans. Veterans can be either single persons or in families. Under Federal Law, a Veteran is any person, who served honorably on active duty in the armed forces of the United States. Discharges marked General and Under Honorable Conditions also qualify.

HUD recommends use of the following questions to determine whether a sheltered or unsheltered person is a veteran.¹⁰

- Recommend Questions
 - Have you served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces (e.g. served in a full-time capacity in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines Corps, or Coast Guard)?
 - Were you ever called into active duty as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist?
- Suggested Supplemental Question
 - If you are unsure if you are a Veteran, have you ever received health care or benefits from a VA center?

Mental Illness, Substance Abusers, and HIV/AIDS: Within the Disabilities sub-assessment in WISP, it is imperative that shelter and transitional housing providers accurately document the disabilities of all adults. This is especially true of persons with Mental Illness, Alcohol Abuse, Drug Abuse, and HIV/AIDS. These are documentation categories in the PIT chart.

Victims of Domestic Violence: Although most Victim Service Providers do not actively use WISP, there still exists the likelihood of a domestic violence victim being served at a non-DV emergency shelter or in a transitional housing program. This status needs to be accurately documented in WISP. The question “Is Client a Victim of Domestic Violence?” is located on several assessments, most notably the HUD 40118 Assessment.

Although the Point-in-Time count is scheduled for a particular day, this does not mean that each agency must enter their data into WISP on that night. Data from the Point-in-Time count should be entered into WISP within 72 hours of the date of the count. Whether your program enters data on the day of service or at a later date, it is imperative that the data you collect are as thorough and accurate as possible. WI Division of Housing Staff are able to run reports to determine if agencies are compliant with this data timeliness requirement.

Any problems or questions encountered during the data collection and entry process should be conveyed to the Division of Housing staff at the WISP Help Desk at: wisphelp@wisconsin.gov.

¹⁰ HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Data Collection Guidance, December 2012, Version 1.1.

Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Providers that DO NOT use WISP

HMIS participation for all programs regardless of funding is a high priority for HUD. This is a standard that all Continuums of Care should strive to achieve. Several local continua in Wisconsin have been successful in getting providers to actively use WISP, but it is a continual process. WISP staff will work with any local CoC in obtaining WISP participation from providers.

Despite high level of WISP participation, there still exist emergency shelter and transitional housing programs throughout the state do not enter data into the WISP system. Examples of entities not entering data could include:

- Rescue missions
- Faith based shelters
- Domestic violence service providers
- Shelter and housing programs that do not receive federal funding
- Seasonal shelters/drop in centers
- New housing or shelter organizations

Every effort must be made to collect a count of sheltered homeless people and subpopulation information for the night designated for the PIT from non-WISP providers. The responsibility ultimately falls on the PIT lead for each local continuum. At minimum, the PIT lead should:¹¹

- Identify providers to include in the sheltered count that do not use WISP;
- Conduct outreach to these providers to solicit their participation and buy-in with the count;
 - It is important that these providers understand the time frame, the information that needs to be gathered, and who they are supposed to be counting.
 - Utilize telephone, email, announcements at local continua meetings, fax, and media in order to provide low-cost, low-effort, and timely announcements and updates.
 - Buy-in is essential. Communicate to providers that the sheltered portion of the PIT count is critical for the completion of the annual CoC application, it helps identify needs and gaps in services, and ultimately generates resources for homeless persons in the community.
 - After the PIT count, offer information in return. Reports can be produced for local and statewide data.
- Prepare for provider data collection by creating and distributing forms and other materials;
 - Make sure they understand names and other personally identifying information on these persons are not required. Only aggregate data is required. Risks of duplication across WISP and non-WISP providers on the night of the PIT count are very small.
 - Determine the time frame and best method for collecting non-WISP provider information.
 - The dissemination of materials should include the following: purpose of the PIT; date and time of the count; list of information to be collected; data collection forms and/or worksheets; procedures and deadline for submitting information; and the name, telephone number, and e-mail of the PIT lead.
- Provide support and training to providers before and during the count; and

¹¹ HUD's Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People, Third Revision, January 2012.

- Collect the required shelter count data and subpopulation information.
 - It is important to collect the sheltered count data from providers as soon as possible following the night of the PIT.

Once this data is returned to the PIT lead, that person will use the URL provided to access the Non-WISP PIT form on Google drive. Once complete, the PIT lead will email the BOSCO Data Committee Chairperson.

Considerations for Rural and Balance of State (BoS) Continuums of Care¹²

In the absence of HMIS, this process can be extremely labor intensive, and requires that the BoS representative(s) work closely with local contacts to ensure that data are collected as efficiently and consistently as possible across jurisdictions. Despite such efforts, it is likely there will be some variation in the ways in which data are collected at the local level. Variation across local jurisdictions can be minimized to some extent through the use of a standardized provider survey and other data collection tools (See Appendix).

It may also be difficult to conduct shelter counts or collect accurate information on homeless subpopulations in rural areas. Shelter resources may be limited or providers may use hotel/motel vouchers to house homeless individuals and families. When this happens, those agencies must be listed on the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) and those beds counted as “voucher beds.”

¹² HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People, Third Revision, January 2012.

Unsheltered People Experiencing Homelessness Actively Seeking Shelter

Another benefit of WISP is the ability to collect and report data on persons who were turned away or denied shelter or housing for any reason. Typically the lack of available beds, funding, or program violations will prevent a homeless individual or family from receiving assistance. In cases where individuals contact providers using WISP, every effort should be made to enter these persons into WISP as an unmet need.

Unsheltered People Experiencing Homelessness NOT Actively Seeking Shelter

One of the most difficult elements of doing a Point-In-Time count is to count those persons who do not actively seek out assistance, or the “hidden homeless.” This “street count” can involve a significant amount of planning, coordination, and cost. Nonetheless, making this count a part of the Point-In-Time is essential to getting an accurate account of homeless persons.

For all unsheltered homeless persons, local continua are instructed to count **all** adults, children, and unaccompanied youth sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, which includes the following examples:

Streets, parks, alleys, parking lots and ramps, parts of the highway system, transportation depots and other parts of the transportation systems (e.g., subway tunnels, railroad cars), all-night commercial establishments (e.g. movie theaters, Laundromats, restaurants, Wal-Marts), abandoned buildings, building roofs or stairwells, farm buildings, rental storage containers, caves, campgrounds, vehicles, and other similar places.¹³

HUD’s latest guidance on doing unsheltered counts focuses on three different approaches:

- Simple counts done in non-shelter locations
- Counts done with an interview component
- Counts based on unsheltered persons using non-shelter services, such as mainstream social service agencies.

Each local CoC must take the following steps to ensure an accurate count:

- Do **NOT** make unscientific adjustments to numbers. Report only the numbers of persons actually counted.
- Do **NOT** base counts on “expert opinion.” This was a common method of relying on persons such as law enforcement to provide a number of how many people they encounter on the night of a count they thought or believed to be homeless. HUD no longer allows this practice and local continua will not get credit for performing this type of count.
- Do **NOT** ask volunteers or agency staff to do street counts by themselves. At the least, do your counts in pairs of volunteers or staff. Safety first.

At a minimum, your simple count should include a count of “known locations.” That is, physical spaces that are known to be frequented by unsheltered homeless persons. A Continuum of Care can strive for total coverage of its community, but the time and resources required to achieve this in a rural community may be unrealistic, especially considering the size and nature of the region (e.g. farmland, forests).

¹³ HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People, Second Revision, January 2008.

Part 2: Planning Process for the Count

General Point-in-Time Count Planning Tips for Street or Known Location Count¹⁴

1. Point-In-Time Count Methodology

Establish methods for counting that make the most sense for your local continua. When establishing methods, some factors to consider include: experience, geography, volunteer/staff capacity, past Point-in-Time experiences.

2. Secure Local Government Support

Obtain a resolution from local, county and city government supporting the local Point-In-Time Count, e.g., this could be a declaration from the mayor and/or county commissioners announcing publicly that this is the local homeless point-in-time count day.

Secure participation from law enforcement – local, county, and state.

Create an all-inclusive list of homeless providers (non-profit, faith-based, government, volunteer, etc.) and enlist their support and participation.

3. Use the Media (print, TV, radio, on-line)

Before the count, use the media to recruit volunteers, inform people about the count, draw attention to the issue of homelessness, and provide a press release (see Appendix for sample).

After the count, use the media to disseminate results of the count, provide education the community about homelessness, and provide a press release (see Appendix for sample).

4. Involve People who are Homeless in the Count

Individual who are experiencing homelessness or have experienced homelessness can help identify known locations or hot spots, assist with the street count, and test out data collection questions.

5. Use Incentives

Collect items that can be used as incentives for participants and/or volunteers.

6. Use PIT count as a Form of Outreach in the Community

Create a resource fair in collaboration with the PIT count process

Create an awareness event for participants and the community

Distribute resources and information on homeless services to businesses frequented by homeless persons.

Answer questions and address concerns raised by the public

¹⁴ Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012 – Everyone Counts! “Coordinator’s Manual”

Strategies to Include Homeless Youth in the PIT Count¹⁵

In 2013, HUD is emphasizing the importance of including homeless youth programs in the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) and homeless youth in the Point-in-Time (PIT) count. Youth includes persons who are less than 25 years of age.

Counting sheltered and unsheltered youth can be challenging. Homeless youth may not use homeless residential services, they may hide from law enforcement, and they may congregate in different areas and at different times of the day than other individuals experiencing homelessness. To ensure that all homeless youth are included in their PIT count, HUD recommends that continua develop specific strategies to overcome the following issues:

- **Collaborate with local school district homeless liaisons.** It is imperative that local continua work with the local school district homeless liaisons to ensure that all homeless children who are unsheltered or staying in a shelter during the PIT are counted. Because the liaisons use a more expansive homeless definition than the HUD definition for the PIT count, it is important to confirm that only children and youth meeting the HUD definition are included in the PIT count.
- **Engage Runaway & Homeless Youth (RHY) programs and other youth shelters and service organizations.** For the sheltered count, local continua should coordinate with providers throughout their community that offer shelter or transitional housing to youth. Other organizations may include drop-in centers, street outreach programs, local churches, and other providers offering service to homeless youth.
- **Recruit currently or formerly homeless youth to assist with the count.** For the unsheltered count, communities that have successful strategies for conducting counts of unsheltered youth enlist homeless or formerly homeless teenagers and young adults to help with the PIT count. Prior to the count, these youth can assist in identifying where homeless youth may be staying or congregating.

You can access the 2012-2013 McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison Contact Information by District from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website at:

<http://homeless.dpi.wi.gov/files/homeless/pdf/liaison-contacts.pdf>

To view the current Wisconsin list of DHHS-Family & Youth Services Bureau list of Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Grantees, go to page 19 of the following document.

https://onecpd.info/resources/documents/2013HICandPITGuidance_Youth.pdf

You can access the current list of Wisconsin Homeless and Runaway Youth Programs, Wisconsin Transitional Living Programs, and Second Chance Homes from the Wisconsin Association for Homeless and Runaway Services (WAHRS) website at:

<http://www.wahrs.org>

¹⁵ HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Supplemental Guidance on Counting Homeless Youth, December 2012, Version 1.0

Overall Challenges & Limitations to the PIT Count¹⁶

A successful PIT count requires buy-in, a level of cooperation and commitment in the community, and communication from start to finish. Often PIT counts must confront the myths and misperceptions about homelessness in addition to completing the count.

Inconsistencies in implementing HUD's definition of homeless while counting people experiencing homelessness can jeopardize the accuracy of the data collected. Training is extremely important and may be the only way to ensure reliable data. All Point-In-Time staff and volunteers need to understand the importance of the data being collected and use consistent definitions of homelessness and precariously housed.

Simply knowing where to look for the unsheltered homeless can become an overwhelming task. The geographic areas to be covered can sometimes be prohibitive. Communities may need to narrow the scope of the area (e.g., known locations, hot-spots, etc.) due to time, location, and resources. Another potential challenge is the time of the year of the count and the extreme weather conditions that can occur.

Still another provider challenge is the concern about not being able to find and calculate the number of homeless. While a Point-In-Time count provides a snapshot of the number of homeless on that day, it may not reflect the true picture of homelessness. Many unsheltered homeless do not wish to be found, let alone be interviewed. Given that homeless persons may utilize more than one homeless or mainstream resource, communities must use caution to prevent duplicative counts.

¹⁶ Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012 – Everyone Counts! “Coordinator’s Manual”

Service-Based Counts for Unsheltered¹⁷

The foundation of a successful service-based count is the quality and number of **RETURNED SURVEYS!** Surveys need to be accurately completed for every homeless individual and family unit.

Steps for local/regional PIT leads:

- Identify agencies where people experiencing homelessness and unsheltered may receive assistance in your area. Consider the following:

Department of Human Services	Community Mental Health Centers
Alcohol & Drug Addiction Service Centers	Hospital Emergency Rooms
Community Health Clinic/Free Clinics	Parks and Recreation/Park Services
Drop-In Centers	Job Services/Workforce Resources
Food Pantries	Meal Sites
Community Service Agencies	Law Enforcement
Probation and Parole	Faith-Based Organizations
Day Shelters	Domestic Violence – Related Agencies
Homeless Youth Providers	Runaway programs

- Ensure that all participating providers understand:
 - The overall goal of the count and how the information will be used;
 - The date and time period for which they are counting;
 - Whom to survey (anyone that is considered homeless, per HUD’s definition);
 - When they should be collecting surveys;
 - What information they need to collect.
- Assign someone to periodically check in with all of the participating providers to make sure they are collecting the data collection forms.
- Train all providers who will complete or distribute and collect forms.
- For providers that may have difficulties completing the numerous forms (high volume – meal sites), enlist assistance from other local CoC members to provide volunteers to assist in completing the forms on the designated Point-In-Time Count date.

¹⁷ HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People, Second Revision, January 2008.

Training Service Providers and Volunteers

When training service providers and volunteers for participation in the Point-in-Time count, it is important to provide an overview of the training, complete the training, ask for questions and provide answers, and then allow time for additional feedback.

The following is a sample overview and approach to training:

Information

- ✓ Describe what the Point-in-Time count is and what the goals are for local continua
- ✓ Explain who will be counted and who will not be counted during this process
- ✓ Discuss the data collection forms and tools
- ✓ Prepare for the count by providing some general tips on interviewing and asking questions
- ✓ Safety awareness and the agency/provider's policies
- ✓ Demonstrate some common problems or issues that could come up during the count and how they should be resolved
- ✓ Describe the actual count – who goes where and how information will be submitted
- ✓ Show statistics from previous local counts, statewide counts, and national information
- ✓ Allow ample time for questions and answers
- ✓ Explain timelines: when to start, when to stop, when information is due back to the PIT lead

Handouts

- ✓ Present a one-page document highlighting the most important points
- ✓ Provide copies of forms and instructions
- ✓ Distribute key people's contact information

Other items to be considered

- ✓ What happens if there is someone that would like shelter for the night? What is the process?
- ✓ Are you handing out blankets? Personal products? Information/brochures? Business cards?

Make sure that the providers are aware of the reporting requirements and the due diligence required to prevent duplication by following the protocols set into place. Keep a list of what provider agencies are participating and how the follow-up will occur.

*Note: while use of volunteers is allowed and encouraged, the BoS Data Committee is prohibiting persons under the age of 18 from participating in the street count. Youth may contribute to the count in other ways, such as collecting and compiling items for kits.

Rural “ Street” Count

The complete coverage of street/public places count method is best for those communities that have large numbers of “visible” homeless or known locations where homeless tend to congregate. However, it can be modified for rural communities.

A basic count is the simplest of the “public places” or street count data collection strategies. Planning and organizing the count involves:¹⁸

- Identifying known locations where one can expect to find people experiencing homelessness, planning for complete coverage, or using a combination of the two approaches;
- Recruiting and training people to conduct the count;
- Planning for the actual night of the count;
- Establishing ground rules for who should be counted and what information obtained by observation will be recorded; and
- Planning for the integration, analysis, and presentation of data after the count.

Specific Steps for Implementing a Rural Street Count¹⁹

- (1) Identify locations
 - Consult with outreach workers, people who are or have been homeless, shelter or services staff, police, businesses, community development organizations, faith-based groups, housing inspectors, parks and recreation staff, etc.
 - Regardless of the accuracy of your records or number of volunteers, nobody knows more about where to find and how to approach homeless people than homeless and formerly homeless people themselves. Ask them, and whenever possible use homeless volunteers as guides. Enlist homeless staying in shelters to aide in the count.
 - Review where homeless were found during the last count (known locations).
 - Develop a list of places/locations to visit
 - Areas to consider: Streets, parks, campgrounds, storage facilities, used car lots, 24-hour establishments (e.g. stores, gas stations, laundromats, restaurants/taverns) and their parking lots, rest stops, abandoned buildings, farm buildings, rental storage containers, caves, vehicles, and other similar places.
- (2) Send out Notifications (see appendix for forms and flyers) - prepare the community, including:
 - Local businesses;
 - Law enforcement – city, county, and state;
 - Media – paper, TV, radio;
 - Service providers – homeless, social service, and other (faith, civic, educational);
 - People experiencing homelessness;
 - General community.

¹⁸ HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People, Second Revision, January 2008.

¹⁹ Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012 – Everyone Counts! “Coordinator’s Manual”

- (3) Finalize strategy for street/public places count with focus on:
 - Safety;
 - Number and experience of volunteers/staff;
 - Distance between locations.

- (4) Prepare for the night of the count:
 - Develop written guidelines for the volunteers/staff;
 - Make copies of releases and data collection forms (see appendix for forms), collect pamphlets/create an information sheet to hand out to people encountered during the night of the count;
 - Collect maps and create directions to the various locations;
 - Develop communication strategies (cell phones, central number, radios/walkie talkies) for the night of the count;
 - Collect pencils, clipboards, flashlights, identification badges, incentives for people encountered the night of the count (e.g. socks, blankets, gift cards, food).

- (5) Organize and provide training for everyone participating in the street count.
 - Ground rules;
 - Recording information/use of forms;
 - What to do in an emergency.

- (6) Assign volunteers/staff in pairs or teams by experience – select a team leader who has previous experience working with this population and is familiar with the area.

- (7) On the actual night of the count:
 - Provide or make sure volunteers/staff are equipped with pencils, clipboards, forms, flashlights, identification, incentives for people they encounter;
 - Provide coffee, snacks, and food for returning enumerators – if possible;
 - Collect all forms as soon as teams return and immediately review for any problems;
 - Keep notes of where volunteers/staff did and did not observe people to use for count planning in the future;

Urban “Street” Count

When it comes to doing an Urban “Street” Count, planning is the key to success. Some of the processes will be the same as the Rural “Street” Count listed above, but there will be other aspects of the count that will be different for the urban areas.

A basic count is the simplest of the “public places” or street count data collection strategies. Planning for and organizing the count involves:²⁰

- Identifying known locations where one can expect to find people experiencing homelessness, planning for complete coverage, or using a combination of the two approaches;
- Recruiting and training people to conduct the count;
- Planning for the actual night of the count;
- Establishing ground rules for who should be counted and what information obtained by observation will be recorded; and
- Planning for the integration, analysis, and presentation of data after the count.

Specific Steps for Implementing an Urban Street Count²¹

(1) Identify locations

- Consult with outreach workers, people who are or have been homeless, shelter or services staff, police, businesses, community development organizations, faith-based groups, housing inspectors, parks and recreation staff, etc. This will be an ongoing process throughout the year to identify where homeless individuals may be located. In urban areas the police may move individuals who are homeless along to a different spot, but eventually those individuals may return to the original site.
 - Regardless of the accuracy of your records or number of volunteers, nobody knows more about where to find and how to approach homeless people than homeless and formerly homeless people themselves. Ask them, and whenever possible use homeless volunteers as guides. Enlist homeless individuals who may be staying in shelters to aide in the count.
- Review where homeless individuals were found during the last count (known locations). The areas where homeless individuals may be staying will depend on the time of year you will be conducting the Point in Time Count. For example, camping out at parks during the summer is a typical spot.
- Develop a list of places/locations to visit:
 - Areas to consider: Streets, parks, campgrounds, storage facilities, used car lots, 24-hour establishments (e.g. stores, gas stations, Laundromats, restaurants/taverns) and their parking lots, rest stops, abandoned buildings, farm buildings, rental storage containers, caves, vehicles, foreclosed houses and other similar places.

²⁰ HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People, Second Revision, January 2008.

²¹ Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012 – Everyone Counts! “Coordinator’s Manual”

- (2) Recruit volunteers for the count. Contact your local volunteer center, colleges, technical schools, churches and last but not least, your staff. If there is an agency who receives PATH Funds, the Outreach Workers for this program would be a good contact; another option is to pay homeless individuals to assist volunteers or staff that night if possible. Volunteers should be trained prior to the night of the actual Point in Time count to ensure they are aware of their duties and any safety concerns or issues.
- (3) If they are a partner in your local CoC, contact the Police Department to arrange for staff/volunteers to ride along with the police that night to look for homeless individuals.
- (4) Send out Notifications (see appendix for forms and flyers) - prepare the community, including:
 - Local businesses;
 - Law enforcement – city, county, and state;
 - Media – paper, TV, radio;
 - Service providers – homeless, social service, and other (faith, civic, educational);
 - People experiencing homelessness;
 - General community.
- (5) Finalize strategy for street/public places count with focus on:
 - Safety;
 - Number and experience of volunteers/staff;
 - Distance between locations.
- (6) Prepare for the night of the count:
 - Develop written guidelines for the volunteers/staff;
 - Make copies of releases and data collection forms (see appendix for forms), collect pamphlets/create an information sheet/packet to hand out to people encountered during the night of the count;
 - Collect maps and create directions to the various locations; develop a list and schedule of who will go where;
 - Develop communication strategies (cell phones, central number, radios/walkie talkies) for the night of the count;
 - Collect pencils, clipboards, flashlights, identification badges, incentives for people encountered the night of the count (e.g. socks, blankets, gift cards, food). If it is raining, purchasing rain ponchos for the volunteers/staff is imperative;
 - Put gift bags together for the individuals. These can include: toothpaste, toothbrush, disposable razor, and other personal hygiene products. You can also check with local businesses who may be interested in donating gift cards for coffee, food, etc. You can also take bottled water and small snacks to give to the homeless individuals.
 - For communities that have 211, make sure that they are aware of the Point in Time Count and are keeping track of individuals who call that are homeless. To ensure that the individual isn't counted twice, make sure that they get the name and date of birth.
- (7) Organize and provide training for everyone participating in the street count.
 - Ground rules, safety practices;
 - Recording information/use of forms;
 - What to do in an emergency.

- (8) Assign volunteers/staff in pairs or teams by experience – select a team leader who has previous experience working with this population and is familiar with the area.
- (9) On the actual night of the count:
 - Provide or make sure volunteers/staff are equipped with pencils, clipboards, forms, flashlights, identification, incentives for people they encounter, gift bags;
 - Provide coffee, snacks, and food for returning volunteers/staff – if possible;
 - Collect all forms as soon as the teams return and immediately review for any problems;
 - De-brief volunteers as soon as possible after the completion of the count;
 - Keep notes of where volunteers/staff did and did not observe people to use for count planning in the future.

Tips for Training Street Count Volunteers

- Training should take place days in advance of count so that leaders can better plan for geographic coverage or take place before the count.
- Provide a general overview of what you will be presenting, for example:
 - Overview and goals of the count
 - Description of strategy
 - How to use data collection form
 - Observation guidelines
 - Safety guidelines
 - Returning completed forms
- Distribute a one or two-page summary of the guidelines to volunteers/staff.
- During the training, present and review the protocol for every public place location, such as parks, alleys, parking ramps, and abandoned buildings.
- Provide data collection forms (see appendix for forms) – include a completed sample form.
- Allow ample time for volunteers to ask questions and raise concerns.
- All volunteers/staff must know the ground rules, how to record information on the data collection forms, where to report results, what to do in case of trouble, and other procedures for the count.
- Make sure all volunteers/staff understand what is expected on the night/day of the count, including:
 - What time they need to arrive
 - Who they will be working with (if known)
 - What time they will be done.
- Provide a list of necessary and recommended items including flashlights, identification, pencils, forms, cell phones, or other communication.
- Provide an emergency number.

Getting the Word Out²²

A critical component to any effective count is community involvement. The greater the involvement and understanding of key community members the greater likelihood of a successful and accurate count. Community involvement also leads to other successes in addressing homelessness in communities beyond the Point-In-Time count, primarily by providing assets and resources essential to ending homelessness.

There are key activities each local CoC should perform to improve community involvement:

- Face to face meetings
- Regular e-mail and mail campaigns
- Follow-up phone calls

Potential community partners to approach about the Point-In-Time:

- Sheriff, police, and highway patrol
- Formerly homeless persons with stability and desire to help
- Hospital Emergency Rooms/urgent care clinics
- Probation and Parole
- Veterans Services
- Faith-based organizations
- Campgrounds (particularly in the summer months)
- School district homeless liaisons
- Homeless Youth Providers – including Runaway & Homeless Youth Programs (RHY)
- Departments of Health and Human Services
- Juvenile courts
- 24-hour businesses such as Wal-Mart, restaurants, Laundromats
- Media outlets such as newspapers, radio and TV stations

²² Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012 – Everyone Counts! “Coordinator’s Manual”

Important Items to Consider

- Contact your local law enforcement office to get their involvement, particularly for ride-alongs on the night of the Point-In-Time.
 - To access a list of Wisconsin Police Departments:
http://www.wisconsin.gov/state/core/alphabetical_index_of_wisconsin_police_departments.html
 - To access a list of Wisconsin Sheriff Departments:
<http://www.wdsda.org/directory.php>
 - To access a list of Wisconsin State Patrol Offices:
<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/about/locate/sp/offices.htm>
- Contact fire departments to obtain insight on possible locations of homeless persons residing in abandoned buildings.
- Urban areas with street outreach programs need to utilize their street outreach teams to conduct count. This should include those agencies/programs that are PATH funded.
- Any items of use to people experiencing homelessness can be valuable for collecting information and gaining their trust.
- Contact key providers prior to the Point-in-Time date. Offer training and ask for volunteers. It is important to collaborate with local school district homeless liaisons, veteran service offices, community health and human services, as well as other service providers in order to create a successful community event.
- Make the Point-In-Time process an essential element of regular local continua meetings. Since the survey will be conducted twice a year, it should be discussed regularly.

Conclusion

The process of collecting and analyzing Point-In-Time data can be an enormous task. The utility and importance of this data continues to increase on a national level, as HUD is using this count as a benchmark to determine a reduction in homelessness. As a result, Wisconsin will need to make improvements and refinements in the methods used to conduct these counts. It is hoped that this guide provides a basic foundation for performing these counts.

References

Homeless Definition

HUD: 24 CFR Parts 91, 582, and 583, Final Rule, Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Defining “Homeless,” December 2011.

https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_HomelessDefinition_FinalRule.pdf

Additional HUD documents

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, 2010.

http://www.ich.gov/PDF/OpeningDoors_2010_FSPPreventEndHomeless.pdf

Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) and Point-in-Time (PIT)

HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Data Collection Guidance, December 2012, Version 1.1

<https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/2013HICandPITGuidance.pdf>

HUD 2013 Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons: Supplemental Guidance on Counting Homeless Youth, December 2012, Version 1.0

https://onecpd.info/resources/documents/2013HICandPITGuidance_Youth.pdf

HUD Preparing for Your 2013 Housing Inventory and Point-in-Time Counts, webinar presented 10/2/2012

<https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/2013HICPIT.pdf>

HUD Preparing for your 2013 Housing Inventory and Point-in-Time Counts with Special Attention on Veteran Program Guidance, webinar presented 12/17/2012

<https://www.onecpd.info/resource/2729/preparing-for-your-2013-hic-pit-counts-veteran-guidance-webinar/>

HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Sheltered Homeless People, Third Revision, January 2012

https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/counting_sheltered.pdf

HUD’s Homeless Assistance Programs, A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People, Second Revision, January 2008

https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/counting_unsheltered.pdf

Other

Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012 – Everyone Counts! “Coordinator’s Manual.” www.cohhio.org

Youth-Specific

Wisconsin School District Homeless Liaisons (2012-13)

<http://homeless.dpi.wi.gov/files/homeless/pdf/liaison-contacts.pdf>

DHHS-Family & Youth Services Bureau list of Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Grantees

https://onecpd.info/resources/documents/2013HICandPITGuidance_Youth.pdf

Wisconsin Association for Homeless and Runaway Services (WAHRS)

<http://www.wahrs.org>

Law Enforcement

Wisconsin Police Departments

http://www.wisconsin.gov/state/core/alphabetical_index_of_wisconsin_police_departments.html

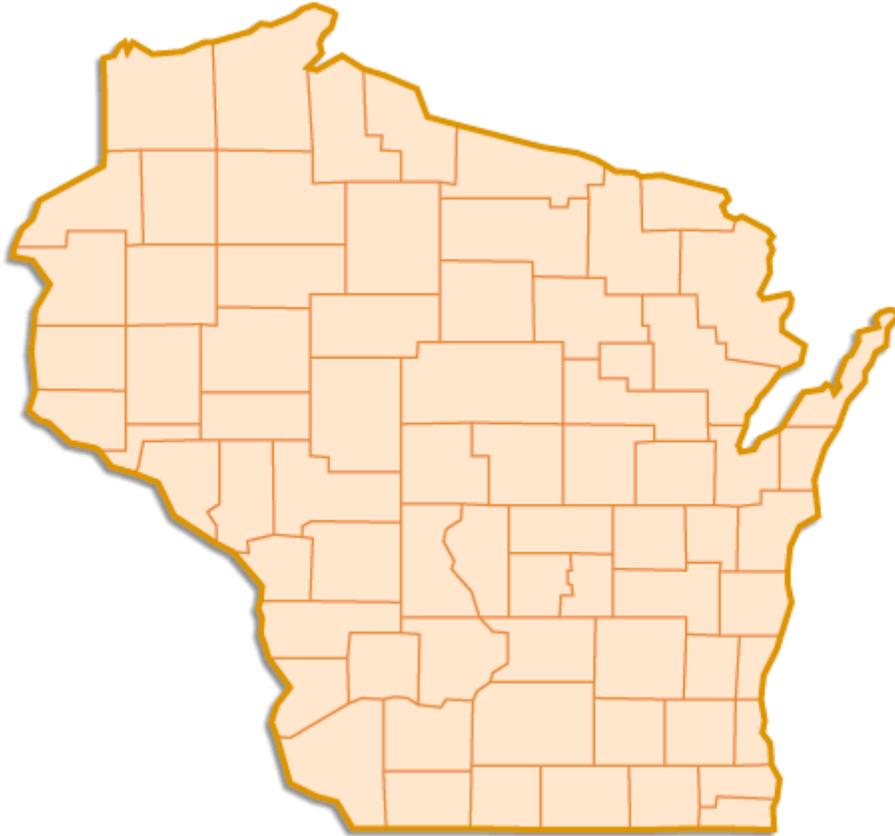
Wisconsin Sheriff Departments

<http://www.wsdsa.org/directory.php>

Wisconsin State Patrol Offices

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/about/locate/sp/offices.htm>

Wisconsin Statewide Homeless Point-In-Time Count



APPENDIX

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[PIT Count Roles & Responsibilities](#)

[Sample Timeline](#)

[Sample: Law Enforcement & Local Business & Media notification](#)

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[Sample: Letter to providers](#)

*Although there are no samples, other suggested documents include:
Volunteer Thank you letter & Certificate of Appreciation*

Wisconsin Non-WISP Point-in-Time Form (Jan. 2014)

This form is for data collection only. Must be inputted onto Non-WISP Excel spreadsheet for the continuum.

Continuum Name: _____ Person completing form: _____

Counties Covered: _____ Report Due date: _____

List of Agencies whose information is included (this should match directly with the providers on the HIC)

ALL FAMILIES					VETERANS FAMILIES ONLY				
Households with at least 1 adult & 1 child					Households with at least 1 adult & 1 child				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Total number of HH	0	0	0	0	Total number of HH	0	0	0	0
Total number of people	0	0	0	0	Total number of people	0	0	0	0
Number of persons (under age 18)	0	0	0	0	Number of persons (under age 18)	0	0	0	0
Number of persons (age 18-24)	0	0	0	0	Number of persons (age 18-24)	0	0	0	0
Number of persons (over age 24)	0	0	0	0	Number of persons (over age 24)	0	0	0	0
Gender (Adults and Children)					Gender (Adults and Children)				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Female	0	0	0	0	Female	0	0	0	0
Male	0	0	0	0	Male	0	0	0	0
Transgender Male to Female	0	0	0	0	Transgender Male to Female	0	0	0	0
Transgender Female to Male	0	0	0	0	Transgender Female to Male	0	0	0	0
Ethnicity (Adults and Children)					Ethnicity (Adults and Children)				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	0	0	0	0	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0
Race (Adults and Children)					Race (Adults and Children)				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
White	0	0	0	0	White	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	0	0	0	0	Black or African American	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	Asian	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0	0	0	0	Multiple Races	0	0	0	0
Homeless Subpopulations					Homeless Subpopulations				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	0	0	Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	0	0
Total Persons in Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	0	0	Total Persons in Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	0	0
Male Veterans	0	0	0	0	Male Veterans	0	0	0	0
Female Veterans	0	0	0	0	Female Veterans	0	0	0	0
Severely Mentally Ill	0	0	0	0	Severely Mentally Ill	0	0	0	0
Chronic Substance Abuse	0	0	0	0	Chronic Substance Abuse	0	0	0	0
Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0	0	Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0	0
Youth Under 25 Aged out of Foster Care	0	0	0	0	Youth Under 25 Aged out of Foster Care	0	0	0	0
Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)	0	0	0	0	Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)	0	0	0	0

ALL INDIVIDUALS					VETERANS INDIVIDUALS ONLY				
Households without Children (i.e. singles)					Households without Children (i.e. singles)				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Total number of HH	0	0	0	0	Total number of HH	0	0	0	0
Total number of people	0	0	0	0	Total number of people	0	0	0	0
Number of persons (age 18-24)	0	0	0	0	Number of persons (age 18-24)	0	0	0	0
Number of persons (over age 24)	0	0	0	0	Number of persons (over age 24)	0	0	0	0
Gender					Gender				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Female	0	0	0	0	Female	0	0	0	0
Male	0	0	0	0	Male	0	0	0	0
Transgender Male to Female	0	0	0	0	Transgender Male to Female	0	0	0	0
Transgender Female to Male	0	0	0	0	Transgender Female to Male	0	0	0	0
Ethnicity					Ethnicity				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	0	0	0	0	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0
Race					Race				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
White	0	0	0	0	White	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	0	0	0	0	Black or African American	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	Asian	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0	0	0	0	Multiple Races	0	0	0	0
Homeless Subpopulations					Homeless Subpopulations				
	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total		Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	ES	TH				ES	TH		
Chronically Homeless	0	0	0	0	Chronically Homeless	0	0	0	0
Male Veterans	0	0	0	0	Male Veterans	0	0	0	0
Female Veterans	0	0	0	0	Female Veterans	0	0	0	0
Severely Mentally Ill	0	0	0	0	Severely Mentally Ill	0	0	0	0
Chronic Substance Abuse	0	0	0	0	Chronic Substance Abuse	0	0	0	0
Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0	0	Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0	0
Youth Under 25 Aged out of Foster Care	0	0	0	0	Youth Under 25 Aged out of Foster Care	0	0	0	0
Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)	0	0	0	0	Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)	0	0	0	0

Instructions for Completing the Non-WISP Point-in-Time Form

1. PIT Leads (as identified by the Continuum of Care) will an instruction guide and URL specific for the Google Drive that hosts the Non-WISP excel spreadsheet for each continuum.
2. Non-PIT leads who shelter, provide transitional housing, or collect information on unsheltered persons that meet the HEARTH homeless definition and DO NOT enter data into WISP, will complete the form. Only Non-WISP providers should report information on this form.
3. Non-PIT providers must return this form to the PIT lead for their continua in a timely fashion.
4. The PIT Lead will be responsible for evaluating the information provided and ensuring that the data collected was complete and accurate.
5. The PIT Lead will access the Google Drive with a specific URL provided to him or her for the Non-WISP PIT form. The PIT lead will enter the aggregated data for all Non-WISP providers into their continua's specific tab.

For example, if you are the PIT lead for Kenosha – then you will collect all the Non-WISP Provider information, add it together, and enter it on the Kenosha tab of the Non-WISP PIT Form located on the Google Drive.

6. The PIT Lead will also access the Google Drive with a specific URL provided to him or her for the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC). The PIT Lead will enter the specific Non-WISP information for each provider on the HIC.
7. The PIT Lead is also responsible for verifying the WISP provider information in WISP and reported to them for the purposes of the HIC.
8. When the HIC (for Non-WISP and WISP providers) and Non-WISP PIT form is complete, the PIT Lead will email the Data Committee Chair – in the Balance of State that person is Carrie Poser. Email address: Carrie.Poser@wisconsin.gov
9. The deadline is **Friday, February 12, 2014**.
10. The Data Committee Chair will submit the completed data to the HMIS Lead Agency

Non-WISP Point-in-Time Form Key

Emergency Shelter = ES

Transitional Housing = TH

HUD Definitions for the Point-in-Time Count

HEARTH Homeless Definition²³

Sheltered Individuals and Families (paragraph 1.ii)

The definition includes individuals and families *“living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters), transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals”* on the night designated for the count. This also includes people residing in in Safe Haven provider programs.

Unsheltered Individuals and Families (paragraph 1.i)

This definition includes individuals and families *“with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus, or train station, airport, or camping ground”* on the night designated for the count. CoCs will also need to collect more complete subpopulation information from unsheltered persons than what was collected in previous years.

Provider Types

Emergency Shelter (ES): Persons needing beds and/or vouchers who are seeking emergency shelter because they have no place to stay.

Transitional Housing (TS): Transitional housing units provide housing and ongoing case management and/or support services for individuals and/or families expected to remain in the unit up to 18 months to a maximum period of 24 months.

Subpopulations

Chronically Homeless Individual - An unaccompanied homeless adult individual (persons 18 years or older) with a disabling condition (see definition below) who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four (4) separate occasions of homelessness in the past three (3) years. To be considered chronically homeless, persons must have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets) and/or in an emergency shelter/Safe Haven during that time. Persons under the age of 18 are not counted as chronically homeless.

For purposes of the PIT, persons living in transitional housing at the time of the PIT count should not be included in this subpopulation category.

²³ HUD 24 CFR Parts 91, 582, and 583, Final Rule, Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transitional to Housing: Defining “Homeless,” December 2011.

Chronically Homeless Family – A household with at least one adult member (persons 18 or older) who has a disabling condition (see definition below) and who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four (4) separate occasions of homelessness in the past three (3) years. To be considered chronically homeless, persons must have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets) and/or in an emergency shelter/Safe Haven during that time. The subpopulation count should include all members of the household.

For purposes of the PIT, persons living in transitional housing at the time of the PIT count should not be included in this subpopulation category.

Chronic Substance Abuse – This category on the PIT includes persons with a substance abuse problem (alcohol abuse, drug abuse, or both) that is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and substantially impairs the person’s ability to live independently.

Disabling Condition – Any one of (1) a disability as defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act; (2) a physical, mental, or emotional impairment which is (a) expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration, (b) substantially impedes an individual’s ability to live independently, and (c) of such a nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions; (3) a developmental disability as defined in Section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act; (4) the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any conditions arising from the etiological agency for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; or (5) a diagnosable substance abuse disorder.

Persons with HIV/AIDS – This subpopulation category of the PIT includes persons who have been diagnosed with AIDS and/or have tested positive for HIV.

Severely Mentally Ill (SMI) – This subpopulation category of the PIT includes persons with mental health problems that are expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and substantially impairs the person’s ability to live independently.

Veteran – This subpopulation category of the PIT includes persons who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

Victims of Domestic Violence – This subpopulation category of the PIT includes persons who have been victims of domestic violence at any point in the past.

Youth – This category is no longer classified as a subpopulation. HUD has defined youth as an individual who is less than 25 years of age.

Data Collection Form

Unsheltered People Experiencing Homelessness

Location: _____ **Interviewer:** _____ **Time:** _____

“Hello, my name is _____ and I’m a volunteer with _____. We are conducting a survey for the community as required by HUD to count the numbers of people who are homeless in our community. If possible, I’d like to ask you a few questions. Participation is completely up to you and you can stop the interview or refuse to answer any question. Participation in this study will not impact your eligibility for any social services.”

1. **Are you willing to participate?** yes no (if no, stop the interview)

2. **Has someone done this survey with you already?** yes (if yes, stop the interview) no

3. **Unique ID:** First letter of First Name _____ First letter of Last Name _____
Date of Birth _____ (month/day/year)

4. **Where did you/will you sleep tonight?**

- On the Street (sidewalk, car, tent, park, abandoned building, etc)
- Emergency Shelter (facility or voucher) including - youth shelter or domestic violence shelter
- Transitional housing (apartment or facility) Hospital
- Treatment facility or other (substance abuse, mental health, jail)
- Commercial establishment (Walmart, Laundromat, gas station)
- In a private dwelling that I own or rent (room, apartment, house)*
- With a family/friend in their private dwelling without paying*
- Other: _____
-

*If you are not homeless now, will you be evicted, discharged, or coerced to leave your current housing situation within one week AND lack the resources to obtain housing?

yes no (if no, stop the interview)

5. **Is your current situation the result of domestic violence?** yes no

6. **How long have you been at the location described in question #4?** _____

7. **How long have you been without a permanent place to stay?**

- 1 day – 4 weeks 1 - 6 months 6 - 12 months
- 1 - 2 years more than 2 years other: _____

8. **Have you been homeless 4 or more times in the past 3 years?** yes no

9. **Do you think you have or have you been told you have: (check all that apply)**

- Serious mental illness Chronic physical illness or disability
- Substance abuse Alcohol abuse
- Developmental disability Other: _____

10. **Have you ever been in the military?** yes no

11. **What is your gender?** Male Female Transgender

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

To be read to each respondent:

“Hello. We are volunteers working with _____ on the Point-in-Time Count and we are conducting a survey related to homelessness. Participation is completely up to you and you do not have to answer any of the questions. You can stop at any time and you may refuse to answer any question. Participation in this survey will in no way affect your eligibility for any social service or services through _____. We will not share your name with anyone.”

“Have you been interviewed already tonight?” *If yes, thank the individual for his/her time. If no, continue.*

“If you agree to participate, I will read the questions to you and record your answers. It will take approximately ten minutes to complete.”

“Do you have any questions or concerns about the survey? Are you willing to participate?”

If you are willing to participate, please sign below. Thank you for your help.

Signature of Respondent

Date

I read the above consent statement to the respondent and to the best of my knowledge it was understood, and the respondent has agreed to participate.

Signature of Interviewer

Date

Unsheltered Observation Form

1. Homeless	2. Household Type/Size	3. Head of Household: Adult (18+) or Unaccompanied Youth (<18)	4. Gender: Adults and Unaccompanied Youth Only <i>As observed</i>	5. Identifying Characteristics	6. Location Where Observed <i>Provide a general description</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Definitely <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> 2+ adult persons <input type="checkbox"/> Family with Children Total in Household — Adults — Children	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		
<input type="checkbox"/> Definitely <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> 2+ adult persons <input type="checkbox"/> Family with Children Total in Household — Adults — Children	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		
<input type="checkbox"/> Definitely <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> 2+ adult persons <input type="checkbox"/> Family with Children Total in Household — Adults — Children	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		

Source: Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2009, Coordinator's Manual

Instructions: Unsheltered Observation Form

Question 1. Homeless.

- If person appears to meet HUD's criteria of living in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., tent, vehicle, park bench, etc.), mark Yes.

Question 2. Household Type/Size.

- Must answer the category of household along with the total numbers of persons.
- If you are unsure about the household configuration or ages observed, make your best guess.

Question 3. Head of Household.

- Must answer the category of Head of Household.
- If you are unsure about the configuration, make your best guess.

Question 4. Gender.

- Enter the appeared gender.
- If you are unsure, make your best guess.

Question 5. Location Where Observed.

- Provide a general description of where you saw him/her, type of clothing, distinguishable emblems on clothing, etc.

Volunteer Release and Confidentiality Form

Print First and Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Agency Affiliation (if any): _____

Release:

By signing below, I understand that I represent to the _____ Continuum of Care that I am over the age of 18. I hereby agree to hold harmless and release the _____ Continuum of Care; its member organizations, their boards/trustees, employees, volunteers, count organizers; and other participants in the Wisconsin Point-In-Time Count from any liability for any accident, injury or death or any theft or loss of property arising from the participation as a volunteer in the Point-In-Time Count, regardless of whether incurred as a result of negligence or other. I voluntarily assume these and any other risks in participating in the count and waive all claims and causes of action that may arise out of participation in the count.

I have agreed to serve as a volunteer for the _____. I understand that as a volunteer for the Point-In-Time Count it will be necessary for me to handle and process confidential information. I acknowledge that I will keep all information confidential while a volunteer and that it is my responsibility to keep this information confidential even after I end my volunteer duties for the Point-In-Time Count. I understand that I am not to disclose any identifying confidential information and/or records or to engage in casual or informal conversation identifying any individual involved in the count.

I have read and fully comprehend the information pertained in this form and agree to the terms of this release. By signing below I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to comply with all relevant laws, policies, and regulations concerning access, use, maintenance and disclosure of information made available to me as a volunteer in the Point-In-Time Count.

Signature

Date

**Please complete this form and return it to _____ at _____
_____ no later than _____.**

Forming Your Point-In-Time Count Committee

In order to have a successful Point-In-Time (PIT) count, each continuum or community should form a PIT Committee. A Coordinator that oversees the Committee's work should lead the PIT count. In general, the coordinator should recruit members, keep members informed, maintain a focus on the overview of the count, keep the work of the committee moving, and make sure that everyone is happily taking responsibility for their role.

Why Create a PIT Committee?

- To plan the count
- To identify key action tasks in counting the homeless
- To monitor the planning and implementation process
- To ensure accountability in the process
- To maintain consistent Point-In-Time count standards

Basic Methodology

- PIT Committee Chair (same as PIT Lead) sends invitation letter to local community stakeholders (judges, majors, trustees, commissioners, law enforcement agencies, schools, local businesses, faith-based organizations, hospitals, media outlets, volunteers, etc.). Letter should explain the importance of the count to the broader community – include local data homelessness
- PIT Lead calls for meetings that includes committed stakeholders
- PIT Lead prepares meeting agenda
- PIT Lead identifies PIT Count key activities and requests volunteers to complete specific roles/responsibilities – may assign roles/responsibilities if no volunteers
- PIT Lead maintains attendance lists, sign-in sheets, minutes

Sample Point-In-Time Count Committee Meeting Agenda Items

- Call meeting to order
- Welcome and introduction of attendees
- Approval of previous minutes
- Overview of the PIT, count methodology, and why count the homeless
- Determine PIT count plan, outcomes, objectives, and timeline
- Establish contingency plans
- Request volunteers for various roles and responsibilities; assign roles and responsibilities
- Set date for subsequent meetings
- For the good of the order/other topics
- Adjourn meeting

Other Possible Point-In-Time Count Committee Lead Roles

- Publicity Chair
- Volunteer Recruitment Chair
- Mapping and Trends Chair
- Donations Chair
- Count Team Leaders

Source: Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012, Coordinator's Manual

Point-In-Time Count Role Descriptions and Responsibilities

Point-In-Time Count Chair (PIT Lead)

- Invite community stakeholders to participate in the count and draw attention to the issues of homelessness. The invitation letter should explain the importance of the count to the broader community. The letter should include information about the local data on homelessness and homeless service and program providers. Such letters should be sent to: county commissioners, mayors, trustees, service providers, judges, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, schools, local businesses, hospitals, faith-based organizations, media outlets, service clubs, private citizens, etc.
- Call and conduct meetings that include committee stakeholders.
- Prepare meeting agenda.
- Monitor/coordinate status of actions/issues, ensure completion of tasks, and is the lead contact regarding the PIT.
- With assistance of committee members, designs handouts, fliers, work/project plans, and identifies location/venue for meetings.
- Provide support to other PIT sub-committee chairs/leads regarding their committee issues/needs.
- Monitor that sub-committees are completing their designated tasks. Provide support and encouragement to committee members to complete tasks. Provide assistance to chairs/leads to ensure that tasks are completed. Encourage sub-committee chairs to obtain representation from homeless sub-populations on the committees.
- Delegate tasks as needed to sub-committee chairs/leads.
- Maintains an attendance list and records minutes of the meetings.
- Reports to CoC Data Committee.
- Complete other necessary tasks as required to ensure that homeless count is completed.

Publicity Chair

- Call and conduct Publicity sub-committee meetings.
- Report to PIT Committee updates, changes and concerns regarding the publicity of the homeless count.
- Monitor/coordinate status of actions/issues, ensures completion of tasks, and is lead contact regarding publicity issues for homeless count.
- Provide support to publicity sub-committee members. Delegate tasks to all members to ensure participation and buy-in of publicity issues for count. Ensure that tasks are completed.
- Encourage participation of homeless sub-populations for publicity committee.
- Assist with final decision making of publicity related issues for count. Refer to PIT Lead any issues/concerns.
- Work with committee to create and release homeless count volunteer recruitment press release – work with Volunteer Recruitment sub-committee.
- Work with committee to create and release PIT count homeless press release.
- Work with committee to create, reproduce, and distribute homeless count flyer & homeless count self-report flyer.
- Work with committee to create, reproduce, distribute, and provide PIT Committee Chair the community resource guide for the count.
- Work with committee to contact media outlets for the count
- Work with committee to devise a list of agencies/entities that have web sites that would be willing to publicize the count – volunteer recruitment, homeless information and results of the count.
- Work with committee to invite media to press conference. Devise plan to present information. Decide on speakers for the press conference.
- Work with committee to complete press release for the results to media that did not attend the press conference.
- Complete thank you letters to volunteers, participants, and donors.
- Complete other necessary tasks as required to ensure that publicity of count is completed.

Volunteer Recruitment Chair

- Call and conduct Volunteer sub-committee meetings.
- Report to PIT Committee updates, changes, and concerns regarding volunteer recruitment for the count.
- Monitor/coordinate status of actions/issues, ensures completion of tasks, and is lead contact regarding volunteer recruitment issues for homeless count.
- Provide support to volunteer recruitment committee members. Delegate tasks to all members to ensure participation and buy in of volunteer recruitment issues for count. Ensure that tasks are completed.
- Encourage participation of homeless sub-populations for volunteer recruitment committee.
- Assist with final decision making of volunteer recruitment related issues for count. Refer to PIT Lead any issues/concerns.
- Work with committee to create and release homeless count volunteer recruitment press release – work with Publicity Committee.
- Review discuss, and develop release of responsibility, statement of confidentiality form and job description for volunteers
- Review, discuss, and develop volunteer training. Set training agenda, content, handouts, and location. Decide upon presenters.
- Ensure that all volunteer training materials are available for date of training.
- Work with committee to develop list of potential volunteers for count (homeless, previously homeless, local university, faith-based organizations, homeless service providers, behavioral health providers, civic organizations, etc.).
- Complete other necessary tasks as required to ensure that volunteer recruitment is completed.

Mapping and Trends Chair

- Call and conduct Mapping and Trends sub-committee meetings.
- Report to PIT Committee updates, changes, and concerns regarding the mapping and trends of the homeless count.
- Monitor/coordinate status of actions/issues, ensures completion of tasks and is lead contact regarding mapping and trends issues for homeless count.
- Provide support to mapping and trends sub-committee members. Delegate tasks to all members to ensure participation and buy-in of mapping and trend issues for count. Ensure that tasks are completed.
- Encourage participation of sub-populations for mapping and trends committee.
- Assist with final decision making of mapping and trend related issues for count. Refer to PIT Lead any issues/concerns.
- Work with committee to scout designated areas for the count.
- Work with the committee to contact county for foreclosure and Sheriff's sale information – scout those areas for possible homeless staying in those houses.
- Develop map for designated areas that volunteers will search for homeless the night of the count.
- Develop database information for sites where homeless have been found or remnants of sites for future counts.
- Complete other necessary tasks as required to ensure that mapping and trends are completed.

Donation Chair

- Call and conduct the Donation sub-committee meetings.
- Report to PIT Committee updates, changes, and concerns regarding the donations to the homeless count.
- Monitor/coordinate status of actions/issues, ensures completion of tasks, and is lead contact regarding donation issues for homeless count.
- Provide support to Donation committee members. Delegate tasks to all members to ensure participation and buy in of donations for count. Ensure tasks are completed.
- Encourage participation of homeless sub-populations for donation committee.
- Assist with final decision making of donations related issues for count. Refer to PIT Lead any issues/concerns.

- Review, discuss, and develop strategy as to what items should be given to homeless during the count (blankets, food, food vouchers, flashlight, water, etc.).
- Work with committee to secure donations of items and location to store items prior to the count.
- Work with committee to prepare the donations for the count.
- Work with committee to donate leftover items to provider agencies after the count.
- Complete other necessary tasks as required to ensure that donations are completed.

Point-In-Time Count Team Leader

- Act as spokesperson for the team. Review PIT count volunteer roles. Answer any questions/concerns that volunteers have prior to beginning count. Refer other issues to Volunteer Recruitment Chair or PIT Lead.
- Able to drive, and have a clean Wisconsin driving record.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Brings map and is familiar with the assigned locations.
- Carries cell phone to communicate with PIT Lead or designee.
- Record number of homeless persons and their information on Street Count Form.
- Contact PIT Lead if shelter is needed/wanted.
- Contact 911 for injuries/incidents. Contact PIT Lead for injuries/incidents.
- Provide donations to homeless.
- Be able to walk one or two miles unassisted.
- After count, discuss any suggestions, changes, and concerns with PIT Lead.
- Provide Mapping and Trends Chair with all street count forms at end of count. Return other supplies to PIT Committee.
- Comply with Wisconsin mandatory reporting of child abuse or neglect if household with child is found and refuses to go to shelter.

Point-In-Time Count Volunteer

- Search for unsheltered homeless within designated location.
- Meet with team leader prior to beginning of count to obtain final instructions – review data collection form prior to the count and become familiar with the questions. Ask team leader for clarifications as needed.
- Provide donations to homeless.
- Carries mobile phone to communicate with PIT Count Team Leader, PIT Lead or designee.
- Do not place yourself or team members at risk. If a volunteer feels threatened, they should avoid the situation and contact 911.
- Offer referral to shelter and supportive services to homeless.
- Maintain visual contact with team members to ensure safety. Do not conduct the count alone.
- Be able to walk one or two miles unassisted.
- Agree to and sign confidentiality agreement with coordinating agency.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- After count, discuss any suggestions, changes, and concerns with team leader.

Point-In-Time Count Support Volunteer

- Assist with pre-packing of count volunteer supplies and donation bags.
- Call shelters the day before the count to remind of information needed.
- Call shelters the day of count to obtain any information needed.
- May be any age (those under 18 years old will need their parent's permission).

Source: Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012, Coordinator's Manual

Sample Timeline for Point-in-Time Count

Three to Four months:

- If using HMIS, begin/continue data clean-up
- Decide who will conduct each piece of the count (CoC staff, providers, or volunteers)
- Update the list of emergency and transitional housing programs

Two months:

- Reach out to providers
- Develop written guidelines for volunteers/staff
- Recruit volunteers
- Finalize count materials
- Identify locations to count
- Organize donations for incentives
 - Socks, coats, hats, gloves, scarves
 - Blankets, pillows
 - Food – pull-top cans, gift cards
 - Flash light, whistle, can opener
 - Hygiene items – toilet paper, shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, comb/brush
 - Gift cards
- Unsheltered Service-Based Count
 - Identify non-shelter service providers that typically serve homeless people
 - Soup kitchens, emergency food programs
 - Street outreach programs
 - Drop-in shelters, day shelters
 - Health care centers, emergency rooms
 - Outpatient mental health, substance abuse treatment facilities
 - If not interviewing at every location, be sure your sample of non-shelter programs is representative
- Unsheltered Count
 - Identify “known locations” where homeless people are typically found
 - Decide how PIT Count volunteers should deal with difficult locations
 - Divide locations into study areas for different teams of volunteers
 - Solicit input from stakeholders
 - Outreach workers, currently/formerly homeless persons, homeless program providers, police, and community or neighborhood groups
- Sheltered Count
 - Emergency shelters
 - Transitional housing programs
 - Permanent supportive housing programs (for the Housing Inventory Chart only)
- Plan for logistics on the night of the count – develop communications strategies – cell phones, central number, radios/walkie talkies for the night of the count

One month:

- Conduct training sessions for providers and volunteers
 - Review volunteer training materials
 - Review data collection forms
 - Discuss what to do in an emergency

Three weeks:

- Deliver count materials to providers
- Shelter-based count materials
- Service-based count materials
- Prepare map of the area – directions to various locations, highlight area to be covered by each team individually

Two weeks:

- Prepare packets of materials for the unsheltered count
 - Include: map of the area, sufficient copies of surveys or observation sheets, emergency contact information, releases, identification badges, instructions, etc.
- Remind providers about HMIS data collection procedures, if applicable
- Prepare a back-up plan, if volunteers do not show –up or the count is postponed
- Collect incentive items from donors

A few days:

- Final HMIS data quality checks
- Remind providers and volunteers about the count
- Pack incentive items in backpacks, gym bags, etc.
- Assign volunteers/staff in pairs or teams by experience – select a team leader who has previous experience working with this population and is familiar with the area

Day or night of the count:

- Make sure that providers have received all necessary materials (surveys, instructions, pens, clipboards, flashlights, identification, incentives, etc.) before the count
- If volunteers or continua staff are assisting, ensure they know where to go and when to arrive
- Assign sites appropriately – to teams with enough people and experience
- Provide coffee, snacks and food for returning counters (if possible)
- Collect all forms as soon as teams return and immediately review for any problems
- Keep notes of where volunteers/staff did and did not observe people to use for future counts

After the count:

- Collect and review the survey or observation sheets – contact volunteers to clarify information soon after the count to ensure the count is still fresh in their mind
- Run HMIS report
- Evaluate the PIT Count process
 - How did the planning group function
 - What changes should be made for next year
 - Does planning timeline need to be adjusted
 - What changes to count procedures should be made for next year
 - What revisions to the surveys/observations forms should be made for next year

Source: Ohio Point-in-Time Count 2012, Coordinator's Manual

Sample Notifications

Law Enforcement

Using a fax cover sheet, send police/sheriff/state patrol the following:

The _____ will be holding its semi-annual homeless count on the evening of _____ starting at _____ and ending at _____. _____ staff and volunteers will be out in the community looking for individuals and/or families who are experiencing homelessness, providing outreach, and obtaining information necessary for the count.

Thank you in advance for your support of this program.

Local Businesses

Send a letter to local establishments that should be aware and may be impacted by the street/known location count in the community.

Dear Manager/Owner:

My name is _____ and I am the _____. I am part of _____ and _____. Our group is committed to _____. All communities across the nation utilizing HUD funds for homeless and housing programs are required to conduct a count of unsheltered and sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness during a designated 24 hour period in their area.

_____ staff and volunteers will be conducting part of our count on or near your locale on the evening of _____. The count will occur throughout _____ starting at _____ and ending at _____. We will make every attempt not to intrude upon the business in your establishment during this count. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at _____. Thank you for your time and support of this effort.

Respectfully,

Media

Using a fax cover sheet, send the following to local media outlets (radio, TV, paper):

Wisconsin Statewide Point-In-Time Count _____

Homeless Count to Take Place in _____ County

On _____, _____ will be joining homeless continua across the state in completing a local count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Staff and volunteers will count persons in shelters for the night as well as persons residing on the streets, in campgrounds, under bridges, or similar places.

The collected data will assist the community in understanding the scope and size of local homelessness, engage in program and service development, and apply for state and federal funding.

****insert appropriate quotes/statements from CoC or other relevant person****

The _____ is comprised of _____ and is committed to eliminating homelessness and improving housing options in _____ County.

For more information, please call _____ at _____.

Sample Media Release

<<Insert Agency Logo>>

For Immediate Release
<<insert date>>

Contact: <<insert information>>

<<Insert County Name>> County's Homeless Numbers Released

<<Insert CoC group>> announced that <<insert #>> individuals experiencing homelessness were counted in <<insert county name>> County during the statewide Point-In-Time Homeless Count conducted on <<insert date>>.

A Point-In-Time count is a statistically reliable, unduplicated count of individuals experiencing homelessness during a specific 24 hour period. This count focuses on people - singles and families - experiencing homelessness and staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, domestic violence shelters, or are unsheltered and living on the streets or any other place not meant for human habitation.

The count is conducted two times a year by service providers and volunteers, and is coordinated through <<insert name of lead agency>>. In the State of Wisconsin, the count is conducted on the last Wednesday in January and July – as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In <<insert year>>, the Point-in-Time Count identified <<insert #>> individuals experiencing homelessness either sheltered or unsheltered in <<insert county name>> County.
could also insert data from previous years

<<insert quote>>

The count does not represent the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness in a given year, it is merely a snapshot of those experiencing homelessness on a specific night. It is estimated that more than <<insert #>> individuals experience homelessness at one point in a given year in <<insert year>>.

The <<insert year>> count revealed that of those surveyed: <<insert percentages of individuals that were chronically homeless, victims/survivors of domestic violence, veterans, unaccompanied youth, etc. >>.

<<Insert name of lead agency>> will release statewide results for the <<insert year>> count in <<insert time frame for release of information>>.

<<insert quote>>

<<insert information about the data collection: HMIS + handout/street count process>>

For more information about the count, contact <<insert contact name and information>>.

<<insert additional information about lead agency, or Balance of State, or Division of Housing, etc.>>

<<Insert Date Here>> *Designated as Wisconsin's Day to Count Homeless and Needs for Service*

Dear Service Provider:

On <<date>> the State of Wisconsin will count individuals and families throughout Wisconsin who are homeless and who are receiving or needing emergency shelter, transitional housing or permanent supportive housing. Please review the attachment containing the definition of homelessness. The data will be used to determine how much and what types of state and federal funding will be available in our communities to provide services to families in need.

<<Agency>> has been designated as the agency to conduct the Point-in-Time survey in <<area>> Wisconsin. We believe the need continues to grow in our state and in <<area>> Wisconsin. Our goal is to provide a continuum of care to these families through collaboration with you and other service providers. However, without your help we are unable to identify those who are homeless.

This letter is provided to alert you of this very important day and to ask your help in providing the most accurate count possible. The following will assist you in completing the Point-in-Time survey:

- The Point-in-Time survey is **FOR ONE DAY ONLY**. Please return this form even if your numbers are zero. Your <<date>> "point in time" information will be sent to the Department of Administration, Division of Housing and included in a statewide report to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
 - Data will be collected in three categories: Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing.
- A representative from <<agency name>> will be available to your agency on <<date>> to answer any questions you may have. The entire questionnaire will take approximately five minutes of your time.
- Return your analysis by fax, email, or by mail **no later than <<date>>**. We are requesting your help to make this Point-in-Time count as accurate as possible.

Thank you, and please contact <<name & phone number>> with any questions. If you would like a copy of information we provide to the state, please let us know on your response.

We appreciate your assistance in this process and commitment to the Continuum of Care of <<continuum name>>.

Return by: <<include contact information here>>