

# **2026 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Planning**

## **Working Group Meeting #1:**

### **Methodology**

**Contra Costa Health Services:**  
**HEALTH, HOUSING & HOMELESS SERVICES (H3)**  
**Research Evaluation & Data (RED)**

**Friday, September 19, 2025**  
**1 pm – 3 pm**



# Welcome

Introductions/Poll

# Agenda



**1. What is the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count?**

**2. HUD PIT Requirements & Planning Recommendations**



**3. Point-in-Time Count 2026**

**4. Proposed 2026 PIT Methodology & Date**



**5. Volunteer Recruitment**

**6. HUB Online Platform**

**7. Gift Card Poll**



## What is the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count?



The PIT Count is a HUD required census of people experiencing homelessness, done in the last 10 days of January.

Every community counts people in shelters each year. HUD only requires unsheltered counts every other year. Contra Costa conducts both every year.

PIT data provides us a snapshot of homelessness in our community.

Collecting this data helps us see trends, support federal funding and understand local needs





**Questions?**

# HUD PIT Requirements



## Counted Once

CoCs must ensure that during the PIT count, persons are only counted once.

- Ensure no one is counted more than once by setting a clear timeframe for the count and using methods to avoid double-counting
- If conducting over multiple days, sufficient information must be collected on all people identified to deduplicate respondents



## Protects Privacy & Safety

- Surveys of people for the sheltered or unsheltered count must be administered in a manner that protects participant privacy and safety, as well as the safety of the person completing the survey

# HUD PIT Requirements



## Training

CoCs are required to ensure that people conducting the PIT count, including project staff & community volunteers, are appropriately trained about:

- Count standards
- Data collection procedures & protocols for privacy
- Security
- Personal safety

**All volunteers are required to attend at least one training session to participate. Contra Costa will offer four in-person training sessions to accommodate everyone's schedules and ensure that all volunteers can attend.**



# HUD Requirements

**Unsheltered Population**

VS

**Sheltered Population**





# HUD Requirements



## Unsheltered population:

The unsheltered population count can be conducted through one of two strategies:

- “Night of count” canvassing all geographic areas of the CoC during a limited number of hours on a given day, either with a complete canvass or via sampling methods approved by HUD
- “Service based” at known locations where people access services such as soup kitchens, outreach locations, and health clinics; this approach requires interviewing every respondent



## Sheltered population:

The sheltered population count should be coordinated with the Housing Inventory Count strategy through:

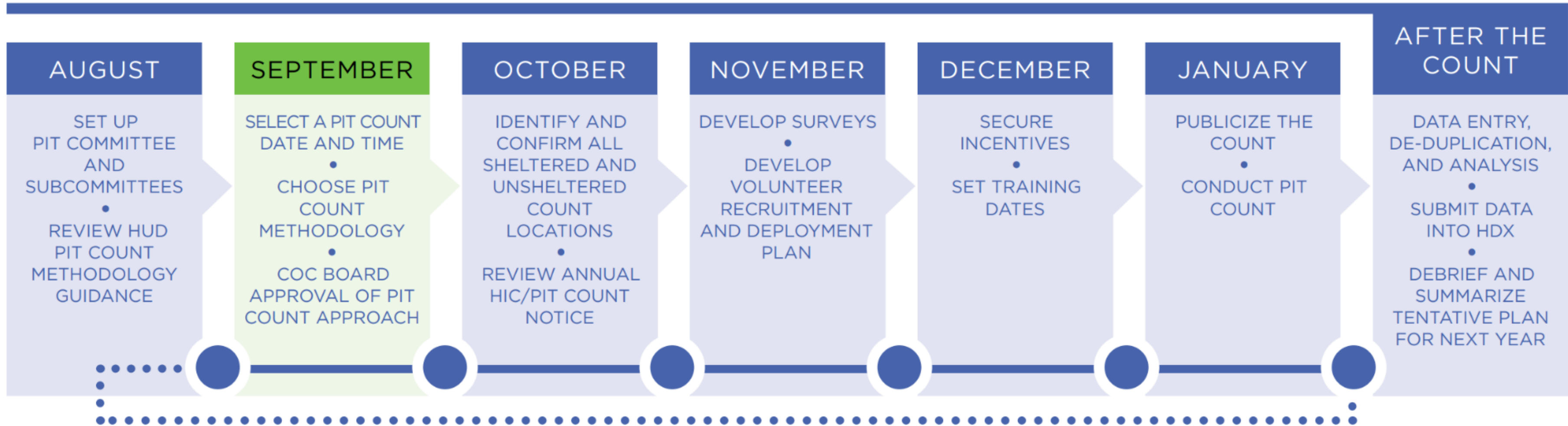
- HMIS data to identify all people residing in emergency and transitional shelters the night of the count, and
- Project-level surveys from non-HMIS shelters to capture HUD required data for people residing in those programs the night of the count

These requirements and recommendations for choosing the best for each CoC are described in the HUD PIT Methodology Guide: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/PIT-Count-Methodology-Guide.pdf>

# HUD Requirements



## POINT-IN-TIME COUNT PLANNING WORKSHEET





# HUD Planning Recommendations

September	October	November	December	January	February
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review HUD PIT Count Methodology and Guidance</li><li>• Select PIT Count date and time</li><li>• Choose PIT Count Methodology</li><li>• COH Sub-Committee selected</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and confirm all sheltered count locations</li><li>• Review unsheltered hotspots</li><li>• Identify unsheltered grids and technology</li><li>• Develop volunteer recruitment plan and tools</li><li>• Identify new HUD data standards</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• COH votes to approve PIT Methods</li><li>• Secure incentives</li><li>• Set training dates and select kick-off sites</li><li>• Review PIT survey</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assign CORE and stakeholders teams to grids</li><li>• PIT HUB will be LIVE</li><li>• Publicize the Count for media purposes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Train PIT Volunteers</li><li>• Test data collection</li><li>• Conduct PIT Count</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow-up surveys at shelter and unsheltered sites</li><li>• Data analysis</li><li>• Submit HUD data to HDX</li><li>• Debrief and summarize tentative plans for future PIT Counts</li></ul>



**Questions?**

# Point in Time Count 2026



To strengthen our initiatives and achieve greater impact, we will focus on expanding partnership engagement through the following strategies:

## Internal & External Workgroup Meetings:

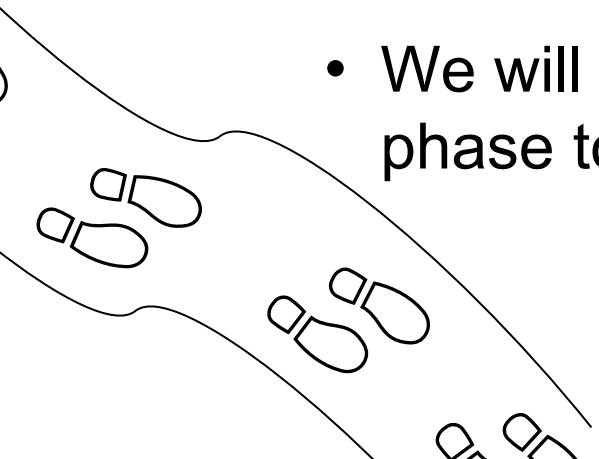
- As a team we will collaborate among team members, streamline our strategies, and address any challenges that arise.

## Engaging Stakeholders with Decision Making Roles:

- We will actively involve different stakeholders who hold decision-making roles in our planning processes.

## Expanding Stakeholder Involvement:

- We will broaden our stakeholder base during the planning, recruitment, messaging and engagement phase to incorporate a wider range of perspectives and expertise.



# Point in Time Count 2026



## Utilizing and Improving Technology Tools

### ArcGIS App:

- Real-time data collection and mapping. This app is user friendly, helps volunteers stay within their assignments, and provide breadcrumb tracking navigation & so much more!

### Survey123:

- Continue using Survey123 application; an easy-to-use app that enables volunteers to manage surveyance efficiently.

### PIT HUB:

- Real-time updates for volunteers, we will incorporate dashboards to visualize data, access to volunteer forms, presentations, photos, contact information, kick-off site information and more!





# Point in Time Count 2026



**Trainings**: All sessions will be held in-person and are mandatory for both volunteers and staff. Proper training ensures that everyone follows the same procedures, resulting in more accurate and reliable data. Our team is also updating the app, so training is mandatory for all staff to ensure everyone is familiar with the latest features and changes

- Central (2 trainings dates will be offered for this site)
- East
- West

Day of Kick off Sites: will be the same locations as the training sites

- Central
- East
- West







**Questions?**

# Proposed 2026 PIT Methodology



## “Night of PIT” Full Canvass

- **Observational Count:** Designate a 3–4-hour period which all volunteers will be engaged in a comprehensive, county-wide observational count. This effort will involve a collective, all-hands-on-deck approach, to ensure thorough coverage and accurate data collection.



## Targeting Hard to Reach Populations

- Collaborate closely with community partners to identify and focus on sub-populations that are typically challenging to locate

# Proposed 2026 PIT Methodology

Survey sampling over a two-week period following the count:

## Exploring City Sampling Strategies

- Develop and implement city-specific sampling methods to capture a representative cross-section for unsheltered individuals. Targeting areas with known populations, and/or other strategic locations to ensure coverage.

## Including Both Unsheltered and Sheltered Populations

- Ensure both survey sampling included unsheltered and sheltered individuals

## Engaging CORE, Service Providers, and People with Lived Experience

- Collaborate with CORE, service providers and individuals with lived experience to help implement the survey
- Attain insights & involvement to help reach hard to reach populations





# Proposed 2026 PIT Dates

## Date(s) of PIT

- “Night of Count:” **January 28th (sheltered)**
- PIT Count observational count morning of **January 29th (unsheltered)**
- PIT Survey for ~two weeks after the Night Count

## Poll Discussion

- Feedback on the selected date for the observational count?





**Questions?**



# Volunteer Recruitment

## Broader Reach

- Working with CORE and other service providers to recruit people with outreach experience
- Will include stakeholders outside of CORE in survey implementation
- Greater focus on having people with current or recent experience with homelessness

## Different Opportunities

Some of the community volunteers will be asked to do things not specific to canvassing:

- Picking up coffee/pastries for kick-off locations
- Seeking out donations for incentives for the survey
- Taking photos before, during, and after PIT to capture the realities of homelessness in the county



# Volunteer Recruitment

## Recruitment Tools

- CORE and other stakeholders with unsheltered knowledge will be assigned by RED Team in collaboration with CORE
- Community volunteers will use an online platform to sign up and identify areas they might be a good fit for canvassing
- Limit phone options to iPhone only for data gatherers

## COVID-19 Protocol

- Following CC Health's recommendations regarding PIT volunteers in vehicles
- Surgical masks and hand sanitizer will be provided at trainings & kick off sites





# Volunteer Recruitment

## Lessons Learned from Previous PIT Counts

- Improve access to training locations for volunteers
- All volunteers are required to attend a mandatory training in order to participate with the PIT Count
- Work closely with GIS team to help volunteers stay on track with their assignment





**Questions?**



# “Point in Time Count” HUB Online Platform

**A centralized resource for all Point-in-Time (PIT) information, designed for easy access by the community:**



Event calendar to sign up for in-person mandatory trainings!

Volunteers can register online and use a live map to select and identify their designated assignments



The option to subscribe to PIT Newsletter emails & much more

[Become a Volunteer](#) [Check Out Training Dates](#) [Day of Kick-off Sites](#) [H3 PIT StoryMap](#)

**Volunteers must follow these three steps!**



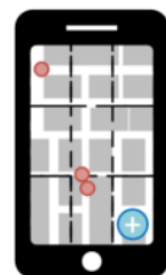
**REGISTER**

[Complete Volunteer Register Form](#)



**TRAIN**

[Check Out Training Dates](#)



**COUNT**

[Kick-Off Site Locations](#)



## STEP 1: Sign up!

- Sign up using the volunteer registration link!
- If you do not have a volunteer partner, we will pair you up with someone

*Registration link will open in December!*



## STEP 2: Attend Training

- Required for all volunteers
- Learn to use the app
- Review safety tips
- What to expect on observation day

*Training sessions are scheduled to begin in January*



## STEP 3: Check Emails!

- Check your emails to know your kickoff site location
- Get last-minute updates & reminders





**Questions?**

# Gift Cards

HUD requires specific data to be collected through surveys after counting people in certain areas throughout Contra Costa County.

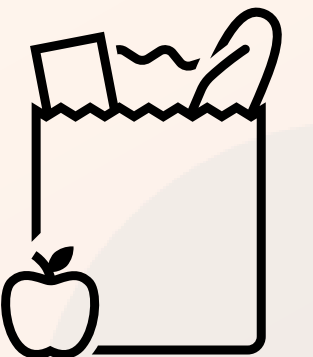
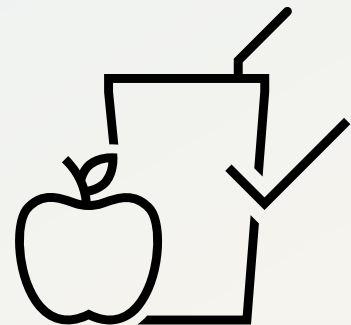
To encourage participation, we will offer \$10 gift cards as incentives to people who answer the survey.

**Poll Discussion:** Feedback on the gift cards we will offer as incentives



**Which two gift card incentives do you find the most beneficial for adults & youth experiencing homelessness?**

- **Dollar Tree**
- **7-Eleven**
- **Grocery Outlet**
- **Chevron**
- **Other?**



# Next Steps



- Gather feedback from today and bring the final proposal for PIT methods approval to Council on Homelessness (COH) on **12/04/25**
- Collaborate with the County DOiT GIS team to refine and enhance tools
- Identify and book training and kick-off sites

## Next PIT Meeting Dates

- **HOT SPOTS:** **Friday, October 17th 1 pm – 3 pm** VIRTUAL
- **SURVEY:** **Friday, November 21st 1 pm – 3 pm** **IN PERSON (Hybrid)**



# Additional Information



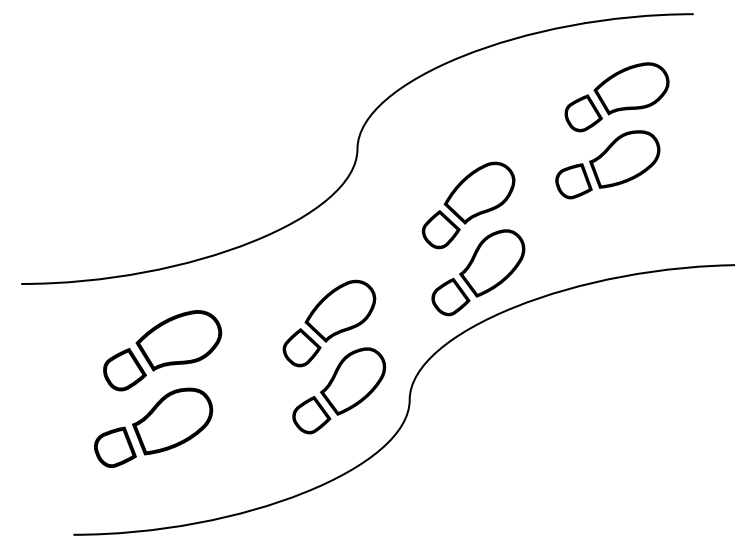
## Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide

HUD PIT Count Methodology Guide:

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/PIT-Count-Methodology-Guide.pdf>

HUD 2023 PIT Count Notice

<https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/OCHCO/documents/2023-11cpdn.pdf>





Questions?