



MARYLAND
BALANCE OF STATE
CONTINUUM OF CARE

2024
Point-in-Time Count
&
Housing Inventory Count
Methodology Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are informed about how the MD-514 Maryland Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) will implement the 2024 Point in Time (PIT) Count and Housing Inventory Count (HIC).

The CoC is required by HUD to conduct, at least biennially, a point-in-time count of (1) Homeless persons who are living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans (“unsheltered”) and (2) Persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects (“sheltered”). HUD requires that the count be carried out on one night in the last 10 calendar days of January (24 CFR 578.3). Additionally, the CoC is required to inventory all beds and units primarily dedicated to serving people who are homeless on the same night of the PIT Count – this is called the Housing Inventory Count.

The PIT Count is a critical source of data regarding the number and characteristics of people who are homeless in the United States and is a measure of local and national progress related to preventing and ending homelessness. Nationally, PIT data is published annually on the [HUD Exchange](#) website, which can be viewed by CoCs and the general public. PIT data is also provided during the annual Continuum of Care Program Funding Competition in addition to an annual report to Congress as part of the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). The AHAR is used by Congress, HUD, other federal departments, and the general public to understand the nature and extent of homelessness. PIT Count data is used to assess progress on [Home Together: the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#).

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PIT Planning Roles and Responsibilities

The Balance of State CoC PIT Count Planning Committee creates and approves the overarching plan for how and when the PIT Count will be conducted, the survey tool that will be utilized and the strategies used to count people experiencing homelessness on a given night. The Committee also works to verify all local homelessness projects are included in the count so all data can be collected. Membership on the committee is open to the public and must include at least one representative from each Local Homelessness Coalition.

Committee members are responsible for ensuring that all decisions made at the BoS CoC level are communicated back to their respective LHC level planning bodies.

Conducting a comprehensive and accurate count requires significant time and expense from many organizations and that all parties work collaboratively within their roles and responsibilities:

CoC Lead Agency Responsibilities (DHCD)

- Recruit membership for and facilitate PIT planning committee
- Draft methodology plan and unsheltered survey questions in compliance with HUD requirements
- Distribute final unsheltered survey (paper & electronic version) and policies to LHC representatives
- Create PIT virtual training materials
- Create project verification tool to ensure that all appropriate projects are included in the PIT and HIC reporting
- Provide technical assistance and support to LHCs in determining where and when they will count
- Review and approve submission of HDX Reports to HUD

HMIS Responsibilities (Team HMIS)

- Create and distribute survey template to shelters and projects not participating in HMIS to obtain bed inventory and client demographic data
- Pull PIT & HIC data from HMIS and collect data from non-HMIS participating agencies
- Compile, analyze and enter into HDX all data necessary to fulfill HUD reporting requirements
- Review draft HDX report for with the CoC HMIS Committee prior to submission

Local PIT Committee/Local Homelessness Coalition Responsibilities

- Determine the hours, days, and locations for unsheltered surveys to be conducted in geographic area
- Determine volunteer needs and recruit volunteers to fill available shifts within their LHC
- Provide local survey sites with training materials, surveys, and resources needed to conduct count
- Review program list and inform CoC and HMIS Lead of any program changes and contact information for program representatives
- Review draft report for accuracy and notify CoC Lead and HMIS Lead of inaccuracies

Point-In-Time Count Methodology

CoCs are required to conduct this count in accordance with the following HUD guidance:

- [Notice CPD-22-12: 2023 HIC and PIT Data Collection for CoC and ESG Programs \(2022\)](#)
- [Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide \(2015\)](#)
- [HIC and PIT Count Safety Considerations for Counting During COVID-19 \(2022\)](#)
- [How to Use Sampling within a CoC to Conduct an Unsheltered Point-in-Time \(PIT\) Count \(2020\)](#)

The CoC is required to conduct both a sheltered and unsheltered count. HUD requires that the **sheltered count** include individuals and families “living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (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. HUD requires that the **unsheltered count** include 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.”

HUD states that persons residing in the following settings on the night of the count not be included in the Point-in-Time Count:

- Persons residing in permanent housing projects,
- Persons counted in any location not listed on the HIC (e.g., staying in projects with beds/units not dedicated for persons who are homeless, such as a halfway home for ex-offenders),
- Persons temporarily staying with family or friends (i.e., “doubled-up” or “couch surfing”),
- Persons residing in housing they rent or own (i.e., permanent housing), including persons residing in rental housing with assistance from a RRH project on the night of the count, and
- Persons residing in institutions (e.g., jails, juvenile correction facilities, foster care, hospital beds, detox centers).

The Maryland Balance of State Continuum of Care has designated Wednesday, January 24, 2024 as the official night of the count. The inclement weather backup date is Thursday, January 25, 2024. LHCs will be able to collect data on those who were sleeping in unsheltered settings through January 31, 2024.

Sources of Data

Three sources of data will be combined to ascertain the total count, including both the sheltered count and unsheltered count. These are:

- Sheltered Count
 - Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data from Emergency Shelter (ES) and Transitional Housing (TH) projects that use HMIS
 - Survey data from Emergency Shelter (ES) and Transitional Housing (TH) projects that do not participate in HMIS, including Domestic Violence Providers
- Unsheltered Count

- Individual surveys conducted with people or households living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans
- Observation based survey for those who are unable or unwilling to provide their personal information

Count Type	Data Source	Population Counted	Where/When Data is Collected	How Data is Collected	Deduplication Strategy
Sheltered Count	HMIS	People residing in HMIS-participating ES, SH and TH projects	Immediately after “night of the count”	Downloaded from HMIS	FN, LN, DOB, SSN Last 4, against surveys
	Surveys	People staying in non-HMIS ES, SH and TH projects	Immediately after “night of the count”	<i>Providers fill out a project-level aggregate data survey*</i>	Assume clients did not stay in 2 shelters the same night or take a survey and report that they were unsheltered on the night of the count (small error rate)
Unsheltered Count	Surveys	People living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans	Surveys collected on the night of the count and up to 7 days after at locations where unsheltered people frequent (drop-in centers, meal programs)	Survey	FN, LN, DOB, SSN Last 4, against other surveys and against HMIS data

**The specific data collection method will be finalized pending receipt of additional information from LHC*

Sheltered Count Plan

The total sheltered count will come from a combination of data obtained directly from HMIS and data obtained through surveys of HMIS non-participating projects.

Projects that do not participate in HMIS will submit data through a project-level data collection tool. If there are non-participating projects that do not collect all of the required client data for the PIT Count, the missing elements will be extrapolated and totaled into the CoC as a whole.

Sheltered Survey Design

The sheltered count will make use of project-level PIT data to collect HUD required data elements. In 2023, PIT data required by HUD for sheltered homelessness includes:

1. Type of project: Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH)
2. Household Type
 - Persons in households with at least one adult and one child. This category includes households with one adult and at least one child under age 18.
 - Persons in households without children. This category includes single adults, adult couples with no children, and groups of adults.

- Persons in households with only children. This category includes persons under age 18, including children in one-child households, adolescent parents (under age 18) and their children, adolescent siblings, or other household configurations composed only of children.
3. Within each household type, the total number of persons and households within each age category:
 - Persons in households with at least one adult and one child:
 - The number of children under age 18;
 - The number of young adults ages 18 - 24;
 - The number of adults ages 25 - 34;
 - The number of adults ages 35-44;
 - The number of adults ages 45-54;
 - The number of adults ages 55-64;
 - The number of adults over age 65.
 - Persons in households without children:
 - The number of young adults ages 18 to 24; and
 - The number of adults ages 25 - 34;
 - The number of adults ages 35-44;
 - The number of adults ages 45-54;
 - The number of adults ages 55-64;
 - The number of adults over age 65.
 4. Gender, race, and ethnicity for all sheltered persons.
 5. Data on veterans: the total number of veteran households, the total number of veterans, the total number of persons in veteran households, and the gender, race, and ethnicity of veterans.
 6. Data on youth households, including gender, race, and ethnicity for parenting youth and unaccompanied youth.
 7. Counts of adults in the subpopulations outlined in the chart below.

Subpopulations Required in PIT Report to HUD

Subpopulation	Definition Created by HUD for the Purpose of the PIT Count
Chronically Homeless Households without Children (Single Adults/Multiple Adults)	An individual who is 18 years of age or older and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter (Persons living in transitional housing at the time of the PIT count should not be included.); and B. Has been homeless and living or residing 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 four separate occasions in the last 3 years; and C. (C1) Can be diagnosed with one or more of the following conditions: substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness (Persons with these disabling conditions identified above must also meet the qualifications identified in the term for

	<p>“disability,” e.g., “is expected to be long-continuing or indefinite duration” OR (C2) An individual with a “disability” meeting with one or more of the following conditions:</p> <p>A. A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that: (1) Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration; (2) Substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently; and (3) Could be improved by the provision of more suitable housing conditions.</p> <p>B. The disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any condition arising from the etiologic agency for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV).</p>
Chronically Homeless Households with at Least One Adult and One Child (Families)	A family with at least one adult head of household and at least one minor child who meets all of the criteria for a chronically homeless individual, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.
Persons in Chronically Homeless Families	(See above definition for “chronically homeless.”)
Chronically Homeless Households with Only Children	A household comprised only of children under 18 years of age and who meet all of the criteria for a chronically homeless individual.
Parenting Youth	Youth who identify as the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, where there is no person over age 24 in the household.
Unaccompanied Youth	Persons under age 25 who are not presenting or sleeping in the same place as their parent or legal guardian, including: A. single youth; B. youth couples; and C. groups of youth presenting as a household
Adults with a Serious Mental Illness	This subpopulation category of the PIT includes adults with a severe and persistent mental illness or emotional impairment that seriously limits a person's ability to live independently. Adults with SMI must also meet the qualifications identified in the term for “disability” (e.g., “is expected to be long-continuing or indefinite duration”).
Adults with a Substance Use Disorder	This subpopulation category of the PIT includes adults with a substance abuse problem (alcohol abuse, drug abuse, or both). Adults with a substance use disorder must also meet the qualifications identified in the term for “disability” (e.g., “is expected to be long-continuing or indefinite duration”).
Adults with HIV/AIDS	This subpopulation category of the PIT includes adults who have been diagnosed with AIDS and/or have tested positive for HIV.
Adult Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)	This subpopulation category of the PIT includes adults who have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Unsheltered Count Plan

HUD has indicated that there is an expectation that CoC's complete an unsheltered count in 2024 and safety protocols identified and put into place during the COVID19 pandemic should be considered and used as appropriate.

Time Frame

The official 2024 Point in Time Count date will be January 24, 2024. LHCs will have up to 7 days after the count to identify and collect data on individuals living in an unsheltered location on the night of January 25, 2024. LHCs will have the ability to determine the duration of the count based on local capacity and may opt to conduct the count on one day as a blitz, or over the course of several days. However, all counting efforts must conclude by January 31, 2024.

Locations

PIT Count surveys will be conducted at known geographic unsheltered areas and at service-based sites, including locations that provide day services, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, or any other site where those living in unsheltered situations may present during the day. LHCs will identify the locations and hours that surveys will be conducted.

LHCs will be required to register the details of their 2024 PIT Count plan with DHCD when requested. The registration request will include, at a minimum: counting locations, counting hours and timeframe, primary contacts, data deduplication efforts, intended counting staff and any safety considerations.

Enumerators

PIT Count surveys may be administered by existing staff or community volunteers. Staff members may include employees from local shelters, street outreach teams and supportive service providers.

Data & Methodology

The 2024 unsheltered survey will include all HUD required data elements. Enumerators are expected to collect as much data as an individual is comfortable and willing to provide. If a client will not or cannot provide personal information, observation-based responses will be accepted. Observation-based surveys should not be utilized on a multi-day counts since deduplication efforts may not be possible; unless the physical geography of the LHC is expansive and known to not include a transient population that may be counted in multiple locations.

Counting Us Mobile App

The 2024 Unsheltered Point-In-Time (PIT) Count will be conducted using the [Counting Us Mobile App](#). For this count, the setup key for the Maryland Balance of State will be "MDBoS". The app will be equipped with two surveys: the Unsheltered Person Observation Tally and the Unsheltered Person Survey. As users interact with individuals during the count, the app will navigate them through the relevant questions on the Unsheltered Person Survey. Each submission will include user account information to assist in data organization and accuracy. The survey is designed to tailor its questions to the interviewee, ensuring appropriateness; for instance, children will not be asked about veteran status. Additionally, the app's GPS functionality will precisely record the location of each survey interaction. The Counting Us [security infrastructure](#) includes safeguard to ensure client data is protected.

Regional Command Center

At least one representative from each LHC will be given “admin” permission access to the Counting Us [Regional Command Center](#) to monitor their county’s data collection. The Responses tab provides a real-time display of all incoming surveys and tallies in both list and map view. Regional count administrators can use these tools to validate the incoming submissions, guide count volunteers, and edit the data as needed.

Unsheltered Survey Design

The unsheltered survey will be available in an online webpage, Mobile App, and paper format. The online survey and Mobile App will be available via Counting Us, and can be accessed via computer, smartphone or tablet. A paper version of the survey will be available for use during the count, however all survey data shall be ultimately entered into Counting Us for inclusion in the BoS PIT Count report by the designated deadline.

Eligible Survey Participants

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.

One survey should be completed per household. The survey will allow for data to be collected on each adult and child identified in the household. Additional training on household data will be provided.

Survey Data Elements

Each survey will ask about an individual and the household members with whom they are experiencing homelessness. Survey questions are designed to meet the minimum HUD reporting criteria for 2024.

Survey questions include:

1. Time and location of survey
2. Participant’s living situation on the night of 1/24/2024
3. Participant and household members’ names, dates of birth, gender, race, and ethnicity

Reporting to HUD

The CoC will report data to HUD using the following household types and age category breakdowns:

1. **Persons in households with at least one adult and one child.** This category includes households with one adult and at least one child under age 18.
 - a. The number of children under age 18;
 - b. The number of young adults ages 18 - 24;
 - c. The number of adults ages 25 - 34;
 - d. The number of adults ages 35-44;
 - e. The number of adults ages 45-54;
 - f. The number of adults ages 55-64;
 - g. The number of adults over age 65.

2. **Persons in households without children.** This category includes single adults, adult couples with no children, and groups of adults (including adult parents with their adult children).
 - a. The number of young adults ages 18 to 24; and
 - b. The number of adults ages 25 - 34;
 - c. The number of adults ages 35-44;
 - d. The number of adults ages 45-54;
 - e. The number of adults ages 55-64;
 - f. The number of adults over age 65.
3. **Persons in households with only children.** This category includes persons under age 18, including children in one-child households, adolescent parents (under age 18) and their children, adolescent siblings, or other household configurations composed only of children.

Additional reporting will include veteran households, unaccompanied and parenting youth households and basic information on identified select diagnosis, disability status and other HUD required subpopulation elements.

Housing Inventory Count Methodology

The HIC is a point-in-time inventory of projects within the CoC that provide beds and units dedicated to serving persons who are homeless and is intended to provide HUD and the CoC with information about the shelter and housing capacity of the homeless crisis response system. The HIC should reflect the number of beds and units available for occupancy on the night of the PIT that are dedicated to serve persons who are homeless (and, for permanent housing projects, persons who were homeless at entry), per the HUD homeless definition.

CoCs are required to conduct an annual Housing Inventory Count in accordance with the following HUD guidance:

- [Notice CPD-22-12: 2023 HIC and PIT Data Collection for CoC and ESG Programs \(2022\)](#)

The CoC has designated Wednesday, January 24, 2024 as the official night of the count, and all HIC related inventory data will be based on that date.

Sources of Data

Two primary sources of data will be combined to ascertain the total count for all participating projects. The data sources include:

1. Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data for all Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH), Rapid Rehousing (RRH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Other Permanent Housing (OPH) projects that use HMIS
2. Provider level survey data for all Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH), Rapid Rehousing (RRH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Other Permanent Housing (OPH) projects that do not participate in HMIS, including Domestic Violence Providers

Housing Inventory Count Plan

HIC related data will be obtained via HMIS and from provider level surveys of HMIS non-participating projects. Additional required project level data will be verified by PIT Committee members and will include, at a minimum:

- Project Address
- Geocode
- Funding Source
- Housing Type
- Inventory Type
- Targeted Population
- Designated Bed Types

MD-514 PIT & HIC Timeline

Action	Responsible Party	Deadline
Verify & Schedule PIT Planning Committee	CoC Lead	11/1/2023
Approve PIT Date & Backup	PIT Committee	11/07/2023
Approve Count Plan Timeline	PIT Committee	11/07/2023
Approve Draft Unsheltered Survey Tool	PIT Committee	12/19/2023
Approve LHC Training Tool Kit	PIT Committee	12/19/2023
Finalize Training Tools	CoC & HMIS Lead	01/06/2024
Finalize Unsheltered Survey	CoC & HMIS Lead	01/06/2024
Complete LHC Local PIT Plan Survey Tool	LHC Lead	01/06/2024
Develop Non-HMIS project & DV provider data collection tool	CoC & HMIS Lead	01/13/2024
Distribute BoS Training Materials to Count Teams / Staff / Volunteers	LHC Lead	01/18/2024
2024 PIT COUNT NIGHT	LHC Lead	01/24/2024
Deadline to Collect Unsheltered Survey Data	LHC Lead	02/09/2024
Deadline to enter Unsheltered Survey Data into Counting Us	LHC Lead	02/09/2024
Deadline to add / correct client data in HMIS	LHC Lead	02/09/2024
Deadline for non-HMIS & DV providers to return sheltered client data	LHC Lead	02/09/2024
Pull HMIS reports for sheltered count	HMIS Lead	02/13/2024
Verify all Project Data for inclusion in the HIC Report	HMIS Lead	March 2024
Submit preliminary PIT/HIC reports to Committee for Approval	HMIS Lead	March 2024
Finalize all data	CoC & HMIS Lead	April 2024
Submit PIT report to HUD	CoC & HMIS Lead	April 2024
Submit HIC report to HUD	CoC & HMIS Lead	April 2024
Publish BoS PIT Report	CoC Lead	May 2024