2017 Point-in-Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Prepared for

PA Balance of State

Eastern PA Continuum of Care

Western PA Continuum of Care

Presented by: Diana T. Myers and Associates, Inc. (DMA)

- For the PA Eastern & Western Balance of State Continuums of Care

- Under contract with the PA DCED

PA pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Overview of Point-in-Time Count

○ "Point-in-Time" (PIT) = a <u>snapshot</u> of people experiencing homelessness on a given night

- **More than an enumeration**

○ Data that is reported to HUD only includes people counted in:

- Shelters
- Transitional housing programs
- Safe Haven programs
- Unsheltered

○ Required by HUD nationally during the last 10 days of January

Overview: 2017 PIT Count

- Wednesday, January 25, 2017
  - This means the period of time from Wednesday night through Thursday morning.

- Includes:
  - Sheltered PIT count
  - Unsheltered PIT count

SHELLTERED PIT COUNT

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

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

Bed Type	McKinney-Vento (ESG)	HMIS participating	Beds HH w/ Children	Units HH w/ Children	Beds HH w/o Children	Beds HH w/ only Children	Population designated beds?	Year-Round Beds	Total Seasonal Beds	Seasonal operating dates	Overflow Beds	PIT Count
Other beds	No	no	0	0	0	0		0	20	10/5/15 - 5/8/16		13
Other beds	No	no	0	0	10	0	10 veteran beds	10	0			4
Other beds	No	no	9	3	0	0		9				9
Other beds	No	no			29	0		29	0			29
Other beds	No	no	15	3	0	0		15				0
Facility-based beds	No	no			0			0	20	12/1/15 - 4/1/16		17
Facility-based beds	No	no	0	0	3	0		3	0			0
Other beds	No	no							15	10/1/15 - 4/30/16		10
Other beds	No	no	14	1	0	0		14	0			14
Facility-based beds	No	no	12	1	30	0		42	0			29
Other beds	Yes	no							19	11/1/15 - 3/31/16		19
Facility-based beds	Yes	no	18	4	13	0		31				31
Facility-based beds	No	no			12		12 veteran beds	12				13

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

- Includes all:
    - Emergency Shelters (ES),
        - Domestic violence shelters
        - Hotel/motel vouchers
    - Safe Haven (SH),
    - Transitional Housing (TH),
    - Rapid Re-Housing projects (RRH),
    - Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

- Data source:
  - ES, SH, TH and PSH complete DMA's online survey
  - RRH is pulled from HMIS
- Online survey requests:
  - Capacity = total # units *and* beds
  - Configuration of units/beds
  - Funding Source
  - Count of persons in program

Sheltered Point-in-Time Count (PIT)

○ Includes all ES, TH, and Safe Haven

   ○ Data source: HMIS *or* Interview Forms

HMIS

    ○ Only if pre-test shows high data quality

    ○ Data must be up-to-date as of 1/25/17

    ○ Data must be accurate

Interview Form

    ○ One form to be completed per household

    ○ Collects demographic information

Sheltered PIT Interview Form

- Write county, agency, and program name at top of form.

- One Interview Form for each household.
  - For households greater than 5 people, attach a 2nd Form.

- Each homeless person to be interviewed <u>one time only</u>.

- One person at each agency designated to collect all forms and return to DMA

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UNSHELTERED PIT COUNT

Unsheltered Count - When?

The Unsheltered PIT Count date is also January 25, 2017.

This means the overnight hours on Wednesday evening

through Thursday morning.

NOTE: The date cannot be changed by one county or RHAB. The entire CoC must conduct the count on the same date.

Unsheltered Count – Where?

○ <u>Unsheltered</u> = Households in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings

Unsheltered Count – Where?

Count includes individuals sleeping
in these types of locations:

- Streets/sidewalks
- Vehicles
- Parks
- Hunting cabins
- Tents
- Campgrounds
- Barns
- Truck Stops

- Abandoned buildings
- Bus station/ transportation depots
- Chicken coops
- Railroad cars
- Storage units
- Lumberyards

Unsheltered Count – Where?

Unsheltered Count <u>DOES NOT</u> include individuals living in these locations:
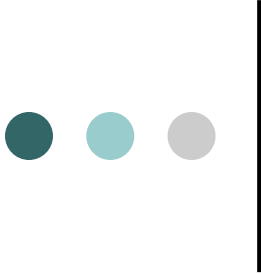
- Hotels/motels
- Shelters, transitional, or permanent homeless programs
- Jails/prison
- Emergency rooms/ hospitals
- Halfway houses

- Recovery houses
- Residential/medical facilities
- Youth in custody of state in foster care or other out-of-home placement
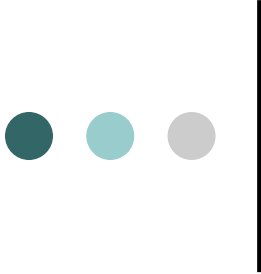- Doubled up in the homes of family/friends

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Unsheltered Count – How?

Methods:

○ Street-based count

- Complete coverage
- Known locations only
- Combination of complete coverage and known locations

○ Service-based count
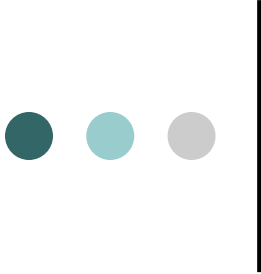
○ "Come and be counted" locations

Unsheltered Count - Street-based count

- **Street-based count** (also called a public-places count) is conducted by walking and/or driving through a community seeking to identify individuals/families who may be homeless. Types of street-based counts include:
  - **Complete Coverage** – Attempt to count unsheltered individuals/families across an entire county, or to cover specific portions of the county.
  - **Known locations only** – Count conducted at locations where homeless individuals/families are likely to be located.
  - **Combination of complete coverage and known locations** – This is when teams conduct the count in known locations in addition to a minimal amount of complete coverage.
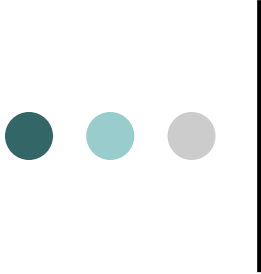- Use either interview form *or* observation only form

Unsheltered Count - Street-based count

- "Street-based" count to be conducted the **<u>night</u>** of January 25 or day/night of January 26

  - January 25: Ask, "where will you sleep tonight"?

  - January 26: Ask, "where <u>did</u> you sleep <u>last</u> tonight"?

Unsheltered Count - Service-based count

- **Service-Based Count**. Staff or volunteers interview participants of programs that provide non-shelter services to persons who are homeless. Examples: drop in center, day program, soup kitchens, food pantries, benefits offices, veteran centers, and mainstream social service programs.

  - **There is a separate interview form for the service-based count**.

- **Combination**. Both a street-based and service-based count.

Unsheltered Count - Service-based count

- "Service-based" count must be conducted on **January 26**, asking, "Where did you sleep last night?"

Unsheltered Count – Come and be counted location

- One method that has proven successful for counting homeless youth is a "come and be counted" type of location
- This is when you select a location, based on input from youth, that is known to be safe and comfortable for youth to congregate
- The date and location is advertised to youth prior to the count and they *come to be counted*

Unsheltered Count – Who?
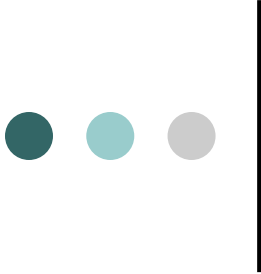
All household types:

- Families with children
- Couples, married and unmarried
- Single individuals
- Youth
  - Children -- under age 18 -- and aged 18-24
  - Unaccompanied youth
  - Parenting youth

Sheltered & Unsheltered – PIT Data Collected

**What information are we collecting?**

1. # persons in household

2. For each person in household:
   - Age
   - Gender
   - Ethnicity
   - Race

3. Additional data collected:
   - # of homeless episodes
   - Length of time (# months) homeless
   - Disability
   - Veteran Status
   - Domestic Violence

Sheltered & Unsheltered – Interview Forms

- Ask all questions as written on the Interview Form.
- Inform participants
  - Participation is voluntary
  - They may refuse to answer some or all questions.
  - Refusal to participate will not result in a denial of shelter, service, or other assistance.
- If a household/individual does not want to participate, answer demographic questions based on observation.
- If person refuses to give initials, assign initials and complete rest of interview.
- Disability status, ask no questions regarding the nature or severity.

HUD Requirements
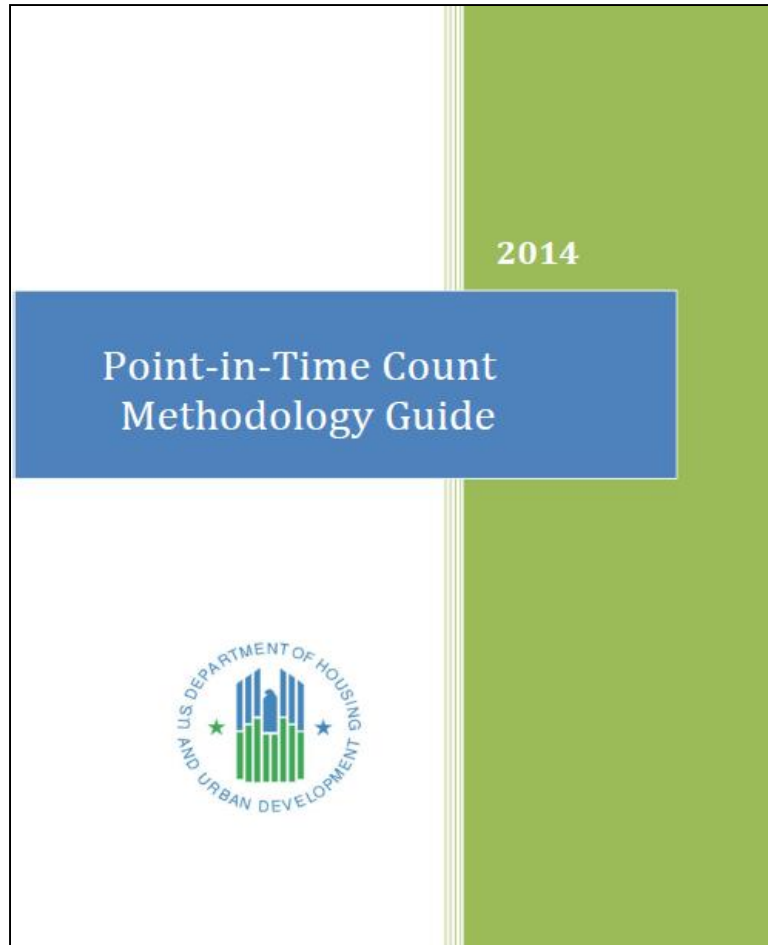
HUD has provided communities with a *Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide*, which includes 14 "Standards" to be followed and implemented by CoCs. The *Guide* dated 2014 is in effect for the 2017 count.

Unsheltered Count Guiding Principles

- Safety
- Anonymity
- Complete information
- Each person counted
- Each person counted once

Counting Veterans

○ Major focus on ending veterans homelessness. Both the Eastern & Western PA CoCs are working with HUD TA teams to reduce and end veterans homelessness.

○ For the unsheltered count, a veteran is defined as someone who:

a) served in the U.S. Armed Forces, or

b) activated, into active duty, as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist

Counting Unsheltered Veterans

○ Resources for counting homeless veterans:

● *Booklet for Unsheltered Count* is available online:

• *http://www.dma-housing.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/2015-Booklet-for-Unsheltered-Count-FINAL.pdf*

○ Coordinate with ***SSVF providers*** and other veteran serving organizations

○ Coordinate with veterans who have experienced homelessness to:

• Identify unsheltered locations

• Participate during unsheltered count

Counting Youth

- 2017 is the "baseline" year for counting homeless youth
  - The CoC will be evaluated on how we reduce youth homelessness from the 2017 baseline number
- HUD is making many resources available:
  - Voices of Youth Count Toolkit
  - NAEH Webinar on 11/2/16
  - USICH Webinar this afternoon at 2pm
  - HUD TA - Rural Youth Peer Network
  - … and more
- We will continue to provide additional youth guidance as it becomes available

Counting Youth

○ Unlike previous years, we are asking that you complete the Interview Form with each person/household encountered… even if they are doubled up or in a location not typically considered homeless per the HUD definition.

○ The additional data collected will allow us to better understand the characteristics of youth who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Counting Unsheltered Youth

- DMA has reached out to the Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Regional Coordinators
- We will also be providing information to PA DHS Children & Youth in hopes of encouraging participation among local child welfare workers
- DMA is in the process updating the list of youth contacts by county
- DMA staff can work with you to enhance your county's planning efforts

Unsheltered Count – Resources

All information will be uploaded to the CoC website: http://pennsylvaniacoc.org/

- *Booklet for the Unsheltered Point-in-Time Count of the Homeless*
- Interview Forms, Observation Form, Summary Form
- PowerPoint training slides for volunteers
- Archived webinars and training slides

Unsheltered PIT - After the Count

Role of the Unsheltered County Coordinator
By February 8, 2017:

- Complete the County Summary Form
- Submit the following:
  - All Interview and Observation Forms (one per counted household)
  - County Summary Form
- The # of homeless households reported on the Summary Form must equal the # of Interview + Observation Forms

Speakers – Unsheltered Count

- Jennifer Malone, Lawrence County Community Action Program

- Andrew Palomo, Valley Youth House

- Mae-Ling Kranz, Transitions of PA

Developing an Unsheltered PIT Count

Best Practices by Lawrence County Social Services

Planning Overview

- Community Awareness

- Communication and engagement

- Utilizing resources

- Follow Through

Community Awareness

Partners and Population

Partners

- Build strong working relationships with partners in the area
- Know the goals and missions of your partnering agencies and how they can tie into your agency's goals.
- Be aware of the services they provide to the community and think about how these services can work with the mission of completing the PIT count.

Population

- Use the knowledge of where the homeless population congregates.
- Think creatively about how to access different sub-populations with in the homeless population in your area.
- Think about areas and other partners that may be outside the box thinking and plan inspired ways to engage them.

Communication and Engagement

" Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. "

-Helen Keller

Communication, coordination and collaboration are key in planning an effective PIT count.

Deliberate Communication and Engagement

- Begin planning several months prior to the count.
- Assign duties and responsibilities well in advance.
- Provide leadership training as well as staff training.
- Create a layout for the event that will focus on a path to engaging each participant. Allow a layout that ensures each participant will be interviewed and provided the opportunity for services.
- Work collaboratively as a group to provide an opportunity to both serve your community and complete the data that is invaluable in driving current and future programming in your area.

A Collaborative Approach

- A collaborative approach allows us to create a team that can provide opportunities for early insights into the outcomes of the event planning for our future.

- Working collaboratively with our Housing Coalition allows us to better understand how we can create a cohesive service based event to conduct the count.

- Know your community strengths and weaknesses. Collectively address the gaps and work on consistent improvement.

Preparing And Utilizing Resources

Some of our strengths

Utilizing Resources

- Time is a resource. Housing Coalition is the perfect opportunity to begin discussing the PIT count. This meeting already has a lot of resources at the table.

- Understanding the resources that each agency in your area provides will allow you to use these resources to enhance the service based count.

- Utilizing possible grant line items creatively.

- Advertising

- Provide immediate services, such as on-site case management.

- Provide training to leadership and staff.

- Utilizing resources to track your data.

Following Through

"

I can give you a six-word formula for success: Think things through-then follow through.

"

-Eddie Rickenbacker

Following through with your partners and population after the count will ensure continued assessment and allow for cognizant areas of growth.

Follow Through

- Provide information to the community, elected official and funders as well as interested stake holders about the data collected.
- Conduct a debrief of the event.
  - Discuss strengths and weaknesses
- Follow through with those identified during the count.

"

Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress and working together is success.

"

-Henry Ford

Thank you for Listening!

Jennifer Malone
Emergency Services Coordinator

Lawrence County Social Services

Lawrence County Community Action Partnership

Ph# 724-658-7258 x1211

Jmalone@lccap.org

Youth Count – Best Practices Overview
Andrew Palomo

Today's Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Overview of Youth Count Lehigh Valley
3. Best Practices in Conducting Youth Counts
4. Questions?

Introduction

Valley Youth House Mission

Valley Youth House empowers and strengthens the lives of children, youth, and families through inclusive programming that builds resilience and fosters growth and independence.

Andrew Palomo

- Research and Evaluation Coordinator

- Masters in Social Work, with a concentration in research methodology

- Have experience in developing sampling techniques with hidden population

- Former Fulbright Fellow working with Street Youth in Guatemala

- Working with RHY youth for over 10+ years

- Villanova/Fordham Grad, Peace Corps Alum
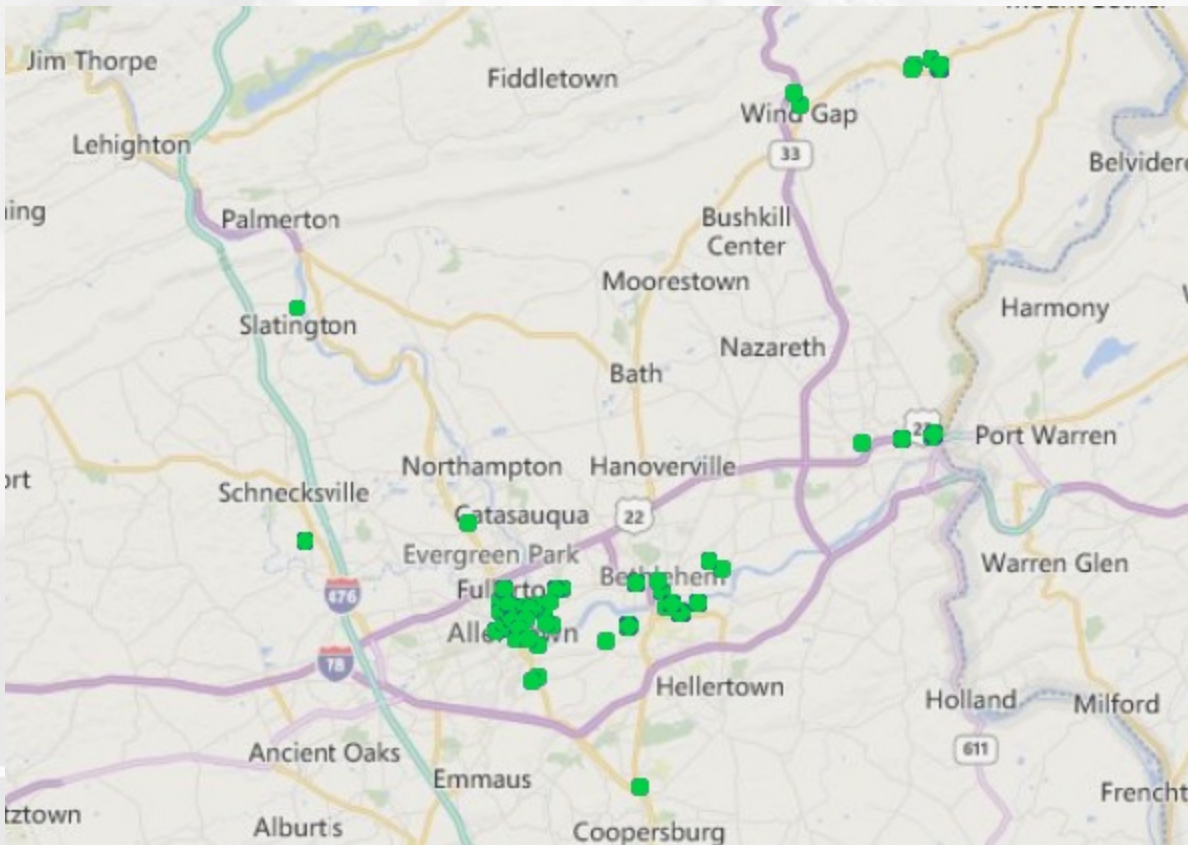
Connect!

apalomo@valleyyouthhouse.org

- Occurred in three days in May 2016
- Multi-pronged approach
  - Magnet Events / Drop-in sites
  - Canvasing
  - Social Media
  - Targeted Locations
  - Chain referral sampling
- 30 Staff and Volunteers
- Used technology (the use of digital surveys)

Results

May 2016
Youth Count Findings

162 surveys administered
72 surveys met inclusion criteria

46% of youth surveyed reported couch-surfing or staying with a friend the previous night

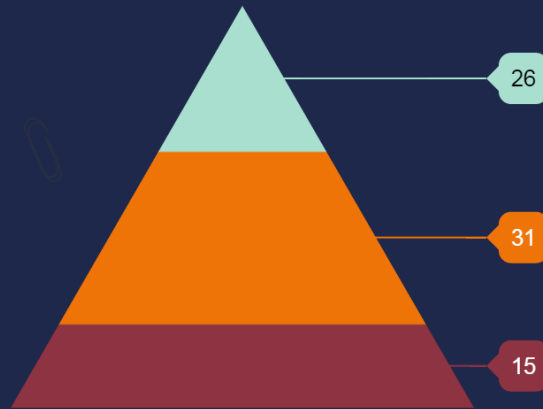# Results

Results

Highlighted Statistics

2 respondents did not provide health, foster care, or employment information

67% had at least 1 shelter stay in the last 3 years

78% indicated no drug abuse, 47% reported having a mental health concern

36% of youth were employed part or full time

14% of youth were in foster care

Lessons Learned / Best Practices

- Youth need to be involved in the planning process
  - We started that late and we learned that youth knew more about locations

  - They were instrumental in marketing and getting the word out (social media can be your friend)

Collaborate With Youth-serving Organizations And Community Partners

- Collaboration is key when planning your youth count. Collaborating with youth serving organizations in the planning and execution stages of the youth count can provide valuable insights

- E.g. Children and Youth Agencies, local schools, police departments, churches,

How to attract youth to fill out surveys:

- Drop-in Site / Magnet Event
- Canvassing
- Targeting Canvassing – locations determined by youth and community partners. Especially helpful in rural areas!
- Social Media – getting the "word" out
- Chain Referral – give out incentives

Paper surveys vs. Digital Surveys

- Pro Digital: Instant data, one-tablet to carry
- Con Digital: Took longer than expected, training, cost associated with rental and app design

- Pro Paper: Faster, less training, inexpensive
- Con Paper: Poor forest, data input, errors

Training was key in conducting these counts, especially if you are using volunteers

- Having leads and worse case scenario plans
- What to do in an emergency
- Basic interaction 101
- FAQs – we did not have that, but will in future counts

Questions

Please contact me if you have questions!

Andrew Palomo

Research and Evaluation Coordinator

apalomo@valleyyouthhouse.org

484-866-7183 (work cell – you may text)

Questions?

The Intersection of Domestic Violence and Homelessness

Presented by: Mae-Ling Kranz
                        Transitions of PA

Up to 50% of homeless women report that domestic violence was the *immediate* cause of their homelessness. And nearly all homeless women report experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault in their lifetime.

Source: National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

Asking the Question During the Unsheltered Count

- Should you ask the question?
- What is the best approach to asking the question?
- What if their response is YES?
- Confidentiality Concerns
- What resources are available?

fppt.com