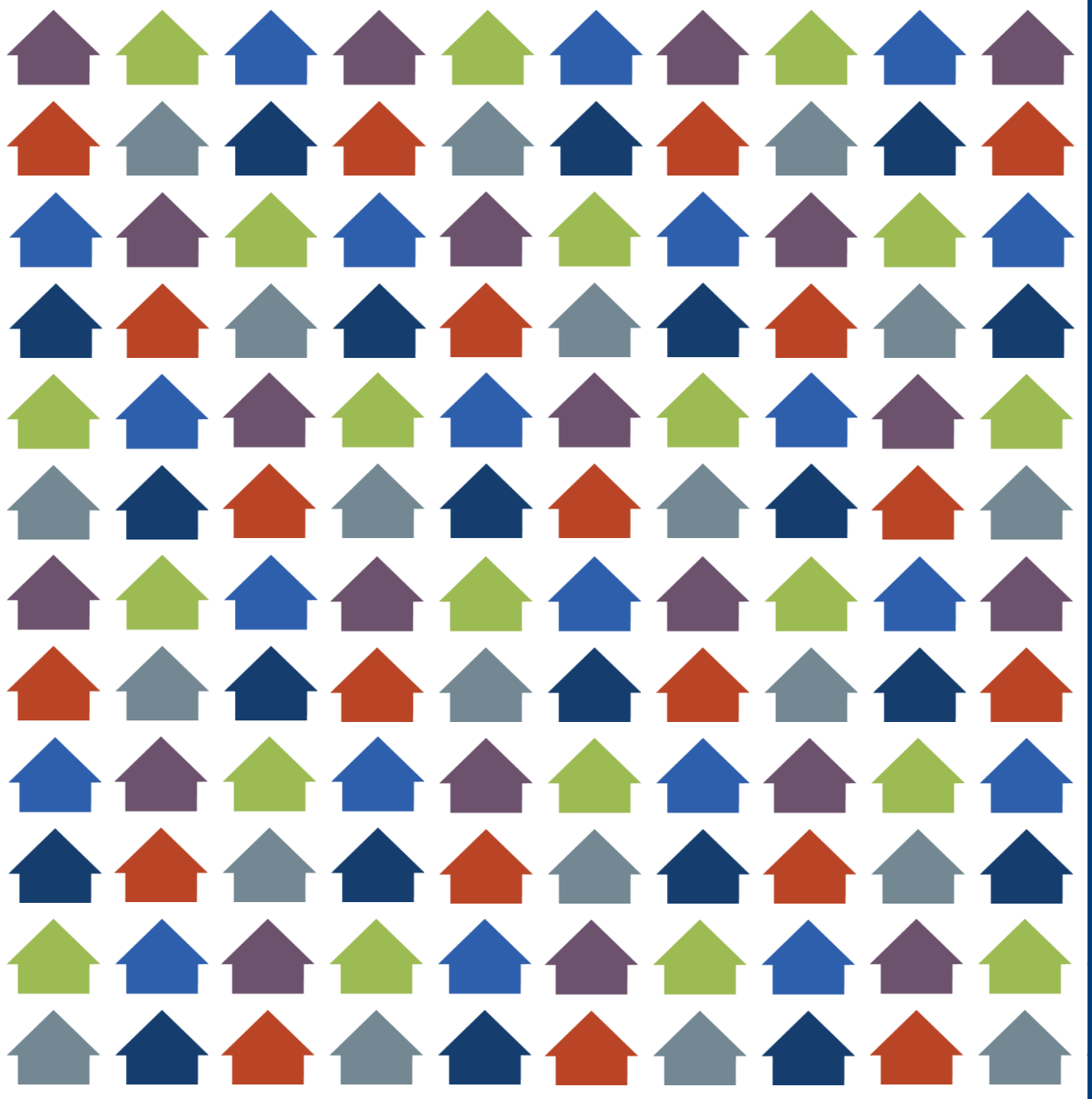


THN
TEXAS HOMELESS NETWORK

2019 PIT Lead Training

Strategies For Change

thn.org

PIT Date

January 24th, 2019

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- PIT Planning
- PIT Methodology
- Training
- Counting Us Mobile App
  - RCC Teams
- Housing Inventory Count
- Q&A

PIT Planning

PIT Basics

- How many people are currently homeless in your community?
- How many of them are families, youth, or veterans?

The answers to these questions and more can be answered by point-in-time counts.

A point-in-time count is an unduplicated count on a single night of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness

WHY A POINT-IN-TIME

FUNDING

- Eligibility to apply for CoC funds

EXTENT

- Trends of homelessness in the local area
- Characteristics of those experiencing homelessness
- New programs

AWARENESS

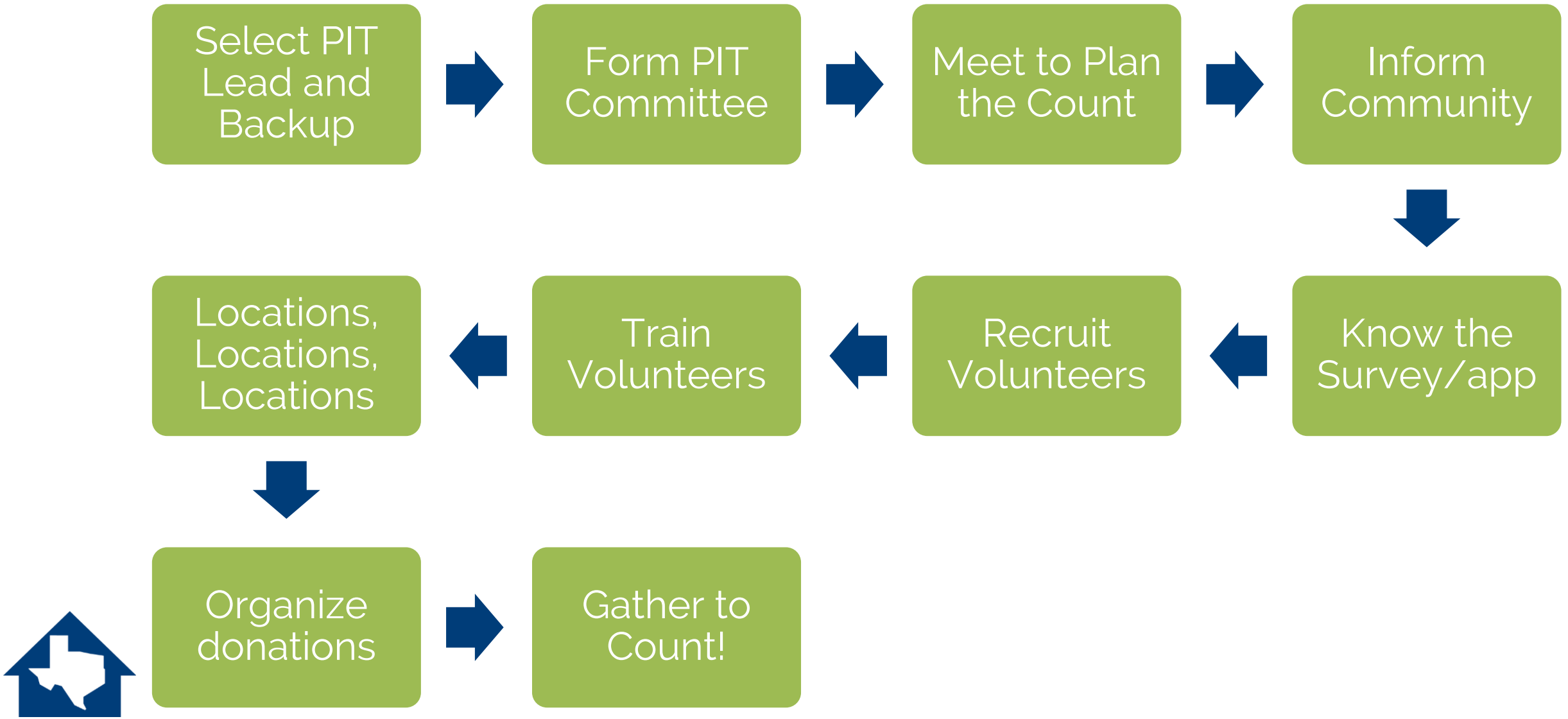
- Raise community awareness
- Raise political awareness

Engaging Subpopulation

- Youth
- Veterans
- Families
- Individuals with Lived Experience

Click here for resources

SUCCESSFUL PIT COUNT



Before the Count

- Develop a Safety Plan
- Plan for Adverse Weather
- Set-up Headquarters Location
- Work with Shelter Leads
- Create map of “Hot Spots”
- Recruit and Assign Volunteers
- Train Volunteer
- Prepare Survey Kits

Types of Volunteers

- Planning
- Headquarters
- Team Leads
- Sheltered
- Unsheltered
- Service-Based

Mobilizing the Community

- Forming PIT Committee
- Spreading awareness
- Recruiting Volunteers

Implementation

- Building Relationships
- Individuals with Lived Experience
- Media Engagement

PIT Methodology

WHO TO COUNT

Individuals & Families Living In:

- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Domestic Violence Shelter
- Safe Haven (none in TX BoS)
- Hotel/Motel paid for by voucher
- Places not meant for human habitation

WHO NOT TO COUNT

Individuals & Families Living In:

- Doubled-up situations
- Substandard housing
- PSH program
- Rapid Re-housing program
- Hotel/Motel paid for with own funds
- Locations using HUD-VASH vouchers
- Shelters designed for foster care or DFPS children

Sheltered PIT Count

- HUD defines sheltered homeless persons as adults, children, and unaccompanied children who, on the night of the count, are living in shelters for the homeless.
- Regardless of funding source, **all** providers of shelter, vouchers, or funds for shelters (including motel/hotel rooms), and/or transitional housing need to provide unduplicated information about the individuals and families on January 24th, 2019.
- For Emergency Shelters, you should conduct the surveys in the late afternoon/evening **when participants are checking into stay the night**.

Sheltered PIT – Who do you count?

You should count:

- Emergency Shelters:
  - Domestic violence shelters
  - Hotel, motel, or apartment vouchers paid for by a public or private agency because the individual or family is homeless
- Transitional Housing

You should NOT count:

- Persons living doubled up in conventional housing;
- Formerly homeless persons living in Section 8 SRO, Shelter Plus Care, Supportive Housing Program permanent housing or other permanent housing units;
- Persons living in conventional housing and receiving temporary assistance (Rapid Rehousing or Homelessness Prevention) from a program funded by the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP);
- Children or youth, who because of their own or a parent's homelessness or abandonment now reside temporarily or for a short anticipated duration in hospitals, residential treatment facilities, emergency foster care, or detention facilities;
- Adults in mental health facilities, chemical dependency facilities, or criminal justice facilities.

Sheltered PIT – Prep and Forms

- Download and register an account with the Counting Us App
  - Practice entering surveys using code: **TXBOS19**
  - Don't be afraid to make mistakes, this is all test data!
- Review the survey and become comfortable with the questions
- Talk to your PIT lead about any concerns prior or on the day of the count
- ES/ TH Facilities

Unsheltered PIT Count

- A count of people who are homeless but not in a shelter or transitional housing program is referred to as an unsheltered count.
- The unsheltered count requires identification of homeless people that are living on the street, in abandoned buildings, in their vehicles, tents, shanties, parks, woods, transportation stations, or other places not meant for human habitation on January 24th.

Unsheltered PIT – Survey Steps

There are **five** steps to completing an unsheltered PIT count survey. As an unsheltered volunteer you should:

1. Identify yourself, engage potential participants and explain the purpose of the count.
2. Deliver the script and the consent process. Obtain verbal consent to proceed.
3. Ask the screening questions. Determine if the individual is eligible.
4. If eligible, administer the survey questions, recording the participant's responses. If ineligible, thank them for their time and move on.
5. Thank the respondent for their participation. If possible, provide the participant with donated items.

Unsheltered PIT – Sample Script

Hello, my name is _____, and I am helping _____conduct a short survey of our community. We would like to learn more about people experiencing homelessness, what kinds of problems they face, and to see what services are needed to address homelessness.

Your participation is strictly voluntary, and all of your responses are confidential. Your privacy will be protected and respected. If questions make you uncomfortable you do not have to answer them. Would you be willing to take a few minutes to answer some questions?

Unsheltered PIT – Where to Count

- Street/sidewalk
- Vehicle (car, van, RV, truck)
- Park
- Abandoned building
- Bus, train station, airport
- Under bridge/overpass
- Woods/outdoor encampment

Unsheltered PIT – Prep and Forms

- Download and register an account with the Counting Us App
- If possible, map out sections for volunteers
- Volunteer Interviewing Guide
- Day of Count Cheat Sheet
- Volunteer Hour Tracker sheet

Safety

Do

- ✓ Always work in teams
- ✓ Be respectful of space
- ✓ Ask a person to participate if you think they are homeless
- ✓ Introduce yourself and explain what you are doing
- ✓ Be sincere and caring
- ✓ Remain calm
- ✓ Know how to de-escalate
- ✓ Know emergency numbers
- ✓ Honor requests to not participate
- ✓ Provide shelter information if possible
- ✓ Dress appropriately
- ✓ Leave valuables behind

Don't

- ✓ Wake up someone*
- ✓ Approach if you don't feel comfortable*
- ✓ Mandate participation
- ✓ Invade personal space
- ✓ Cross barriers
- ✓ Promise anything you can't deliver
- ✓ Be judgmental
- ✓ Give money or offer rides
- ✓ Share any confidential info or photos of participants
- ✓ Panic
- ✓ Put anyone in danger
- ✓ Deviate from the survey

Best Practices

- Familiarize yourself with the survey
- Communicate your intentions to prospective survey participants
- Obtain consent to administer the survey
- Express confidence and compassion
- When surveying individuals within a group, prioritize safety and protect participant's information
- Come up with a safety phrase for discomfort amongst your team
- Know volunteer expectations
- Know community resources

Checklist

Items to bring with you:

- Comfortable clothes and shoes
- Fully charged cell phone (portable charger if possible)
- Flashlight (if conducting count at night or early morning)
- Pen and notepad
- Vehicle if necessary
- “Goodie bags” to pass out if provided

Service Based Count

- This method focuses on conducting interviews with users of non-shelter services and locations frequented by people who are homeless.
- The major difference between a night of the count approach and a service-based approach is that it cannot be assumed that everyone encountered is homeless.
  - To determine homeless status, it is essential to ask detailed questions related to living situation
- **Data collection must not extend beyond 7 days after 1/24/19**

Training

Training Outline

- **The purpose of the count:** Why it is happening and the expected benefits for the community and for the respondents.
- **The population:** Who experiences homelessness and why. There is an opportunity to educate volunteers on the population and the causes of homelessness. This could include specific information on homelessness experienced by Indigenous people and youth.
- **The approach:** How to approach someone to participate in the survey. An explanation of the honoraria/incentives. How to ask the survey questions in a respectful manner.
- **The survey:** How to screen for homelessness. What each question is asking for. The importance of collecting reliable data.
- **Logistics and safety:** What materials will be provided to survey teams. What to wear and bring on the day of the count. Who to contact in the case of a problem or emergency.

Volunteer Training

ONLINE

- Training
- Google Form:
  - Volunteer Registration
  - Quiz
  - Release Form

IN-PERSON

- Training
- Google Form:
  - Volunteer Registration
  - Release Form

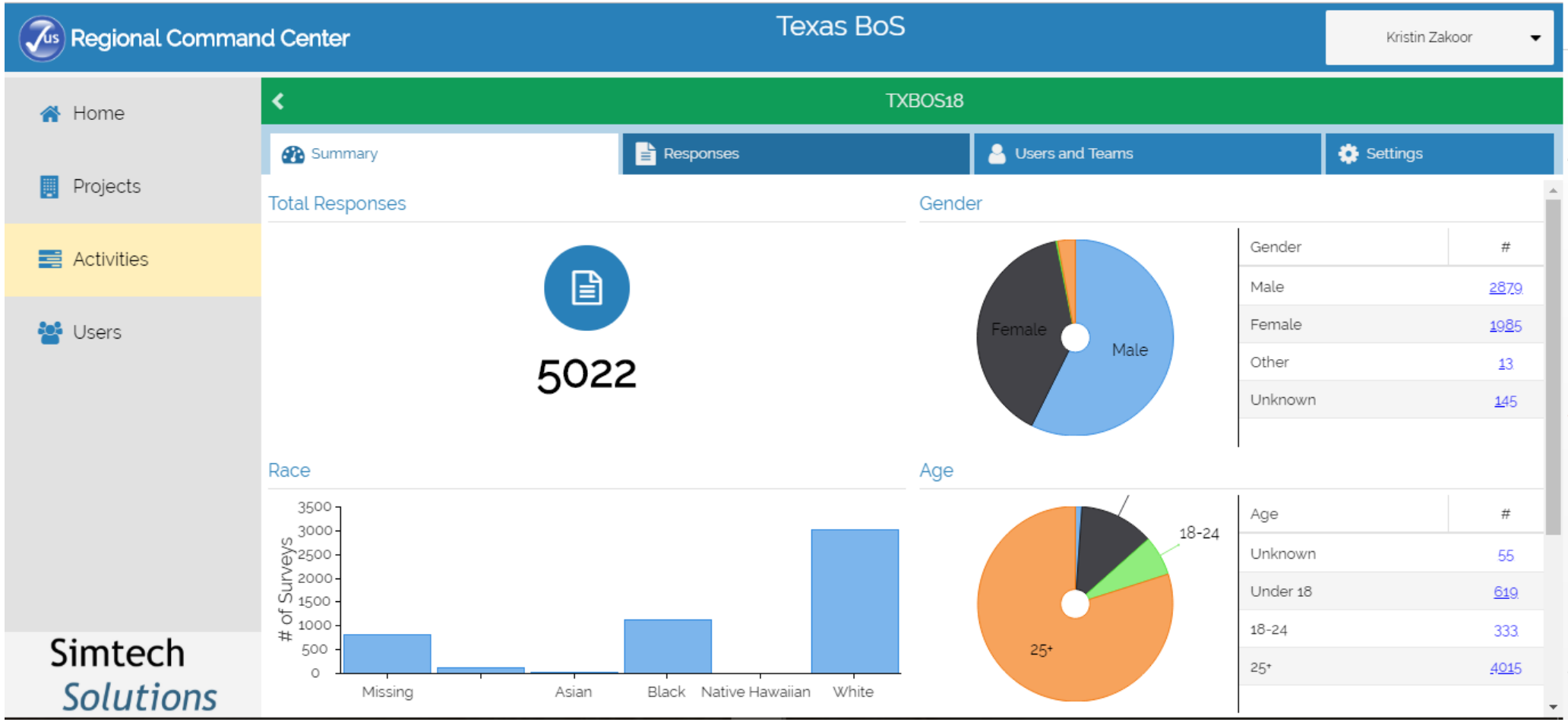
Volunteer Hour Tracker

ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST FILL OUT ONLINE FORM!

Please have volunteers fill out on the day of the count after completing their shift

Counting Us Mobile App

Team Command Center



Addressing your concerns:

- Concerns about volunteers use of app:
  - The app is intuitive
  - Simtech provides support documentation
  - Need to have a plan when people sign up to download, register and practice the app
  - Volunteers can get comfortable if they have some time in advance

- Concerns about people who are homeless responding to the app:
  - Some participants may be reluctant to use an app but we have not heard this at all
  - App does not require a name or DOB or any identifying information – same as paper.
  - Technology is everywhere – going to an emergency room and accessing services
  - Paper can be a back up

- The app is better than paper for managing data quality

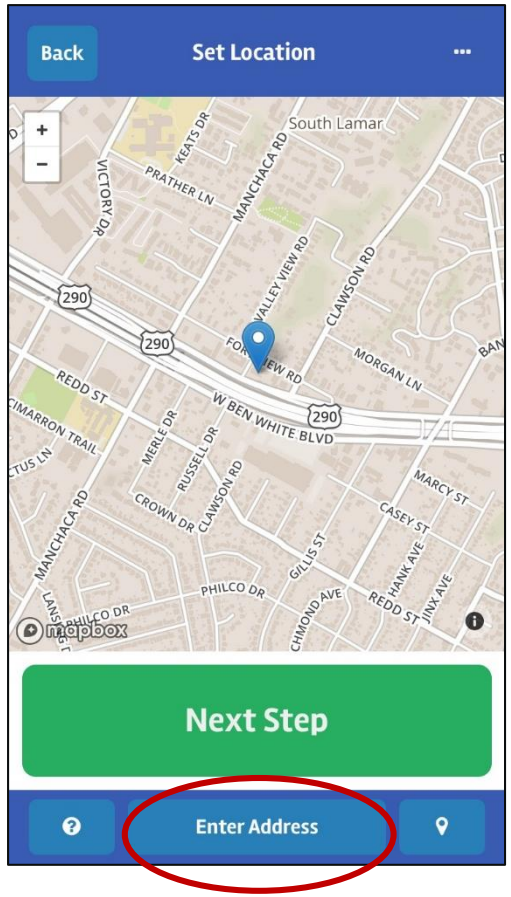
Domestic Violence Survivors

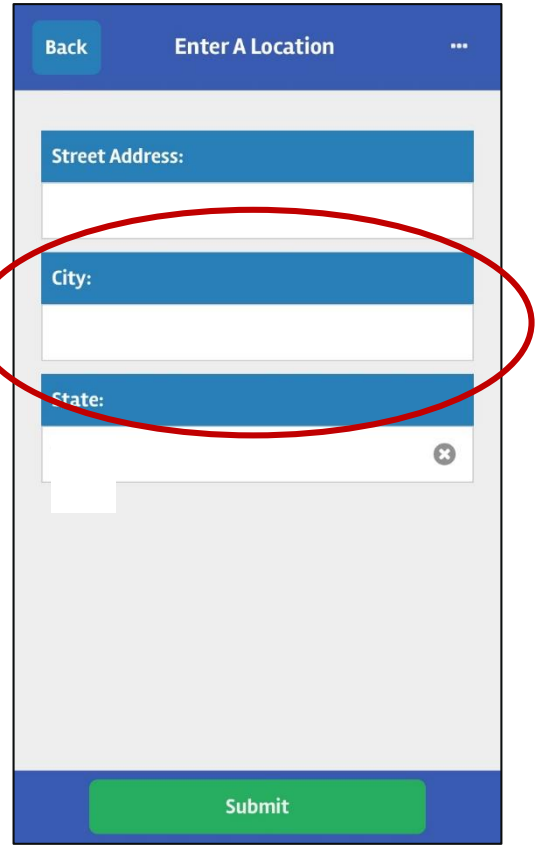
Notice CPD 17-08:

- HUD is requiring that data reported on survivors of domestic violence should be limited to reporting on those who are **currently** experiencing homelessness because they are fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as opposed to reporting on survivors who have ever experienced these circumstances.

DV Surviors and Surveys

- Use Counting Us App
- On geo-location screen, click “Enter Address” button and **ONLY** enter in City and State information
- **DO NOT** enter in first or last name
- For date of birth information **ONLY** enter in age range





Day of Count Set-Up Key

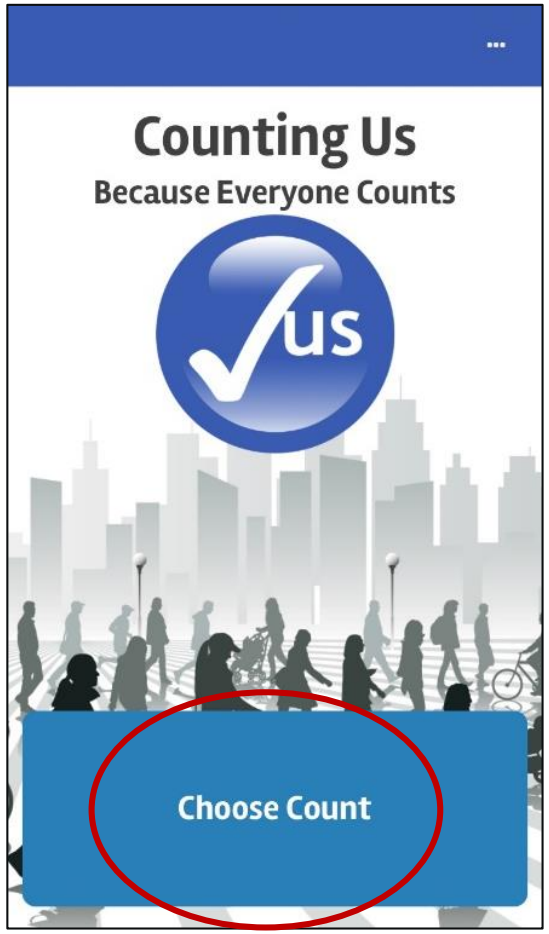
MAKE SURE ON THE DAY OF THE COUNT ALL SURVEYS ARE COLLECTED UNDER SET-UP KEY…

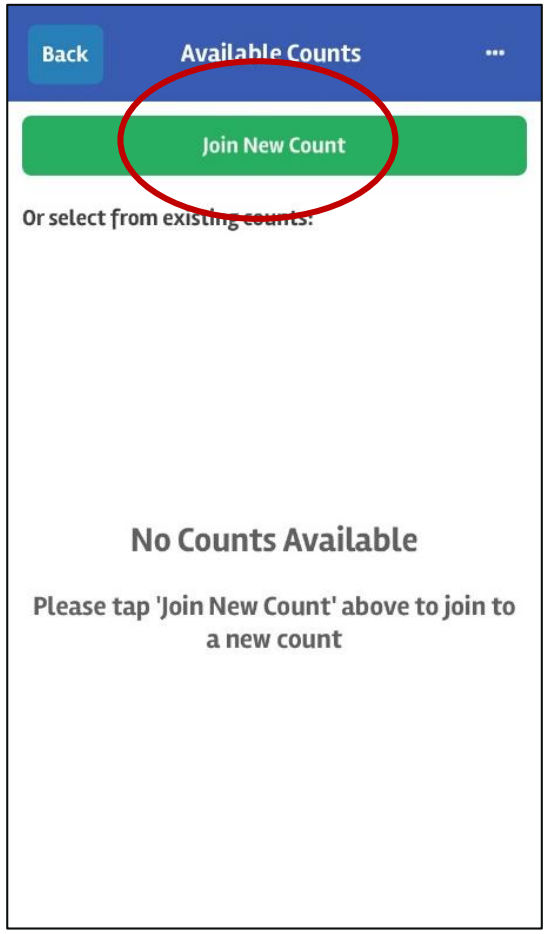
TXBOS19

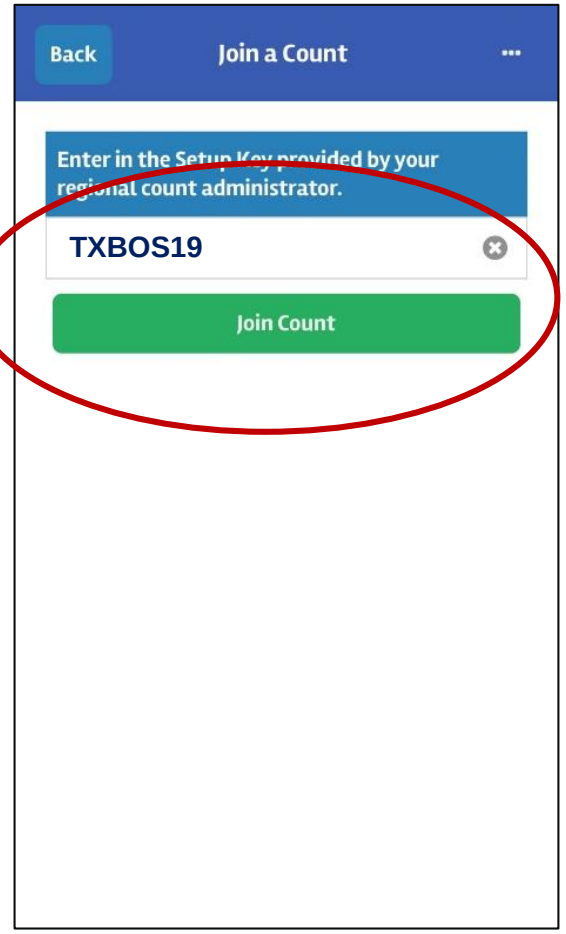
Surveys

- If volunteers have technical issues, make sure they contact PIT Lead first to triage
  - Contact THN staff if need further help addressing issue
  - You will be assigned a THN staff member to contact
- Make sure all volunteers submit “Saved Draft” surveys once they have internet access and need to do so within 24 hrs of count.
  - NO surveys should stay on any device
- Decide how you want to check-in with volunteers at end of count
  - Make sure are safe and count was completed successfully

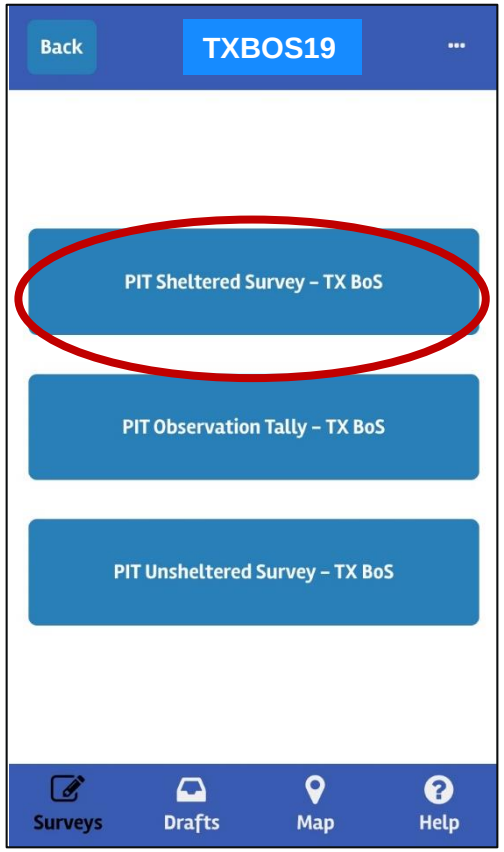
How to Join a Count

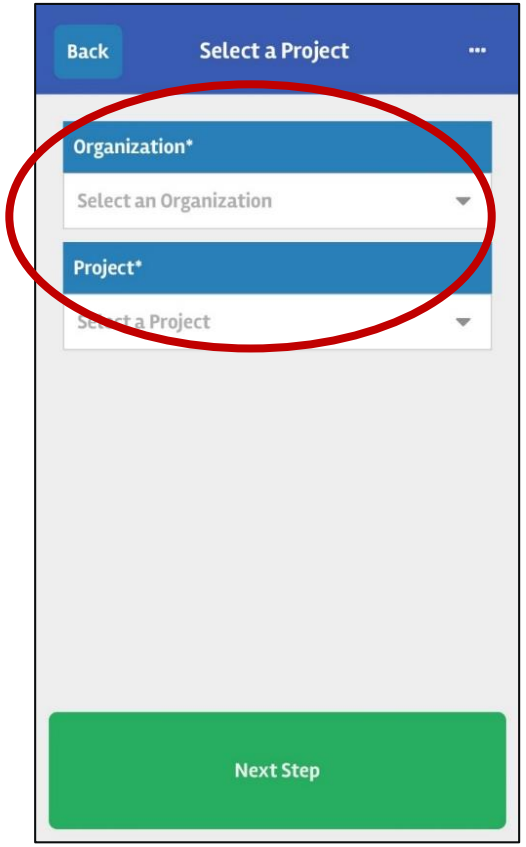






Sheltered Survey



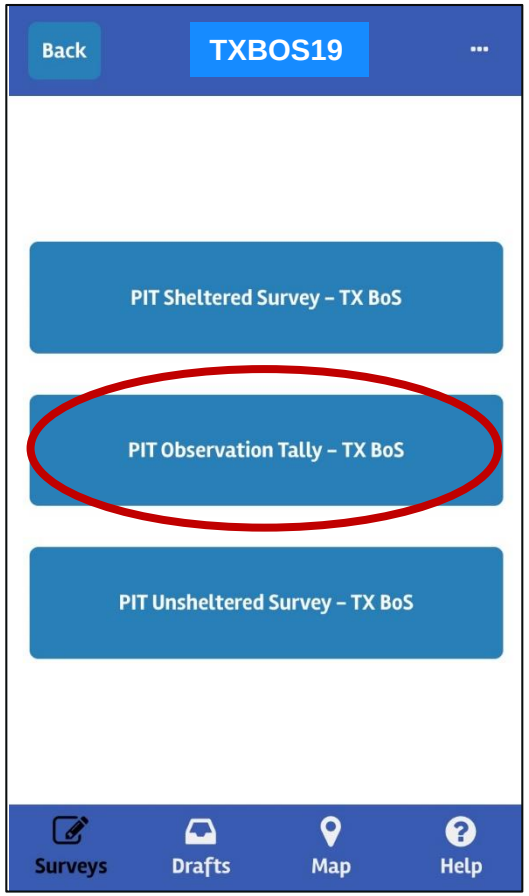


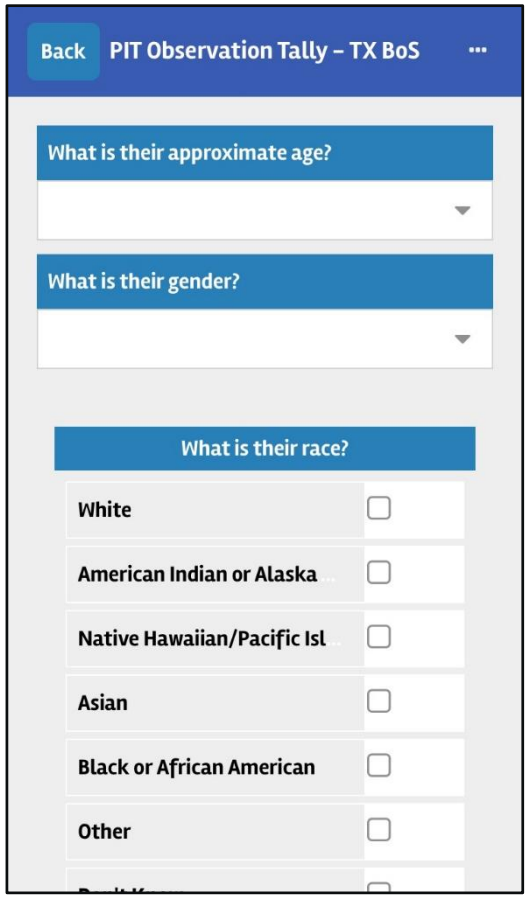
1. Sheltered count should include anyone staying in Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing

2. In order to complete a sheltered survey, you need to choose the correct Organization and Project

3. If you do not see the correct Organization and/or Project, please contact THN immediately

Observation Survey

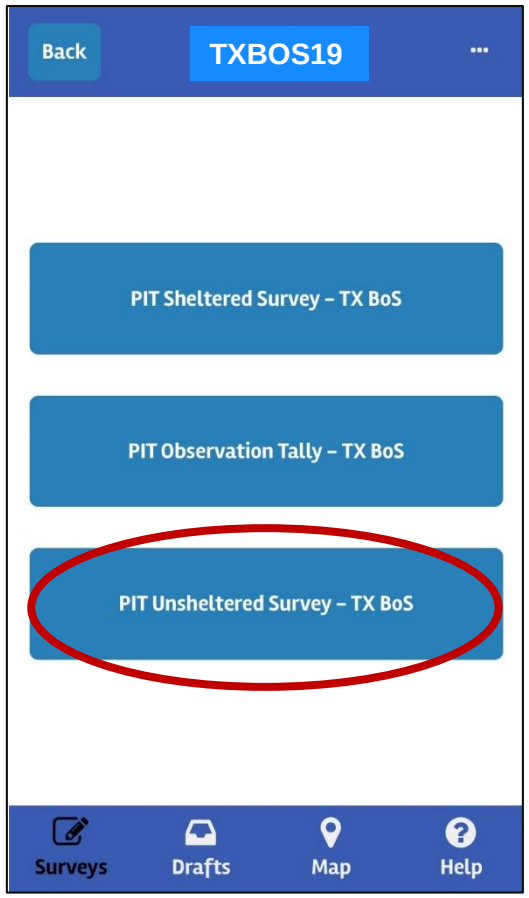


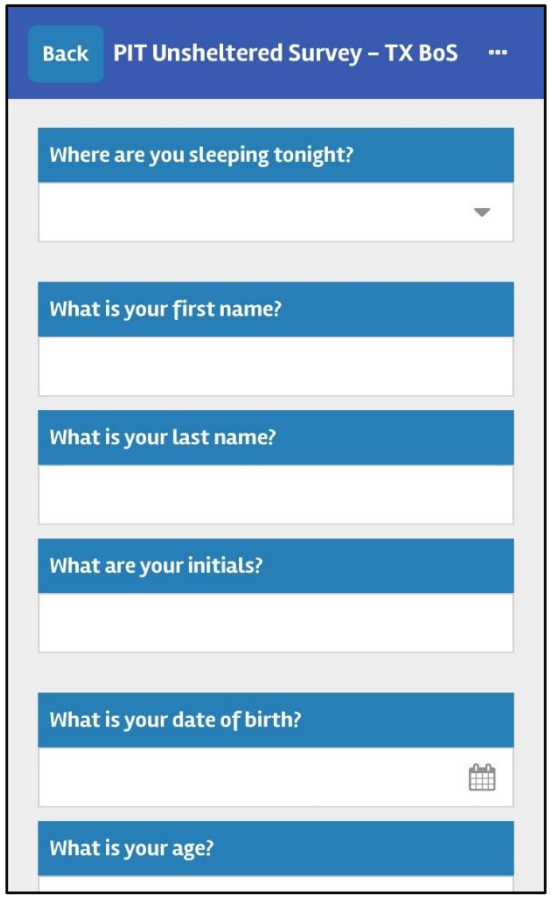


1. Observation survey should be used when:
   - someone is sleeping
   - you do not feel comfortable going to a certain area
   - a person does not want to complete the full survey

2. Please make sure to fill out as much information about the individual and/ or household as possible

Unsheltered Survey





1. Unsheltered survey should include people:
   - living on the street
   - abandoned buildings
   - vehicles
   - tents, shanties, parks, woods, transportation stations
   - other places not meant for human habitation
2. Please make sure to fill out as much information about the individual and/ or household as possible

Sheltered Count and HMIS

- NO surveys will be collected via HMIS
- All surveys should be conducted via Counting Us App

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

PIT + HIC = ❤️

PIT
Measures
People
HIC
Measures
Housing
Who &
Capacity
for Crisis

What it is...

- Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires each Continuum of Care (CoC) to count its Housing Inventory Count (HIC) on the same night as the annually required Point-in-Time (PIT) count.
- HIC to be completed on **January 24, 2019.**

What we Count...

- The HIC includes inventory and capacity information about all programs dedicated to serving homeless persons in a community, regardless of the source of funding. The HIC captures inventory information for the following program types:

Shelter:

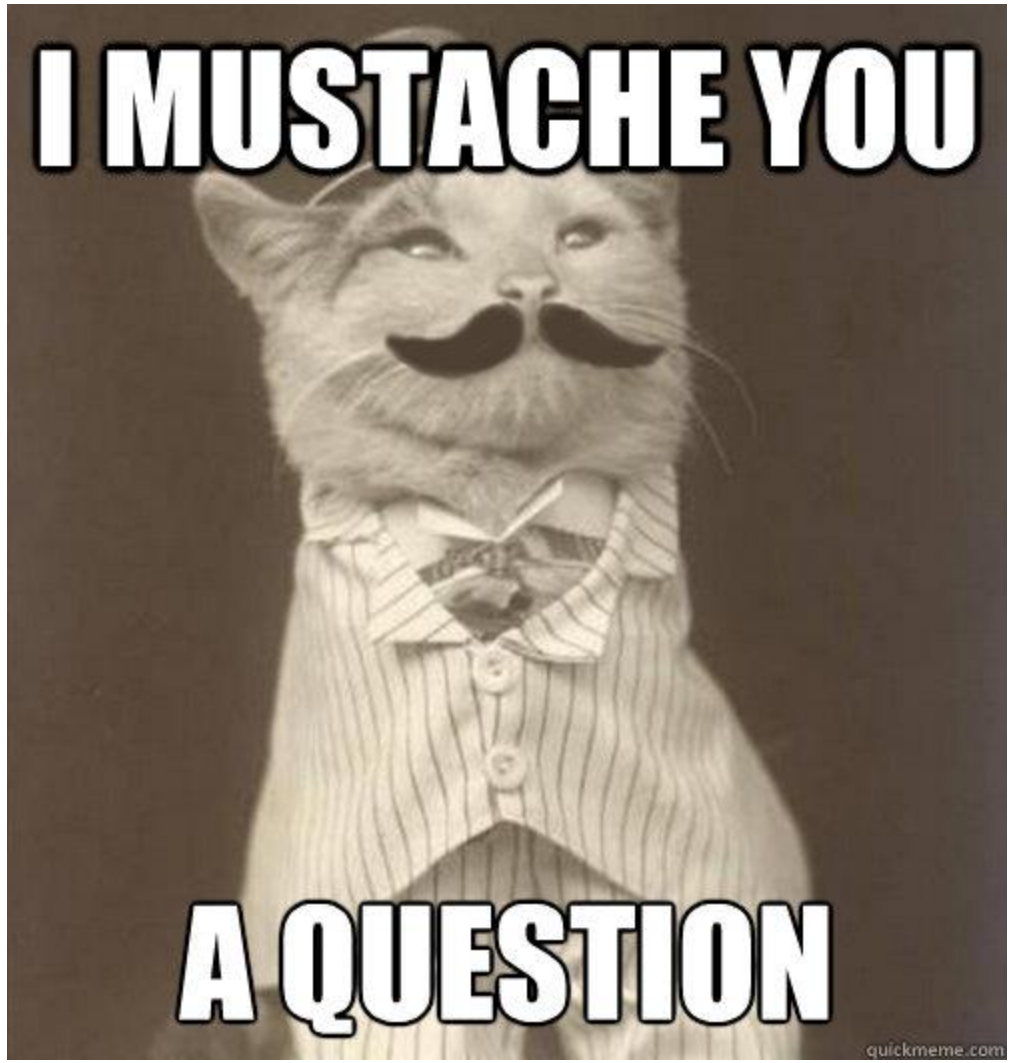
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing

Permanent Housing:

- Rapid Re-Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing

How we Collect…

- THN will send out a HIC Worksheet with Instructional Guide to each HIC Contact to be completed on January 24th
  - Excel document
- HIC Contact will fill out the **overall capacity** the project has to provide services to homeless (or formally homeless individuals)
- Email HIC worksheet back to THN by February 1st, 2019
  - To: Kristin@thn.org


I MUSTACHE YOU
A QUESTION
quickmeme.com