



Day of Count Cheat Sheet

What you need to begin:

- A charged phone or device that you will use for the Count
- Download the “Counting Us” app from either Google Play or the App Store.
- Register an account and log in.
- Enter in the Project Key for the region, **TX2019**.
- Tap “Get Started!” to get to the screen which displays the list of surveys. Follow the guidance below once you get to your designated count area and identify or engage a person whom you believe is homeless.

1) Introduce Yourself

- If you believe you have encountered a person experiencing homelessness approach them, say hello, introduce yourself, and explain that you are a volunteer with the annual Point-in-Time count.
- Ask if another volunteer has already spoken with them. If yes, thank them for their participation and move on. This has also been added as a question on the survey if you forget.
- Don’t approach someone too closely too quickly. Maintain a cordial and respectful distance and don’t put yourself into any unsafe situations. It is always a good idea to stick with a partner.
- Be sensitive – imagine how this might feel if you were in their shoes.

2) Explain what the Point-in-Time count is

- The annual survey is conducted with the goal of helping provide better programs & services to people experiencing homelessness. The information gathered helps demonstrate a need for these programs which in turn helps the region get resources to address these needs.
- The survey should take less than 10 minutes. Ask the person if he or she would be willing to participate.

If they are willing to participate proceed to Step 3.

If they are not willing or able to participate but you believe they are homeless then complete either the *Individual Observation* or *Household Observation* survey within the “Counting Us” app as best you can, and submit it/save as draft.

The unsheltered Point in Time count is intended to report only on people who are sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation, as identified below. People who are staying in sheltered locations should not be included.

Since our region has selected to ask the question “What is your sleeping location on the night of the count?” within the app, the reports will automatically exclude people who are not considered to be unsheltered. But please use this table as a guide to determine who should be surveyed on the day of the count.

Unsheltered/ Places not meant for human habitation		<u>Sheltered locations</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street/sidewalk • Vehicle (car, van, RV, truck) • Park • Abandoned building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus, train station, airport • Under bridge/overpass • Woods/outdoor encampment • Other unsheltered location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency shelter • Transitional housing • Motel/hotel paid for by an agency



3) Conduct the Individual or Household Unsheltered Survey.

- You will first pick the activity that you are doing by selecting the survey that you are completing.
- Identify your location on the next screen. Typically the map will pull up your exact location but if it does not you can drag and swipe the map to the proper location. You can also select “Enter Address” and enter in the nearest street of the interaction. This function is especially helpful when entering in surveys that were collected on paper into the app later.
- The rest of the survey gathers all the HUD elements and a few extra to help the region. Complete the survey and tap “Submit Survey”. If you do not have cell service, you can save the survey by tapping “Save Draft.” The information collected can be submitted when you are back in an area with cell coverage or internet access by opening the “Survey Drafts” tab, opening the surveys that have yet to be submitted, scrolling to the bottom of each survey, and submitting each of them. Please note that if you have multiple surveys in “Save Draft,” each one will need to be submitted individually. Do NOT leave any surveys saved on your device once the count is completed.

4) Safety

Do:

- ✓ 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
- ✓ Know appropriate distance
- ✓ 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

**If you have any questions on the day of the count,
please contact Kristin Zakoor 512-354-2033 or Kyra
Henderson 512-861-2192**