

# 2022 Volunteer Training

Strategies For Change

[thn.org](http://thn.org)

# Winter PIT Count

Date:  
1/27/2022

Module 1

Module 2

Module 3

Module 4

Module 5

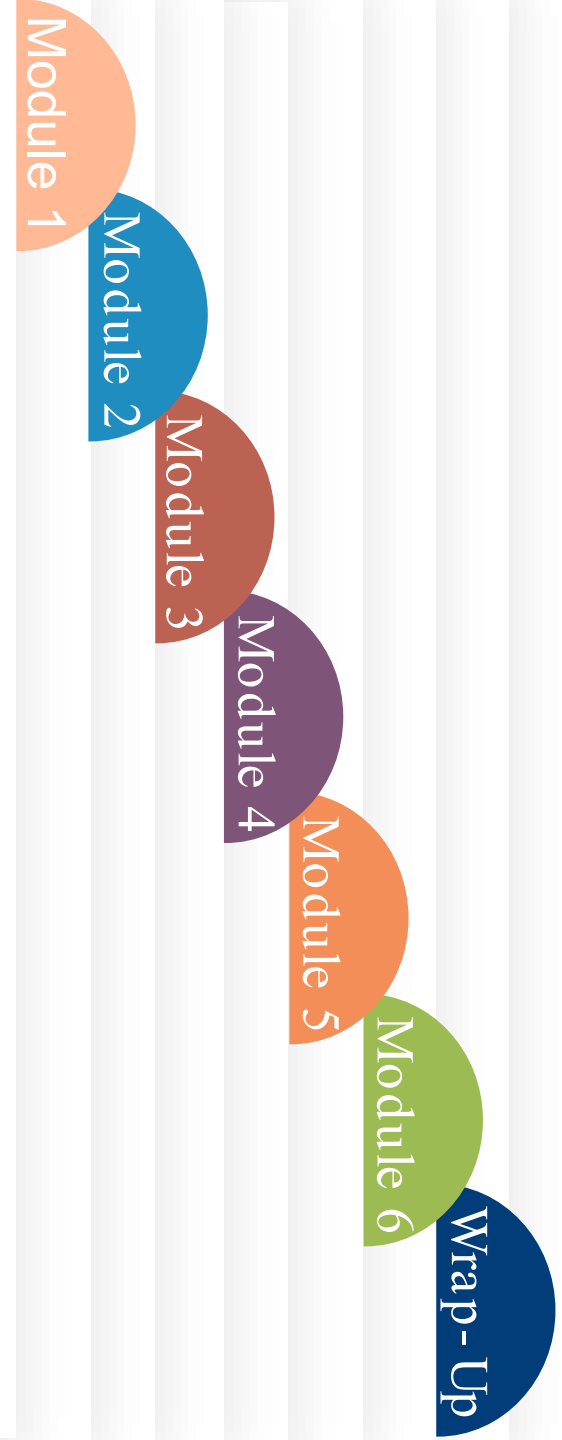
Module 6

Wrap - Up



# Agenda

- Point-in-Time (PIT) Basics
- PIT Count Methodology
- Unsheltered PIT Planning
- Sheltered PIT Planning
- Mobile App Logistics
- Summary
- Wrap-up/ Next Steps



# Coronavirus and the PIT Count

- We have officially received the first round of guidance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
  - Our CoC is expected to participate in the 2022 Unsheltered PIT count as normal. Barring any huge resurgence of COVID-19, leading to the majority of our communities on lockdown we will be doing a full sheltered and unsheltered count.
- We will be checking in with each community at the beginning of January to assess COVID-19 risk as well as to brainstorm any safety precautions each community would like to put in place.
- [HUD PIT Webpage](#) *(hyperlinked)*
  - [Housing Inventory Count \(HIC\) and Point-in-Time \(PIT\) Count Notice](#) *(hyperlinked)*
  - [Safety Considerations for Counting During COVID-19](#) *(hyperlinked)*

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# Point-in-Time (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

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Module 2

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Wrap-Up



# THN Information

- Texas Homeless Network (THN) is a non-profit membership-based organization helping communities strategically plan to prevent and end homelessness.
- THN works to end homelessness in Texas by collaborating with all communities, large and small, across the state to build systems to achieve this goal.
- We coordinate local and national advocacy efforts, data collection and research, host an annual statewide conference, and serve as the host agency for the Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) where we assist in the coordination of programs and funding.
- The Texas Balance of State CoC (TXBoS CoC) is made up of all service providers, advocates, local government officials, and citizens who work to eliminate homelessness in 215 of Texas' 254 counties.

Module 2

Module 3

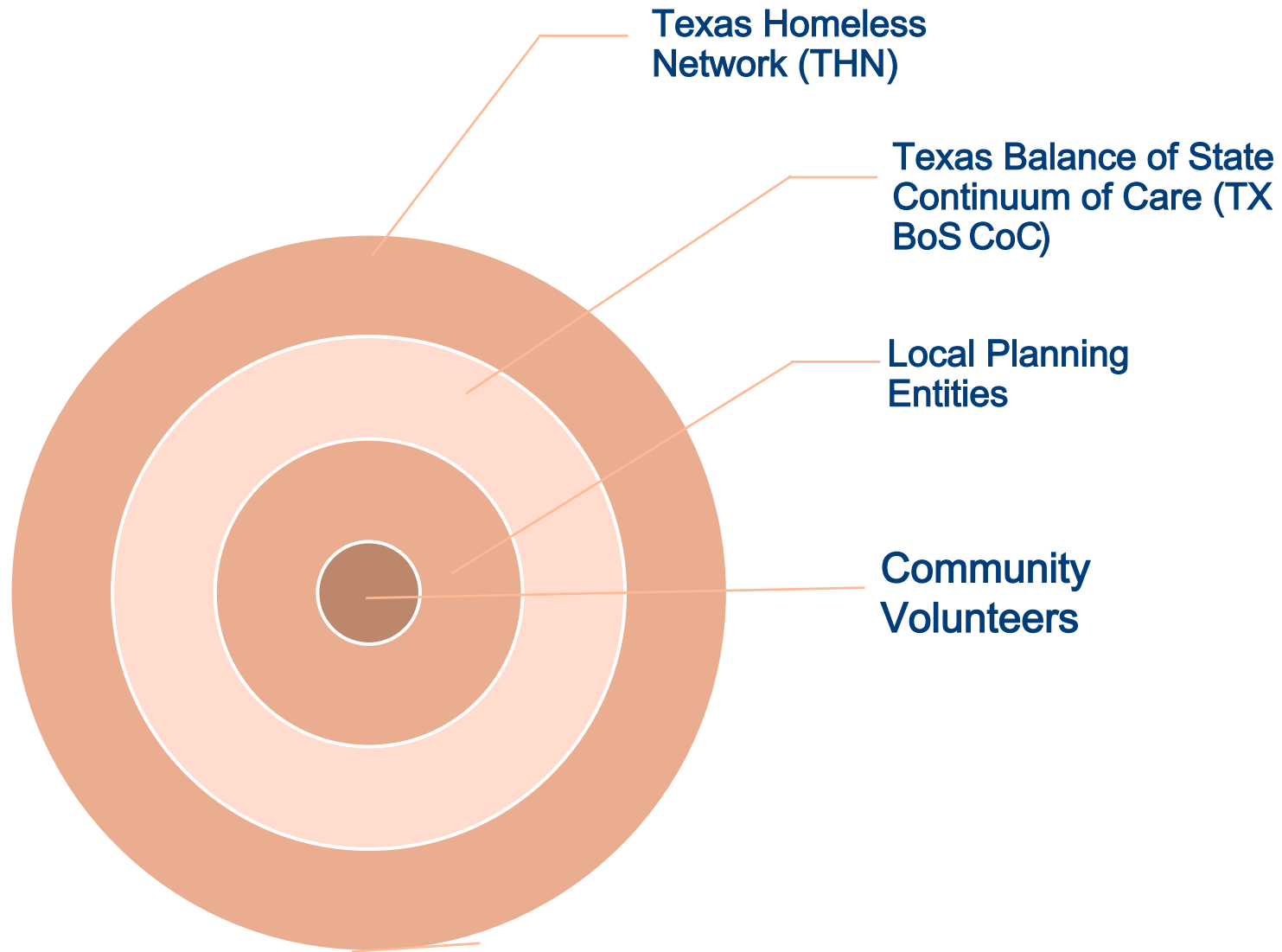
Module 4

Module 5

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Wrap-Up







# Who to Contact

If you have questions about:

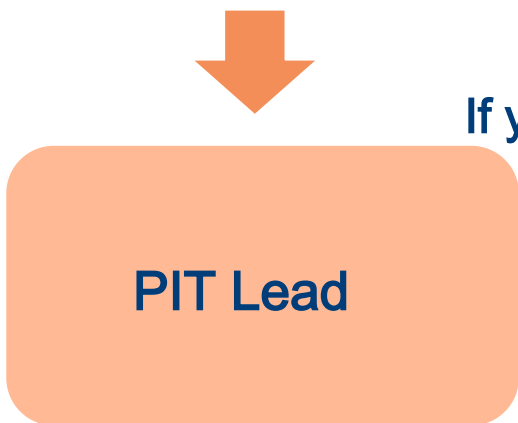
## Community Information

- Shift times
- HQ location
- Assigned count areas

If you have questions about:

## Count Logistics

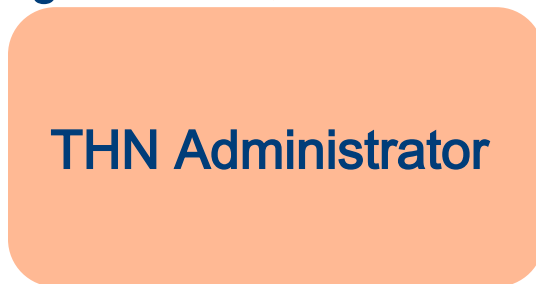
- Who & where we count
- Survey length/questions
- Identifying hot spots
- Technical issues



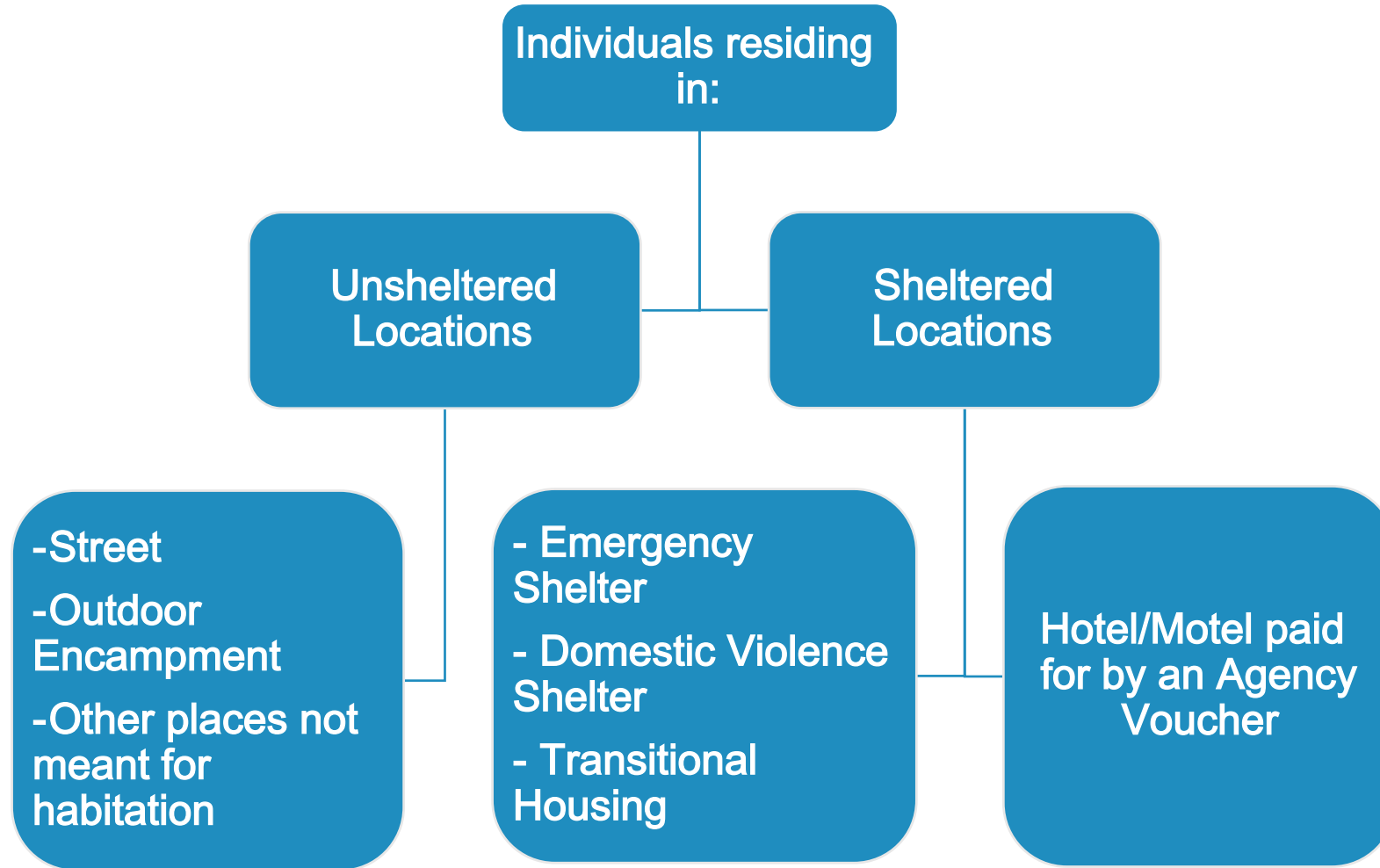
If you can't reach your  
PIT Lead:



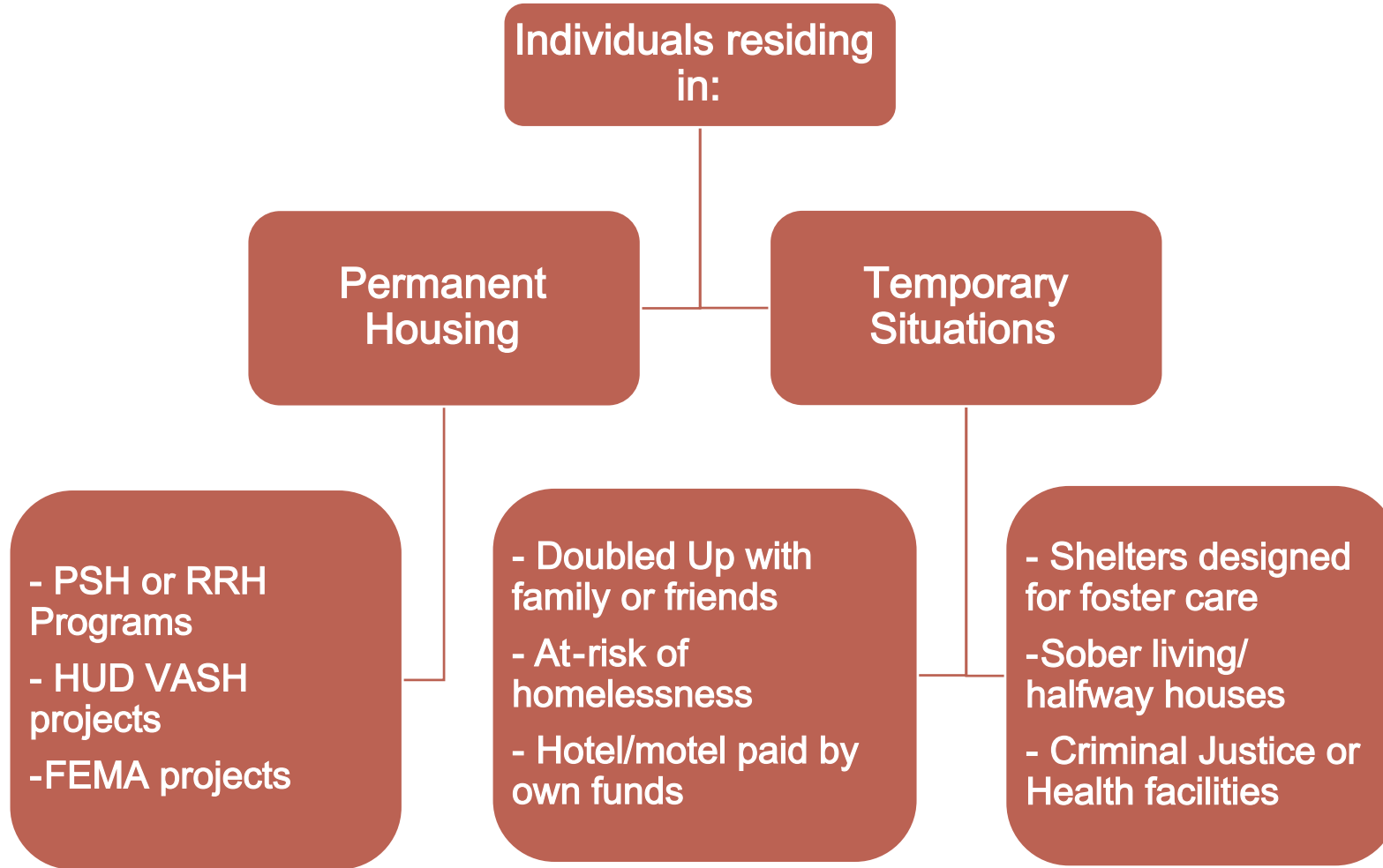
If you can't reach the  
Data Manager



# Who to Count



# Who NOT to Count



# Youth Specific Considerations

## Who counts?

- ✓ children and youths are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters
- ✓ children and youths who have 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
- ✓ children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and iv. migratory children

## Who doesn't count?

- x Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons
- x Children and youth who are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement



# Unsheltered PIT Planning

- A count of people who are unhoused but not in a shelter or transitional housing program is referred to as an unsheltered count.
- The unsheltered count requires identification of persons that are living in places not meant for human habitation on **January 27<sup>th</sup>**.



# Possible Locations

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



# Creating Hot Spot Map

- Work together with your PIT leads to start a list of locations where you see individuals experiencing homelessness living
  - Visit the locations at least once a month leading up to the count
  - Visit locations several times during the week leading up to the count.
- This list will likely change over time and will need regular updates. Collaborate with your PIT leads on the best way to send your updates
- PIT Leads should provide you with a map as well as a list of locations on the day of the count.



# Safety Considerations

## 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

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







# Tips and Tricks

- Read over all of the materials provided to you at least the night before the count
  - Resources will also be posted on the [THN website](#) (hyperlinked)
- Come prepared wearing appropriate clothing, shoes, and with enough water and food for your volunteer shift.
- Make sure your phone/smart device is charged and bring portable charger if possible.
  - Have the app downloaded and be logged in prior to going to your headquarters location
- Practice, Practice, Practice
  - Have your introductory script ready
  - Practice reading through the survey questions out loud
- Reach out to PIT leads if you have any questions or concerns in advance of the count.



# Sheltered PIT Planning

- 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 27th, 2022.
- To be considered for the PIT Count:
  1. The **primary** intent of the project is to serve literally homeless persons,
  2. The project verifies homeless status as part of its eligibility determination, and
  3. The actual project clients are predominantly homeless (or, for permanent housing, were homeless at entry).



# Locations

- **Emergency Shelters:** means any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.
  - Domestic violence shelters
  - Hotel, motel, or apartment vouchers paid for by a public or private agency because the individual or family is homeless

*\*For Emergency Shelters, you should conduct the surveys in the late afternoon/evening when participants are checking in to stay the night.*

- **Transitional Housing:** is designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. Transitional housing may be used to cover the costs of up to 24 months of housing with accompanying supportive services. Program participants must have a lease (or sublease) or occupancy agreement in place when residing in transitional housing.



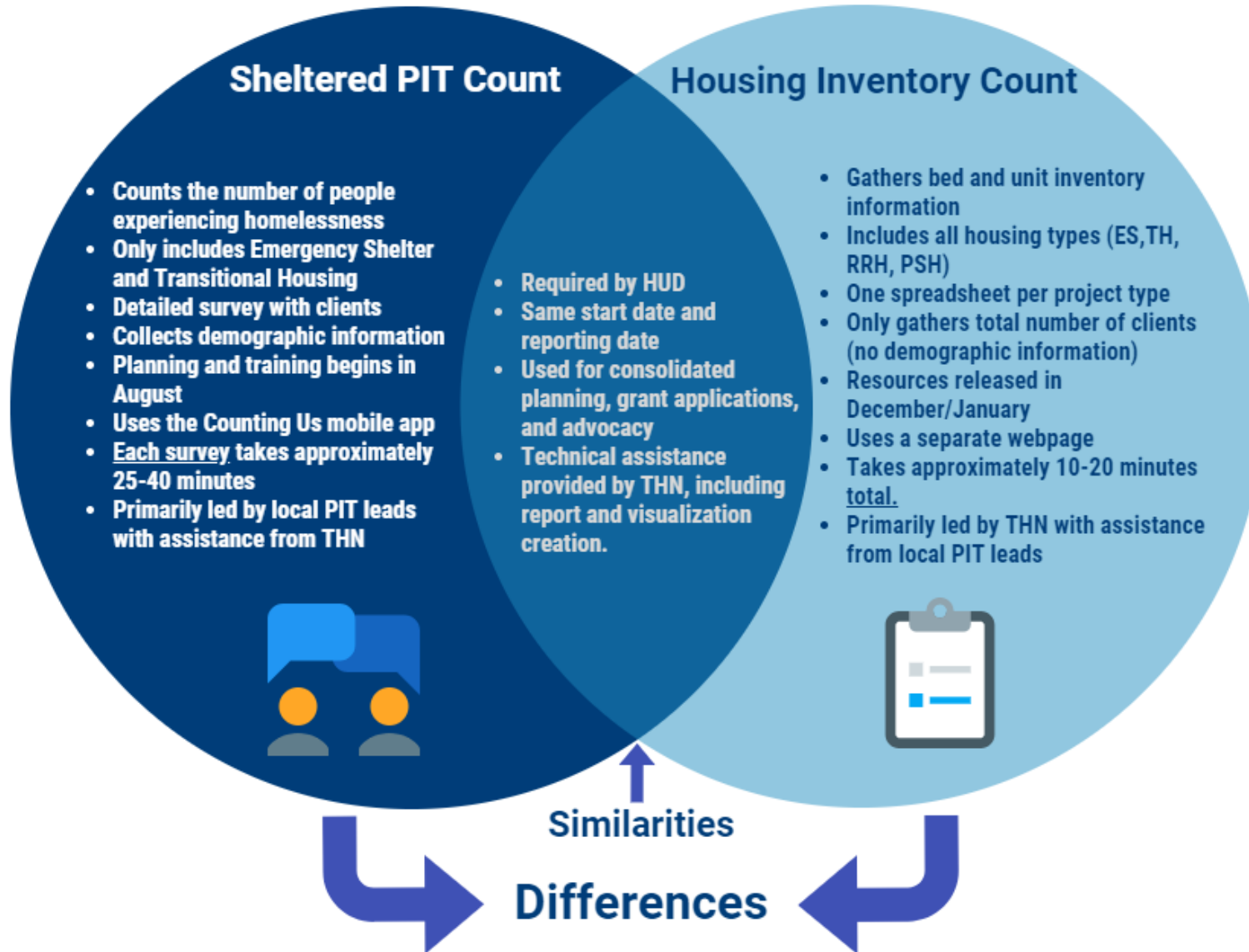
# Locations Continued

- Your PIT Lead should be providing you with a list of agencies prior to the day of the count.
  - If you have not received a list please contact your PIT lead.
  - If you believe there is an agency that should be on this list, please contact your PIT Lead and they will reach out to me if necessary.
- To view the list of agencies that participated last year, please visit the THN website and download the Housing Inventory Count (HIC) Report
  - [Link to website](#)

***\*\*If you represent an agency that provides Hotel/Motel vouchers for individuals experiencing homelessness, please contact me ASAP\*\****



# PIT Count Vs. HIC



# Domestic Violence Protocol

## 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.
- **Question on the survey: Are you currently staying in this shelter because of domestic violence? (Including: dating violence, sexual violence, and/or stalking)**



# Surveying Survivors

## Do

- ✓ Explain that the survey is confidential and all identifying information is removed for their safety.
- ✓ Use their initials or a code for their name (if they don't want to give you their initials).
- ✓ Fill out their age range.
- ✓ Complete the remainder of the survey with them.
- ✓ Write in the notes section of the survey that they are a survivor so I can make sure their location is secure.
- ✓ Provide any information on support that your PIT lead provided you

## Don't

- X Fill in their full name
- X Fill in their date of birth
- X Fill in their exact age
- X Provide any identifying information in the notes section
- X Pressure participants into answering any questions they don't feel comfortable answering.
- X Express disbelief or pity to answers on the survey by survivors.





# App Screenshot

What is your last name?	
What are your initials?	KH
What is your gender?	Female
What is your birthday?	
What is your age?	
What age range do you fall into?*	25-34



# Tips and Tricks

- Verify list of agencies for your community prior to the PIT count.
  - Contact your PIT Lead if one appears to be missing.
- Work with your PIT Lead to set up either a phone call or a visit with each shelter you plan to count at.
  - Take note of their confidentiality protocols as well as their visitor policy.
  - Be respectful and follow the direction of shelter staff at all times.
- Maintain contact with your assigned shelter leading up to the count.
  - Identify the time you will be helping survey and how long they anticipate needing your assistance.



# Unsheltered and Sheltered Counts

## Do

- ✓ If you have obtained consent

## Don't

- x Do not complete a survey without consent
- x Do not continue the survey if the individual has expressed the desire to end the survey
- x Do not complete a survey based on an intake form unless you have specifically obtained consent to do so.



# Observation Survey

## Do

- ✓ Someone is sleeping
- ✓ You do not feel comfortable going to a certain area
- ✓ A person did not give their consent to participate in the survey or they don't want to complete the survey in its entirety
- ✓ Someone does not seem to understand the consent process and cannot reasonably consent to the survey.

## Don't

- X Fill out an observation survey if you have not laid eyes on the individual that day





Encounter someone you believe is experiencing homelessness

Safe to approach

Person Consented to survey

If you are in a Sheltered location

Complete Sheltered Survey

If you are at an Unsheltered location

Complete Unsheltered Survey

Person did not consent to survey

Complete Observation Survey

Person could not consent to survey  
-They were sleeping and/or they did not understand the consent process

Complete Observation survey

Person reported that they are not experiencing homelessness

Thank them for their time.  
**DO NOT COMPLETE A SURVEY**

Unsafe to approach

Complete Observation survey

# Best Practices for Sheltered Count

- Familiarize yourself with the survey
  - Practice reading all of the questions out loud.
  - Practice giving your introduction script out loud.
- 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
  - Whenever possible, attempt to give participants as much privacy as they request.
- Know volunteer expectations
- Know community resources
- Review this training again in the month of January to refresh your knowledge



# Registration Information

Registration Link: [txbos.pointintime.info](https://txbos.pointintime.info)

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

[COVID Waiver Link](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- **Required for all PIT Leads and Volunteers**
- If this is your first time registering, you will need to follow the instructions for setting your password.
- If you are a returning volunteer you can click update registration and follow the prompts to update your old password.
- **Kyra cannot reset your password for you, they can only tell you which email you registered under.**



# Mobile App Basics

Website Url: [Counting.us](https://counting.us)

App Developer: [Simtech Solutions Inc.](#)

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- **You will need to go through the registration process before using the mobile app**
  - If you haven't already set your password, you can do it on the mobile app by selecting forgot password
- **Please make sure you are registered under the 2022 PIT Count.**
  - If you do not see 2022 PIT count anywhere, click change count and type in the setup key: **TX2022**
- As long as there is a yellow highlight on the top of the screen, the count is in test mode and you can practice.
- You will need access to internet or data to download the app
  - You will also need to have access in order to **submit surveys**
  - You can conduct surveys and save them as a draft without a connection
- You are encouraged to do practice surveys up until **11:59 pm on 01/26/2022** (the night before the count)
  - Any surveys submitted after that time are viewed as legitimate surveys





# Hot Spot Mapping Survey

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- **This survey is only available prior to the count in order to help out with planning.**
  - Ask your PIT leads if this is a tool they plan on using. If not, you can skip this slide
- The intention of the hot spot map is to give the PIT leads an idea of where individuals are observed to be experiencing unsheltered homelessness throughout your geography leading up to the count.
  - This will then be used to determine approximately how many volunteers are needed for the count as well as which locations need to be covered.
- **There are only two pieces of the Hot Spot Mapping Survey**
  - You will need to ensure that you are tagging the surveys in the correct spot. IE you either need to fill it out as soon as you see the unhoused neighbors (because your gps will drop a pin where you currently are)
    - Or you will need to remember the cross streets of where they were located so you can manually move the pin
  - The only other thing this survey requires is that you estimate the number of individuals residing at that location.



# Sheltered Survey

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- **Surveys are offered in English and Spanish**
- First determine if it is a household or individual survey
  - You cannot have a household of 1
  - Only fill out surveys on individuals and household members that **have not already been surveyed.**
- Select project type before selecting organization and project name
  - The list will pre-filter based on your project type
  - If you are conducting surveys for clients staying in a hotel paid for by an agency voucher, please contact your PIT lead or myself before proceeding.
- **If you believe an organization or project is missing from the list, contact your PIT lead and myself**
  - Please do this well in advance of the count
  - Do not select a different shelter that is incorrect. If you are confused about an organization name, don't guess. Call and ask.
- **Fill out the survey in order and always fill out the age range before progressing into the next sections of the survey**
  - Different ages will have different questions asked.



# Unsheltered Survey

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- This survey is only reserved for those that are residing in an unsheltered location such as a street, car, outdoor encampment, or other places not meant for habitation.
  - If someone says they are staying in a shelter later that evening, still fill out the survey with them based on where you encounter them and then ask that they provide you the name of the shelter they will be staying at.
  - Type that Organization name in the notes section.
- **Surveys are offered in English and Spanish**
- First determine if it is a household or individual survey
  - You cannot have a household of 1
  - Only fill out surveys on individuals and household members that **have not already been surveyed.**
- **Fill out the survey in order and always fill out the age range before progressing into the next sections of the survey**
  - Different ages will have different questions asked.



# Observation Survey

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- **Observation surveys can be completed in unsheltered locations and sheltered locations.**
  - You will use this in a sheltered location if a client refuses to participate in the survey. This should only be used as a last resort on sheltered clients though
- The observation survey will no longer gather any demographic information
  - This is a HUD recommendation and we will continue to follow their guidance. If you need more information, please contact [kyra@thn.org](mailto:kyra@thn.org)
- **Only conduct observation surveys on people you can physically see.**
  - At a minimum you need to be able to estimate their general age.
- Provide as much detail as possible so we can ensure the same people aren't counted twice.



# Saved Drafts

[Tutorial Video](#) (hyperlinked)

## Reminders:

- You will need to submit each draft individually
- You have drafts saved if you see a white number in a red circle on the bottom part of your screen. All drafts need to be submitted by **11:59 pm on 1/27/22**.
  - Any drafts not submitted will not count in the reports
- **Drafts should only be used if you have no connection to submit the survey**
  - Submitting them in the moment will save you time in the end.
  - This means you will have less to remember at the end of your shift.
- You will need to have all the required questions filled out before you can successfully submit the surveys.



# Community Concerns

- Varying degrees of COVID-19 infection rates across cities and counties.
- Several communities have reached out citing issues with community buy-in.
  - We recognize that COVID-19 is still a very legitimate concern in many communities. Each community has the flexibility of participating in the unsheltered count as they see fit.
  - This can include some communities limiting the hot spots they visit or limiting volunteer recruitment.
    - There are pro's and con's to this and I would be happy to speak with each community on how to make the best decision.
- General concerns around the validity of the data due to: low volunteer recruitment, the camping ban making it more difficult to locate unsheltered folx, and staff not having extra capacity to plan/conduct the count.
  - THN recognizes this and wants to reassure all PIT Leads and volunteers that we will support you in any way we can.
  - At this point, any data you get will have to be good enough. We can talk strategies for messaging around the data after the count.



# Next Steps

- Watch the mobile app training video(s)
  - There is one combined video which includes all of the short tutorials (*hyperlinked*)
  - **OR** you can watch only the tutorial videos that apply to you on their own.
- Register for the PIT Count
  - <https://txbos.pointintime.info>
- Work with your PIT leads to start mapping hot spot locations
- There are a series of additional presentations posted to the website to help you engage those with lived experience, youth, veterans, and victim service providers.
- There will be additional refresher materials released in January of 2022.





# Contact Information

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Data Manager

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Phone: (512) 861-2192



# Thank you!

Strategies For Change

[thn.org](http://thn.org)