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**AUBREY SITLER:** Okay. I think we're going to go ahead and get started. I know there are still several people joining, but we've got a little bit of housekeeping to start out with today anyway. So might as well get that underway. Thank you all for joining our quarterly office hours call, the October 2019 edition. We're delighted that you're here and have some exciting things to go through today. We're going to start with some introductions and housekeeping. We're going to talk about the 2020 PIT count. We're going to talk about our topic of focus, which is counting survivors of domestic violence. And then we're going to have our usual open discussion and Q&A. Before we get started, we always do our introductions. On today's call, we have William Snow from HUD, in the SNAPS Office. We have Jill Robertson from Collaborative Solutions, who is kind of our domestic violence expert, who will be speaking about domestic violence survivors and the PIT count later on. And I'm Aubrey Sitler with Abt Associates. And we also have Meghan Henry and Rian Watt from Abt Associates who might chime in with either some answers to your questions, or you might hear their voices in other ways during today's call. We always like to do a little bit of a WebEx how-to when we are running these calls because the way we do them is a little different from the usual webinars that we do. At the top of your screen if you are having any audio issues or if you get kicked off and need to jump back on, the way to do that is to go up to this Quick Start menu that you should see in the upper left-hand panel of your screen and click Audio Conference. And it will give you a number of different ways to connect to the audio. You can do that through your computer, or you can do that through your phone. Either one is just fine. You also have a number of other panels that you have access to. There's the participants panel that shows you who the panelists are and who's talking. There's a chat panel, and there's a Q&A. In order to kind of activate those, you want to click them so they turn blue. And then you'll see down below these little panels that pop up that you can expand by clicking the little triangles next to them. If you're having any technical difficulties today, please send a chat message to host and presenters or all presenters, and we should be able to help you get sorted with that. And if you have any questions that you would like to ask verbally, please click the hand raising button, and that will signal me that you want to be unmuted, and I will unmute you. We like to have as much verbal discussion and conversation on these calls as possible, especially in that last half when we are having open Q&A. We want to hear what's working for you guys, what you're working on, and any questions or trouble shooting issues that you want to go through. Or if you'd prefer to write in a question through the Q&A box, please use that, and we will triage it and make sure you get an answer during today's call. You'll see this screen later on. It's kind of aggressive to look at, but it should give you an idea of all of these different features that we just talked through and a reminder of which one to use for things like technical difficulties as opposed to actually getting your questions answers. So with that, I will turn it over to William to talk us through the 2020 PIT count and housing inventory count.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** All right. Thanks, Aubrey. I'm excited to have this conversation. My colleague, Lisa Coffman, may join as well later to help answer some questions around the domestic violence and point in time count intersection, which I'm happy about as well. This is a fun conversation to have. I've been watching the news every day and see the PIT counts. The 2019 PIT count results get blasted all over the place. Even though HUD still hasn't officially

released the results, I see a news article almost every single day on the impact of the PIT count. So it's one of those things where, obviously, whether you love or hate the PIT count, the media picks up on it. And there's a lot that goes around for the PIT count. So we try to focus on making it as accurate as possible so that you can tell your story. That's one of the reasons we do this call. So we're going to jump into the 2020 PIT count *Notice* stuff. That's fun to be able to say that there's actually not a new *Notice*. We looked through all the things that we thought about changing, and it turns out there was nothing that we felt needed to be put in a *Notice*, so there are no new PIT count requirements. It is worth noting, though, that for those who receive either funding for joint components or YHDP grants, there are one or two small technical things you need to take note of, and we'll talk about that in the beginning here. But they weren't something large enough that they really

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changed the scope for everybody, so we didn't update the *Notice* accordingly. Let's jump into the first one for those who get funding for the joint transitional housing and rapid rehousing projects, what difference. The standard is actually all the same except when you get to the funding source in the housing inventory count, instead of selecting both the transitional housing and the rapid rehousing funding source components under the CoC program, you'll simply select the one HUD CoC joint component TH/RRH funding source. So that's nice. You don't have to select both. You just select one. As a reminder, when you're reporting them, the transitional housing portion is reported just like all other transitional housing projects. You report based on the beds available for use. So if you have 30 beds that are available even though 25 are filled, you report all 30 beds for that project. For the rapid rehousing portion, you report it just like you do for the rapid rehousing -- all other rapid rehousing grants. It's essentially triggered by the beds in use, those that have move in dates associated with them specifically as opposed to available. We all know with rapid rehousing, it's complicated to try to figure out what that means. So we just go with how they're being used on the night of the count, and we do that for all rapid rehousing, even the joint rapid rehousing portion for the joint component grants. So, again, for the PIT count, the TH folks are counted and the RH folks are not. So that's it for the joint component aspects. Let's jump to the next slide on YHDP. So yes, if you are a YHDP recipient, you will be reporting in the housing inventory count and in the point in time count where applicable, the same rules as all other projects. To kind of figure out what you should be reporting on, you need to refer to, if you're a YHDP grantee, what you identified as your project types in e-snaps. So if you fund a transitional housing project, and that's how it's recorded in e-snaps, you should also have a corollary to that in the HIC. And those people should be counted in the PIT count. So if you have a services only project, that will not be included in either the HIC or the PIT count. So just remember it's all the same rules. All your residential projects should be included, and the people who are in emergency shelter, safe haven or transitional housing, those folks will also be included in the PIT count. So I just want to make sure no one felt left out. We want to include our YHDP folks in this. There's some great work happening there. We're excited about that. So we will definitely include them. As we jump to the next portion, you can go to the next slide please, one of the reasons that we are going to have the topic that will come next, which will be on domestic violence and the point in time count, is that this is domestic violence awareness month. We wanted to do something to help recognize how important that issue is. We value it a

lot. We are excited about the DV bonus grants that have gone out last year and that we are going to fund through this 2019 competition. And it appears highly likely that there will be another round of funding based on the current house and senate budget proposals. That's very exciting. We appreciate all of your hard work, and we also know there are challenges. We've had lots of discussions around comparable databases and lots of discussions around the point in time count. Before we jump to that segment of today's point -- or office hours, I wanted to open up just for two or three questions, if you had any, on the existing *Notice* requirements. It's okay to hold those until the end as well. It's up to you, but we thought we would open it up for just a few questions right now if folks want. So, again, use your hand raising feature if you want to speak verbally what your question is. Or you can enter into the Q&A box, a question, or you can use the chat box as well.

**AUBREY SITLER:** So the only question that I have seen so far is asking whether this presentation will be available online, and if so where it will be. Yes, we always record the office hours sessions and post them to the HUD Exchange. There's kind of like a

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PIT count and HIC landing page, and in that page there's a tab devoted to the office hours where you can find all of these recordings. If anybody has questions about the *Notice* and reporting requirements specifically for the PIT count and the HIC, feel free to raise those hands in the WebEx or just send a Q&A. I'm seeing nothing right now. Why don't we go ahead and move into the DV portion of our call.

**JILL ROBERTSON:** All right. Well, welcome, everyone. This is Jill Robertson. I will be talking to you this afternoon a little bit about counting survivors for domestic violence. Let's go ahead and jump into the topic. One of the first things that we want to talk about, if you could advance the slide, is about the safety considerations. Super important for us as CoC members to think first and foremost about safety and confidentiality of survivors. Some of the questions that we should begin to ask ourselves as CoC members is can we really safely and confidentially administer the PIT unsheltered survey to anyone that might be experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault when we're actually in the field? So what actually does happen if you meet a survivor that's actively fleeing? How would we handle that? If you don't really have an answer or you don't have a specific plan on how to do this safely, then we are asking you to not pursue the collection of data from that survivor. Or maybe just as a CoC, maybe it's not the right time for you to be collecting that data. A few additional questions to consider before you begin thinking about including survivors in your count. Next slide please. Some of the questions to be thinking about are, what is your CoC plan should you meet a current fleeing survivor? Will you make referrals to a victim service provider? Will you have people in the field that will be there to help you? Will there be victim service providers available to assist with immediate safety needs? Is there any training that you'll be doing in advance to -- before you conduct the survey in a trauma-informed way? And then another question might be victim service providers who receive HUD McKinney Vento funds, they can provide aggregate data for unsheltered clients. And maybe that is sufficient for your CoC. Next slide please. So once you've thought through those considerations, it's time to start thinking about the point in time and actually collecting

survivor data. So reporting on the number of sheltered and unsheltered survivors of domestic violence will continue to be optional. If you choose to count them, you will want to include those that are currently fleeing, that have experienced homelessness due to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. If you decide to collect this data, some of the benefits and advantages of collecting the data would be that it helps demonstrate the need for housing for survivors and their family. As we know and as William alluded to, there's a lot of money in the system right now for DV bonus funds, through the DV bonus funds, and we want to see and make sure that survivors have access to those funds, including funding for their families to be housed as well. It helps us identify the gaps in support and services that survivors need. It also will help us potentially secure additional funds for survivors to make sure that they're housed. It can highlight the importance of developing a survivor-specific CoC program or programs. And it can result in stronger partnerships between housing providers and victim service providers, really to ensure safe, stable, affordable housing for survivors that are fleeing domestic violence. And, again, overall, it's very helpful for us to begin to look at how the DV bonus funds are making a difference in your local community. Next slide please. So HUD wants to highly encourage CoCs who choose to include survivor data in their PIT count to partner with their local victim service providers to determine the best way to safely and confidentially collect this data. Communities should evaluate how to ensure adequate safety and confidentiality of those that are

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being interviewed and those that are conducting the survey. Communities only submit aggregate data to HUD and should have policies in place to protect the data on persons after it's collected. So when you're filling out the forms, when you're working with anyone in -- that's experiencing homelessness, your CoC needs to have a plan for what you'll do with those surveys, whether they're paper or electronic, and how you'll dispose of those. I did want to just touch on what a definition is of the aggregate data. So what is aggregate data? It's any information that is not including personally identifying information. So it would not include names. It would not include social security numbers. Would not include dates of birth. And it could include just basic, simple demographic information that's potentially not identifiable. One consideration is to make sure if you live in a rural or sparsely populated area, it may be that even the aggregate data puts survivors at risk. So please consider your community and whether it's safe to collect and report on that data. Next slide please. So how to have a successful DV count. Well, we talked a little bit about safety and confidentiality, and having a trauma-informed care process is very important to having a successful point in time count. So how and when should DV service providers be engaged in the point in time count? Well, really, through the entire process, at the very beginning when you begin planning, which would be right now. So in October, engage your victim service providers in your community and help them -- allow them to help you guide the planning process. They should also be included in your sheltered count, your unsheltered count, and they can provide some guidance on safety and confidentiality concerns. I did want to just mention the trauma-informed care practices. We want you to create space and confidential spaces for data collection. If you happen to be doing an unsheltered count and you find a survivor in the field who might be with a partner that puts that person in an unsafe situation, please be thoughtful about asking questions or asking too many questions. We want to make

sure that we keep everyone safe in the field. Next slide please. So continuing on on the PIT planning process, so engaging DV service providers early in the planning process. We talked a little bit about that. One thing that's just very important to begin to realize is it's never really too early to start planning. Communities should take a lot of care in including stakeholders from the entire community as well as all kinds of service providers. Victim service providers should be included, and other community stakeholders as well would be -- should be included in your planning. It's important to educate the service providers about the benefits of being involved. And it's also a way of making sure, as you get service providers involved, that you have a more accurate and comprehensive point in time count for the entire community. Utilizing a trauma-informed approach is critical. This will help ensure that the point in time count is implemented in the most compassionate way. And it's important for communities to consider and address the potential safety concerns for both survivors and for those who are administering the surveys. Many point in time training curriculums include role playing or practice runs for volunteers or staff so that they know how to ask questions in a trauma-informed way and so they ensure the survivor's safety. Next slide please. So how to have a successful DV count in the sheltered count. Victim service providers should be able to provide you with a sheltered count for their facility that's de-identified. They would only be reporting the aggregate data and would only include persons that are currently experiencing homelessness due to domestic violence. As most of us know, a lot of people experiencing homelessness have experienced domestic violence or some sort of violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence. But only those that are currently experiencing that would be included in your count. Next slide please. For the unsheltered count, you want to, again, be sure you're involving

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our victim service provider friends. Include the staff and volunteers in administering the unsheltered count. It's so important to include them and make sure that their voices are heard. They may be able to provide not only direction but help keep you and the other volunteers safe. They may also be able to provide some education and training on safety planning and other resources that would be available to those that might need that. So if and how direct service referrals would be made to the survivor, that will be important for your CoC to determine. Will you provide a direct referral to a client that's -- that you meet in the field? Or will they have to go through coordinated entry? Beginning to have a process in place is very important. Teaching volunteers how to conduct the survey in a safe way for themselves and for the survivor, equally important. Next slide please. For the unsheltered count, specialized training for your point in time volunteers administering the survey will be important. You want to make sure that they approach survivors and really anyone in the field in a non-threatening, non-judgmental way. There should be interview protocols set up for privacy and safety, meaning that if it's not -- if you -- there's a lot of things that happen in the field. And sometimes, they're not always safe to be collecting the data for volunteers or for the individuals actually providing the information. And then lastly, helping respondents feel respected and safe really can -- making sure that this is client focused and client centered is very important. Next slide. All right. We will now take questions. And Aubrey, I'll turn it back over to you.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Thanks, Jill. I will encourage people to stick their questions in the Q&A. I don't see any yet. So if you put one in there and we should see one, if you could send me a chat message just to let me know. We usually have several that have kind of added up by this point in the presentation. You can also use that hand raising function if you have questions that you would like to ask verbally. Okay. Somebody just sent in a question through the chat. And they said, to clarify, if we collect individual surveys from people who are in a DV shelter, we need to aggregate it before sending to HUD and protect the information.

**JILL ROBERTSON:** Yes, that is correct.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Also to clarify, when you're submitting your PIT count information through the HUD Exchange, there's not really an option to submit individual data anyway. So it all has to be aggregated. Any other questions that you guys have? All right. We've got another question. Can you explain the relationship between information on survivors on the PIT count and on HMIS? Good question.

**JILL ROBERTSON:** Okay. So I'll take a stab at that. So anyone who's a victim service provider or receiving VOCA, OBW, OBC funds should not be using HMIS. They should be using a comparable database. Now, for a homeless service provider, the situation might be a little bit different because a lot of individuals that are homeless will be presenting to your shelter, and you'll be collecting that information. But if that answers the question, great. Otherwise, please feel free to ask an additional question.

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**AUBREY SITLER:** All right. We've got another question. For the DV sheltered PIT count, did I hear correctly that we only report those currently homeless due to fleeing, category four? Because a VSP may serve more than just people fleeing if they use funding agency wide, correct?

**JILL ROBERTSON:** Yes, that's correct.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Somebody else has asked, for purposes of the PIT count, when we're looking at what questions to ask in our surveys, are we only looking at dating and sexual violence, or are we looking at all violence per the category four definition of homelessness? How do we define DV for the PIT count?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** So I'll jump in on that one. DV data collection is optional, as we stated. We strongly encourage folks if they're -- if they think they can collect the data in a safe way to collect on it. And we would say it can be as open as you are comfortable in your community. We would not limit it to dating and stalking. We would open it as far -- anyone who is currently fleeing from a domestic violence situation as in the broad sense. That could include human trafficking as well. We would say that that's acceptable from HUD's perspective. So you have lots of flexibility. But, again, you need to make sure as a community you're able to ask questions in a sensitive enough way and that you can do it in a way where you'll know you'll get accurate information as well.

**AUBREY SITLER:** All right. I am not seeing any other hands raised or any other questions right now. If we want to go ahead and move into our next section, do we want to do that and just kind of leave things open for people to keep asking questions?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, let's do that. There are some other questions that I see in there that are not related to domestic violence. So let's move to the next section, and then we can jump there.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** All right. So before we jump into questions, I've been reviewing continue NOFA applications from this 2019 competition and looking at what people are saying about their point in time count processings going well, things that are not. Even though you weren't asked that specifically, you volunteered lots of information, which we appreciate. So I just took note of several things that I -- [PH] themes that I was seeing on things that are going well or improvements from the past. And I wanted to take note of them. These are things that have been challenges often in the past, and -- or they just haven't been addressed. And I'm seeing a lot of communities saying, we are actively doing this. It's going well. It doesn't mean that there's no challenges with it, but it means that you're learning from it and doing a good job. So these are the things that I notice that I really liked and wanted to highlight and encourage other communities to learn from it as well. Engaging people with lived experience in the whole process. I saw lots of responses that talked about engaging them in planning. That could be to identify locations. It could be to review the survey. It could be for lots of purposes as well as including them in the counting process as peer counters. And several communities even talked about using stipends in that process. That's fantastic. The more we can do with folks with lived experience the better. Obviously, it makes your count better because these folks know where people are sleeping. But it also elevates them in the process. They are important. That is why we are out here. So we love to give them voice and appreciate seeing that in the communities, so thank you for that. Involvement of schools in both planning and counting and finding creative ways to engage schools. I saw a lot of responses that showed that you guys are working hard to engage the schools. And, again, we appreciate that. And we appreciate the schools, quite frankly, for being willing to engage. We know some of you are probably saying, well, my schools won't engage. It's not the case everywhere. But we love to see the results from when schools are involved, and we tend to find that the level of engagement brings greater awareness. It also helps bridge the gap between some of the complications of definitions if we say, look, we're all on the same team trying to address this larger concept of homelessness. The PIT count is one vehicle for doing it.

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Helping partner and find youth experiencing homelessness for the PIT count definition is very helpful but also means we partner with the education folks in their own efforts as well. So it's just a really strong partnership. So I saw just a lot of great progress there. That was wonderful. I see communities actively speaking about trauma-informed practices. Strangely, we haven't

really talked about that in the context of the PIT count, but wow, that's such a critical concept. We often take lay people who have nothing to do with our service system and take them in as volunteers and then ask them to go in these sensitive situations. Yeah, talking about trauma-informed practices is really important. So we appreciate you raising that and helping them understand how important it is. And quite frankly, there are many people who just don't even understand that these questions could create traumatic situation or could raise some of past traumas. So helping them understand that is really powerful, and we appreciate seeing that. And we saw an increase in the use of mobile applications. A lot of people talked specifically about how it helped them spend less time on kind of the nitty gritty of collecting the surveys or numbering them so you know they all returned, and more time on the addressing real-time problems. Things weren't complete. We could see that when it was submitted, and we did call the person collecting the data and say, hey, we noticed you didn't complete this. Can you tell us a little bit more? Is there a reason? And sometimes, it leads to more -- getting more information. So mobile applications has been great. There were still some challenges there. It's not perfect. It doesn't solve all the problems. We know that some folks had connection issues or hadn't tested the apps to make sure they were compatible with either devices or kind of the feedback command center that the CoC was using to track it centrally. So it just kind of goes to say if you're going to use the mobile app, which we strongly encourage, we see a lot of good things, make sure you test it ahead of time. We find almost all of the problems, 95 percent of them can be addressed by early use and testing. So one thing that I noticed as a challenge that continues to come up, and I don't -- it's unclear how people are viewing this, but it's the concept of extrapolation. Our very first point in time count office hours was about extrapolation. I think we talked about it since then as well. It appears from what -- the way I read, at least some of the responses, and it may be just how we ask the question, but folks are not clear about how to account for areas where they don't count. So I want to clarify the concept of a known locations count. So in our PIT count methodology guide, we allow known locations as an acceptable counting methodology. And that's the idea that you have identified hot spots where people go. And you do your best to count in all of those hot spots, or you at least do a sample of those hot spots. So I just want to make sure that as long as you are confident you know all known locations and you are somehow accounting for them, that's acceptable. What I'm seeing is that there are many communities who don't know one way or the other about counties. And I see responses that essentially say, we added a new county to our PIT count, and that increased our numbers. What that does for me, it makes me a little nervous because it makes me think, what are you doing to extrapolate for other counties that you currently don't get data from? What are you doing to try to identify whether somebody might be in those counties? I know there's a lot of outreach that happens ahead of time and lot of work to find that. So I just can't stress enough the reality that you've got to account for those if you can. You need to do some outreach ahead of time, certainly. Talk to police. Talk to whoever it is that's in those jurisdictions and extrapolate to account for them if you are not able to get to them. It's hard to see, and our count definitely went up because we included the county because my gut reaction is we should be accounting for those counties through extrapolation if we haven't counted for them in the past. And I say that partly because I -- we do include point in time count in the competition setting. That's actually a statutory requirement, so we have to do that. And we look at decreases. But we try to



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account for any changes in methodology. But if you are able to extrapolate for jurisdictions that you don't get to for one reason or another, it makes the volatility a lot less likely or lower when you add a county to the count that you couldn't normally get before. So I just want to make sure some -- for -- sometimes, we just don't know what's going on in those counties. You've tried. You don't know anything. And all of a sudden, somebody says, hey, I just found this encampment. There's really not much you can do about that. That's just new information. But there are other times when you're -- kind of know that there are folks out there. You just can't get to them. That's the type of situation where you need to find a way to extrapolate to account for that county. That way, you're not going to have this big boost in your PIT count numbers because now you have somebody counting out there. You will have already accounted for them, and it means it's less likely that will just increase numbers because we included the county if we've already accounted for it somehow. Again, that's as much art as it is science. Knowing if people are in counties or jurisdictions is not easy. But, again, I know we rest in this in between world. Some folks know there are folks out there, and we just don't know the number. But they don't include them in the count. And there are others who it just popped up on them. So want to put a plug in there. If you are aware of any folks in a jurisdiction you're not able to account -- to literally go and count in, even if you're doing a known locations count, you need to extrapolate to account for that jurisdiction. So I'll stop there, but that's a really, really important piece. It's probably a good time just to jump into other questions, and I'll let you lead that, Aubrey.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Sure. On the extrapolation piece, I know that a lot of people get a little intimidated by the idea of coming up with extrapolation approaches. The AAQ is always open for you to submit questions to HUD/the TA team to provide feedback or advise in some ways on what is and isn't acceptable by HUD standards based on the methodology guide. Just remember that that resource exists. Okay. So there have been a couple of other questions that have come in. Thank you, guys, for submitting those. So [PH] Shay has asked, William, do you have any examples of balance of state continuums that have done a good job of extrapolating?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** That's a good question, actually. Let me ask folks who are on the call to enter in the chat box. I know the balance of states involved would probably know best if they feel like their count accounts for everyone. So I am aware of a lot of CoCs that do their best to account for everyone. I know Wisconsin does a good job trying to account for everyone. I did probably point to lots. I know Iowa does a pretty good job. I bet if you ask them how they feel about it, they'd probably say, I know I don't account for everybody, though. So I want to be kind of fair there, that -- but they address the known locations. That I'm sure of, and they're doing their best to account for those areas where they're -- where they just have kind of an unknown in the unsheltered information.

**AUBREY SITLER:** And then if anybody else from other balance of states wants to contribute or generally rural areas wants to contribute through the chat, go for it. Quick reminder that if you have questions for us, if you could please use the Q&A instead of the chat, it's just a lot easier for us to filter through and figure out what we're trying to answer. So questions in the Q&A, general comments in the chat. Okay. One of our counties wants to use observation only,

which we have never done because we can't ensure de-duplication. Is this a routine practice, especially in rural communities?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, so when the PIT count started way back when, it was almost always observation only. And that was because, well, there were lots of reasons, but we often didn't do surveys. So the reason why the point in time count generally happens on a single night, a core reason, is so you can de-duplicate. So if you use -- if you're doing a count and it's literally on the one night, if you're using observation, that's fine. That is your method of de-duplicating just by virtue of doing it in those limited nighttime hours on a single date. If you want to cover several dates or, again, up to seven dates is what we allow, if you want to do that you either have to include survey questions, so there's not a good way to do an observation

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base at that point. Or if your geography is large enough that you are confident there is no spillover -- so a good example would be Alaska. They have the largest geography in this country. There are lots of parts of it where, quite literally, you never could reach the other side. A plane doesn't even fly there in that seven-day period. Yeah, I'm not worried about you doing an observation count on January 29th and 30th if you need to do that for jurisdictions that are just completely separated. I know many of you don't have it quite that extreme, where there's literally no flight in or out between the -- in those days. But there are many of you who have kind of expressed, we know that the populations in county X are not in this -- over a two-day period, they're not jumping over into another county and sleeping over there. These are folks who are -- they're settled in an encampment area. We're aware of them. We just couldn't get to them for X, Y reason. That's okay. So we allow a little flexibility. But if you're going to do a primarily observation-based count and there is a chance that there's crossing over of folks between locations, it really should be limited to a single night. And, again, we would -- if you want to kind of test that boundary, you can send in a AAQ or send me an email directly, and I'll have that conversation with you. But without confirmation either through that AAQ or an email from me, don't cross the date boundary. Do it on a single date.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Okay. So I see somebody with their hand raised, [PH] Yvette. And, Yvette, it looks like you have called in on a phone and are not -- that's not connected to your name in the WebEx. So I am not able to unmute you, but if you try hitting \*6 on your phone, that might work. Want to give that a try? All right. I'm not hearing anything.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** So I --

**AUBREY SITLER:** I know that you had -- go ahead, William.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** I think I know Yvette's questions. I'm assuming this is Yvette from Glendale, and she asked a chat question about whether to include financial systems program under CESH or HEAP. So just for everyone on the call to be aware, CESH and HEAP are California-specific funding streams. So this may apply to you as well. Your funding source may be something else, but the general idea is other funding sources. So the response here is it totally

depends on if it falls into the residential project concepts. For the sheltered count, we include folks who are in residential programs. That's how we include them on the HIC and then, again, transitional housing, safe haven and mercy shelter. That's how we include them on the PIT count. So you would need to look at your HMIS setup for those projects. Or, if they are not in HMIS, you would need to consider are these residential-based programs that are -- or are not otherwise captured. So I'm guessing by you asking financial assistance program, they're not, although that -- financial systems could mean lots of things. So it just look to how they're set up in HMIS. I think your programs are in HMIS because I think your state requires annual reports from HMIS. So that's the key. But that would apply, again, to any funding source in any jurisdiction. Look to how it's set up in HMIS or consider the residential service model.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. And then, William, one person had asked, earlier you had said that you've seen a lot of good examples of working with schools. And just to clarify, we assume that you mean public schools, private schools and universities. Or were you talking just about a specific subset of the education sector?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Great question. We primarily hear about it for elementary and secondary. But I did see some responses about engagement with universities or vocational schools, which is fantastic. That is a really big resource. We often think about using universities to help us extrapolate using the statistics department or something like that. But we have found that they're an amazing resource to find volunteers, and there are a lot of homeless youth

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in our education system and that university system or vocational program system. So engaging the universities or colleges is a good thing anyways because they're a good partner with people you serve but also to help you find and serve them.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Are you aware, William, of any privacy concerns over using the mobile app? So, for example, who owns the data? Is it the CoC, or is it the app company? And do you have any recommendations for ensuring that folks using mobile apps are aware of and recognizing those privacy concerns?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, that's a great question. So I would defer back to your -- whoever on your CoC contracted with the app company. I actually think the rules are different, and it depends on the engagement with the firm that they're working with. It is definitely possible to house all of the data on a local server. I think you just have to set it up that way. So it depends on how you've arranged it within your given CoC. But if you are considering adopting a mobile app as your platform, and that's a concern, which it's a very good concern, there are ways to ensure that the privacy is protected, and you can hold it locally. But, again, I would say have that conversation, if you're thinking about it, with the app vendor. Or, if you already have an app, have the conversation with the entity that's contracted with the app.

**AUBREY SITLER:** All right. And going back to some of the extrapolation pieces of our conversation that we had had, someone has asked, how do we account for the first time we

extrapolate for counties for which we have not previously had information? It will show that our numbers are higher, possibly significantly. And is there a way for us to explain that change?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yes. There are a couple places you can explain that. So when you submit your data in HDX, we ask if there's any reason for the change from year to year. We look through that data, especially the general notes. But we actually look pretty closely at that. It gets looked at both in the data quality setting when we're trying to figure out are there any anomalies in the data, are there any red flags. You may get the question anyways during the data quality process. Or in addition to, in the competition, we asked for explanations about changes to methodology or implementation. We did that in section 2B of your CoC application in 2019. We read that. That's part of your score. If you didn't decrease by a certain percent or you had an increase, I -- we read every single one of those to see, can we give some credit here for folks who implement a new methodology or did something that improved the accuracy of their count? So many of you who especially had increases made notes to that affect and will get credit for it in the competition. It won't give you full points. I won't say that. But you will get some kind of what we refer to as buy-back points because of that. So it's in the application. Look at 2B. For unsheltered, 2B5 is where it is, and I can't remember where it is for the sheltered section.

**AUBREY SITLER:** And another thing that I'll add, during the PIT count and HIC data cleaning process, the liaisons and reviewers at Abt are very attuned to paying attention to the kinds of explanations that are given for things like pretty big changes from year to year. And so as many details as you can include in your original submission notes makes it much -- a much faster process for us to go through that with you, for us to understand exactly what those changes were and why they occurred. Okay. Somebody has asked, I thought that HUD had a limit to the percentage of people who can be included in the PIT count via observation. Is this incorrect?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Oh, that's a good question. No, that's not correct. We don't have a limit. There are still some CoCs that do 100 percent observation based. That's becoming fewer because it's so hard to get that other information. What they'll do is they'll do 100 percent observation. They'll do a follow-up survey in the next several days to find

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a sample for the rest of the information for the demographics and the subpopulation data. I think there, whenever possible, if you're going to do a sample anyways, it'd be -- it's, I think, more powerful to get that sample on the night of the count. That way, you're not including any potential bias for those you do the sample with. But to be clear, yes, there are some who do 100 percent observation, and we allow that.

**AUBREY SITLER:** I'll follow up. I think some of the confusion might be coming from the extrapolation tool that we posted online. And in the directions for the extrapolation tool it says that no more than 20 percent of the total number you're extrapolating for should be based on observation. That's mainly because statistically, it's -- they get less and less likely that the demographics that you're projecting are accurate when you have more observation-based data. I'll also add that when you're relying heavily on observation for your PIT count, there's a lot of

risk of either overcounting or undercounting, depending on how you train your volunteers and what kind of day it is and what you're looking for because it -- for many people, it's hard to tell where they're actually sleeping at night without actually having that conversation. Okay. Another question. This is a little bit broader than the PIT count, but has HUD updated its old guide to gaps analysis for either a point in time or, even better, annualized?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** I'm not sure what we're referring to there. We've released too many things in the past that sounds close to that, and we're so good at naming things that they sound really similar. So I'm not sure what that refers to. So if you want to do a follow-up saying exactly what that is, that would be helpful.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Okay. We will look out for a chat or something from you if you have an additional question there.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** I want to put a quick plug in for Connecticut talking about their extrapolation, so thank you for putting that in there. Other CoCs, if you don't mind sharing, that's great. And I loved seeing Andrea talked a little bit about the impact of having people with lived experience identify hot spots and locations. It increased the count but brought some more confidence to who they're sounding and making sure they're doing a better job covering everyone. I'm turning your words a little bit there, Andrea, sorry. But thank you for sharing that because that's exactly what we think will happen if you include people with lived experience. You'll find things that you just couldn't before. Sometimes, it means bigger numbers. Sometimes, it means changes within the numbers itself. So the demographics or the populations look different than you had been thinking maybe because you're using a larger kind of multiplier to account for your sub-pops or whatever it be. So just want to put a plug in. Thanks for sharing, both of you, on that.

**AUBREY SITLER:** And I'll add to keep in mind that different populations are going to have different insights that will all kind of augment your count in meaningful ways, so families, single adults, veterans, young people, keeping in mind the people's lived experience. Different lived experiences might have different insights. They're all valuable. We have a general call if there are any communities who are engaging with universities to count university students for the PIT count. If you have any information you're willing to share on how you engage at the university level to make that happen, feel free to please put those in the chat. That sounds like a great learning opportunity. Thank you, Lisa, for asking that question. Okay. Can you provide guidance for updating and entering rapid rehousing inventory information? For example, should this be entered quarterly? Since the LSA is due at the end of the year and we conduct the HIC at the beginning of the year, these numbers will not match. So it sounds, William, like this person wants to know how -- if there are supposed to be differences between LSA and the HIC in terms of rapid rehousing capacity.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, great question. Rapid rehousing is the worst element we collect on in the HIC. So you probably all feel that way. I'll acknowledge it. We have not found a good way to collect rapid rehousing information. We actually think the LSA will be the best place to collect that information or at least get a better sense of what's going on with rapid rehousing.

The point in time count is great for that night but not very reflective of the rest of the year. So that's a little tangent from what you asked. I would say you're probably going to need to do at least an upload

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associated with the date tied to your HIC, which will be tied to your PIT count as well. And you'll need to probably do a separate upload for your LSA timeline. You can kind of work with your HMIS folks. Maybe you are the HMIS folks. But you can certainly do it more and kind of figure out what makes the most sense locally. But we too are trying to grapple with how do we best reflect rapid rehousing in all of our data collection process. And, again, LSA is a pretty powerful way to do that. So if I were you, I would focus on how you're representing in an LSA. And I'll kind of take this second here to talk about LSA. So we know the kind of the pain last year with LSA, and we're doing some stuff to hopefully, crossing our fingers, make that a better process. I should say, kind of our vision with it, there are parts of the LSA that we are hoping to use more broadly, perhaps some of it even in the competition. We'll see. But rapid rehousing is a good example of that. This year, we had lots of data quality issues, more than we've ever seen. And we think that's probably because you could manually change your submissions when you submitted the AHAR in the past or data for the AHAR. And now, you got to go back and change in HMIS. I suspect we kind of have years of we manually changed it in the AHAR submission but didn't go back and change it in the HMIS, and we're kind of catching up from that. As that data quality improves -- I should also say year one was painful as it is, so there's data quality just associated with that aspect as well. But as that improves, do not be surprised to see data from the LSA creep into other parts of what HUD looks at, including the competition. And, again, rapid rehousing's a good place for that. We will seriously consider whether that's the kind of metric or thing we should look at because it's just would be more comprehensive than what you get in the HIC.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Yeah, this is Meghan Henry. I would just add to the question about the HIC not matching the LSA coming from the perspective of the data cleaning and analysis and reporting side, there -- we don't expect them to match. The data standards do provide some guidance on how to record the fluctuation. So if there are significant fluctuations in your inventory, you should go in and change those in HMIS. But I think there is an expectation that there will be differences in those two data points.

**AUBREY SITLER:** All right. Thanks, Meghan and William. William, do you have any suggestions on apps to look at when considering conducting an app-assisted PIT count?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Oh, great question. So HUD is not allowed to kind of advertise for apps. We did a webinar last year that talked about one that was available to many communities. But what we actually recommend folks to do is kind of crowd source off of your peers. I believe in our last PIT count office hours we asked communities to identify apps that they're using and their experience or whether they're willing to share about their experience with that app. So that's in the transcript, I believe, for the last PIT count office hours. I would recommend going there. Quite frankly, I've seen -- all the apps we've seen have been positive, not to say that every

implementation has always been great. The only time where there was an app that didn't work out so well, it was because it was home grown. It didn't get tested. And then it essentially was a last-minute piece. So that didn't work out so well. I don't want to discourage you from doing it home grown, necessarily, because that still could be a good option. But especially in that instance, you got to give a ton of lead time. You really have to test it. You got to make sure your backup servers are in place. So that's my one caveat there is -- in terms of off the shelf stuff, though, I haven't heard any negative. So my two cents there.

**AUBREY SITLER:** And I just put into the chat the hyperlink to that office hours call where we did cover some stuff about mobile apps. And we published the chat and Q&A that was relevant to mobile apps with the transcript and the recording in case any of that was helpful. There were several communities that were willing to share their experience and some of the successes and lessons that they had learned along the way. So thank you again for those of you who did that. And feel free to use this chat box today to share any other updates that you guys have

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related to mobile apps. Okay. So another question. Our PHA will not share VASH data with the CoC, so we aren't able to include it in HMIS. And our PSH vet coverage is always low. Is there any chance that in the future, VASH numbers will be or can be excluded from the calculation of HMIS bed coverage?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Good question. We continue to see this. I will say, I read all of those questions as well. This is your HMIS bed coverage question in the CoC application. That was question 2A. And if you didn't have 85 percent in every category, it was 2A2. There are lots of communities that talked about that. I will say that many communities have found a solution to that. Not to say that it's easy or not to say that it's one of those things where there's a perfect solution, but many have addressed it. And I am grateful for that and see that as positive. You will likely never see that taken away. The main reason is as we do more and more to find out how your whole system is functioning, you can't forget the largest source of permanent supportive housing in your community. And most communities, it's VASH. So no, it's not going to go away. But that doesn't mean that we're off the hook on the HUD side either in trying to work with the VA. Prior to this call, I was talking with some of our folks who are working with the VA. We've talked with them for years and made, actually, a lot of good progress with can you enter it. Remember, there was a decade where they said, you're not even allowed to enter it. We got through that. You're allowed to enter that. So if somebody says national VA's telling me I can't enter VASH data, that's simply wrong. We can quickly debunk that. I can send VA staff to debunk that to your VAMC. That's easy to address. But we still know that that doesn't solve the reality that nobody wants to double enter data. So we're in conversations with the VA to see is there some form of import allowance that we can do that doesn't bump into some of their HIPAA concerns and other things. So we haven't given up on our end in terms of finding even technical solutions to this. Whatever happens will probably take some time still. But we're optimistic that we also can make some progress. But, again, going back to the core question, are we ever going to take it out, no. It's not going to be taken out.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Thanks, William. Okay. A question back to kind of PIT count implementation. If you have volunteers looking for unsheltered people in a county but don't find anyone on the night of the count, should we still extrapolate for that county? Or is extrapolation only for the counties where we didn't have volunteers looking for folks?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Oh, that's a great question. It is the latter, only where you didn't have volunteers looking for folks. We appreciate when you go and you look, and you don't find anyone. And it's one of those weird cases of people are let down, especially volunteers, that they don't find homeless people, which is kind of a funny thing. That's great that you didn't find homeless people. But people volunteered so that they could find them. So I think your bigger challenge is how do make those folks who volunteered feel like they were involved and it was somehow meaningful because that non-information is equally valid for us. But yes, you do not have to extrapolate for something where you have a known zero there. You can just take that out. And I think that actually is the challenge. A lot of rural communities, it actually is a zero, or it's going to be a one. And how do you -- if you have 30 counties and you get to 10 of them, how do you account for the other 20? It's trying to find some way to get a sample for -- of those. Does their makeup look like the one, the county with one person, the county with zero or the county with 10? And that's the real job up front of kind of mapping out beforehand. How do I characterize these counties before the count?

**AUBREY SITLER:** And I think, William, the only caveat to that would be if there were a county where you suspect that there are people, but you have to pick where you're sending people. You can't send them everywhere on the night of the count. Do you have any guidance on that? I'm thinking, for example, some of the counties that border Washington, D.C. They might not have the full volunteer capacity to send people to every kind of place where there might possibly be people experiencing homelessness. They kind of have to pick where they send them. Are there any considerations that you would suggest people take into account in those instances?

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**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, so that's where you try to put them in buckets, try to -- you know you can't get to everyone. There are very few CoCs that literally can get to every part of their jurisdiction that might have homeless people, so just kind of ahead of time in your preparation, trying to figure out which bucket do they fit in, and just extrapolating for it. I'll give the example of Las Vegas. They do a great job. They cover almost their entire CoC every year. But they don't necessarily get to every part. And I know the one year we talked about extrapolating for two percent of the jurisdiction that they didn't get to. That's fine. You may have to do an extrapolation. That doesn't downgrade your count. We don't all of a sudden say, wow, they didn't cover the whole thing, lazy CoC. No, we don't think of it that way at all. It is so hard to capture every part of your CoC in a given night. It's okay to have some extrapolation. But the beauty of it kind of rests in the category of how confident are you when you're categorizing what type of jurisdiction is that you missed in terms of density. How many homeless people were likely there that you couldn't reach? That's the whole difficulty of extrapolation, is characterizing what type of jurisdiction it should be in terms of homeless density. Again, that's the part we appreciate. I can talk all day long about doing it. It's important to do it. You must



do it. And I recognize that's where the rubber hits the road in figuring that piece out, how to -- who's in what density level. That's hard. That's months of data collection up front and talking with, again, your police departments, your, certainly, [INDISCERNIBLE] outreach if you have them. But I acknowledge that that is not easy work, and it takes a long time to get it right. So we appreciate that.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Thank you. Going back to the VASH question, can you provide guidance on what other communities have done to work with their local VASH programs to get them to agree to participating in HMIS?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Sure. That's something that we should probably think about a guidance document. But as a quick note, [PH] coordinated entry has actually been a really useful piece for pushing a lot of VASH providers into the HMIS side. And we appreciate that as the VA has funded coordinators for coordinated entry. Those folks have now been the catalyst for bringing more opportunities for data collection. And we saw, gosh, several communities in this competition say, we now have this person here. They've said they understand why HMIS data collection is important. And they are setting up a meeting with so-and-so to talk about how can we share the data periodically. And it may be a limited data sharing piece, but it's made inroads and led to data collection. And that's been really useful. And quite frankly, there have been times where we use the national arm to talk to the VANC, who keep saying, no, we can't collect this, to clarify, yo, you in fact -- you can interact with HMIS. That is absolutely available, so you no longer can use that as an excuse. So that's the stick approach. It's not always the funnest [sic], but some of you are probably at that place where you've offered enough carrots and nobody's picking it up. We're willing to help you with that. So you can send an AAQ if you have a VANC saying we absolutely cannot do this. That's simply wrong. So happy to deal with that on a CoC by CoC basis, so feel free to send an AAQ if that's the case.

**AUBREY SITLER:** I see that there are also a couple people offering insights for what their continuums have done. Thank you so much for sharing those. One of them was sent just to me, so I'll read it out loud for you, unless, Lisa, you want to put that in to all participants. But she said, for VASH projects we asked our local housing authority to enter that information into the system rather than a VA. And this has worked for us for a while. It's not perfect, but each year more and more beds are included in HMIS versus not. Thank you for sharing that. There are a few other domestic violence related questions that have come in, so I'm going to turn back to those. Back to the question about aggregating information from shelters, DV shelters, that came up earlier, this person has clarified, some folks thought we could only collect aggregate information from DV shelters. That is an option but not a requirement. We could get individual surveys from DV shelters but would need to work with DV agencies to verify if we can adequately protect the data and keep people safe. Is that correct?

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**WILLIAM SNOW:** So Jill, I'll let you take a first stab at --

**JILL ROBERTSON:** Okay. Yes, absolutely. Yes, you would absolutely want to work with your victim service provider to make sure that you could still aggregate the data, keep it safe and confidential.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yup. I think that's the short end. I'm going to ask -- Lisa Cuffman joined us. And, again, she's our -- from the SNAPS -- HUD SNAPS app, she's our expert in domestic violence issues. Lisa, is there anything you want to add to that question or anything else that you think is important to kind of take note of in the larger work to collect information on survivors of domestic violence?

**AUBREY SITLER:** So looks like Lisa's WebEx login is not connected to a phone or an audio source, so there's not a way for me to unmute her. Lisa, if you have any insights, if you could stick those in the chat, that would be great. Or if you're able to disconnect your phone and call back in using a participant number through the Quick Start menu, that would allow us to link the phone to your name, and you could unmute.

**JILL ROBERTSON:** William, could I add something to that?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Sure.

**JILL ROBERTSON:** So I know in past experience working with victim service providers, we did have some of them that did not at that time have a comparable database, and they did the paper surveys. Then the process becomes trying to figure out how to enter that data into a type of comparable database so that it can be available in an aggregate form. So that's another option, if that makes sense to the community. But, again, the safety and confidentiality of the survivors is of paramount importance.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah. Thanks, Jill. Great point.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Okay. And there was one other DV question that had come through. This person has asked, if we interview someone during the PIT count who discloses that they are a survivor, after making the proper referrals, should that person's information be added to the aggregate data from our DV shelters? I can't tell if this is asking about for purposes of confidentiality, or if it's asking about just kind of the mechanisms for aggregating different types of information collected during the PIT count.

**JILL ROBERTSON:** So if you want to look at that from an experiential process, it's -- you collect a survey, and you realize that person is actively fleeing, and you need to make a referral to victim service provider. One of two things, either somehow shred or discard the paper survey, and the victim service provider can provide that data in an aggregate form, or you can work with your victim service provider to make sure that's included. Just want to make sure you don't duplicate the numbers there and the data.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, and if you're doing it on a single night, you don't have to worry so much about the duplication. That is your form of de-duplication. So just to be very clear,

especially if you're doing your count only in the nighttime hours, you can just take the aggregated number from the DV provider. And they should hold whatever information they have on the client that should never leave their space. It will only leave in an aggregate form to you. So, again, the one night is how most CoCs still conduct their counts. That's great. It makes a lot of things easier, including this aspect with the DV providers. It allows them to engage more but also in a data safe way, so you can be confident as you're engaging them as providers. They're just going to provide you the aggregate information, and no PII or any private information is shared.

**LISA CUFFMAN:** Hey, William, this is Lisa. It looks like I'm connected now.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Oh, great.

**LISA CUFFMAN:** Hey, everyone. Wanted to just thank Aubrey and Jill and William and all of you for dialing in. And definitely, I don't want to add anything additional other to say that -- what Jill and William have already answered. It's pretty much the guidance for you all. But I do want to mention a couple of resources for folks.

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And one of them is, of course, the Domestic Violence Housing Technical Assistance Consortium, of which Collaborative Solutions is a partner. And there are some other TA folks that are a great resource to your community as you're thinking about your count and how to engage victim service providers. And also, your state coalition against domestic violence may also be a really good resource. They can help connect you to victim service providers if they aren't already in your CoC. But most of you, I know, have connections with the victim service providers in your community. Most of them are in the CoCs. For maybe those CoCs that don't, I want to say your state coalitions are also a really good resource. And then as Aubrey mentioned earlier too the AAQ. Please don't hesitate to send us questions if you have information or you're just not sure how to navigate something and you want to get some clarity. Please feel free to send questions to the AAQ, and we'll get an answer to you.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Thanks, Lisa.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. And I've also pulled up the slide that we put some additional PIT count resources on. So when we publish this to HUD Exchange, you'll be able to see and click through some of these things. And we'll make sure that the ones that Lisa just mentioned get added on here as well. Okay. So there's another DV question. Our DV providers complete paper surveys without the identifying information for people who are in shelters. We don't enter any of that into HMIS and keep it in a simple Excel spreadsheet. But it sounds like that might not be okay. Can you guys advise on what to take into consideration when collecting PIT count information from DV survivors and what's not okay?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, I think that actually goes back somewhat to the last piece, especially if you're doing it on a single night. It is okay to do all of that work in house within the DV

provider and for that DV provider to aggregate the data and send it in aggregate form to the CoC and leave it at that. They never have to share the individual surveys or any of that. That's a great way to go. If you do it over multiple nights, that obviously gets a little more complicated. I, again, often don't see that. So I'm going to kind of leave it there. But it is really important. We're with you on the value of protecting privacy. I will put in one little plug that makes me slightly nervous. This has been our big fear, actually, in general as we engage with survivor and providers, is the use of Excel. So we love Excel. We use it a lot. However, I would caution that collecting the data and storing it in Excel is actually often not a safe way to store the data. If your computer is tied to the internet, it is much more accessible than a database that is otherwise encrypted. So it gets to the heart of our larger discussion around comparable database. So I would encourage you as much as possible when you have PII on the people you're serving -- this is not limited to those serving survivors of domestic violence, but it often comes up in that scenario. Please keep that data in a secure location, in an encrypted location, in a database that, again, has encryption or other protection. So I have to say that. I keep seeing it over and over again, and it makes me slightly nervous. We want to protect those folks too. That's really valuable to us. So please, let's make sure we do that in how we're storing it locally as well.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Another critical piece of that to draw out, I think, William, not just -- especially for DV survivors but also for everybody who's surveyed on the night of the PIT count or in conjunction with the PIT count, is there's really no need to be collecting actual PII. You shouldn't be having names, addresses, even -- I know often date of birth can be a way to help de-duplicate data. But unless it's absolutely necessary, that level of detail is not necessarily critical to collect. That's one thing to keep in mind.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, and I think the complication there is our model surveys say, collect name in particular. So I'm going to channel what you're saying a little bit. What I think you're saying, Aubrey, is, especially if you're a provider, a DV provider,

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you're going to know these things, I imagine. Maybe you're a 200-person provider, and you don't know everyone separately. But if you're able to collect some kind of proxy for that, for name, just initials or instead of date of birth, age, or -- like these other things that allow you ensure you have the information you need to fulfill the PIT count, what gets submitted to HUD, and you're sure that they're unique, each person is identified uniquely, that's the key. It gets harder when you're doing the unsheltered count because, again, we ask you to -- or in our model surveys we include that. But the core reason for it is so that you can de-identify folks. So your survey just needs to be able to find ways to de-identify on the night of the count. And, again, you can do that through collecting partial names or, again, age or birth year instead of date. You have some flexibility in how you do that. And, again, I don't think we say that enough to you because we kind of tell you to look at the model surveys. And sometimes, we get people coming back to us and saying, well, you said to collect name there. And that's kind of the -- our logic with it. It helps you de-identify, but you can be creative in how you collect that if you're not comfortable collecting name or you're confident that you can find other ways to safely and

accurately de-identify your folks. You just have to be able to collect enough information to do that de-identification.

**AUBREY SITLER:** All right. Thanks for the clarifier. Let's see. I think there was one more Q&A that had come in. Okay. So we have an update. Earlier, somebody had asked about the [PH] gaps analysis. There was a guide that came out in 2011 called Calculating Unmet Needs for Homeless Individuals and Families. And that was the one that they had asked if there was going to be an update to that coming out.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** No. So we used to collect unmet need in the data collection process, and it was a royal pain. And we were happy to finally remove something as opposed to add. So that was one of those things got -- that got removed, so we have not updated it since that '11 release.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Okay. And then one other example has come through the Q&A that I guess I'll read out loud so that people have it of kind of the VASH and HMIS issue that was asked about earlier. This person says we have two counties with VASH vouchers. One county does their own data entry. They also have HUD TSH programs so it's fairly simple. And then the other county is a combination of the housing authority and the VA folks providing the data to the HMIS administrator to enter. So that's another model that people might be able to consider getting the VA on board with. Okay. Two other questions that I have written down. We've got about seven minutes left. So we might be able to fit in a couple more if you have them. One person has asked, is part of the reason we're utilizing the 2019 PIT and HIC data collection notice for 2020 so that we can have more consistent data ongoing?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Great question. So yes. I think the bigger reason is I would like that forever going forward. I don't want to focus on changing data elements. We want to focus on the accuracy of the count. And it's taken us years to get to the point where we could say no new *Notice*. The *Notice*, if you'll read it, it says, at the beginning of 2019 and going forward, this is in place until it gets superseded by the next *Notice*. So we kind of anticipate that one day we'll be able to stop making changes. And this just happens to be the first one. So we may kind of still make a few changes in the future that are likely going to be more technical. At some point, we'll probably update, for instance, to include in the *Notice* the funding source change for YHDP and joint component. But those are so small right now. The universe that's impacted is so small that we just thought that's not worth changing the *Notice*. But our core priority is to let you focus on the accuracy of your count. That's what we want, consistency, accuracy, absolutely the most important thing.

**AUBREY SITLER:** And one person has asked if we have any thoughts on getting accurate data on race, age and gender for the tally. I assume that means for an observation-based PIT count, since people, especially in colder climates, tend to be bundled up during the January PIT count. They're asking, would you still use a sampling method as you discussed earlier?

[01:25:01]

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yes. The short answer is yes. Please ask questions. We're finding people are still making assumptions about how people identify, and we want to respect people for what they're choosing to identify as. So yes, absolutely use the sample. We do know that people are bundled up. It's hard to tell. And, actually, in some ways that's helpful because we want you to ask more often than not. And, again, in an observation setting, use the sample to kind of derive that. It actually reminds me of Michael [PH] Oleman's comment from earlier. He had kind of suggested expanding. So I'm just going to note that's not HUD's recommendation. So that's not that we don't care, but I am going to say for our perspective, we ask a lot on the point in time count night already. To collect more, it's fine. Actually, we talked about the DV questions and its potential to ask more. Our fear with any more questions, though, is can you do it in a way that doesn't compromise the count already? Again, we ask for a lot. So we don't ask for everything you possibly could ask for in the PIT count because that's not the right place to do it. So we try to limit what you ask for in the point in time count, knowing that this is tough. It's so hard to get this information. And we, quite frankly, are probably asking for too much, and we're stuck where we are. And that larger number, I'd love to see it decrease a little bit, quite frankly, not because the information's not important, but because it's just asking for too much from this data collection source. So just want to put a plug. We appreciate thoughts and comments like that, but that's not one that HUD's necessarily endorsing but for that reason.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Thanks, William. So we've got a couple of minutes left. I don't see any new questions that have come in. So I guess I will take the last couple of minutes to thank everybody for their time for joining us today. We will, like I said, update those PIT count resources slide of this deck to include the two that Lisa had mentioned earlier related to state coalitions and some of the other DV resources that are out there. And we'll remind you guys the last PIT count office hours call that we had, we talked a little bit about the volunteer training toolkit that we did end up releasing, I think, last month. So that's available up on the HUD Exchange. There was a Listserv announcement about it. And, of course, there's always the option for you to submit any specific questions that you have to your planning efforts or your implementation efforts directly to the ask a question or the AAQ desk on the HUD Exchange. We're happy to help you out with whatever questions you have. William, anything else to add?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** No, thank you all for all of your great work. We really appreciate it and appreciate you giving feedback here for others to see. You guys are the experts, so it's great to see what you're doing well and sharing that with other CoCs. So we appreciate that.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Well, with that, we'll go ahead and log off. But thank you all so much for joining us. And best of luck with all of your planning efforts, and we'll talk to you in a couple months.

[01:28:50]