

Attendee Comments, Resources, & Feedback from the June 2019 PIT Count Office Hours

Overview

During the June 2019 PIT Count Office Hours session, participants were unable to send chat messages to the full group of participants with feedback on their own experiences and resources related to mobile apps and PIT count volunteer training approaches. This resource is a curated version of the resources and insights that participants sent to presenters in an effort to better disseminate the information they shared, which would have been public during the session had WebEx permitted attendees to send these messages to each other more broadly.

PIT Count Mobile Apps: CoC Comments & Feedback

As noted during the PIT Count Office Hours Session, HUD supports CoCs' use of mobile apps to conduct their PIT counts, but HUD does not endorse using any specific vendor or product over another. The views represented below come from communities with experience using specific PIT count mobile apps.

Valeri Knight: Panelists: Happy to share our experience with the Mobile App if anyone wants to reach out. Valeri.Knight@piercecountywa.gov

Robert Ward: The vehicle/makeshift shelter etc. observation count feature needs some work in the Counting Us app. The reports don't really work for those tallies because you don't have any demographic data on inanimate objects

Lloyd Schmeidler: Another challenge with the use of a mobile app is having a conversation with the person being interviewed while completing the survey in the mobile app. We addressed this by encouraging volunteers to conduct interviews in teams of two, with one person asking the questions of the homeless person and the other person recording the responses in the mobile app.

Robert Ward: You have to manually mark your location on the map if you don't have cell service in the Counting Us app

Shavon Moore: Dallas used Count Us

Davis Schofield: South Dakota Statewide uses SIMTECH Solutions Counting US Application

Diana Romagnoli: Thumbs up for Counting Us, Simtech from Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance

Amy Dixon: Counting Us. We loved it. This year used it for [sheltered and unsheltered PIT counts].

Carolyn Curry: Simtech Counting Us App and Outreach Grid

April Woods: We used Simtech and give it a thumbs up

Tarra McFadden: We worked with our County Surveyors office and used ESRI

April Woods: Georgia BoS used Simtech and is trying out Survey123

Valeri Knight: We are using Simtech Solution's app Counting Us for 2 years now and are thrilled to use them for a 3rd time.

Michael Chapman: FYI: We used a mobile app name "Smart Sheet". It does not store data on the mobile device, it connects to server and stores data on the server only. Only HMIS Admin has access to the server.

PIT Count Volunteer Training Practices: Comments & Resources

Camille Castillo: I would love to have a 'Community of Practice' session with other communities and to hear about other communities PIT practices. I feel that we have a strong PIT practice.

Lloyd Schmeidler: Re. volunteers and training: we also have tried to offer volunteers an online training option that volunteers can access on the web at their convenience and an in-person training option.

Sarah Glover: We received a suggestion to use existing volunteers that already spend at places serving people experiencing homelessness. E.g. food pantries, churches etc. because they're already familiar with the space and population, rather than using general volunteers from the community

Shavon Moore: Dallas has liability waivers

Shavon Moore: Dallas uses a video uploaded via YouTube as a training video for our volunteers

Valeri Knight: We are using a video this year for experienced volunteers and in-person mandatory for new volunteers

Andrea Hurley: We do a recorded webinar, and then post the recording AND the slides for people to go back to it. We try to keep it to 30 minutes or so.

Rhonda Taylor: Yes, the Atlanta CoC did both a live/recorded webinar and a in-person webinar. The volunteers had to do the webinar first. It was helpful

Kat Durant: [link to San Diego's online PIT count volunteer training video]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpayaNkAKJc>

Brenda Chamberlain: FL-508 has done video trainings.

Alicia La Patra: We would provide a resource list to hand out to clients after completing the survey. We would also provide food gift cards.

Suzie Tolmie: In Nashville, we are fortunate to have MDs & psych residents who not only go over signs of hypothermia with volunteers before deploying, and to "roam" to count teams that call in for additional urgent primary health or mental health needs.