AUBREY SITLER: Okay, it looks like our list of folks who are joining is slowing down, so we're going to go ahead and get started. For everyone's reference, this session is being recorded and it will be posted on the HUD Exchange some time in the next week or two as soon as we're able to get all of the documents ready for posting. Thank you all for joining us today for the PIT Count Methodology Office Hours. We have a pretty full slate of things to discuss, as you can see from our agenda.

I'm going to kick us off with some introductions and some housekeeping notes, and then William is going to lead part of our focus discussion, which, for this Office Hours event, is focused on a few different pieces in the PIT Count Planning Process, and then, after that, I'm going to walk you through a big picture overview of a new set of resources that we've been working on that really aim to support communities in training their volunteers to help conduct their PIT Counts. And then, finally, as is usual for these calls, we will end with time devoted to open Q&A on anything that you want to ask about the PIT Count. I'm seeing some notes that people are having trouble hearing. We will hopefully be able to get to those in a second. So, let's get started with our introductions. We've got William Snow from the SNAPS Office at HUD on the line, and then Meghan Henry, and Rian Watt, and this is Aubrey Sitler talking, all from Abt Associates, your TA providers. So those of you who have joined us on these calls before know that we tend to conduct them a little bit differently than more webinars. We like to encourage as much participation from the people in the audience as possible. So, I'm going to go ahead and walk us through just a quick tutorial of how to use a few of the different features in this WebEx interface to make sure that you know how to use them. And for anybody who has audio trouble throughout this call, this image on the screen right now shows you where to go to connect using a different medium. You can either use your computer or a phone to call in, but you need to go to the Quick Start Menu up in this upper left-hand corner of the screen and then go to audio conference and you can make a couple of different selections from there. Okay, so, then there are a few different icons that you will see in the upper right-hand corner of your screen, and they say things like Participant's Chat, Q&A, polling, etc. You can click to turn those -- the corresponding panels to those icons on and off, and if you click the little triangle in the corner you'll see a list of additional icons that you can click. We're going to use all of these panels today, so just wanted to make sure you're familiar with how to use them. There's another little arrow in the corner of all of the panels that you can use to expand them and collapse them. I know sometimes it's easier to see the bigger version or the smaller version depending on what you're looking for. If you're having any technical difficulties at all, please send a chat, not a Q&A, to host and presenters. You can see that there's the little drop-down there that gives you a list of different people that you can send chats to. Rian or I will message you back to hopefully help you figure out that technical issue, but if you send it to host and all presenters then you'll have a higher likelihood of getting a quick response. When it gets to the point in our conversation where we're trying to have a discussion, if you would like to ask a question verbally or offer a comment verbally please use these hand-raising icon that you'll see that the bottom of your participant's panel. That'll alert us to the fact that you have something you want to say and I can go ahead and un-mute you and ask for your comment or question. And if you prefer to write written questions or comments on any of the things that we're talking about, please feel to use the Q&A panel.

So I know that that's a lot of information to keep track of. I often use the slide that I can pull up again when we get to the open Q&A part or the discussion part just to remind people of what these features are and how to use them. So, you'll this guy a little bit later. William, let's go over to you to start a conversation about PIT Count Planning.

WILLIAM SNOW: All right, excited to meet with everyone again. It's kind of crazy because I just -- we're still ramping up to do the follow-up from the last PIT Count, so to have this conversation, I'm glad we're having it and it's nice to do the Office Hours quarterly, but it's always one of those funny deals where we just finish and now we're jumping into the next one already. So that's the fun of doing counts and working with data. I want to just cover two things. I want to spend some time on mobile apps. We talked a little bit about it last time and there was a lot of interest, so let's start with a poll question. Did your CoC use a mobile app to conduct the PIT Count this year? Let's start with that one. Again, that should be available for everyone to answer. I know in my screen it's on the right-hand side.

AUBREY SITLER: It looks we've got some responses coming in from about 70%. We'll wait till we have at least 80, hopefully, and then we'll close it.

WILLIAM SNOW: Cool.

AUBREY SITLER: All right, you've got 15 more seconds.

WILLIAM SNOW: All right, let's see what the responses are. So, it looks like 42 out of the 182 said yes. We had about 80, so nearly half said no, some not sures, and then not applicable. So, that's actually a pretty good chunk that did do it. It's exciting to see that this is a technology that we're able to access and use. So let's ask a quick follow-up question, and this question applies to those who used it last year and those thinking about it, so this applies really to everybody, and the question is "does your CoC plan to use a mobile app to conduct your PIT Count in the next year?" Again, as you're answering this, what we'll go over in a few minutes is some of the lessons learned, there's a lot of positive feedback, there's a little bit on the challenges side, so we'll raise that as well. HUD's in a fun place of we strongly encourage the use of apps, it's most certainly not required, but the benefits we're seeing from it show that it's a good thing in most areas. There's also a cost component and whatnot. We can't recommend a vendor. It's similar to the HMIS space. We are not allowed to endorse vendors. We, for the purposes of how you contract or do any of that, there certainly are quite a few out there and you have different options about who could provide what apps. We recommend that you engage with peer communities to the extent you can. We had looked into whether or not we can share that information about who's done it. We haven't been able to do that on our website yet, but I'd encourage folks to chime in, in the chat or the Q&A box to say if you're willing to talk with other communities. If you used an app last year that would be great. Chat would probably be ideal for that. So, let's see where we came out, does your CoC plan in the future? Last year we had a response of 42 out of the 186 on the call that said yes, and now those planning it's up to about 69. So, we have certainly more communities thinking about it. Only 20 said no, and then a good chunk who aren't sure. But it looks like there's an increasing interest in using mobile apps. Again, that's exciting, so hopefully we can watch it through a couple of things to think

about in considering mobile apps. All right, let me jump into those lessons learned. So, from the many communities I've talked to, I've only had one community that shared with me that they don't plan on using a mobile app again.

And it wasn't because they didn't like it or it was dysfunctional. It actually was because their CoC was small enough and the nature of their count was small enough that the app didn't provide a value added, but it provided a little more work for them on the setup and some extra costs. And, so, they just felt like, from a cost benefit analysis, it just wasn't worth it. Again, that's only one community. I probably talked over time to 30-ish, 35 communities about their experience, and the rest have all said we loved it, and these are the various reasons that I have recorded as to why they thought it was beneficial, so I'll go through. I have eight core ones that I'll highlight. So, benefit number one, data collection was faster. This is largely because you've got a platform that walked the volunteer through the process, as opposed to the volunteer just trying to figure out on paper and what questions you ask and what questions you omit. We're all comfortable with phones, or many of us are, and, so, it actually resulted in a speedier engagement with folks. Number two, the app allows CoCs to count more people. This is tied to the speed piece, so they were just able to engage, again, more because they were able to go through all the surveys faster. This applied more to the larger areas where there are lots of people to engage with, so I just wanted to put that note. Not to say that other areas couldn't or didn't experience that, but I noticed it most with areas who had lots of people to engage with at a single time and in their line of sight. And a lot of people, the geo tag, that's an obvious big benefit is the ability to say, "Hey, I saw them here," and rather than try to go through a process of writing down the street or anything like that, which most people did not do outside of the mobile app, you can pin them, pin the spot where people are which is fantastic. It allows you to do all sorts of analysis later. Benefit number four, it allowed greater capacity to run reports. So not only did you add this tab on geo tags, but also allowed people to move very quickly in aggregating reports so that you can do things faster in terms of reports, but also more. So, you could use the geo tag, in particular, to look at regions and to look at places where the data was commonly incomplete. And you can get a sense of is that a volunteer issue, or is it a volunteer leader issue, or a training issue based on where people are located. It just allowed a more rich analysis of both the training process and the engagement process, which I thought was interesting, and that was very positive because we certainly want to get at the quality pieces. Number five that we saw was real-time feedback. A lot of the folks that are using mobile apps that's something akin to a command center where information would feed into the CoC during the count, and the folks leading the command center could address questions, but also be proactive if they saw high missing rates for certain response categories. They could engage the volunteers. They could call them or the volunteer leader and say, "What's going on? We're seeing that we're missing things, is there confusion about questions that need to be answered?" So it allowed a lot more real-time engagement, which we really haven't seen much of that in the past so it's exciting to see that option. Benefit number six, there was better subpopulation. Again, this is partly due to the ability to engage people real-time. So if veteran questions or disability questions that were tied to chronic status were not answered, it allowed the team to engage quicker so that we could troubleshoot whatever was stopping or preventing them from getting complete information. So that, again, also very exciting. Benefit number seven, it was easier for volunteers. I mentioned that earlier with number one. Most people are very familiar

with mobile apps and surveys, and it's nice to have something that really guides you through the process. You don't have to think twice about what questions you ask. The app does all the work. You ask this question and you do it in this order, and they don't even know what questions they have to skip because they don't see them, so volunteers tended to like it.

The last one that I wanted to note was it helps with future planning. This can be done in two ways. You can look at how the app was used in your most recent count and look at where were hot spots or, back to the training issue, what were things that appeared to be a problem, not because of the technology, but because of how people were engaging with the technology or engaging the population. So, if volunteers weren't asking all of the questions, it allowed folks to know that real hand. You could also use the technology in preparation for the future in using other forms of outreach and apps that a lot of you are already doing ahead of the count, so drafting up hot spots a month before the count, identify where many people are, and working with your law enforcement, and seeing where you should count. Well, this is a great opportunity for you to put that, kind of, test the waters of that in the app and see where the people end up congregating on the night of the count, and you can engage a little early but then use the app to plan on how many volunteers should go to what type of locations and things like that. So that was exciting, a lot of good things. That's not all of the good things. There were a lot of opportunities for communities to have flexibility in what they add to it for local question purposes, local needs, and other things. So, let me move, though, to a few challenges. There were three main challenges that we saw. So, one of them was understanding who was creating your app and the backend piece. So, we had one community who had worked hard to get the app up and going, and, unfortunately, their server died out on them that night and then the backup server died as well, so they ended up having to redo their count. And that was painful, a lot of scare there. So that was not a great thing. I will say that was tied to a homegrown app, as opposed to ones we've seen more off the shelf. I heard another similar story that was also tied to a [community-]created mobile app. So, I would just encourage folks just be a little cautious if you're going to go and create your own, which is not a problem in any way as long as you're doing all that you need to ensure that privacy exists, and also to ensure that you have any backup server capacity that you may need. So that was just one major note of caution. Another one was using the app ahead of time to test the questions. Folks do that often with the regular surveys, but just making sure that the right questions are firing so we're relying very heavily on the right logic. That should certainly be tested before you go out to make sure that people are getting the right question. And then another variation on the testing principle is load testing. On the night of the count you're going to have a lot of people using it, so just make sure that whatever backend server you're using can handle the load you're talking about. That wasn't a huge issue. Most did not have a problem there, but it's worth testing if you had some slow-down that they weren't expecting because of that. So those are the three, although I will say one other piece is a few communities struggled a little bit because they couldn't change the questions that are HUD required questions because [INDISCERNIBLE] they were working with. And, so, that's some of the negotiations you have to make with whoever is the provider for that. So just think about that how you ask, again, the HUD required questions and whether or not you can have flexibility in changing the wording a little bit. So those are the major pieces that I wanted to just highlight on mobile apps. I think what we'll do is we'll take all of these questions and we'll address them

all at the end. I think that's probably going to be easiest unless there's something you've seen in the chat or Q&A. Aubrey, is there anything in the chat or --

AUBREY SITLER: There are a couple of Q&A's that I can pitch to you real quick. I don't think they'll take too long, so why don't we go ahead and touch on those ones right now while we're on the apps?

WILLIAM SNOW: Cool.

AUBREY SITLER: Okay, so, one person asked, "Is the mobile app being used for providers to complete, or clients completing surveys on their own cellular device using an app?"

WILLIAM SNOW: Oh, great question. There are a couple variations on this. The apps that I have seen can be used both in the sheltered and un-sheltered context. And in the un-sheltered I've seen it used for observation and interview base counts.

So, in short, they can do everything. I have not seen communities use it much on the shelter side, but generally HMIS does enough of the work that it's not worth the cost to do that. Not to say no one did it, but it just wasn't very common. So, most people were using it for un-sheltered, and in that engagement it was the volunteer's device most of the time. A few communities were able to get donations of tablets and phones that they could use on the night of the count. So that was rare. More often than not, again, it was volunteers who were downloading the app on their phone and then engaging with folks experiencing homelessness on the night of. I didn't hear them handing their phone. That actually is an option based on the comfort level and security of the volunteer with their app. I don't see any problem. As long as we're confident that whoever receives it A, will feel like this is a more secure or private way to provide their information and that you can be somehow confident that they are able to read and understand the questions. Those are some huge assumptions, so, for the most part, people are -- volunteers are holding their phone asking the questions as they go. But, again, I don't want to take off the table the opportunity to hand over the device and let the person you're talking to actually just answer the questions, read them and answer them.

AUBREY SITLER: Right, thanks. And just to clarify to the person who asked that question, in the same that you should never be just listing a link somewhere for anybody to be able to fill out a PIT Count Survey and count is as a valid PIT Count Survey, you should not be letting people download an app at their own will to complete a survey on their own. It should always be administered by somebody who is assessing them for whether or not they meet the definition of experiencing homelessness to then conduct the survey with them.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, great reminder. Thank you.

AUBREY SITLER: Okay, so, one other question, this person says that they would like some feedback on mobile apps and if they are able to conduct the questions offline and submit later. So I imagine this is in reference to whether or not the actual interface is able to save the data that's collected onto a phone for them to upload to a server or whatever else later. And they said

this would make it easier to be able to use it in rural areas, like Vermont, where's there's not necessarily good service everywhere.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, nearly every mobile app I've seen have both capacities. They generally have a downloadable format and a web-based. Most don't use the web-based, they end up using the downloadable, but it's optional for both. And especially with the downloadable it'll save where you are so you don't need internet connection. When you go back and get internet connection then you can upload that data to the larger server wherever the surveys are going for the CoC's purposes. So, most apps have that capability and, even though you're not tied to the internet, generally you can do the geo coding so you can still drop the pin where people are and it'll still save it at the location you are even if you don't have internet there. So, yeah, most apps can accommodate that, which we're thrilled to see.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. And then we'll just do one more right now, and then a bunch of the other ones that I'm seeing are more general questions, but I think we can wait to answer until the general Q&A later in this call. So this person has asked, "Are you able to share the name of the apps that are being used? It seems like there are different ones from different vendors." And, William, I don't know if you're able to say that or if you just want to encourage other people to put into the chat the names of the vendors they've worked with.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, I'd really rather have folks just put it in the chat. I'm aware of a few, but it's not comprehensive and, again, I have to be careful a little bit on the endorsement side. But if you've used an app, please share what you used in the chat box and if you have anything that you would say, even if it's just a thumbs up/thumbs down, people like to know that stuff as well. Seeing that most were thumbs up you don't necessarily need to do that, but you certainly can. So, we'd appreciate you sharing.

AUBREY SITLER: And also, thanks to everybody who has shared their experiences with their mobile apps in the chat. I think it's really helpful for people to be able to process that in that way, even if HUD and the key providers are not able to enforce anything specifically.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, thank you for sharing that. We really appreciate that.

AUBREY SITLER: All right, should we move on, William?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, so, I want to make this piece quick. Again, I mentioned we just really finished the last count in terms of data collection and reporting it to HUD, and we're already on the next one. In our timeline that we had published a few years ago we had recommended that folks get started around August. I know that actually varies by the nature of CoCs and how intense the engagement is. So, I just wanted to ask, via poll, where people are just to see are people already starting to do their count. And I don't want to go much further than that, I'd rather spend time on your questions, but let's ask that question. So, the poll is open now, have you begun planning your 2020 PIT Count? Again, we --

AUBREY SITLER: We'll give folks about 15 more seconds.

WILLIAM SNOW: We know not everyone's going to count in 2020. We have about a little over 80% of communities tend to count on an off year, and 2020 is not a required year. So, while we encourage it, it's not a requirement to do an un-sheltered count in 2020.

AUBREY SITLER: All right, you should be able to see the results. Are you guys able to see those?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yep. It looks like about a quarter of folks have already started, and then we have a variation of no and not sure for the rest, so that's a lot. That's exciting, again, a big work. So, this is one of the reasons we do this more quarterly based Point-in-Time count Office Hours so that we don't leave you in the lurch for most of the year. So hopefully you'll be able to ask some questions and we're excited to be able to answer them, but before we get there, we'll jump into the next piece. We want to make sure we're giving you tools that are helpful, and Aubrey and Meghan and I and others have talked with folks like you guys in the communities, and talked elsewhere, and tried to brainstorm what is it that we could provide to you that could be helpful to maybe reduce some of the load, short of getting rid of the count all together, so just trying to brainstorm what resources could we provide to help you. So this is some of the results of that type of conversation and your feedback, and, so, I'll turn it over to Aubrey to show us where we're going with that.

AUBREY SITLER: Great, thanks William. So, as William said, we are constantly thinking about ways to provide tools or resources or guidance that can help with your PIT Count because, at the end of the day, the PIT Count data that you guys collect and that we have on the nation as a whole are really only as good as the information that is collected on the night of the PIT Count. So over the last couple of years at this point, we've developing a new set of resources that we're referring to as the PIT Count Volunteer Training Toolkit. And that has come on the heels of hearing from providers and CoCs across the country that either they do train their volunteers but would like -- they do have volunteers who come out for the PIT Count and help them to conduct their PIT Counts, but they would like some assistance in figuring out ways to improve those trainings, as well as folks who are like, "Hey, we would really love to use volunteers for our PIT Count, but we really don't have the capacity to develop this whole set of resources to make sure they're doing the best job that we would need them to do in order to be able to rely on that data." So, in developing this toolkit, we looked through a whole range of resources that we got from a number of communities across the country, and that includes some of the bigger urban cities in the U.S., as well as some suburban locations and a few more rural areas, to see how do you guys train your volunteers, what are some of the challenges you face in training volunteers. We also talked to people who have participated as volunteers in PIT Counts before to understand what they thought their trainings that they undergone had done really well to really prepare them to go out and talk to people and complete surveys with strangers, to maybe sleeping in un-sheltered locations, and to understand what did you wish that you had known before going out to do this for the first. And, so, we arrived -- the current iteration of the PIT Count Volunteer Training Toolkit has four files in it. One is a trainer's guide, which I like to refer to as the Teacher's Version of the textbook. It provides and overview of the entire toolkit. There's a sample Volunteer Training slide deck. I know that developing content to present to volunteers can be

one of the biggest barriers to training them in the first place, so we've developed a 47 slide PowerPoint file that could be used in your community.

And then there's a sample Volunteer Refresher hand-out, and a sample list of local resources. And, so, we're not going to go into all of these resources in-depth today, but I will touch on each one more specifically in the next couple of slides. In general, each one is meant to be customized. As you can imagine, there is literally no possible way to develop something that is going to be useable in its original state by every possible Continuum of Care in the United States. You guys are too diverse to be able to do that. And, so, we plan to release each of the final versions of these files in formats that would be editable, so Word docs, and PowerPoint files, because they really meant to be customized. Okay, so, the first one that I'm going to give you an overview of is this Trainer's Guide which, again, is the teacher's version of the textbook, if you will. And as you can see from the Table of Contents here to the right, it's divided up into different parts with one part devoted to each of the tools that comprises the toolkit. It's organized by toolkit file, and it also includes links to some other PIT Count resources, as well as an appendix that has some tips and some help with using some of the PowerPoint features that are built into the sample slide deck. And within each of the parts that focuses on the different tools that are part of the toolkit, it provides a full explanation of what that particular tool is supposed to do, how to use it, how to customize it, and the different places where it's built in for communities to be able to customize those specific tools. The sample slide deck, like I said, it's 47 total slides right now, and it is geared mainly toward Continuums that use volunteers for their un-sheltered PIT Count activities. It could be pretty easily restructured to fit into a sheltered PIT Count for volunteers, but the biggest need that we've heard from CoCs is that they really want to be able to use volunteers for their un-sheltered PIT Counts. Again, I want to keep reiterating it is entirely intended to be customized, so it's customizable. We've used the notes pane in PowerPoint. If you look at this screen shot to the right here you can see the notes pane at the bottom. They've got these little info symbols next to them. There are descriptions next to the little info symbols of what the slide is and what the intentions of its contents are supposed to be. Now, this particular slide that you're looking at doesn't have these or the other symbols on it, but there are several slides in the sample slide decks that have this little -- it looks, kind of, like a little chat bubble, like a cartoon, and it has sample scripts to use during the training to explain some of the slide content. And we use those for things like explaining why is the PIT Count at the end of January, or why do we have to do a PIT Count, or why do I have to ask the survey questions in the way that they're phrased? Things like should be able to help communities to explain common questions that people have without having to come up with their own explanations, necessarily, if they don't want to. And then there's this little document symbol, and throughout the PowerPoint slide that will include links to other relevant resources or references, but just a notice for the PIT Count Methodology Guide, or the model survey tools that we post on the HUD exchange that are the baseline of what you could use to collect your PIT Count information. Also, throughout the sample slide deck, there are slides that have red text in them and that was how we denoted things that much be customized for each continuum, and that's things that pertain to, for example, whether you're using a full sense of methodology, whether you're walking every street in your Continuum then that's going to require a different explanation than if you're using a hotspot methodology or something like that. And, so, the last thing that I would say about this right now, I think, is the slide that it shows to use a screen shot

of is the agenda so you can see how this training is structured, and what the different parts that it goes through are. So it starts with a PIT Count 101 and it really goes through the volunteer focus background of what is a PIT Count and why do we do one and what are the commonly asked questions about it. And then there's an overview of the volunteer's role in the PIT Count, which includes everything from an introduction, to the actual survey tool and how to do interviews, where volunteers are expected to go, how they will know where to go, and who they should interview while they're out conducting a PIT Count. And, of course, safety, the safety of both the volunteers themselves, as well as the people they're interviewing.

And then there's an entire section dedicated to, what I refer to as, survey practice, so that's setting people up to be able to do practice going through the survey with other volunteers at the training so that they can start to get comfortable asking questions that we, quite frankly, are not accustomed to asking strangers with any frequency. And then the last piece is all about the logistics, and that can obviously be catered to Continuums that want to conduct this training before the night, as needed, for the count, and it can also be structured for those who want to conduct it right before on the nights dedicated for the PIT Count. And, so, that would include things like what you recommend volunteers bring with them, the schedule of events for the night, what time they should plan to be back, where they need to go, and then it opens to Q&A for people to talk through what lingering questions they might have. And, so, I think this is probably the biggest piece of this toolkit. Everything else is -- it, kind of, wraps around this idea of the training of actually offering a comprehensive training to the volunteers. And, so, the last two documents that we'll talk about just very briefly, one is a sample resource guide, and it's currently eight total pages. The first six pages are lists of examples of resources that you could possibly choose to include in a one-page, or maybe front and back page, handout that you would have volunteers bring with them on the night that's needed for the PIT Count so that if they want to make a call somewhere with somebody they encounter, or if they want to hand these resources out to the people they encounter, they could do that. And then the last page of the resource guide includes the screen shot that you see here, which is a formatted one-page document that that, as you can see, you can fit a whole bunch of information on. We're aware different communities have different levels of resources. Your community may not have this many resources, so the idea of having to fit them all into one single page is maybe not as daunting of a task for you, but I know that the formatting piece can be a barrier to some folks. So we decided to include this an example of how you could fit a whole bunch of information onto a small space. And then the last resource that we're going to talk about today is what we're referring to as a Sample Refresher Handout. So the intention of this is that you would hand it to volunteers after they have completed their PIT Count training and they would be able to either carry it with them on the night of the count, or, if you're training them well before the night of the count, they'll be able to consult it before they go back out to remember what are the big points that I need to take with me while I'm out and doing this tonight. I've seen some CoCs that have put together full, very comprehensive guidebooks for volunteers, which is great. The intention behind this, though, was that it was something quick and accessible. So the current format of it, as you can see, it's literally a one-page document. So you're looking at the whole current draft of it right now. The whole point of it is that it's small and it's accessible. So if you have suggestions on things like the format of that and whether you think that it should be smaller, maybe a quarter page or a half page, that's the type of feedback that we would definitely want to hear about that. But, in

general, this is -- its current point is meant to be just a very brief example of the type of thing that you could hand to a volunteer to take with them. So I'm going to pause there, and I'm going to give you guys a new poll. I know that that was a very quick introduction and that you did not get the chance to dive into the content of this toolkit very heavily, but just thinking about the idea of having a volunteer training toolkit is that something that you think your CoC would use to either develop new volunteer training materials or to update existing ones if you guys already conduct a volunteer training? I'll give people a little bit more time. But at the end of the day I think the main point is that we want to develop tools that people will use, and the content, as you can see at the bottom of this slide, we really want to hear some feedback on the content and the structure of what we have developed before we release it to make sure that it is meeting the need that you all have. I'll give you guys about 20 more seconds to finish answering the poll. But after this session I will reach out to everybody who attended, and this is not -- we're still trying to figure out the best ways to get feedback on the full toolkit. We definitely want the feedback of everybody who is present for this session.

So after this Office Hours call, we're going to reach out with an email that has some of the sample files attached and a survey to seek your feedback on the current draft. Let's see what people said. Okay, so, it looks like only 1% said that they would absolutely not use this training toolkit, which is great. That means that we're at least in the right direction, I hope. And there were several who said not sure, there is one person who's not from a CoC, but 117 different people have said that they would find this useful. Okay, so, let's pause there and see if there are questions. I know Rian has been looking at them. Rian, do you want to pitch a couple of the questions that people have been asking?

RIAN WATT: Yeah. There are a couple of questions about this toolkit in particular, so one is asking, "Will there be specifically sources available for rural communities?"

AUBREY SITLER: That's a great question. William, do you want to speak to that or do you want me to speak to that first?

WILLIAM SNOW: I can take a crack at it. I think the short answer is not necessarily. I don't think there's anything in the toolkit now that would be limited or targeted necessarily to rural communities. That being said, we would welcome on what it is that you would want in rural communities that might be different than would be urban communities in this context. What resources could be more helpful to you? We'd love that feedback. We would love to help rural communities and -- well, all communities, but to provide specific resources if needed for different geographic types. So happy to meet that need if you can be a little more specific in the feedback process as to what it is you need.

AUBREY SITLER: Yep, that's exactly what I would've said. So when we send out that survey, specifically to the person who asked that question and anybody else who's wondering something similar, if you could make sure to include that kind of perspective of what you feel like it's missing specifically from your region or Continuum, where you stand, that'd be great.

RIAN WATT: Great. We have three more brief questions about the toolkit. Two of them, I think, are more suggestions about what should be included. The one says, "Will a sample liability form be provided? In my previous work we had volunteers sign a liability waiver." And then the other one on the subject says, "I would like the schedule slide from earlier to be a part of the toolkit."

WILLIAM SNOW: The schedule slide is actually available in different formats. We have a checklist form of the schedule online among the various tools, so that actually might be more useful to you as opposed to the slide. Although, I think it has something akin to the slide already. So that's public, you could already do that. The liability one is a tough one. At the end of the day that's probably not going to happen, not because it's not needed, but because we don't think we can get something approved out of our office. So we just have -- we've gone rounds on it. We actually have a draft form of a liability waiver and we've just never had success getting it out. So that's one where we would strongly encourage folks to share with each other. I know I've seen a few folks willing to share, so please open up. If you have something like that, make it available to others to see what you've done. We really appreciate that.

RIAN WATT: Great. And I think this is implicit in what you just said, William, but the last question about the toolkit is, "Do you want samples from any of our CoCs? We have a good volunteer guide with photos produced by a local outreach and advocacy group we'd be glad go send."

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah I'd love that. That's from Susie, I believe, thanks Susie for making that an option. In fact, if we could put that on the chat so others can see? HUD has a weird place that we can't really -- or we're limited in what we can put on our website if we haven't reviewed it. And, so, if we had 400 different PIT Count Methodology packets and volunteer material, we just wouldn't have the bandwidth to review every single one and "approve them." So we haven't been able to do much with that but, again, that's been the same vein of if you are willing to share what you have and just know that that's from peers and they've worked hard on it, we strongly encourage that and we appreciate any community who's willing to share.

RIAN WATT: Those are the only questions in the Q&A about the toolkit. We have a couple broader questions, but I'll let Aubrey decide when those should come up.

AUBREY SITLER: I am also looking through the chat. It seems like people are saying that they're not able to send chats to all attendees or all participants, and it looks like it's grayed out for you guys. I'm sorry about that. I vaguely remember this happening on one of our other webinars, but I don't think we came up with a solution to it. We'll to look at the settings for the next one that we host. But, again, I apologize for that. We'll try to amplify what people have said by sending it out to the full group ourselves. So, keep sending us that content. That's fine. Somebody just asked if anybody uses a video to train PIT Count Volunteers, and do volunteers like that format? I know that there are Continuums that do, do that, but we obviously have not incorporated a video into our example, but that -- I participated in one as a volunteer, actually, that had us watch a video before came to the event. But if you guys want to send examples through the chat, we can, again, amplify those to folks.

WILLIAM SNOW: And I think, Aubrey, with that that almost makes the most sense to do, if communities are looking at that, to have that refresher piece that we have in the toolkit. It's ideal if the training happened again on your own, or happened weeks earlier if you have that type of refresher. So you get there as a volunteer and you get handed this quick one-pager, beware, do this, don't do this type stuff, but it's not a full training. At the same time, all the core stuff you can hit on. So one reason we put that in there was just the reality that we know people are moving towards that online platform, or more towards earlier trainings, and it makes that piece that much more relevant.

AUBREY SITLER: Yep. I'm also seeing a question from somebody who said that, for them, the un-sheltered PIT Count serves very medically vulnerable populations and they're wondering if the draft toolkit includes instructions on ensuring that people in need of services are offered assistance and not just enumerated. And I have two things to say in response to that. The first is that yes. So I mentioned safety is, if we go back to that slide with the overview, is included under the Your Role as a Volunteer section of the sample training. And the first part of safety is about the safety of the volunteers who are conducting the PIT Count because they're often concerned about their own safety, especially people who haven't gone out and talked to strangers on the street before often are a little more nervous than the people who have done this before. But then the second part of it is the safety of the people they're interviewing, and it includes space for each Continuum to customize based on their climate, based on the population that they tend to serve, and the kinds of vulnerabilities that they see in people, how to instruct volunteers of who to call, when to call. So, for example, somebody who decides that they want shelter for the night, is there a way for them to get shelter that night? If they see somebody who appears to be in incredible medical danger, always call 911. How to assess in colder climates for things like hypothermia, or to assess whether somebody is just really, deeply asleep or really in danger? And, so, a lot of that we rely on Continuums to have the expertise for, but there's definitely space in here that is dedicated to that. But thanks for asking that question. I do think that's an important piece of the volunteer training. Rian, are there any other questions that you think we need to pitch right now, or should we move onto more general Q&A?

RIAN WATT: I think we can do both. I mean, there are a couple of more general questions that we can pitch now. There are two questions, in fact, about coordination with the 2020 Federal Census. One specifically asks, "Are you coordinating in any way for the 2020 U.S. Censes count? It's only a few weeks later, so I'm wondering if there is any coordination when it comes to counting people experiencing homelessness for both purposes." And then a second question that is about the same topic.

WILLIAM SNOW: I can definitely speak to that. We've been working with the Census over a couple of weeks and months trying to figure out how we should proceed. So there are a few things to think about in relation to that. First, we've gotten questions about will HUD grant exceptions to the timeline to coordinate with the Census instead of in lieu of doing the un-sheltered count? Unfortunately, the answer is no. We've looked at that. We've looked at their timeline. The problem is that it's -- their timeline for the un-sheltered engagement piece is the last week or last couple of days in March and going into April.

Because of our requirement to get the information out to our congressional folks, as tied to our appropriations and our statutory stuff, and because once you start to get into March, or really April, your count looks different than it would if you compare your count to everyone else's whose in January. So we decided to not grant exceptions to go that late for the Census engagement. That being said, it's an off-year count, so if you choose to not do an un-sheltered count and instead decide we're going to engage with the Census and do the count a few weeks later, it would be officially counted for HUD's purposes, but we'll use the effort we would normally do in the PIT Count to engage the Census. We have no problem with that. We think engaging with the Census is extremely valuable and important. So I want to start with that because that's going to be the first question we get is, are the exceptions, and the short answer is no. In our talking with them about what counting the homeless means, we asked for some clarification. So this is how they are describing their methodology for engaging the homeless populations. They're referring to the count of the homeless as a service-based enumeration. That includes four key areas of engagement on their part. Going to shelters and transitional housing, going to soup kitchens specifically, going with regular scheduled mobile food vans, and I guess the fifth one is actually their targeted un-sheltered or non-sheltered outdoor locations. So they have these things that are different than what we call a service-based count. They're actually including what we would normally count as everything. They're including that all and expanding who they reached, again, mobile food vans and the way they engage soup kitchens. They have, again, a lot of data or a lot of information already on the web, then we'll put more information out about this about how they do that count. One of our immediate questions to them was how are you going to share this information, the data that you glean because we're not sure how comprehensive -- I mean, they said up front we're not counting every -- we're not trying to do a comprehensive un-sheltered PIT Count. Their response was we're not planning on releasing this data. So they'll collect on the homeless population, but they're not going to release it either nationally or locally. So that's important context for you guys to have if you decide not to do a PIT Count because you're going to lean on that and hopefully be able to reference it. You won't be able to reference it. That's not going to be an option because they're not going to publish it. The other piece there is we have encouraged them to engage CoCs. We have specifically asked them not to go and just cold call whoever they think is leading the homeless effort locally, which folks leading it have various views about who that might be. So we've asked that they centralize that by contacting the CoCs. As part of that we also asked to follow-up of what incentives do we have for the CoCs. It's obviously important to get a comprehensive count, but we also want to recognize that there's time involved and resources involved. We asked specifically is there some sort of stipend or anything like that. They have responded on us on that yet, so we'll continue to ask whether or not there's a stipend. They actually have stipends for a lot of different types of the engagement, so I just don't know what that means. If I were you, I wouldn't hold your breath about getting the stipend, but we just figured it's fair to ask and you shouldn't have to ask them. We should be able to ask them for you. So we have done that and, again, we'll publish information as we receive it. So, we'll put out more information on our List Serve as we get closer to the count about what that means, and some of the possible fears or a lot of FAQs that Census has already put out about privacy and security about various pieces that concern our population in particular. And, so, we have asked them to coordinate with us so that we can share that with all of you and you share it with those experiencing homelessness and

your providers and whoever is interested. But we definitely want to get as many people involved as possible.

AUBREY SITLER: Great, thanks William. We have a couple of questions from people about PIT Count conducted in the summer in general.

But also there's one in particular that's saying, "Can we merge a housing survey with an existing annual large scale use event and it count it for our PIT numbers even though it is not in January?" And they're asking specifically about the use portion of the count. It sounds like there's some kind of event where they feel like they're getting a better estimate maybe, or a better count of the youth experiencing homeless in their Continuum, but it does not fall at the same -- within the last 10 days of January.

WILLIAM SNOW: It would depend on when it is. It would depend on how comprehensive it is. It would depend on the overlap, kind of, what are you talking about in engaging them, how comprehensive is the engagement? So, the short answer is it depends. That's an AAQ, or you can shoot me even an email, I don't mind that at all, and happy to engage in that conversation. But if you do that, which I encourage you do, be prepared to provide those details. And again, that first one of when, if you say October the answer is no. If you say March, the answer is probably not, but not impossibly no, but probably not. So it'd still have to be, kind of, in the winter timeframe in the early part of the year. But again, the other questions also bare weight and, so, I want to think about those. Those are just things to think about.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. So another summertime question, "We're conducting a summer PIT Count, and due to our geography we are seeing an influx of migrants coming through shelters. Is there a different category designation if they are in an emergency shelter but on their way to family in another location?"

WILLIAM SNOW: No, not on --

AUBREY SITLER: This sounds less like a PIT Count question, but more of an HMIS designation question.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah. So no we don't. The last thing you guys want us to do is create 50 variations on an emergency shelter because we could add navigation centers, and we can add all sorts of variations. So we intentionally don't do that, but you can certainly add elements to you system. The main piece there is to determine are they actually homeless, does this look much more like a vacation concept even though it's -- well, so there are a couple things you'll have to grapple with locally on that one, but you'll probably have to customize your system if you are trying to collect that very specific population information.

AUBREY SITLER: Okay, we've got another mobile app question, William. It says, "For mobile apps, how can we confirm that the app provider meets the HUD privacy guidance?" They had an issue with this last year apparently.

WILLIAM SNOW: That's a good question. You can refer them to the limited information we have on privacy, which ties into, again, the ability to keep the data secure and, well, there's a bunch to privacy. But, yeah, you can refer them to our guidance that's already out on the HMIS side. That all generally applies in this context. I will say that having a mobile app has natural challenges in terms of privacy. Often, especially if it's a downloadable app, you have records residing on people's phones. So the vendor should be able to speak to how the record comes in, how long it stays, what is the transfer point that it goes to the CoC's database, and then when is the record destroyed, for all intents and purposes, on the phone? Those are things when we beta tested several years ago, those are certainly things we looked at and they continue to be things we could strong encourage CoCs to ask questions about when they're considering a vendor.

AUBREY SITLER: Great, thanks. So, I'll just remind folks, I haven't seen anybody use the hand raising feature yet. If you want to verbally ask any questions feel free to click that little hand. I can pull that slide up again. Click this little hand that has the purple circle around it at the very bottom of the participant's tab. We do like to hear your voices. We feel less like we're talking to ourselves that way. Somebody has asked in the Q&A about observation counts. They want us to please cover the acceptable methods, for example, if a person walks away mid-survey, or if somebody in an encampment runs away when or if a count enumerator approaches them.

WILLIAM SNOW: That's a good question. So we actually give a lot of flexibility to you at the CoC level on that.

You have the ability to determine when you have an interview-based survey that's merely incomplete, or when you need to move to an observation, especially if you're using an app. Most of the times, it'll have both options handy and available so you can even switch mid-app, if I remember right, and with paper you certainly would want to carry probably both types of forms -- the observation and the interview one. But, again, I would look to completeness to make that decision, and we -- well, we allow, again, on the CoCs to make a lot of decisions about what that means. As long as you're able to do the extrapolation, the very worst option is to throw out a record period. So, if you know or have a good sense from your limited engagement that they are homeless, or have every reason to believe it based on the observation, then please don't throw out the record. At least choose the observation and then extrapolation the account for the other details that you're required to submit to us.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. And there are a few questions from people asking about if there are any tips for or guidance around how to count people who are sleeping in cars without waking them up in the middle of the night.

WILLIAM SNOW: The short answer is no, and that I would say if you're going to count people in cars you're going to have to wake some of them up in order for you to do a sample because that's a unique population. Often folks living in cars do not look the same as the others, so this would be similar to what you would do with the normal sample. You would have to derive a sample based on known information. Even with the un-sheltered population, if you do an observation-based count, you still have to do a sample at some point of that population. So, if you have a way of sampling those who are sleeping in vehicles as a post-night follow-up, that's

acceptable, but you would have to have some sort of sample. So, if you did that post-night follow-up, let's say you have a parking program – a safe parking program and you know that's where a lot of people are sleeping, you could do a follow-up perhaps in the next day or so and ask folks, again, the demographic-type stuff. That way you're not waking them up. The one caveat there is do you have any reason to believe that a part of the vehicular homeless population does not look like who's sleeping in the safe parking programs? I mean, that's the same type of theory with the un-sheltered population. There are different folks who like to sleep in different types of areas, and no -- there are just things to watch out for. We worked with San Diego this year, and San Diego did a lot to identify those sleeping in vehicles and we commend them for their effort, but it was challenging as well and they have a lot of people sleeping in vehicles. And they implemented a sample approach so that they were engaging a limited number of people, waking them up or knocking on doors, but not everyone, and then using that sample to apply to all vehicles that they identified.

AUBREY SITLER: Great, thanks for that William. And I know we've been asked in the past, too, about whether there's a standard multiplier that is suggested to be used for if you see that there is clearly somebody sleeping in the car if you should be assuming that's one person, or two people, or whatever else. And the answer that we always give us no, there's not a standard multiplier. That's come up in the AAQ several times over the last few years.

WILLIAM SNOW: That's a good point because that actually is exactly why we want you to do the sample. We want you to find out what does your community look like. Not even your neighboring community. What does your CoC's vehicular homeless community, or any part of your CoC? I you're ever using multipliers, we want you to base the multiplier on a sample within your CoC and during this period of time. Don't use the multiplier from October if you're counting the homeless in January.

AUBREY SITLER: Right. So one person has asked about -- they're from Dallas and they say that Dallas wants to create a PIT Count Committee to help coordinate the event. Who would you suggest be on the committee? And, William, if you want to start answering that and I can also pull up the planning worksheet that I sent in the chat a few times of the links to that timeline that we talked about at the beginning of the call, because I know it speaks to that in the August section. So I can show that on the screen.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, that's a great question. It depends partly on how you structure your counts, especially if you do a youth separate count because often youth should be involved in that. We would encourage you to engage people experiencing homeless as part of whatever committee you do, and we've seen the most success in the work with homeless youth, both in planning PIT Counts, as well as service engagement. So definitely would say if you're including youth in that larger committee, or you're going to count the youth on that and not do a separate youth count, include someone from the youth side. I would just look at your local dynamics, right? If you're in Arizona and you're close to reservations, I would see if you can get tribal participation. I know there are several states or areas where they either have tribal lands or there's a heavy urban tribal presence and, so, that's another thing to consider. Engage your board, so sometimes people don't think of having board members on. They have their HMIS

lead, or a data lead be on that and have a small committee. We would encourage you to have at least one CoC Board Member, partly because they're the ones who, at the end of the day, are responsible. But we also want them in engaged in doing the count and being out there. Many of you have board members who are steeped in the work, and that's not a difficulty. So, other than that, I think looking at what Aubrey has put up already is actually probably helpful. There are all sorts of people you can engage, but at some point, there are too many cooks in the kitchen. And, so, just finding out your core groups and then making sure, again, have someone from your CoC board, have somebody with lived experience, and then find out who's going to lead the effort. You definitely want that. And this is a good place to insert an intern, or somebody who's temporary who can have the passion to rile people as long as they have someone behind them who has the experience to answer questions and the experience to say, "Yeah, we need to engage people and we do this in the PIT Count." So, this is a good place to maybe get a little help from interns, but foist it all on them because they generally are not prepared to take on the whole effort.

AUBREY SITLER: I think, too, it's important to keep in mind what it is you want your PIT Count Committee to accomplish. If it's something like overhauling your entire methodology then that's going to require a different group of people with a different group of experience, than, for example, somebody who's trying to get the word out and trying to, like William's saying, rile the community and bringing passion to it. So, keeping the ultimate of those conversations or that committee in mind will inform who you invite to the table, too. Okay, so, we've got somebody asking "if their mobile app is HIPPA compliant, is that also in compliance with HUD's privacy rules?"

WILLIAM SNOW: Very likely, yes, because HIPPA tends to be a higher standard, certainly a different standard but a higher standard for what we require, so yes, typically.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. And, so, for the people who are asking for the link to this worksheet, I sent it, I think, three different times in the chat now and it should've been sent to all participants. So, again, go up to that upper right-hand corner of your screen and make sure that the thing that says chat is blue, and then open up that panel to see where that link is. You can also just Google PIT Count Planning Worksheet, or search for it in the HUD Exchange and it should pop up as one of the first options.

RIAN WATT: There are two I see in the Q&A that have not been answered.

WILLIAM SNOW: Are you looking at Michael Chapman's one about the extrapolation tool?

RIAN WATT: That's right, and [PH] Melissa McGwinnie's question about do you count --

WILLIAM SNOW: I haven't seen that.

AUBREY SITLER: I have a follow-up question for Michael, though, and I'm wondering what about the extrapolation tool, Michael, you were hoping would be updated? I don't know if you'd feel comfortable if I un-muted you or if you'd prefer to just send in a new Q&A clarifying what

you wanted to be updated? I know in the past we've talked about extrapolating for people when you don't know their household type. I know that's not accounted for in the extrapolation tool. But other than that, it would be helpful to hear a little bit more clarification. There he is, okay. I'm going to un-mute you, Michael.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: Hello.

AUBREY SITLER: Hi, Michael.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: So, I just wondered about the extrapolation tool. If there's going to be an update for any changes with data elements that are collected in the PIT and, of course, we've got HIC and the infamous LSA and all of that. So, the extrapolation tool is important to us because we get a number of cases with people that we survey that may be families with children, and they won't provide the children's information. They may say, "We have three children," and that's about all we get. We may get the race, we may get age, but not an actual birth date so, you know, those demographics. It's tough to include all of that and which ones to accept the data and which ones to disallow the data as part of the count for the sake of accuracy. So, I'm just wondering if there's going to be an update to that extrapolation tool.

WILLIAM SNOW: So, I think there are two parts to that question. One is, are we changing anything in 2020? That's actually one of the questions that's probably a bigger question.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: Yeah, that's true.

WILLIAM SNOW: With the tool now, is there something that's not working on the tool now when you went through 2019? I don't think we updated it in 2018. Did you have any problems in 2019 with things that we need to update because it didn't work?

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: No, it worked fine for 2019.

WILLIAM SNOW: Okay, good. So, let me, then, revert to the other question of changes. So, we were hoping not to do any changes in 2020. I was working on the notice this week. It looks like we'll probably have to do -- at this point in time, I'm seeing two potential changes, both tied to the data standards, not PIT Count changes though. They would impact the HIC and they're just clarification about how to collect for the joint component and YHDP. So, the changes we're looking at now impact, gosh, I could probably count the number of projects that we're talking about is probably less than 300 projects across the 23,000 records we get. So, don't expect changes. We're hoping that it's limited to this. It's not finalized, so I can't promise there is nothing else, but we have no intent to add any new elements to the PIT Count and I don't want to actually do anymore to the HIC portion if I can avoid it, other than clarifying those two which actually, hopefully, will help you to move forward for next year.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: Okay. Could I ask a follow-up question?

WILLIAM SNOW: Sure.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: The PIT Count will be collected, I noticed, on the HDX2. We have the PIT and HIC on there. So are we going to be submitting the information on the HDX, or HDX2 for 2020?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, that's a good question. I don't know the answer to that yet. We're having various conversations around what's going to be collected where and what the timeline is for these various data collection points. So, the timeline isn't looking any different for those next year. The system performance measures will probably change our data collection timeline on that, and we're thinking about where that data is going to land. But as of right now, I have no clear answer on whether it's going to be on HDX1.0 or 2.0.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN: Oh, okay. Thanks.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yep.

AUBREY SITLER: Thanks, Michael. We've got another question from the chat about rural PIT Resources in general, and I think that this can function both as a comment to take into consideration for the Toolkit, but maybe also something to discuss right now as well. And that is, they say that outreach is hard in rural areas because they have so much space to cover. Are there any best practices for un-sheltered outreach, specifically one that might just be 10 people within a 100 mile radius? That might be an exaggeration, but any kind of guidance would be very helpful.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, I love that question. I have the privilege of working being the rural homelessness lead in our office, and I really enjoy it. I have great respect for all that work that all of our CoCs do, but I see our rural folks have a lot of geography to cover, often with fewer staff members. We've seen a lot of very creative models on the street outreach side for our rural communities. Many of them have one or two staff to cover hundreds, sometimes thousands of square miles, and it is amazing to see how much they rely on existing structures that aren't necessarily traditional homeless structures.

Sometimes they are but often they're not. So, Maine, I'll give you their example. They, again, have very limited folks who are able to do street outreach, but they're engaging various groups, like snowmobiling clubs who are going out in random areas that you just can't get to, but homeless people could get to, and if they don't want to be seen they can end up there. So engaging groups like that to say, "Hey, can you just let us know if you see anyone?" So, I've enjoyed that kind of creative engagement. It's very common for our street outreach teams in rural areas to look for the formal or informal hub, kind of, the know-it-all type person who it's their town, they know. And sometimes that's the librarian, sometimes it's an elected official, sometimes it's the barber, and it's just a matter of going into the gas station often and starting there and saying, "Have you seen anyone who's sleeping outside, or do you know anyone who I can talk with who's helped in this area?" And it's often a snowball effect. But what ends up happening is they ask these folks to be their eyes and ears. So, they don't go out there very often. It's more of an every once in a while, every couple of months, they'll go to all of the areas, or

sometimes it's once in the year they get to all these areas. But they have people on the ground who can say, "Yeah I talked to somebody and we'd like to be able to help them." So, it's a matter of finding champions and finding people who know what's going on and just utilizing that, and they're volunteer folks most of the time. There will be more on that. We're hoping to put out little more resources. Again, we've seen a lot of wonderful examples of street outreach engagement all over the country in rural areas, and we'll try to do more to amplify that so folks can get ideas.

AUBREY SITLER: Great, thanks William. We've got somebody asking, "Why do we have to count GPD in the PIT and HIC?" Sorry we had some background noise.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, great question. We were having a conversation this week with the VA about GPD. So, GPD does have a homeless requirement to it. We confirmed that this week. Even the clinical treatment one that's actually what we were focusing our conversation on, that's what their regulatory requirement is. Their form of verification is different than ours. We have a similar case with our RYE providers. They don't often necessarily serve people who are coming from an un-sheltered situation, or coming from the street, and we absolutely do include them as well. We do this because they are homeless providers. Unless you have something on the RYE side that shows that they're serving more to the state, we ask you to include the project. And we do the same for GPD because they're homeless programs, which actually isn't that different than our own homeless programs, right? The HUD-funded traditional housing programs, many of them you can take folks at risk of homeless and RYE has a broader eligibility, and even our shelter context. So, the very nature of the more crisis based interactions often has components that are a little more nimble and allow larger catchment. But they're core intent and the large, vast majority of who they're serving is homeless, so we ask you to include them.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. So, we've got a couple of questions from somebody about -- it seems like there might be some migrants who are coming into the U.S. and presenting at an emergency shelter for a short period of time and then are on their way. We already answered a part of this. Oh, they want to know if they should count people who are on their way to somewhere else as literally homeless when doing their PIT Count if they're staying at an emergency shelter but are on their way somewhere else?

WILLIAM SNOW: So, this is a fun area where we give you a little flexibility. I'd say, at the end of the day, it's going to end up being a case-by-case basis. There are some people who, let's say, that they were working on a ranch and they had employment for six months of the year. They don't live in, let's just say, North Dakota or Montana or wherever it is normally, but they go there for the work. Outside of that, they don't have a place to stay. They literally are working there, getting housing as part of that work and they have nowhere to go that other six months.

Well, yeah, if they're in that other six-month window, you have every right to count them as homeless because they are homeless. If you have somebody who is living in one area and moving to the other, and, sure, they're not going to be in their house for two weeks, but they have a house and they're slowly making their way there, I probably would not count that as

homeless. Even though that's not a traditional vacation principle, it's certainly not that ideal leisurely or recreational "homeless" for that. They're not in the spirit of what we're talking about, people who don't have a place to go or a resource for housing. And those folks that, generally, that you're talking about, or potentially talking about, it sounds like they have a residence and they're just making their way there. So that's what I say, again, that's very broad strokes, and when you get to the details of each case you'll just have to make some calls about is this person really meeting the spirit of they're homeless, or are they in transition but they have -- they came from a place, they're going to a place, it's just a matter of time for them to get there and how long is that time --

AUBREY SITLER: Even if they're staying in a bed that's paid for using, for example, CoC funding, that principle would apply?

WILLIAM SNOW: That's a good question --

AUBREY SITLER: I'm sorry, it would have the EFG funding if it were an emergency shelter, but --

WILLIAM SNOW: Right. So, if they're residing in the emergency shelter bed, we'd say that they're staying in the shelter and we would actually allow you to count them there. We'd probably say do count them -- or not probably. We'd say chount them, they're utilizing the shelter bed. That's a good question. If they're utilizing the homeless shelter or the crisis response system, I guess there's almost nothing to say you shouldn't do that. But if it's someone you're engaging either on the street or you're seeing them in the hotel/motel context, things get a little different there. So yeah, again, the Devil's in the details and you'd have to play it out. We're happy to walk through that on the case-by-case if you have specific cases you want to talk through but, again, I suspect you'll talk through it for every individual.

AUBREY SITLER: This seems like an appropriate time to plug the AAQ for any of those specific questions in your community.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yes.

AUBREY SITLER: Feel free to send us questions. We'd love answering them.

WILLIAM SNOW: And I see Michelle's follow-up on engaging the rural street outreach piece. Michelle Milliken added that law enforcements often use -- I'm glad she said that, I meant to say that because law enforcement, while not everyone's best friend, we know not every community has the best relationship with law enforcement, law enforcement often is a very good resource and has been very positive in many of our rural communities, as well as our non-rural communities. But especially when you just can't get out to an area, often the law enforcement has had some touch point or more common touch point than you have, so law enforcement's great. We've also seen engagement on both national and state and sometimes county park authorities. So, our national park authority has been really good in many areas, but state parks

are often more effective because they just have -- they're more common to have state parks, so those are also other places to reach out to.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. And I think the only other unanswered question that we have in the Q&A, I know there are a few comments but we've been filtering the questions from the Q&A box, is "what are the criteria that will be used to determine whether the proposed piggybacking on the youth count at another time of year will be approved or not?" So, this is going back to that question, William, that we had touched on before where you said there might be leeway, but we would need to take it on a case-by-case basis.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yep. Again, I'd like at proximity to the counts. It would have to be after your PIT Count night. So, if this event is December and your PIT Count night is January 31st, that wouldn't work. You'd need to do it after the count. Again, proximity to the end, so let's say you wanted to do one in March. Again, we'd try not to get that far away from the count, but there are sometimes good reasons for it. You would still have to get your data in by the deadline to us. We would not move or extend the submission deadline for that. So, we rarely have the flexibility to move the deadline for submitting data. That's pretty hard and fast. So that's the other consideration is the later it is, the harder it is for you to collate the data. You'd also have to think about your matching type ability. Is this going to be an observation principle? If it is, that's a little more difficult for us to allow it for the route.

If this is going to be you're collecting information, as in an interview, and you can de-duplicate that information from your larger PIT Count information then we'd certainly be more amendable to that because it allows you to address the duplication problem. That's certainly not everything, but those are core principles.

AUBREY SITLER: Awesome. Okay, so, two more quick questions have come in that I think we can get to in the last four minutes of this call. First is, "Does HUD need to approve any local methodology changes in advance of the PIT Count? If so, by when?"

WILLIAM SNOW: Great question. We do not need to approve them as long as you're confident that it meets the standards in the PIT Count Methodology Guide. If you are not sure if it varies from that count, you certainly can send an AAQ or you can engage me directly. If you just want to engage a methodology, I love to talk about methodology and happy to provide ideas and talk through it, so I'm always open to that idea. In terms of timing, it actually depends more on when you were planning on implementing. I mean, we could approve that or look at it a couple days before you implement your count if somehow you think you can implement in that amount of time. So, we're flexible there, although don't email me January 27th and ask for approval January 28th. My review period has got to be a little longer than that, but often I can review stuff, especially closer to the count, in a week or two. So, those take a little more to review than a mere question, so I do try to take methodology reviews pretty seriously. But, again, we welcome that. We tend to see the bad stuff on methodologies. We see problems more than we see good stuff, so I love to see good stuff, especially if you think it's good, and aren't sure or want to share more. I'd love to see that because, again, I see a lot of the negative and I would like to see some of the positive along with it.

AUBREY SITLER: Yeah, that's such a great point, William. Okay, so, I think this will be our last question that we answer, "Do you have any tips on working with schools to better count homeless children and students?"

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, great question. So, we've started by engaging the Department of Education. That's one thing that we have seen as our homework list. We have a fact sheet that, actually, the Department of Education created to provide to their folks, so we felt it would be better accepted for school liaisons to receive something from the Department of Education than from HUD. So that's a resource that's on our website now under the PIT Count Tools and Resources in the Subpopulation Section. So, if you want to start there, you have people who are willing but they're not sure what they're allowed to do, that is a place to start. They generally cannot release information without consent, and it's very hard to get consent because youth are either unaccompanied or the parent, it's hard to engage them. So, what we've done is we've used matching principles. We have worked with the HMIS provider and the ED folks at times to see -- they'll do a is this person there, and a yes or no, or the ED folks will ask that of the HMIS side or the PIT Count Collection side. We've seen a little bit of that. That's hard to coordinate. It's very time intensive. More often we've just pitched it as our common desire to serve the youth and the liaisons often will join in the daytime count. So, if you have more of a targeted youth count that has a different method in particular, liaisons often want to do that and they'll provide information on hot spots and they'll be able to help you understand where to look. So, we use them more on the planning side than we do on the engagement side for the night of the count, but we'd like to see more of that night of piece. We're interested as well.

AUBREY SITLER: Great. Well, I think that's the last thing we're going to address today. But, again, the Ask A Question that's on the HUD Exchange is always open, and feel free to send us specific questions about if it's anything from where I find the link to that planning worksheet that you brought up, to hey I have this specific question about my PIT Count, can you help me, we're always happy to respond to that. And for those of you who attended, again, thank you so much for your time on this lovely Thursday, hopefully lovely where you are, and I will be in touch in the next couple of days with some of the resources that we talked about with the Volunteer Training Toolkit, and a survey form for you to provide some specific feedback on the structure and content of that to make sure that it is meeting the needs of your community.

So, with that, William, do you have anything else to say? Go for it.

WILLIAM SNOW: No. Thank you all. Again, you guys do fantastic work and this is hard and we appreciate it. So, thank you.