

**April 2018 PIT Count Office Hours Transcription**  
**Abt Associates**  
**April, 26, 2018**

**WILLIAM SNOW:** I promise that I don't have an answer for everything, so be prepared for us at times to say, "I don't know," or, "I think this is how it should go," and give us some more time. Um, that's kind of the give and take of doing an open mic so to speak is letting you guys ask your questions. It doesn't guarantee we'll have the answers.

Also, we're looking at the housing inventory count as well. We mentioned PIT counts – that's kinda the core topic, but there's certainly a large interplay with the Housing Inventory Count, so questions about Housing Inventory Count are certainly allowed.

One other comment: When we open up the floor for people to give comments, I want to make sure that this is focused on addressing core issues. If I feel like the questions are kind of leaning into not getting at, not focusing on addressing core issues, I may cut off a comment. So that's just fair warning, like I want to make sure we're somewhat on topic, and I want to give you a chance to voice your issues that you want to raise. And it's easier to voice it than to try to type it, but again, if I feel we're getting too off topic, I may cut us off, or cut off somebody who's asking a question and move us along. So, again, just fair warning.

So, today, we're going to talk about extrapolation. I just want to raise a few core issues that I have seen that have been issues for other people. And then we'll open up for questions. The other piece here is that you don't have to have a question. If you have a comment, especially one where you can share experience with success or failure on something, that is helpful, right? We learn just as much from success as we do from the failures, and we want to learn from both. And you guys are doing this, so I like to have peer to peer learning. Again we'll ask about that later. So there are a few concepts about extrapolation that I want to discuss. First, what do I mean by extrapolation? I generally mean one of two things: 1) Extrapolate to determine what your universe is. Right? If you sample five communities, but you have 30 in your CoC, then you're going to have to do something to cover the remaining 25. You're going to have to extrapolate to account for them. So that's what I mean by getting to the universe. Your base, um, we'll talk about some options there, could be the county level, it could be the census level. Uh, it's actually open to you. You could set your own levels based on hot spots in terms of what you're using as your sample. It actually raises another point of, sometimes people are afraid to admit they're doing sampling, or they're asking us, "Is sampling okay?" Sampling is absolutely okay, especially if you're in a large geography, it seems infeasible to do a count in every area, so it's hard to do a coverage count of the state, for example. However, the reason people tend to ask that is because A) When you're physically able to visit every location, or most locations, you have a good sense of people. Right? You've seen them, and you're hopefully able to interact with them and kind of develop a list. That maps very well with a by-name list, for instance. Uh, when you have a sample, you have the challenge of, again, if you counted in the five counties and the 25 you didn't, when people ask, "What's going on in one of those other counties," all you are able to say is, "This is what I think is going on based on the other samples that we have." Uh, so when you do a full coverage count, you're able to speak a little more clearly to what's going on in the specific county or jurisdiction. Again, that's not feasible everywhere, and we

don't expect that everyone is able to do that. Uh, but when you're getting down to, um, especially when you're doing things like criteria benchmark, the reason we went to by-name list in a lot of that effort is because you're literally counting every person you know and trying to work down through your list. So, just to be clear, sampling is okay, especially for large jurisdictions, we are okay with that. Um, but there is some strength in having full coverage.

So let's go into the other form. This is all I have. I mentioned that there are two forms of extrapolation. This is extrapolating to the universe, so what is the other form of extrapolation? It is extrapolating to determine the characteristics of your population. This is pretty common, I, uh, suspect that most, if not all, CoCs have to do this, if for no other reason than you have missing data. Alright so you may do it to cover all of the characteristics if you're doing an observation-based count, for instance, you'll get your sample a day or two or up to a week after the count. You'll kind of determine your sample, and you'll apply your sample characteristics to the large universe you've already determined. Uh, but even if you count full coverage, and you counted everyone and you asked interview questions, for the missing elements, you can and certainly should use extrapolation to account for the missing information. Our extrapolation tool is explicitly for that latter purpose, right, to cover the extrapolation for characteristics scenarios. So that should help you with, especially demographic data to help you kind of even that out. It is not necessarily to cover how you get to your full universe. So I just want to be clear on that. So that's one big thing people get wrapped up on when we use this term, what does it mean? Here's another one: non-random samples. By-name list. People are asking, "Why are we still doing Point-In-Time counts when we have by-name lists?" Several reasons: We like by-name lists, and I want to be clear about that. We like them, that's very good. Often, by-name lists do not cover an entire CoC; they usually cover one population. For instance, veterans or chronic. Very rarely do they cover families with children, which is hard. Some communities do have that. We love to see that. You have to work through some local privacy issues – usually state issues in terms of having under-aged children on lists. So that's just stuff, practical aspects you have to work through.

By-name lists again are super helpful, but they can cause some harm. And I'm going to give one example where it caused harm totally inadvertently. One community, they had a great by-name list, and they understand where their veterans were, but in that community, when they did their Point-In-Time counts, they inadvertently were using the by-name lists to deride their sample of veterans. And they more or less had a complete universe of veterans, but they didn't count in all of the jurisdictions. So they extrapolated. Well, it turns out they pretty much had their full list of veterans, but they still extrapolated, so it inflated their veteran number by a factor of the extrapolation. So you have to be careful if you're going to do a sample, in particular to determine your characteristics, or your populations like veterans, a by-name list could hurt you if you don't adjust for the reality that your by-name list is relatively complete.

Um, it also is an opportunity for you to test your by-name completeness, right? If you do a full coverage count and you think you have everyone, a Point-in-Time count is a fantastic way to verify whether or not that is true. So that's also a big piece. So beware of the non-random samples when you're doing extrapolation, because, again, your good datasets might harm your sample if you don't adjust for that reality.

Uh, it's important for you to figure out what your samples should look like when you extrapolate. So, if you are a balance of state, there is no way you can do one extrapolation metric. It seems almost impossible just because you are going to have somewhat urban areas, you're going to have some rural areas. You're going to need some densities, right. You're gonna need strata to work off of, where you can say look we counted in this low density areas, or these low density areas, and we counted in these high density areas. And density would be referring to total population as well as homeless population. And then kind of figuring out what other areas that we didn't count in are similar to these types of density levels? And then extrapolate based on that. That's another common thing we're finding. Sometimes for whole populations, sometimes for subpopulations, communities are inadvertently combining with everybody and then extrapolating with probably the wrong base.

So again, I saw an example in a large state, a somewhat urban county was being used to extrapolate for the entire state. And that was a problem because it was largely rural. So again, beware of an oversimplified extrapolation. That can be a pain, obviously, to try to figure out, "What's the strata, you know? How do I set this up?" That's another reason we're having these type of calls. We'd like to discuss that. Uh, but this points to the reality that you will likely need some sort of statistician involved. So we strongly encourage you – work with universities, work with your state, work with statisticians who can help you set up your extrapolation if that's what you need to do. Um, but, on the flip side of that challenge, right, when they give you something, numbers in particular – it's most easy to challenge them after they've given you numbers – look at them and test if it passes a most basic back of the envelop test. So, uh, in the last year or so I saw into this one community who ran into this issue where they saw the results of the sample and it looked off. They weren't able to fix that before the submission deadline, and they found out later that they were using an extrapolation base that was too high, and it threw off their numbers by a lot. But, uh, they kind of knew it intuitively up front, but they didn't know how to challenge the, the organization that had given them their numbers. So I would just have you, empower you, if you are the CoC, and something looks off, you can challenge it. It may take more time, that's the one rub. And it may take someone who has the expertise. If you're using the university, drag in another university and say, "Hey, something feels off here. Can you look at it?" So I just want to raise that as well, and now I think I want to shift us a little bit, I want us to go to our polls because I think this will help us do a baseline, and then we'll open it up for questions.

So Aubrey, can you move us to the first poll? Hopefully everyone sees that on your right hand of your screen. Uh, and you can fill it out. I'll read out the poll, but certainly you can start submitting your responses. Has your CoC changed from counting a sample of your geography as to conducting a full coverage PIT count in the last five years? Alright, we'll give you another five seconds, and then let's look at the results. Alright Aubrey, can we see the results on that?

**AUBREY SITLER:** It is processing.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Alright. Again, this is just to give us a sense of "Where are you today? What's your change aspect?" The next several questions will focus on, "Do you use an extrapolation and what does that look like?"

Okay. So it looks like most people don't, aren't kind of in the change world, or don't know where you are for one reason or another. So, uh, that maps actually more or less to what I was thinking and what I've seen in the application process in HDX. We often don't have a lot of changes in methodology. Um, in terms of full scale methodology, that's relatively minor. It's usually in the implementation process.

Let's move to the next poll question. I think that's, uh, let's see, during what time frame do you conduct your PIT counts? And what data sources do you use in that time frame?

Alright, and we'll get a sense here of who's using our kind of night-of-the-count approach versus service-based. Uh, my intuition says most people are using some form of night-of-the-count or some hybrid. Very few CoCs use purely service-based counts. So let's see what the results show us.

We're seeing more people use HMIS. I just want to say, there's been some confusion about how much you're allowed to evaluate your responses, self-reported responses from people during the PIT count. If you have HMIS records for both your sheltered and unsheltered populations, you actually, we do not have a problem with you doing a verification. The rough there is that you have to feel confident that you have a match and that the data there in HMIS is more accurate. This is particularly important when you start thinking about veterans and chronic, where you have a by-name list, you've worked with the VA, you've kind of established these pieces that help you have confidence. Uh, when you have that confidence, you should use it. So, uh, there again have been issues with that in the past, but we want you to use the best dataset you have to validate your PIT count responses. Again, that's not possible for everyone, but where you are confident in your data, please do that.

So let's peek at what's going on. Again, it looks like most people are doing that hybrid approach. Lots more night-of-the-count. We do have some service-based counts there. And then, um, some not quite sure of their answer.

Alright, let's move to the next question. So let's get a sense of what's going on in the extrapolation world here. I'm always curious to see how comfortable people are with extrapolating. Again, some people love it. I tend to find that there are few people I talk to that feel they grasp it very, very well, and they implement it well just because it takes a lot of time and effort. And I'll be honest, it's a little nerdy to love the statistician piece of this. So, uh, I don't have a problem admitting my nerdiness, but, maybe others do. I'll just be, put it out there.

Alright, let's stop it there. Those results will come up in just a second and we'll get a sense of what people know. I suspect here we'll have, um, yep, quite a few who aren't quite sure. Yeah, some mixed bags there. It looks like we have a kind of a good mix of, "Yes, feel confident," and "Yes, we use it but not quite so confident in it," and then a lot who don't use it at all. We're seeing more and more, uh, more CoCs doing full coverage counts, so that doesn't surprise me a ton.

Alright, let's go to the next question. Alright, so, just trying to get a sense for those things we talked about up front. Uh, when you do extrapolation, what're you doing it on? Are you doing it

to deride your entire universe? Or are you doing it to deride your characteristics? Are you doing it for both? Alright, let's see what we have here. And the next question will, you'll see when it comes up, will look at your actual base. Right. What percent are you extrapolating from with the CoCs are using it for their universe?

So this last question where we asked about the extrapolation – what are we extrapolating to? Looks like not too many are extrapolating to deride the universe. Uh, there's a good chunk doing it for characteristics. And some doing both. And then a lot in the not quite sure camp.

So let's go to the last question for those who extrapolate for the universe. Looks like that should have maybe one respondent, based on the last question. So we'll give you just a couple seconds for that one. Yeah. We can move quickly on it. But that's something to think about, right, is there are a lot of rules of thumb in statistics, and one of them is to kind of look at a critical mass. There are different rules based on the sample. Total universe, some say 15, some say 30 should be your base. In terms of percent, we often like to look at 85%. That seems unlikely in a lot of areas. Um, but, we still put it out there.

Alright, so, looks like 10-20%. Alright, so, I've gone through kind of my framing. We've gone through a couple polls to give a sense of where people are. If you have a question, you can hit the "raise your hand" tool. And we will start answering those questions. And you can use the Q and A piece as well.

Let's see, Aubrey or Meghan, do you want to go ahead and lead us out on the questions?

**AUBREY SITLER:** I can go ahead and lead us out on, once people have their hands sort of raised, um, Paula Holtsquaw, it looks like you have yours raised, so I'm going to go ahead and unmute you.

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** Thank you, and, I have a HIC question that's kind of urgent. If you guys need me to not ask it...

**WILLIAM SNOW:** No, go right ahead.

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** Alright. So, we have an SSCF provider who was housing two people in a motel with a voucher on the night of our count. Um, I tried to create an emergency shelter line item on our HIC, 'cause that seemed to be what you would do, and it told me I couldn't do that. So I sent a question to HUD FAQ, and they confirmed that, yes, that's what we needed to do and that there was an issue on the HIC that they were going to correct. And, um, to allow me to do that. And I'm supposed to put the beds in as overflow beds. Well I'm getting an error, a validation error cause I'm not putting in veteran for the year-round beds as well 'cause they're not year-round beds. And if I put the two in under the veteran beds, it says error 'cause I don't have any year round beds.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep.

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** I'm frustrated! This is the only thing I have left to do to hit submit.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep.

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** And that's all I have to do. How do I fix this?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** So, this one, and Meghan correct me if I'm wrong. This is more on our end on the technical end, is that right?

**MEGHAN HENRY** Yeah, Paula, I actually responded to you in the Q&A box. We're going to contact our vendor and we'll have that fixed ASAP, and we can connect online to make sure that gets cleared up.

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** Oh, perfect. Thank you so much.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Yeah, no problem.

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** And when might that happen?

**MEGHAN HENRY:** That will happen right after this call. So we can connect right after this call and I will connect with the vendor. Okay?

**PAULA HOLTSQUAW:** Awesome. Thank you.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Alright. One quick thing that I want to note: I see that there's at least one person with their hand raised. If there's not a symbol next to your name, with either a phone or a picture of a computer monitor, it means that your name is not connected to however you're connected to the audio. Um, and so I don't have any way to identify how to unmute you because it means there are, I don't know, like 20 or 30, quote unquote call-in users. So unfortunately, if there's not a phone symbol next to your name, um, if you could go ahead and type your questions into the Q&A and we'll try to get to those. Um, so, sorry about that inconvenience. But, it looks like Gary Coleson has a question, so I'm going to unmute you.

**GARY COLESON:** Hi, uh, during our count this year, we did an observational count of um, of the morning of the count. And during that observational count, we came across cars, and trailers, and RVs, and such like that that we determined probably do have a homeless person inside. Is there some kind of formula we could use to determine how many people might in that car or in the trailer?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** That's a great question. You're not going to love the answer though. I'm just going to put it out there. So, this, for us, we don't have a formula. There's no national formula. What we have found is: the local circumstance tends to rule the day. In some areas it is typical for a couple to be in a car. Um, for whatever reason, it tends to be the colder areas are less comfortable with their children out in the car. It seems somewhat reasonable. But, uh, other areas again, it tends to be warmer climates, we see more families coming in. So, it wouldn't make sense for us to have a national metric there. The, so, locally, you'll have to figure out, what does it look like? You also have to make sure they're homeless, right? Like it depends on what time of

day. Some people are counting cars and vehicles during the light hours, and it's hard to confirm that even when they have stuff in their cars. We have some reservations with how we're hearing some of the car counts being done. If it is late at night, certainly in the parking lot, that's uh, you know, obviously all their stuff's in there. That makes sense. This is one of the weird places, as with some of the other aspects of the count, where you'll actually have to figure out for your community, you'll have to do a sample. Right? You'll need to figure out. Knock on the window, and figure out how many people are in the car. 'Cause you can't really deride a sample, or you can't really deride a count based on that cause you have zero sample to work off of. And again, unfortunately, nationally, we don't really have a good way to gauge that, because of differences in areas. Very good question. We keep seeing questions like that, and they're great. Tough questions though.

**GARY COLESON:** Yeah, our count was between 5:00 and 7:00 in the morning. So it's still dark, and each person who did the survey really made sure that all the signs pointing to that somebody was in that car or RV at that time.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, and obviously, unfortunately, you might have to have a different standard for your RVs versus your cars, right? But that's...

**GARY COLESON:** Yeah, we do...

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, yeah, RVs are tough. Cars you usually can get a sense of what's going on. Uh, RVs, very, very hard.

**GARY COLESON:** And you mentioned about getting the sample. We decided not to approach any cars, you know, to see who's inside. No knocking on the windows or anything like that.

**WILLIAM SNOW :** Okay. That's a choice you can make. Obviously that makes it almost impossible to figure out how far you're going to take your sample there.

**GARY COLESON:** Right.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** And it makes it difficult if, um, I don't know if this is your community. Some communities will count a sample of cars. Right? They don't go to every neighborhood, but they count a sample of cars. And if you do that, you have the kind of, these accumulation problems. Right? You've got to figure out what an average car looks like in terms of people. And then you've got to figure out how many cars you think you should be extrapolating to. So some of these things compound and make things extra fun.

**GARY COLESON:** Yeah, at least with our community is, we do look at every car.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Good, good.

**GARY COLESON:** Yeah. Okay, well thank you.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Thank you.

Okay, Aubrey or Meghan, it looks like we should take at least one or two of the questions that are typed in.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Sure. How about this one? Can you talk about how you use the hot spot count if your jurisdiction has a combination of urban and rural areas, and the hot spots are all in the urban areas?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yes, so, yeah, this is one of the fun ones. So I work on rural issues. I actually love addressing the rural issues. And what a hot spot is in a rural issue is always a kind of funny definition. Right? It's sometimes camps and camp grounds. Uh, or sometimes it is in the quote unquote city rural areas. That doesn't look like what most of us consider a city, in terms of size and population. So, um, I would say, especially if you have to do an extrapolation to determine your sample, you're going to need to figure out what you think a rural hot spot would be. Um, so it's like one of those things where I'm answering your question with a question. Sorry 'bout that, but um, if that's the case, you're actually going to need people to go out to what that is. So, you have to A) define "What is a hot spot in a rural area?" And again, it might be three people. Right? That might be what a hot spot is in a rural area, whereas in an urban, you're likely to find 5, 10, 15 people, maybe more. So you have to define what that is and then assign folks to go out and verify that those hot spots are what they are. Right? The number of people that are there, and then extrapolate accordingly. So I hope that's helpful. Again, I suspect that's circular, and you probably knew some of that, if not all of it.

Alright, another one from the written questions.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Sure, um. We know this, but the HUD extrapolation tool covers demographics, but does not extrapolate for age. Any guidance on age extrapolation?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** I wonder if, Aubrey or Meghan, if one of you actually want to touch on that.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Well Aubrey works on the tool. Um, Aubrey, is that right, that the extrapolation tool does not account for age?

**AUBREY SITLER:** Um, I'm wondering if the person who asked this question would be able to, um, speak a little bit to what they mean. Do you mean because it's broken down by household type? I know a lot of people struggle with trying to figure out what household type they should be assigning people to when they're extrapolating. Or if they don't know what household type they should be, particularly if they are on the cusp of being an adult and being a child.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** 'Cause I do believe that it counts for age characteristics. I think it divides them out into youth under 18, youth 18-24, and adults that are not youth.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep, so that one may be worth just following up on through an FAQ, because, yeah, we need to figure out some of what exactly the question is there. And it may be just looking back at the tool as well and further discussing that.



Alright, let's move to some more raised hands.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Um, let's see. Jamie Janette. I'm so sorry if I'm butchering people's names by the way. I hope you'll bear with me on that one. Jamie, I'm going to go ahead and unmute you.

**JAMIE JANETTE:** Hi! Uh, I have a question. We do a full census, so we would be extrapolating for characteristics. But, um, one thing, I guess it would be characteristics of the observation right? 'Cause if we already feel like we're capturing the number of the total population, then we would be looking at. Uh, what we've done is look at the data that we know through the surveys and then applied that same percentage to the observations.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep.

**JAMIE JANETTE:** That seems. Okay.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep.

**JAMIE JANETTE:** Is that legit enough? You said get statisticians, and we're not statisticians, but we're basically applying the same proportion of that data, you know, same proportion of the characteristics from the surveys we completed, um, and applying them to the observations.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep. Yep. That's typically what folks do who do the observation count.

**JAMIE JANETTE:** Okay. Uh, and then when you're talking about these, most basic questions, some of the stuff, what we need from HUD, we get through our observations, right? Well, we guess on race and ethnicity. We guess on age from 25 and above, or actually minors versus non-minors. And we guess on gender. But, do people extrapolate on those things based on observations, or do they just...

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, so what they end up doing. A lot of communities, um, I'll just pull a few. Like Seattle King county, I'm fairly sure Los Angeles does something like this. A lot of them, what they'll do is derive a sample, they'll go back to their populations, using usually their street outreach team, and they'll actively sample them. Right? They'll do an interview, so they have a strong enough base of what are the populations of those those... what are the characteristics of those sleeping on the street. It's not, it's much less guessing based on the volunteer saying, "Yeah, we think this person is male or female. Right? It's a lot more, people who are actually able to go out and derive a sample with much more confidence in the characteristics. So that's something I would recommend, because it'll strengthen your count. Although certainly adds more, and it assumes you're able to take that on. Right? If you have a street outreach team, that tends to be the best vehicle, but not everyone has a street outreach team, so...

**JAMIE JANETTE:** Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Cool. Let's take another raised hand.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Daniel Cooper, I'm going to unmute you. Daniel, it looks like you're connected through a computer. Is your computer's mic unmuted and working? We don't hear what you're saying right now. Okay. It looks like he's maybe having some technical issues. I'll reach out to him to try to sort that one.

In the meantime though, we did get a question through the Q&A box that says, "Does everyone do overnight counts? We do a count during the day, and this is a, 'We've always done it this way' kind of things that I'm not totally clear on. How do you handle waking people up when you're doing an overnight count?"

**WILLIAM SNOW:** I love this one. Uh, this comes up every year. I should say, one of the tools we're planning on providing, and we've been thinking about it for years, is a sample presentation that you can use for training your volunteers, which would cover some basics like safety, some principles around why the count is done. But, you know, like a core basic slide set or slide deck that you could choose to use or not use. But it's one of those things we've been thinking about for a while, and this issue comes up regularly in there. Um, I've participated in the Richmond and Ryco(?) County Point-in-Time Count this year. We woke people up, uh, asked them questions. We certainly did so respectfully. We, some of us had police officers with us to ensure that everything was safe, especially if we were in the downtown. Uh, but that's not everyone. I would recommend having at least a street outreach worker involved when you're doing a count that involves waking people up. They tend to be most sensitive and do it well. Um, but yes, it's one of those uncomfortable events. Um, but, often they are very respectful. If we are respectful in waking them up, they are respectful in responding to the questions, and not everyone is going to respond. Right? Either you're sometimes not going to wake them up, or they're going to ask you to go. Sometimes nicely, sometimes not. And we respect that as well.

Um, doing, the time of day for the count. So if you're doing an observation count, you should not be counting in the daylight hours. Uh, I recently had a question from somebody who was in a more rural community, who said that they are counting into the later morning. So this is an area where I think that we would allow it. Now, like, late morning going into noon, that's too late. Uh, but, if you're in an area that's truly isolated, right? You're not going to have a mix of people walking around in the area, but it is an encampment, it is relatively far off, right? They are not going to be mixing with people who are not homeless. Having a count that goes into the mid-morning hours, I'd say, I don't think I could approve anything in good conscience that goes past 10:00, but, again, there are some areas where they're isolated enough and they're not mingling with other folks just because of proximity, where that would be okay.

If you're in an urban area, I pretty much don't see that as a possibility. You'd have to be counting in the dark hours. To be late at night. You know, 10:00 or later is pretty typical, or early, early in the morning, uh, usually between 3:00 and 7:00 is when I've seen. So that's core, the core for observation-based counts.

If you're doing an interview, uh, you can count in whatever hour of the day. Your challenge is: you've got to count everybody. Right? And you've got to interview everybody. So if you do it at

5:00 in the afternoon when school is getting out, you should be asking everyone their homeless status. That's, that's a lot, right? That's a lot of work. So, that's the one rub I would give on that, is while you can do full hours, any of hour of the day when you're using an interview, your challenges will increase pretty exponentially if you choose to go to a relatively populated area and try to do that type of count when there's a lot of people out. Uh, because, especially with our youth, it is not safe to assume that people who do not look homeless are not homeless. I mean, we see that over and over again. And it's certainly not limited to youth, although it's, um, adults tend to manifest themselves a lot more clearly that they're homeless. But that's not always true either. So that would be the one caveat there, is beware of daytime counts, 'cause you'll have more work to do. Uh, but again, very feasible. I participate in the Arlington, Virginia counts, and they often do a count in the woods in the day time, kind of the early morning, but when it's somewhat light outside. And they count everyone, but they're often in the woods. And everyone really is, like, the people living in an encampment. It's not so much a concern in that case.

And to do those counts, you do an interview because you need to be able to deduplicate. So you need to be very confident that your deduplication factors are good.

Uh, I will say, one other piece of this that kind of goes against a little bit of what I said. If you're interested in understanding your doubled up population a little bit more, and you want to ask questions, you can do that in a count during the day with an interview actually can help you do that. I would warn you that you'll never get a good, full sense of your doubled up population by doing a Point-in-Time Count. It's just the very nature of doubled up homelessness is not good for capturing for a Point-in-Time Count. That's why we don't do it. It's not feasible. It takes a lot of resources. But if you're doing, if you want some information on that, uh, doing a count during the day with an interview could yield more information for you.

Mk. Let's move to another raised hand.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Okay, real quick, Daniel, who we had called on earlier but whose mic wasn't working did actually ask a question through the Q&A box that I told him we would get to. And, um, he is wondering, so if they do some kind of PIT count in both an urban and a rural area, I assume where it's not a full coverage, where it's some kind of sampling approach, what do you actually do with that data once you get it to make sure you're appropriately extrapolating based on the information that you've gotten from urban and rural areas?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yep, so, first you need to feel confident in your initial sample, right? For rural, look, I drove the country this year. I drove on so many roads that had nobody, nothing, not even cows in many instances, for all of the teasing we do for that. There was nothing, right? Like we wouldn't expect them to go to every spot, but it is okay to go to, like, the towns in rural areas and count there, and if you feel you've covered the towns in rural areas, or you know of other areas, right, if you're near a federal park or state park, and you know people are sleeping there, if you feel you've covered the area, then your challenge is figuring out other like jurisdictions to apply it to. You actually should be starting backwards. You should start with, what does each jurisdiction look like? Right? Can I label them in different strata? Can I say this is high density and this is the low density? You might actually have to have more than two strata, right? You might actually have to have a middle density one. So you start there, and then you move to,

“Okay, I’ve put everybody in a bucket, whichever strata I’m planning on.” And then you kind of say, “Okay, I only counted in these three rural jurisdictions, but I have 30 others. So, but I’ve already determined my universe. Right? I know who’ve I counted as low density areas. And so I’m going to use these three counties. I feel confident in them that they are accurate of what is in those counties that I’m going to apply my extrapolation of those three counties to the other low density areas.”

So again, don’t start with, “Well I did my count, here’s what I got.” Start with, “This is my composition, and this is how I’m going to bucket them when I have to do extrapolation. So let’s make sure I have each bucket covered when I do the count.”

So I hope that covers the question.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Awesome, thanks William. Um, Matthew Lee, I’m going to unmute you and have you ask your question.

**MATTHEW LEE:** Hi, well actually, this is Chris Swear. I’ll step in for Matt. So we, we have a program that is in an itinerant church-based program that we have. It is currently coded in our HMIS beds as 100 beds, but it doesn’t occur all the time. It’ll move around and be at a place and not at another place. And currently it had, um, zero people in it on that night because, I believe, they just weren’t on, weren’t operating on our PIT night. So we’re getting a warning or an error. Is that just something that we just explain away, or is there something more that we have to do to align that with our HIC PIT?

WS: So, um, that’s a great one. Uh, yes, we want you to reflect what was going on on the night of the PIT count. So you can certainly use the, um, you can use the notes. And you should explain that away. But, I do want to ask you a follow-up. So, where are you normally counting that then? Are you counting them as year-round beds? Are you them as seasonal? Are you counting them as overflow? What does that look like for you?

**CHRIS SWEAR:** We are currently counting them as year-round beds. Now, that’s, ha-ha, I will say that our entire HMIS staff has completely changed over. So our, we have no one who actually created this program at the, um, here anymore. But it was created as year-round beds. So the corollary is, should we be changing that to overflow, or um, seasonal beds?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, that’s kind of what I’m thinking through. Um, it’s hard to tell, right? But if you have a program that flexes enough between zero and 100, that doesn’t feel like a very strong year-round representation, right? ‘Cause that’s a lot of, lot of change there. Seasonal really does have a fairly defined category, right? It’s open for x days and it closes y days, so it’s truly open during a season, and it’s consistently open for that season. That doesn’t sound like what you’re describing. It sounds a lot more like an ad hoc or a, you know, a season, not a seasonal, sorry. This is more like the ad hoc. So, that’s probably where I’d lean – the overflow ad hoc area in that. But I would also look at trends over time, right? I would try to take snapshots in HMIS or in other areas if you have that to kind of try to figure out, like, is that normally 100 and this is just a really weird day? Or is it normally all over the place?

**CHRIS SWEAR:** Okay.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Does that help you?

**CHRIS SWEAR:** And so really, we want to categorize it to whatever really reflects the flux of the bed use there. If we think it's seasonal, we'll put in seasonal. But it also could be... How would you differentiate an overflow bed from a seasonal bed then?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Uh, again, seasonal has defined dates, right? It opens on November 1<sup>st</sup> and closes April 1<sup>st</sup> every year, right? It truly is defined, whereas ad hoc it is based on the people seeking the service that night, and it could change any given day. Sometimes zero sometimes 100.

**CHRIS SWEAR:** Okay. Very, very helpful. Thank you very much.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Cool. Thank you.

So I'm, I'm going to add to his question a little bit, or raise another point. 'Cause actually, we are grateful for our faith-based community. They provide a lot of services, but we also know that it raises challenges sometimes on HMIS in particular, and then when it comes to the PIT count, right? So what do you do when you have a rescue mission, it doesn't actually have to be faith-based. That's common, but it doesn't have to be. Um, what do you do when one year they participate and the next year they don't? So let me just address that quickly, right?

You have a few options. A) You got to say you're at how much of the population that they cover. Right? If they are literally your entire emergency shelter population, uh, you're probably going to have to look at what was reported in the previous year, if they reported stuff. And use kind of your experts, folks who are experiencing homelessness who go through that facility, uh, your street outreach team, to the extent that they interact with folks who have been through it. You're going to have to kind of piece it together. But often your baseline, if they are the game in town, is to work off the years where you felt most confident the data was accurate. So that's kind of one approach.

Another one is if they're not the biggest game in town, but they, um, they're a fairly large sample and something you certainly can't ignore and turn to zero, and you shouldn't. You have a few options. You can extrapolate based on the other project types, similar project types, right? And if it's shelter, you can extrapolate based on other shelters. That's if you're confident they, the folks who are served are similar. This is a DV shelter, but all of your emergency shelters, you other emergency shelters, are not DV, maybe some of them are single sex, and another of them are focusing on families, right? Like, if they're all over the place, then it doesn't feel like that may be a very good fit with your DV. But if it is, if it's a similar population, then you can use your existing data from your other shelters. If it is a different population, you can also look at past years. You can talk to people who, again, go in and out of the shelter, or your street outreach team. Um, you can use kind of the, well, I guess those are kind of the core ones. I won't go further. But I did want to kind of put that out there. We're seeing more and more, and I think that's actually always been around, but we're seeing more and more questions around it. So you

do have a few options there, but it totally depends on how big the facility is and whether or not you have something to go off of – a past year or a similar sample. My one big piece there is: don't ignore them altogether. Right? If they say, "We're not going to participate. I don't want anything to do with it," that doesn't mean you shouldn't try to represent them on the HIC, especially if you know they're providing beds. Especially if they're shelter or transitional housing, because that affects your PIT count. So, we can work through different ways to kind of approach that, but don't ignore them altogether.

Alright, let's keep going to questions.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Alright, it's 3:46 right now, and I want to be cognizant of people's time because we had planned for this to end at 4:00 PM Eastern. So William, do you want to do just one more question?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Yeah, let's do one more.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Okay. Meghan, I think, has a couple more queued up from the Q&A.

**MEGHAN HENRY:** Okay, so, the earliest one we got in asks: Our CoC considers its PIT count to be full coverage, however, volunteers don't go into abandoned buildings or other dangerous areas. Is this an instance where we should be extrapolating to get the universe?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Oooh that's a good one. Uh, the short answer is yes, you should be trying to cover it. But, we certainly don't expect people to go into abandoned buildings or unsafe neighborhoods. Um, especially lay volunteers. Like, that's just, that's not the way to go. We don't want to endanger anybody. However, I believe it is New Orleans who's a great example of having to address abandoned buildings. They use a mix of street outreach and law enforcement to help them do an abandoned building approach. So if you have a lot of abandoned buildings, yes, you should sample for it. I'd say if you have one or two, ideally you'd kind of partner with street outreach or law enforcement. If neither of them are available or comfortable, um, you can choose how to move there. We certainly won't force you if it's one or two buildings, and you're not sure. It could be nobody, or it could be two or three. You can make your best judgement there. But if you know there are a lot of abandoned buildings, you should find a way to address that. And again, I would recommend using law enforcement and street outreach to do it. And if you need that example, New Orleans has a great methodology that they implemented there.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. Okay, so I think, um, we've only got about two minutes left. So, uh, let's go ahead and close out. William, did you have any final things that you wanted to say?

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Just one or two. So first, thank you. Sorry we couldn't get to more questions. We're going to ask you a handful of survey questions to figure out what's going to be most helpful in doing this going forward so that we can provide a venue for you. But thank you. We really appreciate what you are doing out there.

**AUBREY SITLER:** Great. So, I just opened up a poll with two questions on it. And my understanding is that some of you are having trouble reading the whole questions and answers.

So, the first one on there is: How soon should we host our next PIT Count Office Hours in this format? And your options are: within the next month, or one to three months from now. So basically quarterly. Or if you just don't have a preference, that's also fine.

And then the other one is an open question where you can submit whatever answer you think is relevant, to ask: What kind of topics are you interested in hearing about specifically? Um, today we focused obviously mostly on, um, extrapolation. But in the future, um, we could focus on whatever you guys faces challenges most recently.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Alright, we're just seeing what the results show. Again, thank you for participating. We see folks dropping off. We know you have other places to be. So if you need to drop off, that's fine. For those of you that stay on, we'll just tell you what we see in terms of frequency. And uh, we'll give you a little bit about what we see on that second question about topics.

Alright, so, a handful said within the next month. We had one to three say, or 38 say one to three, which um, or within the one to three months. And a handful with no preference. And then about 91 who said no answer. So it looks like one to three months is about the sweet spot. We were thinking about doing this quarterly, so that jives with what we thought made sense for you guys. So we will likely schedule something in the next quarter to allow you a chance to ask more questions.

Uh, can we see some of those responses there?

**AUBREY SITLER:** And then apparently the topics one ceased to function, so nobody could actually enter an answer. So look out for a survey to be emailed to you so you have the opportunity to provide some input about the types of topics you'd want to hear about. Um, and apologies that that didn't work right now.

**WILLIAM SNOW:** Great, thank you everyone for joining the call.

**AUBREY SITLER:** And I would just say, if you asked a question that we didn't get to, please feel free to ask it through the AAQ function, and we will help you with that through that AAQ process.