LAUREN DUNTON: All right, so I want to welcome everyone today to the Preparing for your 2017 Housing Inventory and Point-in-Time Counts. This is Lauren Dunton at Abt Associates. I am joined today by my colleague Tracy D'Alanno as well as William Snow from HUD. We will be walking through some slides that we prepared for today, and then we will be opening up the session for a Q&A at the end. We've gotten a couple questions about materials for the session. We will be – hopefully the recording will work – and we're planning on posting the recording of this session on HUD Exchange, probably it will be about a week till we get it up there, but it will be available if you have any questions to go back and refer to, and also the slides will be available for printouts. Someone asked about handouts, so we'll post the slides and the recording, and also a transcript of the recording so you'll have multiple ways to go back and reference today's session. So with that, I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to William, and he's going to start us off today.

WILLIAM SNOW: All right, thank you, Lauren. Thanks, everyone, for being on the webinar today. I'm very excited to talk about the Point-in-Time Counts. I love the work that we do there. I think it's a good testament of all the effort done at the local level. So you at the community level, we know you're working hard. We know the Point-in-Time Count is not easy, and it is just one of the many ways that we're able to see all that you're doing both through the numbers but also through sheer level of effort. We know Point-in-Time Counts take time, it takes community engagement, it takes stakeholders at the table, it takes a lot of things, and we know that's a lot of work. We think it's worth it, we hope you do as well, but again we want to thank you for all that you do on that.

I'm really excited that this year we got the Notice out in August. That has been a request that has been made to HUD for as long as I can remember. That is what we hope to do going forward. I can't promise that but that certainly is our intent, so we will aim to release this information, the Notice each year early enough for you to have time to plan and implements your counts. You'll see that the changes this year were fewer. Some of it was more cosmetic in nature or moving things around. We also hope that becomes more of the way we do business. The Point-in-Time Counts already ask for a lot, and same with the Housing Inventory Count, and so we don't have a great plan to change a bunch of things. We've made several changes in the past couple years. We want you to focus on counting better so we're not planning on doing a lot. Does that mean things won't change? No, things may change, but we will aim to reduce or keep it minimal to the extent we can so that, again, you can focus on getting the count done most accurately, bringing the right people to the table, especially including homeless persons themselves because they add so much to the process, or can.

So let's talk about what the Housing Inventory and Point-in-Time Count do for us. The Housing Inventory is a snapshot at the end of January of all the resources that are dedicated to serve persons experiencing homelessness. It gives you a sense for capacity at a specific point in time. The Point-in-Time is kind of the flip side of that. It gives you a sense at a point in time what the need is, now many people in your community are experiencing homelessness. It not only gives you a top-line number but it gives you an idea of characteristics, including information on different populations and demographics. We believe that the Point-in-Time Count is extremely valuable. It's unique in that it gives us an idea of what goes on not only in the sheltered context

but also how many persons are experiencing homelessness on the street. This is the only place that we collect nationally the data on persons experiencing homelessness on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation. So it's very, very impactful and we feel it's useful. Again, we hope that you find it useful also, and that you are in fact using it because this is a valuable set of data.

One set that I want to make on this idea of doing these counts at the end of January. I often get the question/concern/criticism on the idea of January counts. I just wanted to speak one minute to that idea. Why do we bother doing counts in January? It's cold, in some areas you're under inches, sometimes feet of snow, it's not convenient, so why would we do that? There are a few answers. I'm going to kind of give the top-line. The first one is we use the PIT count for lots of purposes but one of it is to try to get the sense of what is the largest point in time where we find homeless persons, and we've actually found in terms of counting and being able to access where homeless people are, it is in fact in January that we're able to count across the nation the highest number of persons who are homeless, and that's valuable. We use that for budget purposes. We use it to get a sense of, again, what is the biggest number that we see.

Does this mean at your own respective community or your various communities that it is the largest number? It might not mean that, right, and we recognize that. Nationally, we think it does represent it and we will continue to use January. That's not to say that you shouldn't do something in addition to that. We know some communities – I'll highlight parts of Minnesota, for instance, where it is extremely cold, face terrible temperatures, and definitely snow during January – they often do a summer count, and it helps supplement their knowledge of the homeless population just because we know it's hard to do the January counts. That's one aspect, right, getting the large number.

We also know that that gives us different information about sheltered and unsheltered. We know that there are different cycles of how people use shelters and how they experience homelessness on the streets. We understand that as well. We try to couch our reporting on the PIT count in terms of it being in January, recognizing for instance New York in the summer may have a different unsheltered look than it does in January. We know that, and we encourage that as you're talking about PIT numbers to certainly feel free to mention that context. I imagine most of you do, but that's valuable. We want people to understand homelessness has different looks for different seasons, but the Point-in-Time Count is still extremely valuable. It gives us a heavy understanding of the population that we're trying to serve.

There are a couple other minor pieces with doing it in January that I think are worth noting. One, you get much more public involvement. We've seen this over and over. We've tested that theory and we've seen that doing it in January, it gets public appeal. People are willing to come out, they want to help. You're able to get volunteers in a different way. Summer experiences vacations, moving, all sorts of variables that happen at other times of the year but at a much higher rate and it's harder to bring people in. So I thought it was worth mentioning kind of the January aspect because it's raised so often, and again we know locally that may present problems depending on where you are, and it's not necessarily easy, but please know that we didn't just arbitrarily choose January and we weren't doing it to cause pain. There's actually logic for it, and

we hope you utilize some of the logic, and there's more on that in the Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide. We have a whole explanation on it if you want to read more on that. All right, next slide, please.

The Notice, it came out in August this year. We hope you read it. We hope you have read it. It is certainly important for the standards for this year. Next slide, please.

All right, if you haven't heard already, and I'm sure you have, 2017 will be considered the baseline year for the Point-in-Time Count data for youth experiencing homelessness. I wanted to take just a second to explain that. What does it mean that it's a baseline year? It means to the extent we use PIT Count data as a trend, 2017 will be that base year for the trend. It doesn't mean that we can't or won't look at other data sets. We certainly will continue to look at annual data. We'll look at other resources for information on youth experience homelessness, including education data, program data from the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, and other agencies and other data sets. We encourage you to do the same. Use the PIT Count data, it's valuable, but also recognize that other data sources give us a more full picture; but when we are talking about youth data, we will plan nationally on using 2017 as the baseline year.

You locally can decide how you want to use your PIT Count data. If you want to use a different baseline, that is up to you. I will give an example I'm aware of. So Los Angeles this last year engaged in a lot of efforts, brought many experts to the table, and had a wonderful community engagement strategy in 2016. If they choose to use 2016 as their baseline year for youth, that may very well be appropriate for them. You again, all communities, can choose what is the best benchmark year for your youth data, knowing your level of engagement, but nationally we're going to use 2017 as the baseline year because we know many communities are still trying to figure out what the right strategy is and we're okay with that. That's part of the growing pains of learning how to count, and so we just wanted to make sure it's clear what we meant by baseline year, how we're going to use the data.

So we hope that as you use this as the baseline year, that those relationships with the various youth stakeholder are strong, that you certainly will involve them in planning, and this is your schools, it's your child welfare, your youth providers, and most importantly youth themselves. If you want to know youth experiencing homelessness are sleeping, ask them or ask formerly homeless youth. They know, and they certainly have opinions and will help you to find their peers as long as we are clear like how we're going to use the data and why it's important. So we certainly encourage you to reach out, use your partners, and make it the best count you can.

One final thing I want to note is that we plan on putting out resources. Today we sent our list [PH] serve announcing a few youth resources, one a Promising Practice Guide, another one is a Contact Sheet that marries up the Federal agencies. The Contact Sheet was difficult to create. Things were out-of-date in some places, there were some complications. So what I will say is you should use it as the starting point, recognize you may end up getting one person's wrong phone number, it may happen. Please don't stop there. Try to find the right person to contact. The idea is to try to make those connections, and I am fairly confident 95% of that spreadsheet is probably accurate, whereas we're going to inevitably have 5%-ish that is not accurate.

There are other places where you can get resources on counting youth. Lots of folks are doing things. The Department of Education is preparing to release an idea or a document, a best practices document for their schools, their liaisons. I would encourage communities to look at that. Lots of advocacy communities or networks have released things. Look at those materials. Recognize that you have responsibility to use the HUD standards and you still need to make sure, while those materials may have various things that they recommend, you still need to meet our requirements, but please look at them.

One other resource that's good to look at is the Voices of Youth Count information that was just released by Chapin Hall – a lot of great ideas from that effort. I strongly encourage you to look at the material. And again, as I said before, you still need to meet the HUD requirements. There are a few things in most of those materials that don't quite match up exactly with HUD stuff so please, please look into that and make sure that you're meeting those requirements. All right, with that I'm going to turn the time over to Lauren and Tracy to help us walk through the rest of the materials.

LAUREN DUNTON: And Tracy, I'm just going to jump in here. Can I jump in for one second because we have some people having issues?

TRACY D'ALANNO: You bet! Lick this down, sure.

LAUREN DUNTON: Yeah, so if you're having trouble using the voice-over internet protocol, I apologize. I would recommend, if you can, trying to call in on your regular landline phone or cell phone, so typically that works more consistently than the voice-over internet, or using your computer to call in. A lot of questions about if a recording will be available as well – yes, we're planning on posting the recording and the slides, and hopefully a transcript onto HUD Exchange in about a week. Also if you happen, for some reason, to get kicked off the phone or get kicked off the WebEx, which we hope you won't, but just try logging in again and hopefully that will help. We're trying to troubleshoot questions but just wanted to put that out there. So Tracy, go ahead, sorry to interrupt.

TRACY D'ALANNO: No problem, thanks, and thank you, William, for providing that great background and overview about why we do the count in January, and secondly, very, very important, the Notice is out. You really do need to read it. Everything you need to know about what you need to collect for the Housing Inventory Count and the Point-in-Time is in that Notice, so make sure you review the Notice so you don't miss counting something that you need to know because when you go to enter the data, if you haven't collected it, you won't have it. So that's really important, and also – hint, hint – very big issue for HUD, this is a baseline year for counting homeless youth so make sure you pay attention to that and start working now to figure out your strategy for counting that special population. And Lauren, if we could go to the next slide.

What I want to do next is to provide you just a short overview of what you need to include on your Housing Inventory Count. So firstly and very importantly, the beds and the units that you are including on your Housing Inventory Count are considered part of your CoC Homeless

Assistance System. In other words, the beds and units on the HIC should be and must be dedicated to serving homeless persons, or for permanent housing project obviously they need to be dedicated for persons who are homeless at entry. For the purposes of the HIC, a project with dedicated beds and units is one where a) the primary intent of the project is to serve homeless persons, and 2) that the project verifies homeless status as part of its eligibility determination, and lastly) that the actual project clients are predominantly homeless, or for permanent housing were homeless at entry. So for example, if there are beds in institutional settings that are not specifically dedicated for persons who are homeless, such as detox facilities, emergency rooms, jails, acute crisis or treatment centers, those should not be included on the HIC.

However note that HUD does consider extreme weather shelters as dedicated homeless inventory, and those beds should be included on the HIC. We know that there are some occasional instances where a project that has beds that are dedicated to serve homeless persons may end up serving a person who is not homeless, and that's okay. You're still going to want to include those beds on your HIC. For example, if you have a detox program that's dedicated to homeless persons, and the person comes in and they're so intoxicated that you can't determine eligibility, it's okay to serve that person, send them home the next day, and still count those beds as dedicated homeless beds. Okay, let's go to the next slide.

On the next slide, what we're looking at here are changes to your Housing Inventory Count for 2017, and there are basically five changes. The first one is simply just a clean-up, and that is that HUD removed the DEM project type associated with projects funded under HUD's Rapid Rehousing Demonstration Program, and that's been removed because the designation is no longer necessary.

The second one is that HUD has revised the data collection field for CoCs to indicate whether a project was funded through McKinney-Vento funding as well as other funding sources. In the past we just asked you, "Do you receive McKinney-Vento funding?" – And you would reply yes or no. This year it's been updated to align more closely with the HMIS Project descriptor data elements, and you can now choose exactly McKinney funding is associated with your project, including ESG or CoC Safe Haven, CoC Transitional Housing, CoC Permanent Supportive Housing or Services Only. Obviously, if the Housing Inventory chart – so probably not that one. And for some of those old legacy programs, if you're still administering those you'll be able to check Shelter Plus Care, or Section 8 Mod Rehab, or Supportive Housing Program.

The third change is in the VA GPD TIP program. So the Department of Veteran Affairs designates a limited number of its Grant and Per Diem projects and Transition In Place or TIP projects. For 2017, the VA has clarified that CoC should report the beds and units associated with GPD TIP projects under the Other Permanent Housing or OPH project type. Not that because the GPD TIP beds and units are reported underneath the OPH project type, persons in those beds and units won't be included in your CoC Sheltered PIT Count. Okay, let's move on to the next two changes.

So the next change is that HUD has clarified when reporting beds dedicated for youth. So CoC should also include beds that are dedicated for members of a youth-headed household. So for

example if a parenting youth also has children, you're going to want to count all the beds associated with that household, and this is really similar to how you should be counting dedicated beds for people who are chronically homeless and veterans. Those beds should include beds dedicated for other family members of a chronically homeless household or a veteran household.

And finally, HUD is renaming and expanding the Scattered Site field in the Organization and Project Information section to require CoCs to indicate whether the project is site-based single site, site-based clustered multiple sites, or tenant-based scattered site. The new field name will be Housing Type, and CoCs are required to enter an address for all projects that are site-based. Note that if a site-based project has multiple sites, the CoC should enter the address for the site where most beds and units are located. For tenant-based scattered site projects, CoCs are required to enter the zip code where most beds and units are located. Note that HUD is going to remove the TH unit type under Transition [INDISCERNIBLE] question because it would be redundant with the information that you're now reporting in the House Type field. Now, don't worry if you're madly like writing notes as I'm talking because all this information, again, is included in the Notice that's been posted. So if you haven't been able to keep up with my fast talking, it is in the Notice and it's clear in there what the new Housing Type field is. So that was a short overview of the HIC, and now I'm going to turn this over to Lauren, so Lauren?

LAUREN DUNTON: Thanks, Tracy. And also, sorry, just another housekeeping thing, could you please make sure to put your questions into the Q&A box instead of the Chat box? I know some people have put questions in Chat, and that's okay, but it's just hard for us to keep up with both systems. Okay, thank you.

I am going to be talking the Point-in-Time changes for this year and the Point-in-Time overall. So probably most of you know this but I'll go over it again – William touched on some of it at the beginning of the presentation – but all CoCs are required to conduct a Point-in-Time count biennially during the last 10 days in January. This year in 2017, CoCs are required to conduct both a sheltered and an unsheltered count.

Your count must be in compliance with the HUD standards and the PIT Count Methodology Guide. The Guide came out a couple of years ago and really walks through all the requirements that HUD has put forth. There are standards that every count must meet, and there's also a lot of explanation about different approaches and methodologies that you can use.

CoCs will be required to identify in the HDX year, similar to last year, the methodologies that they use for their PIT count, so make sure you're documenting the choices that you make as you are planning your Point-in-Time count. I'll also put a plug in for the planning worksheet that we developed for Point-in-Time counts, available on HUD Exchange. It kind of lays out the steps that each CoC should go through, and the planning process and a timeline, and it's a fillable PDF that hopefully will be helpful as you're leading up to your count with decision-making.

CoCs are also strongly encouraged to use HMIS systems to generated their sheltered count where possible, and there's more on how to use your HMIS to generate your sheltered count in the Methodology Guide, and it's discussed a little bit I think in the Data Collection Notice as well.

Okay, so I just want to go over some basics of the Point-in-Time count. So people that should be included in the Sheltered Point-in-Time count are all persons who meet the criteria of the Homeless Definition Final Rule. That includes people who are in emergency shelters, including people that are assisted with any type of hotel or motel vouchers, people in transitional housing, and people in safe havens.

For the Unsheltered Point-in-Time count, you should also be referring to the Homeless Definitional Final Rule, and that should include all people whose primary nighttime residence is a public place, not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including cars, parks abandoned buildings, buses or train stations, airports, or camping grounds.

Sorry, I'm trying to weave in questions here, we've been getting a lot of questions about homeless youth and the different definition that the Department of Education uses, and kind of how to reconcile that with the HUD definition. For reporting and your Point-in-Time counts to HUD, you need to make sure that the use that you're including do meet the HUD definition of homelessness. Obviously, we want to try to capture as many youth that are homeless during the count process, but you need to be able to distinguish between youth that meet the HUD definition and maybe youth that meet the Department of Education definition, which is a little bit different.

Okay, so this is something we've actually got a couple of questions on already but I go over this every year. People not to include in your Point-in-Time count, there's always some kind of questions about certain populations but these are people that should not be included in your Point-in-Time count. People in Permanent Supportive Housing projects. This includes people in VASH, also people in Rapid Rehousing Demonstration projects, don't include them either. You're not including anyone who is in a location that's not listed in the Housing Inventory Count, so any beds or units not dedicated for homeless people.

Don't include any kind of detox beds. I know someone asked a question about that. If they're not strictly dedicated for homeless, and then you should refer back to what Tracy was just talking about of what beds should be included, but if they're not on the HIC you shouldn't be counting people in them for the Point-in-Time count. That often comes up when people are entering data into the HDX, and you find out your numbers that are entered on the HIC and the number on the PIT don't match, and the HDX will flag it for you. That's because you're not using the same universe for both the HIC and the PIT, so that's something to keep in mind.

You do not want to include anyone who is staying temporarily with friends or family. Anyone that's doubled up should not be included in the Point-in-Time count. Again, many CoCs choose to collect this data because it is helpful for planning purposes, and that's great and your CoCs should do that if it's helpful data for you to have, but it can't be included in the numbers that are

submitted to HUD. You also should not be included anyone who is housing that they rent or own, including rental housing that they're getting through the Rapid Rehousing Assistance.

Also anybody who is residing in any type of institution, jail, anyone who is in the hospital on the night of the count. You really want to go back to where the person is on the night that you're designating for the count. So whatever night during the last 10 days of January you think of, if that person is not meeting the definition on that night, then they should not be included in the Point-in-Time count.

Okay, so changes to the Point-in-Time count for January 2017. Thankfully these changes are smaller I would say, or on a less significant scale maybe than some of the past years. The first one I want to talk about is there is a new gender identify option. So HUD convened a team of experts regarding the most appropriate way to collect data on gender identity, so as a result HUD is expanding the gender identity options in the Piont-in-Time count to include an additional gender option which is "don't identify as male, female, or transgender." It's important to remember that this new gender category is intended to represent people whose gender identity is not male, female, or transgender, so the CoC should not be using this to collect "missing" or "don't know/refused" data.

You should be looking at extrapolation techniques to ensure that the total number of persons listed under each category equal the total number of persons counted. We're in the process right now of updating the Point-in-Time count Extrapolation Tool that's posted on HUD Exchange to reflect the couple changes that are made for Point-in-Time reporting this year. The Extrapolation Tool will be available for the count, so that's something you can reference and use if you need to do some extrapolating for missing information.

Okay, other changes for the Point-in-Time count for 2017, so this year there are some new reporting requirements around the chronic homeless, so persons experiencing chronic homelessness will now be reported by household type, so this is a change from other years. So it will be broken out by chronically homeless people in households with at least one adult and one child, chronically homeless persons in households without children, and chronically homeless persons in households with only children. So those three household types that we use for veterans and for all persons we'll be asking for the chronic homeless to be reported in that same reason, so for that reason HUD will no longer require CoCs to report persons who are experiencing chronic homelessness under the sub-population section in HDX. So it will roll over and be part of those kind of household types that we use already for all persons and veterans.

HUD also wanted to clarify something in a notice around when to count a whole household as chronically homeless. So if one adult or youth head of a household qualifies as chronically homeless then all persons in the household should be counted as chronically homeless. This means a CoC should count all person in the household as chronically homeless, and then all beds dedicated to these household members should also be counted on the HIC as dedicated for chronically homeless, so hopefully that's a little bit more clarity. Even though it was in the notice, we've gotten a lot of questions about that through the AAQ.

So that's really the quick summary of Point-in-Time and HIC changes for this year. As always, we are trying to bring you updated tools and resources for the Point-in-Time and the HIC. This is a just a screen shot on HUD Exchange. I know I mentioned some of the implementation tools that are available. So we have the Planning Worksheet that's available. We have the Methodology Guide is available on this site. We also are updating the Extrapolation Tool that will be posted in the coming weeks, and we're also working on updating the Model Surveys for CoCs to use, as well as putting together a Model Survey specifically for homeless youth. So those are things coming down the pipeline in the next few weeks as every CoC prepares for their Point-in-Time count in January.

So with that, I think we have one more slide and then we're going to open it up to Q&A. So just a reminder, if you have questions that we don't get to as part of this webinar for about the next half an hour, or you think of something later, you can always submit your questions to the AAQ on HUD Exchange. I believe there's a Point-in-Time/HIC option. It is helpful, though, if you make sure you review all the material, review the Notice and see if the question is answered in those before you submit things to Ask a Question.

So with that, I think we're going to start opening it up for Q&A. Again, if you can type thing in the Q&A box. I know a couple people said they didn't have a Q&A box, I don't know why that is, but if you don't have a Q&A box and you do have a Chat box, feel free to use that, but if a Q&A box is available, I would prefer if you use that just so we can make sure we track everyone's questions.

So I started jotting some down that came in earlier. One is [PH] Cindy, William asked about historical problems working with local school districts. Because the Department of Education obviously has a different definition of homelessness, that they've been reluctant to participate with the CoC in planning and executing the Point-in-Time count. Would you have any suggestions in how to engage the [PH] FDAs and LEAs as part of that process, and is there any outreach that is going on from HUD to the Department of Education to encourage that relationship-building?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yes, thank you, so there's actually lots of pieces to this so I will see if I got them all and you can check me if I don't. I love the question. The Department of Education is a really important place to find our youth, right. Our schools know, many of our homeless youth are interacting with them. There are some restrictions. I don't know all the restrictions, I'll be totally honest about that. Because of that, we absolutely are working with the Department of Education. They, again, are preparing to release a document about counting within the context of the PIT count to their school liaisons. When that comes out, I plan on providing that link to you, to CoCs in general, because I think we should know the same thing that they know.

This cross-walk of contacts is kind of a first attempt to at least let people know who to talk to. So if you're at the CoC and you want to bring Education to the table and you don't have them there already, partly because maybe you don't know who to bring to the table, this is one way to kind of give you a first leg up on who do I talk to. I believe most communities actually are working with their school liaisons. We see that as part of our competition. I've reviewed several

applications, and I'm very well aware that many of them stated that they worked with school liaison, so it sounds like this is not new to folks. We just want to remind people to use the PIT context in addition to other interactions on homeless youth to engage schools.

The definition is a fun one. Sometimes we get caught in the definition but I think in the PIT count there are ways to broaden the way we think about the data collection. So you don't give us every single iota of information that you collect in the PIT count when you report to us, us being HUD. HUD has a prescribed set of data elements that we want you to submit to us. That should not be read to mean you can't collect things locally or different. You at least have to meet the minimum standard. Many communities, when they ask "Where were you sleeping on the night of the count" or "Where were you sleeping last night," have several options that are not limited to "in a shelter" or "on the street" or "in a car." They have options that actually coincide with the definitions of other federal partners. That's fantastic. That's great!

That's information I hope that those communities that are collecting that are actually using. Just because you're not reporting it to us doesn't mean it's not useful and doesn't mean that you shouldn't find a way to incorporate it in your understanding of persons that you're serving, and that's not limited to youth. It comes up often in the youth context but it's certainly not limited there. So again, use the PIT count wisely. We don't want to ask a million questions. There's survey fatigue. We don't want to hurt people who take the survey by asking a million questions. But at the same time, this is a great opportunity. Take it. Learn from it.

If you're collecting information on persons who are living doubled-up as one of the potential categories of where they slept the night before, my big caution there is I think you know as well as I do that you're not getting all the information on persons who are doubled-up. To do that accurately, you'd have to knock on everyone's door, or call everyone, or derive a sample that is accurate enough to give you that information. That's too onerous. Statutorily, we can't require you to do that and we won't because it's too much to put on you. That doesn't mean that you can't somehow use it, though, right? You could at least in the very minimum say, "We counted 200 youth. 50 met HUD's definition, another 100 were identified as doubled-up. We know this isn't everyone but this gives us a good sense that there is at least this other portion of the population experiencing housing instability, homelessness under another agency's definition, and it's a population that we think resources should go to." You could certainly message in that way, and we encourage you to use your data collection to the fullest. Lauren, did that answer all the pieces?

LAUREN DUNTON: Yes, I think it did. Thank you. Okay, so next question, there are several people that have written in with kind of some confusion around counting the youth as chronically homeless, and thought that you had to be 18 to be considered chronically homeless. So could you provide a little clarification around that, William?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, that's a great question, and in fact we weren't that clear in our summary of changes this year. So to be chronically homeless, you have to either be an adult or a youth head of household. That's the rub right there, right, so I want to make sure we're clear on that. If you're a youth-headed household, that youth can be the eligible person experiencing

chronic homelessness. The statement is otherwise correct, that adult is the way to count, but don't forget that youth-headed household provision in the definition that allows you to count youth, and youth-headed could mean the youth is under 18 and is the only member of the household. If it's a 17-year-old on their own who meets that definition, you can and should count them. We don't think that's a very large number but we're not going to write it off the books. We know it's certainly possible, and unfortunately youth experience homelessness in families and then go off on their own. They could have four episodes, three with their family and one on their own, and that fourth one makes them eligible to be considered chronically homeless if it's been 12 months of homelessness. So there's a few different scenarios that play out there but that should be the answer to the under-18 aspect of the chronic definition.

LAUREN DUNTON: Thanks, William. We also had a couple questions about whether HUD is supporting a mobile application this year for the Point-in-Time count, and if not if there is one that HUD recommends, or if there is any guidance around the use of mobile apps for the PIT count.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, that's a good question. So we did a beta test in '15, only to find out from our own agency that we weren't allowed to go further on that, and we were disappointed in that. So no, HUD is not providing a free app. I wish we could. You certainly can pursue mobile apps. We found a lot of communities have had success with it. I cannot recommend one. That actually would violate rules that I have. So unfortunately, no, I can't recommend a software. We learned things from the beta test. I have provided comments and feedback on a document that kind of summarizes some of the things we learned, and I anticipate that coming out soon. Again, I know that it's probably not helpful to you now for counting in 2017, if we're totally realistic, and I'm sorry about that. I wish it could come out earlier, and that's something we'll try to get out to you, so it's probably something more useful for 2018, realistically, but we will put it out.

LAUREN DUNTON: Okay, William, here's one and we always get this one. The question is when calculating how many beds we have on our Housing Inventory Count, should we just count the beds that are occupied or all the possible beds? For example, if I have a 3-bedroom unit, I could have 6 beds in the unit, but on the night of the count I may only have 4 occupied beds. Should I report 6 or 4?

WILLIAM SNOW: Good question, so there's a little trick to this but the general principle is you count all inventory. If you have 100 beds, 50 occupied, you have 100 beds, 50% utilization on that night in terms of beds. We also look at unit utilization. We always get the question of, "Why do you only look at bed utilization?" I promise you we don't exclusively look at that. We know that family programs experience utilization different. They're focused on units. In fact, our programs that focus on individuals also do the same. We look at both, bed and unit inventory, but it is about availability.

The one kind of nuance is Rapid Rehousing, if I'm totally honest, the Housing Inventory Count is just not a great way to capture Rapid Rehousing. We do it. We ask that you provide information on the Rapid Rehousing beds available that night. We assume "available" is going to be the same thing as "occupied," so really your Rapid Rehousing should have 100% utilization

on the night of the PIT. We'll try to figure out how to do this better. I'm not sure there's a better way to do Rapid Rehousing Inventory in the context of the PIT count. So if I were you and using local planning principles with your HIC, I would be more expansive in how I look at my Rapid Rehousing to kind of get an idea of what's going on over the course of an entire year. So again, that's a problem HUD will try to think through. I can't guarantee a solution but, we will try to work through it.

LAUREN DUNTON: Thanks, William. There's also a couple questions around whether a disability needs to be documented during the PIT counts, especially the Unsheltered Count, to consider someone chronically homeless. I didn't know if you wanted to speak to that, explain that a little bit.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, I live that question. I wish that somehow we had the ability to do all that in the middle of the night. It would help us – when I say "us" I actually mean you guys locally planning, right, how do you determine how many beds you need for persons who are chronically homeless if you're using the PIT count? The more documentation you have, certainly the better, but that's simply not a realistic requirement for us to put on you. And so no, we do not require that documentation. This is actually one of the reasons we strongly encourage using HMIS as your foundation for your Sheltered piece because most of the time, though not always, but most of the time having it in HMIS, you might actually have a more refined answer to some of these difficult questions like disability status. You might know those things without having to kind of pry and rely on self-reported data. Again, that doesn't actually hold true in all cases but we hope it does. You could actually, again, use your HMIS to help you. If you know that certain people are on the street, your street outreach people will know that and they might be able to help you use your HMIS to understand the nature of those persons' experience, including things like disability or veteran status or things like that. So HMIS is a really helpful tool here but no, we don't require documentation.

LAUREN DUNTON: Okay, William, we have a question from Zachary. They have a detox facility that actually has some dedicated homeless beds, and he's wondering if he should not include that on the HIC. Do you want to clarify for him, if the beds are dedicated to persons who are homeless, how that works?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, that's a really tricky one, tricky for lots of reasons, but in general we don't count detox. We count that as not homeless but as a treatment principle. It's like an institution so that's how we look at it. Even for those dedicated to the homeless, we still typically treat the detox, if it is a detox center, as an institutional principle. Again, that's tricky for lots of reasons. One is that some of the VA inventory is kind of a mixed paradigm there. We used to collect information on domiciliary beds. We actually stopped doing that. They were largely treatment-based and provided some shelter aspect, but one of the reasons we stopped is because they were largely treatment-based. So we were trying to be consistent with our larger policy by not requiring that on the Housing Inventory. Tracy, you actually get a lot of questions like that. Is there anything more that you would say on this question?

TRACY D'ALANNO: I think the key here is the treatment aspect, and so it becomes sort of like an institution versus a temporary shelter night bed. So I don't know, I don't know that I could add more to what you just said. I do think there is one in here that's really important, though, that I want to read to you and have you respond. When look at capacity for PSH projects, do you list the capacity as shown on your grant proposal or the capacity they actually have? Oftentimes a PSH grant may say have a capacity of 20 beds but they are actually able to house more people and so they actually have 32. Which one would you want them to report?

WILLIAM SNOW: Oh, I love that question. Report your actual capacity. We are not tying your HIC to the grant application with regard to individual projects. We don't do that, there's no plan to do that as of right now in terms of what you're asking in your project applications. That's a great question. We want to know what's actually going on in your communities, what is your actual capacity.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Okay. Lauren, did you find one?

LAUREN DUNTON: Oh sorry, I'm answering one.

WILLIAM SNOW: I heard a question earlier about VASH so I want to continue to reaffirm. VASH, HUD VASH should be included on your Housing Inventory. It is permanent housing, so it should not be included in your PIT count because they are not homeless on the night of the count but it is part of your permanent inventory and it, again, should be part of your Permanent Supportive Housing inventory or your PSH inventory. So please continue to include that. And I will say we actually do some verification on the VASH. We work with the VA and actually others within our own department to kind of get a feel for the accuracy of that data, so please work hard to make that as accurate as possible because that's something we do look very carefully at.

LAUREN DUNTON: Thanks, William. There's also a couple questions about domestic violence providers and how they factor into the HIC and the PIT, and if there's any special circumstances for including them.

WILLIAM SNOW: Oh yes. First of all, they should be included. In fact, we have such a dearth of information when it comes to the providers of domestic violence. This is such an important vehicle to collect it. We generally have different requirements when it comes to survivors of domestic violence and providers, specifically Victim Service Providers in the context of the PIT count. Inventory dedicated to victims and survivors of domestic violence should be included. The community should continue to have the same caution and confidentiality and privacy protections they would always provide. We don't require on the PIT, for instance, that you report or collect on the sheltered and unsheltered persons because face-to-face interviews, that sometimes is uncomfortable or not the right context. We want to be sensitive to that. But the inventory aspect, we do want you to provide that information.

In the HIC, you'll notice we don't ask for address for those that are Victim Service Providers. That's to provide the protection that we think is necessary. But knowing what inventory is

available is really, really important, and we're working with other federal partners on what it means to collect data, how we best represent the needs, how to best serve victims and survivors of domestic violence, and we need this. We need some information to be able to help, and so we've used some of the HIC information to give us some idea of what's going on, and even the impact of competitions and other decisions. So please, please make sure that you're giving us what information you can on projects that serve survivors of domestic violence.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Okay, William, this is a question we get all the time. In general, how do you count inventory for Family Projects? For instance, a Family Project application usually has an estimate of a low number of persons per bed, but obviously the number of persons in families vary. So how would you recommend that they estimate the total number of beds when the number of persons in the family varies?

WILLIAM SNOW: There are a few ways to do it, the Notice actually talks about a few different things, so I don't actually want to go through all the nuances of what's in the Notice. This is one I would refer you there.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Then page 12 and 13 of the Notice, and it gives you three different options for counting beds.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, and I think, where possible, just try to look at what you have that night. I know that that's not easy, right? Some days that's easy for me to say but it's not like it's quite that simple. So look at the different methods. If at all possible, yeah, give us that information. We know that sometimes you have 2 people in 1 bed, or you have 5 beds and 3 people in those beds but the full unit is occupied. Again, we know family utilization requires an analysis of unit utilization and bed utilization to understand what's going on, and we know beds are often used in a different ways, beds and units with families than they are with individuals, and that it should be looked at it in different ways or in multiple ways. So we're aware of that. Please go to the Notice where Tracy referred, I think she said pages 12 and 13, for ideas on how to do that well.

LAUREN DUNTON: Thanks, William. Sorry, I'm just scanning through here for questions. You addressed VASH, we talked about that. Oh, there's a question about – oh, we answered that one, never mind.

WILLIAM SNOW: I'll mention, people have asked about collecting chronic status in the context of unsheltered. That's another one that I know is not easy. To know chronic history, often you need to know their actual residential history. That can't really be done in the PIT count, right, so we know that it's not going to be perfect and that it is going to be challenging. We have some ideas and are going to try to talk to different communities about ways to do this well. We don't have a best practice to share at this point. Again, we know the challenges. We've seen different styles. We've seen some communities just ask for the bare-bone information that's in our model surveys, and we've seen other communities ask a little bit of a residential history, trying not to go too far but just a little bit more information than what, again, we put on our model survey.

We are trying to gather what information we can about what's working, and as we get more information we'll try to share it. That's one I recognize is actually one of the biggest challenges, I think, in the PIT count, and that's kind of saying a lot because there are a lot of challenges with counting people early in the morning or late at night, but that status piece for chronic is difficult and we know it. So we'll try to provide you what we can. That's going to take some time, though.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Okay, William, we have a question about does the project have to verify homeless status per the HUD CoC rule, or can they use a more lenient federal definition of homelessness? And I think you probably need to tackle this one from the difference between an emergency shelter and other longer types of housing.

WILLIAM SNOW: Well, and there's a couple other angles here because definitions of homelessness means a lot of things. So let's start with the requirement that what we're collecting in the HIC for Sheltered Inventory, which is Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, and Transitional Housing – sorry, that's what the Sheltered Inventory is. They have to be in one of those three types of housing. When we talk about other federal definitions, there certainly are some fun aspects to what that means, and we are looking at dedicated inventory or inventory that generally meets HUD's definition of homelessness. We know that some providers are more expanded but for instance Transitional Housing allows persons at-risk to be counted. We would let you count your full Transitional Housing inventory, even if you know that some persons in there meet the at-risk definition which isn't necessarily what you would count usually in the PIT count context. So we know that's a challenging one. Actually, there's lot of federal angles and I'm not sure I'm going to cover them right. Let me actually point it back towards Tracy to see if you have other thoughts, just knowing the nature of some of the questions we've received on this.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Sure, sure. So your Emergency Shelters, the fact that they're in an Emergency Shelter – and obviously if it's a short-term Emergency Shelter where they're not really having a lot of time to collect all the demographic information – the fact that they're in the Emergency Shelter that night in HUD's definition means that they're literally homeless. So you don't have to worry so much about those faith-based providers who run an emergency shelter or hotel/motel voucher program for a night or two. You can count those folks as homeless. So that helps with the verification a little bit. Does that maybe help a little bit on how to count folks in meeting the literal homeless definition? Of course, if you're in Permanent Supportive Housing or up to a 2-year Transitional Housing program, you have a lot more time to verify that status.

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, I think you said it much better than me. Thank you, Tracy.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Then there's another one about persons in jail. Do people in jail less than 90 days who were considered homeless, can they be counted on the PIT?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yeah, that's a good question. This is where we have to remember that the PIT count is not the same as eligibility. So we count people where they are on the night of the Point-in-Time count. If they are in jail, they are in an institution and not counted as homeless. Does this mean that person in jail is now prevented from receiving homeless services if it's less than 90 days? No, it doesn't actually change their eligibility. Their eligibility still has to fall

within that 90-day criteria but no, it doesn't impact that aspect. But for the PIT count, you only count based on where they are that night.

TRACY D'ALANNO: Okay, there is some question here, I think maybe some clarification on the three different household types and who goes where. So you have households with children, households without children, and households with only children. Do you want to sort of clarify for everybody those three different household types and who fits where?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yes, and if I don't explain it well, you can chime in. So households with children – there has to be at least 1 adult and 1 child in the household. If there is at least 1 adult and 1 child, then everyone in that household is counted in that household bucket. Households without children – there is not a single person in the household who is under 18. It doesn't matter if there are 10 people in the household, as long as none of them are under 18 then they are counted in the category of households without children. Households with only children – it's the very flip side of that. If there are only persons under 18 in the household, there's not a single adult aged 18 or over, in that case you count – it doesn't matter, again, if there's 1 or 10 as long as they're all under 18, then they fall in that household category. Tracy, does that answer it well enough?

TRACY D'ALANNO: Yeah, I think so, I think so. There is a question here about clarifying that people in PSH and RRH, probably CoC RRH, are not included in the PIT count of homeless people, but does HUD expect communities to report the Housing Inventory of these projects and the PIT count of those projects?

WILLIAM SNOW: Yes, and this is where we're kind of tripping over our own words, right?

TRACY D'ALANNO: Yeah, exactly.

WILLIAM SNOW: So in the PIT count itself, where we count sheltered and unsheltered persons, you do not include persons residing in Rapid Rehousing. In the Housing Inventory, we count both sheltered and permanent housing resources that are dedicated to homeless persons. This includes Rapid Rehousing. As part of the Housing Inventory, one of the fields that you complete is something called the PIT Count. It gives us an idea of how that resource is being used on that night. And so you do actually enter the number of persons on that night associated with that inventory, even if it's permanent inventory, in the context of the PIT Count. It just won't be included in the "larger PIT Count effort" because they're not counted as sheltered or unsheltered on that night.

LAUREN DUNTON: Okay, so it is 4 o'clock now so I think we're going to wrap up. I just wanted to thank everyone for their great questions, and Tracy and William for presenting with me today. I know we didn't get to everyone's questions but we tried to look for ones that we were seeing more than once or seemed like they would benefit the audience overall, so if you had a more specific question we may have not gotten to it. You can always feel free to submit your questions to the Ask a Question function. The website is on your screen right now. So thanks,

everyone. Good luck with your HIC and Point-in-Time counts in January, and we appreciate your participation today. Thank you.

WILLIAM SNOW: Thanks!

TRACY D'ALANNO: Thanks, guys.