'Using ArcGIS to Address Homelessness' Webcast (10/22/2018) Q&A's

(Q) I'm relatively new to ArcGIS, but is this more of a front-end capability that can potentially feed or link to HMIS systems or is it an HMIS system?

(A) The ArcGIS Solution is not an HMIS system. The ArcGIS Solution for Homelessness includes maps and apps to help agencies, service providers and CoCs conduct point in time (PIT) counts, inventory and locate homeless services, report homeless activity, and analyze factors related to homelessness.

(Q) Can you add data elements to the survey, or is what you see what you get? *(i.e. Can the survey be customized?)*

(A) The survey is fully customizable. You can easily add, modify and remove questions from the survey.

(Q) Is the client-facing service locator able to display availability in real time, such as for shelter beds? Or be updated based on weather (*i.e. cold weather shelters, cooling centers etc.)?*

(A) The service locator application can be configured to show availability in real-time. We are working on enhancing the application so availability is included in the application by default. We hope to release this update early 2019.

(Q) Do you need to be connected to the internet to use the ArcGIS PIT Survey tools*? (i.e. Can this survey be done offline, without internet service?)* Please explain how this works.

(A) No, you don't need to be connected to the internet to conduct a survey. When you are not connected to the internet, the surveys are stored on the device. When you get back to the office or get to a location with internet access, the surveys can be submitted to the database.

(Q) Will ESRI be updating the surveys or will it be the responsibility of each implementing agency to do so when /if HUD changes the survey questions?

(A) Esri plans to update the survey to stay in-sync with HUD requirements as well as enhance it with new questions frequently requested by customers.

(Q) Have you tried to use this with HMIS? Is there a way to upload the sheltered PIT data from HMIS to the homeless count database?

(A) It is possible to upload or append data to the Homeless Count database. The schema of the database to support the Homeless Count survey will likely be different from the format exported from your HMIS system. Esri provides tools to append data and map from one source schema to a target schema which is what will be required in this case.

(Q) Is the inventory homeless resource customized in ArcGIS Pro or through the app itself?

(A) You can add or inventory additional Homeless Service agencies from the application or ArcGIS Pro. However, you will customize the application from the app itself.

(Q) How do you capture location if a person was someplace else for the night of the count and there is no address? Is there a way to place a point on the map?

(A) Yes, you can pan or zoom the map to the location and place the pin on the location you want to capture for the homeless individual.

(Q) Is the app intended for sheltered and unsheltered counts?

(A) Yes, it supports both. Depending on the answer to one of the initial questions, you will be capturing a sheltered or unsheltered count.

(Q) The sheltered PIT data is taken from HMIS and the survey is only used for the street count, not those in emergency shelters. How will this affect the dashboard?

(A) The dashboard will work fine in this case; however, it will just only reflect the information collected in the unsheltered count.

(Q) Is this tool acceptable to HUD?

(A) HUD believes that Survey 123, as provided through the ArcGIS suite, is a very effective tool that communities can use. To be acceptable, CoCs must ensure the mobile application is updated in accordance with the latest annual HIC and PIT Count Notice with all required elements included in the survey. HUD released the 2019 HIC and PIT Count Notice last week which can be found HERE.

(Q) Who builds the resource locator database?

(A) Each community collects and manages this information. We provide a Health Resource Inventory application with this Solution that can be used to add and update Homeless Service providers.

(Q) Is it possible to customize the survey by adding questions and skip logic and creating related measures to be displayed in the dashboard?

(A) Yes, it is possible to customize both the survey and the dashboard. Adding logic to skip questions based on responses to previous question is also possible and customizable.

(Q) Where can we download the Application? Where would the information be stored so that we can pull for our PIT numbers?

(A) You can learn more about all the maps and applications included with the Solution HERE. If you would like to learn more about how you can get started with ArcGIS, **please contact Kymberli Fieux (KFieux@esri.com).**

(Q) Does data stay in phones or devices once it is uploaded?

(A) It can be configured either way, by default it won't be stored on the device once uploaded.

(Q) How long would this process take from conception to live? (i.e. go from paper to digital and begin using ArcGIS?)

(A) It depends on if you require customizing the survey. If you use the default survey that Esri provides, you can deploy this solution for your organization in 10 minutes and begin using it right away.

(Q) Is there a fee to add or remove questions to/from the survey template?

(A) There is no fee to customize the survey

(Q) How does a volunteer download the app on android or iPhone?

(A) The Survey123 application can be installed from the AppStore or Google Play

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(Q) During the PIT Count, can we see as the data is coming in? For example, the app we are using right now: I am able to log in to the Command Center and I can see where people are entering surveys and if they are out of our CoC area or if they are in an area that has already been completed. Is this a function that we can do with this app? This also allows us to track our data quality as we go throughout the Count.

(A) The dashboard that is included with the Solution will update in real-time as surveys are submitted. You can use this to see where data is coming from and monitor data quality throughout the count. You can also access the raw surveys from the Survey123 website as they are submitted.

(Q) Does this require using Hosted Services or can we use Feature Services with an SDE backend?

(A) Both are supported with this solution

(Q) Is this app only for the night of count or can it be used for service-based surveys for up to a week after the count?

(A) The Survey123 application which is used to create the Homeless Count survey can be used to create any survey any time. There is no requirement that it is only used for the night of count.

(Q) Can the app handle conditional logic*? (i.e. If the answer to question 6 is "No" - skip to question 10)*

(A) Yes, the survey can be configured to show or hide questions based on responses to previous questions.

(Q) A local constituent wants us to provide kiosks that would allow unsheltered persons to self-register. Would this be possible with ArcGIS?

(A) Yes, this is possible. The survey can be accessed from a web browser, so if the kiosk has internet access you would be able to make the survey accessible for any individual to complete. There are also options for how the survey could record self-reporting off-line. We suggest reaching out to Kymberli Fieux (KFieux@esri.com) to discuss your specific needs and hardware capabilities to determine the best approach.

(Q) Does the "Homeless Service Locator" already set up, perhaps by 2-1-1, or would all Homeless Services need to be added into a database by someone in the community?

(A) Each community collects and manages this information for their community. We provide a Health Resource Inventory application with this Solution that can be used to add and update Homeless Service providers.

(Q) For the Homeless Services Application, does an administrator need to enter and update the agency information or can you have each agency do that?

(A) It is possible to provide agencies the ability to enter and maintain their own information.

(Q) Does this application solution create a shapefile you can download?

(A) You can export the results of the count to a Shapefile, File Geodatabase, CSV, or MSExcel

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(Q) Does answering "Yes" to the 'Residence' question have conditional logic to collect the specifics of the last residence?

(A) Yes, if you select that the person last lived in a Residence, another question is displayed asking for the address of the last residence. This can be configured if you would like to ask additional questions.

(Q) How would a CoC get more information/who should they contact to get started?

(A) Please contact Kymberli Fieux, Esri POC for CoCs at KFieux@esri.com

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(Q) For the Anchorage – Alaska Case Study, did you deal with pushback from surveyors on using a digital form vs. paper form? If so, how did you address it and gain their buy-in?

(A) Change is always hard, but after seeing how easy it was to use the digital survey, most volunteers were "won over". Many of our customers will do their first TEST for the PIT count using both paper and mobile app for that very reason. The mobile survey answers are compiled immediately, cutting down tremendously on volunteer hours required post-count.

(Q) What kind of data sharing agreement exists between the data collectors and the Police Department? Many folks get concerned that police will use this type of information for arrests.

(A) Some communities have MOU's signed for data sharing. A number of communities assign police officers to assist CoCs with homelessness initiatives and services.

(Q) How much do these applications cost?

(A) Please contact Kymberli Fieux, Esri POC for CoCs at KFieux@esri.com for specific pricing related to your needs.

(Q) Does the Homeless Service Locator generate service credit costs for queries?

(A) No, it costs nothing for the agency if people are looking for services from the template.

(Q) How did Anchorage use the ArcGIS to report back to the public on what the City was doing?

(A) Anchorage created a campaign to show people the work they had done, which included the story map linked above. They also had a lot of media coverage and press releases from the Mayor's office, including posted statistics on their website.

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(Q) How are volunteers trained to use the app? Does that happen from ESRI? Are there webinars set up to train volunteers?

(A) Please contact Kymberli Fieux, Esri POC for CoCs at KFieux@esri.com regarding the best path for training.

(Q) Is there an additional cost for the Homeless Service Locator tool or is it available with ArcGIS?

(A) The Homeless Services Locator tool is a free template that is available to any ArcGIS User

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(Q) What type of security does this provide regarding personal information?

(A) Our customers mostly do not collect PHI during the PIT count. If you do require PHI to be collected using the survey, we recommend doing so with our installed Enterprise solution, which would locate the mobile apps behind your firewall. This option may/may not be available through your community partners. Please contact Kymberli Fieux (KFieux@esri.com) for more details.

(Q) How much assistance do you provide with set up and up keep of the program?

(A) We offer a complete implementation package for start-up, and after that have solution engineers and on-going technical support available to assist you.