

2023 Point-in-Time Count for Schools

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the 2023 Homeless Point-in-Time Count. Your efforts are essential to helping develop an accurate picture of homelessness in our community.

What is the Point-in-Time Count?

All jurisdictions receiving federal funding to provide housing and services for homeless populations through McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct an annual Point-in-Time Count of unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals and families. The count will happen on January 27th and all data must be tied to one night.

Why does the Point-in-Time Count matter?

Point-in-Time Count data are the primary data used for federal funding allocations and national homelessness estimates. The numbers reported by your community are used by the US Interagency Council on Homelessness and all federal departments, including HUD and the U.S. Department of Education. Point-in-Time Count numbers are also often cited by local strategic plans, the media, and state, county and city governments.

Why are your participation and data essential to the Point-in-Time Count?

Government and nonprofit estimates of the number of homeless youth vary widely, from tens of thousands to over a million. No one has an accurate estimate how many children and youth are currently homeless. Not knowing the true size of the population makes it difficult to measure progress in efforts to end and prevent homelessness.

While Point-in-Time Count data are used by most federal agencies, they have traditionally underestimated the number of children and families experiencing homelessness. The goal of the 2023 Point-in-Time Count is to improve data collection for children and families and to develop a Point-in-Time Count number that is accepted by school districts, homeless services providers and the federal government.

Who is included in the Point-in-Time Count?

Part of the difficulty in developing these estimates is that different counts use different age ranges and definitions of homelessness. The Point-in-Time Count focuses on children under 18 and those between the ages of 18 and 25, but uses a narrower definition of homelessness than the McKinney Vento Act (category 1 of the Hearth Act definition). This means that only those students and their family members residing in public shelters, vehicles, on the street, or in places not meant for human habitation can be included in the count.

In order to include homeless youth identified through the County Office of Education (COE), your districts will need to verify where each student and their families were on the night of the Point-in-Time Count and account for any possible duplication. Many of the students identified as homeless by the COE will not be included in the Point-in-Time Count, as the majority of these students are in a double up situation. Students and family members residing in community shelters or in hotels will already be included in the Point-in-Time Count through other outreach efforts, and therefore should not be included through the COE's data contribution.

How can you count and verify the locations of children and families?

The County Office of Education is asking all districts to contact McKinney Vento identified families and students grades K-12 to verify their place of residence in the week of January 2023. Using a tool we will provide, we ask that you record the number of students and their family members who meet the narrower definition of homelessness prescribed by HUD for the 2023 Point-in-Time Count. We understand that the list of McKinney Vento identified students may be too large for you to connect with each student or household during the last week of January; if that is the case, we recommend prioritizing the list by contacting those households and families that are most likely to meet the Point-in-Time Count definition of homeless first. These would be the students who have been identified as unsheltered, living in cars/vehicles and those in other categories who have high truancy rates.

We also understand that every district and every school may have a different way of tracking students. Therefore, we suggest starting by looking students in the CalPADS database. Here are some suggested steps that have worked in other communities:

1. Run the list of students in CalPADS by school district and school
2. Ask each district or school to review the list and:
 - a. Look at their own data on identified students and confirm individuals on the list
 - b. Check that the students are currently enrolled in school
 - c. Look to see if there are students from the same family or household so the household is only contacted once

Once the lists by school district and school are populated, determine who will contact each of the households (district staff, school staff, district volunteers or interns) during the last two weeks of January.

We ask that you use the attached script when contacting families and record which family and phone number was used for each of the households in the data collection forms. We know that you and your schools know these students and families best, so please alter the introduction as you see fit. We also understand that this is a conversation and the phone calls may not follow this script exactly.

Please record the information you gather from the survey on the attached data collection form. Record information on each family or unaccompanied child you interview as a separate household. If a child is living on their own without an adult, they should still be counted as a household.

Once you have completed all of your calls, we ask that you send your information back to the COE. Please return all data charts to the COE no later than **February 13th, 2023**. We thank you for your time and effort. We know this is a time consuming request, but your contribution is part of a larger effort to collect this data and increase our county's understanding of youth and family homelessness.

2023 Point-in-Time Count Survey Script

Hello my name is _____. I am calling on behalf of _____.

Our records indicate that you/your child may be experiencing some challenges with finding stable housing. Based on the information we have, we understand you may be living _____ (current listed status).

If it is okay with you, we would like to ask you a couple of questions about where you are currently staying and the people you live with. All of this information is confidential and your responses will not prevent you from receiving any assistance or services you are already receiving. In fact, these questions are being asked to better support your needs and improve the wellbeing of our community.

This survey is part of a national effort to better understand and hopefully address housing challenges for students and families. We will never share your name with any other organization and all of the information gathered will be reported together so that no one will know how you responded. It will only take 2 or minutes. Is that okay with you? Or, do you have any questions?

No: Okay, thank you for your time.

Yes: Great, let's get started.

I am going to ask you a couple of questions about where you are staying and a little information about each of the people in your household. Because these questions are part of a national study, they may sound a little bit funny or may be confusing. If you have any questions, please feel free to stop me at any time and if you don't want to answer the questions just say "pass."

1. Where will/were you staying on the night of January 26th? *(Please write in the location or insert the following code into the form, if you are unsure what their descriptions means, please write-in what the person is staying)*

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Outdoors<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Streetii. Parkiii. Encampment areaiv. Backyardb. A place in a house not normally used for sleeping (unconverted garage, kitchen, hallway, etc.)c. A shed or storage structured. Vehicle (Car/Van/RV/Camper)e. Homeless Shelter or Transitional Housing<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Emergencyii. Transitionalf. Motel/Hotel |
|---|

- g. Living in an apartment or home with friends or family
 - h. Living in an apartment or home of their own
2. In what city or area?
 3. How many people including yourself are in your household?
 4. Are/were all of them living with you on the night of January 26th? (*Ask them to answer the following questions about only those living with them on the night of the count*)
 5. What are the ages of each of those people? (*Please note: unaccompanied youth living by themselves or with a sibling should be considered an independent household for reporting purposes*)
 6. I am going to ask you about the gender of the members in your household. I will ask how many people in each age group are male, female or transgender. First, thinking about the people age under age 0-17 in your household....
 - a. How many are male?
 - b. How many are female?
 - c. How many are transgender? (male to female or female to male)
 7. Now, thinking about the people age 18-and older in your household....
 - a. How many are male and what are their ages?
 - b. How many are female and what are their ages?
 - c. How many are transgender and what are their ages? (male to female or female to male)
 8. Is anyone you just mentioned a veteran or have served in the US Armed Forces?
 - a. *If they are not sure write in details or follow up with...Have you or a household member ever received benefits or medical care from a VA (Veterans Administration) center? - if yes, mark as a veteran and skip to the end*

Thank you so much for your time. We really appreciate your help with this project.
