



January 2022 Point in Time Count Summary of HUD Reported Data Elements

Background

As required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Joint Office sponsored a point-in-time count at the end of January 2022 that endeavored to enumerate and collect crucial demographic and other data for all people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness in Multnomah County (the Count).

The Regional Research Institute at Portland State University (RRI) coordinated the Count. As in all past years, we endeavored to maintain comparability of data across time by maintaining consistency of methodology with previous counts. The Count used a combination of existing HMIS data and survey forms to collect information on people in shelter and transitional housing (the Shelter Count), and an in-person survey administered by professional outreach workers and community volunteers to collect information on the unsheltered population (the Street Count). While the Street Count survey included five additional questions, primarily related to COVID-19, it was largely unchanged from the 2019 survey.

A full PIT report will be released this summer. This report will include a more thorough analysis of the data collected; what is reported to HUD is not the extent of the data we collect for our Multnomah County Count.

It is also important to note the significant work that has occurred simultaneously over the years to support thousands of people to end their homelessness and move back into permanent housing. From July 2021 through December 2021 alone, 1,780 people left homelessness for housing, with more placements yet to be reported for the third and fourth quarters this fiscal year.

Impacts of COVID-19

As noted in prior public communications in the lead up to conducting the 2022 Street Count, this year the pandemic did present additional challenges to our ability to reach and count people. The Count occurred at the height of the Omicron surge, and RRI heard feedback that COVID-19 affected the ability of several outreach providers to field teams for the Count. After speaking with

a number of the organizations who partner to conduct the Street Count, we are confident that this is where we saw a significant impact on coverage and therefore lower numbers of returned Street Count surveys.

Among outreach teams that, combined, had completed hundreds of surveys in 2019:

- One team had a positive case of COVID-19 that required the entire team to quarantine during the week of the Count.
- One team, which historically relied on trained volunteers as part of their outreach efforts, had not yet reintroduced volunteers to their outreach efforts because of the pandemic.
- Another organization that in the past deployed staff to do outreach had not returned to in-person work and therefore did not contribute surveys.
- One team lost staff and was unable to participate as a result.
- At least two daytime service centers that were open and contributed a significant number of surveys in 2019 remained closed due to COVID. A third critical site that was open in 2019, St. Francis Dining Hall, is no longer in operation.

The 2022 Count Methodology

The Shelter Count appears to have occurred as we expected, and we will have considerable useful information from the sheltered population to include in the full Count report this summer.

The number of Street Count survey forms returned is below what we would have expected, given observed conditions in our public spaces and reports from our providers. In 2019, 2,000 valid forms were returned; the number of valid Street Count forms returned this year is 1,603.

While the 1,603 surveys of the unsheltered population will still allow us to provide, with significant qualifiers, a profile of the unsheltered population, this data alone is not a sufficient basis to estimate how many people were unsheltered at the time of the Count.

Therefore, after consultation with HUD and other jurisdictions, we incorporated data from our community's three local Coordinated Entry lists as a supplement for this year's unsheltered dataset, in order to improve the representativeness of the Street Count.

The three lists are referred to as Coordinated Access for Adults (containing adult-only households), the Family Queue (containing households with at least one adult and one child), and the Veteran By Name List (or "VBNL", for veteran households). We included households from Coordinated Entry if they met the following criteria:

- On a Coordinated Entry list, as of the night of the PIT Count
- Unsheltered at their time of entry to a Coordinated Entry list
- Unsheltered at the time of the Count, as indicated by HMIS data
- HMIS activity within 365 days of the PIT Count
- Not already included in the Street Count or in the Shelter Count

Coordinated Entry lists contain detailed demographic information only on the head of a household. The number of additional individuals living in the household is included, as is whether they are adults or children. These additional individuals were included in the Street Count number, even though more detailed demographic information is not available for them.

The 2022 PIT Count Data

As in all years, the 2022 Count is necessarily just an estimate of the total population of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. In addition, while it has always been problematic to draw conclusions about changes in rates of homelessness between counts, that is particularly true this year, given the need to supplement the traditional unsheltered methodology to address COVID-19 impacts. Similarly, the demographic data presented below should be treated only as a sample that still requires additional analysis to fully understand its representativeness. That analysis will be contained in the forthcoming full Count report this summer.

Multnomah County counted 5,228 people experiencing homelessness (in 4,488 households) on the night of January 26, 2022.

- Of those 5,228 people:
 - 1,485 people were in emergency shelters
 - 686 people were in transitional housing
 - 3,057 were unsheltered
 - 3,120 people were experiencing chronic homelessness
 - 1,007 in emergency shelters
 - 2,113 unsheltered

The following optional demographic data are presented in HUD-required categories and very likely represent a significant undercount of BIPOC communities. HUD's reporting requirements do not adhere to best practices in reporting racial demographics, and the Joint Office will conduct a more thorough analysis for the report to be released this summer.

In 2019 our community's culturally specific organizations returned 16% of Street Count forms; in 2022, those organizations were unable to participate in Street Count to the same degree due to COVID-19 restrictions and other impacts stated above; this time, they contributed 2% of Street Count forms. Nevertheless, the data continues to show the disproportionate impact of homelessness on our communities of color:

- BIPOC: 2,074
 - American Indian, Alaskan Native and Indigenous: 303
 - Asian and Asian American: 54
 - Black, African American, African: 789
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 80
 - Multiple Races: 848
- White: 3,154

- Ethnicity
 - Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x): 475
 - Non-Hispanic/Latin(a)(o)(x): 4,753

- Gender data— please note that in October 2021, HUD updated its Gender data standards such that people can identify in multiple gender categories. These multiple responses are what led to the higher number of responses than people.
 - Male: 3,189 (55.5% were unsheltered)
 - Female: 1,871 (64.7% were unsheltered)
 - Transgender: 80 (47.5% were unsheltered)
 - Questioning: 13 (61.5% were unsheltered)
 - Gender that is not singularly male or female (ex: nonbinary, gender fluid, agender, culturally specific gender): 99 (50.5% were unsheltered)

- Age data (HUD-required categories reported here do not sufficiently meet our needs for age breakdowns; a full, best-practices analysis will be available in our full PIT Report this summer):
 - Under 18: 422 people
 - 18-24 years old: 266 people
 - Over 24 years old: 4,540 people

Next Steps

The JOHS will continue to do the full data analysis, as we've done in prior years, required to write and release a full PIT Count report this summer. Another Point in Time Count is planned for January 2023, maintaining our regular schedule of conducting counts in odd-numbered years after a one-year delay in 2021.

The Joint Office will also immediately engage a third party to undertake a more comprehensive evaluation of why the Street Count methodology that we have used for more than a decade was so much less effective in the face of a pandemic that continues to sicken hundreds of Oregonians daily and determine whether a fundamentally different methodology is needed for next year's Street Count.

The Joint Office will also continue implementing our work on Built for Zero to create a by name list for people experiencing chronic homelessness in our community.