



DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELESSNESS AND
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

2026 PIT Count

San Francisco Point-in-Time Count Planning
LHCB January 5, 2026



Agenda

- About the PIT
- Approval of Proposed PIT Methodology
- Areas for Feedback and Improvement



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About the PIT



What is the PIT Count?

- HUD requires that Continuum of Care (CoC) grantees conduct a Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of all sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness at least once every other year during the last 10 days of January.
- HUD also requires that CoCs report on all housing and shelter resources dedicated for homeless people as of the night of the PIT in the Housing Inventory Count (HIC).



Components of the PIT Count



Sheltered Count

Count of homeless individuals and families staying in emergency shelters and transitional housing



Street Count

Visual count of unsheltered homeless individuals and families



Survey

Interviews with sheltered and unsheltered individuals and families; Supplemental questions are asked of transitional age youth

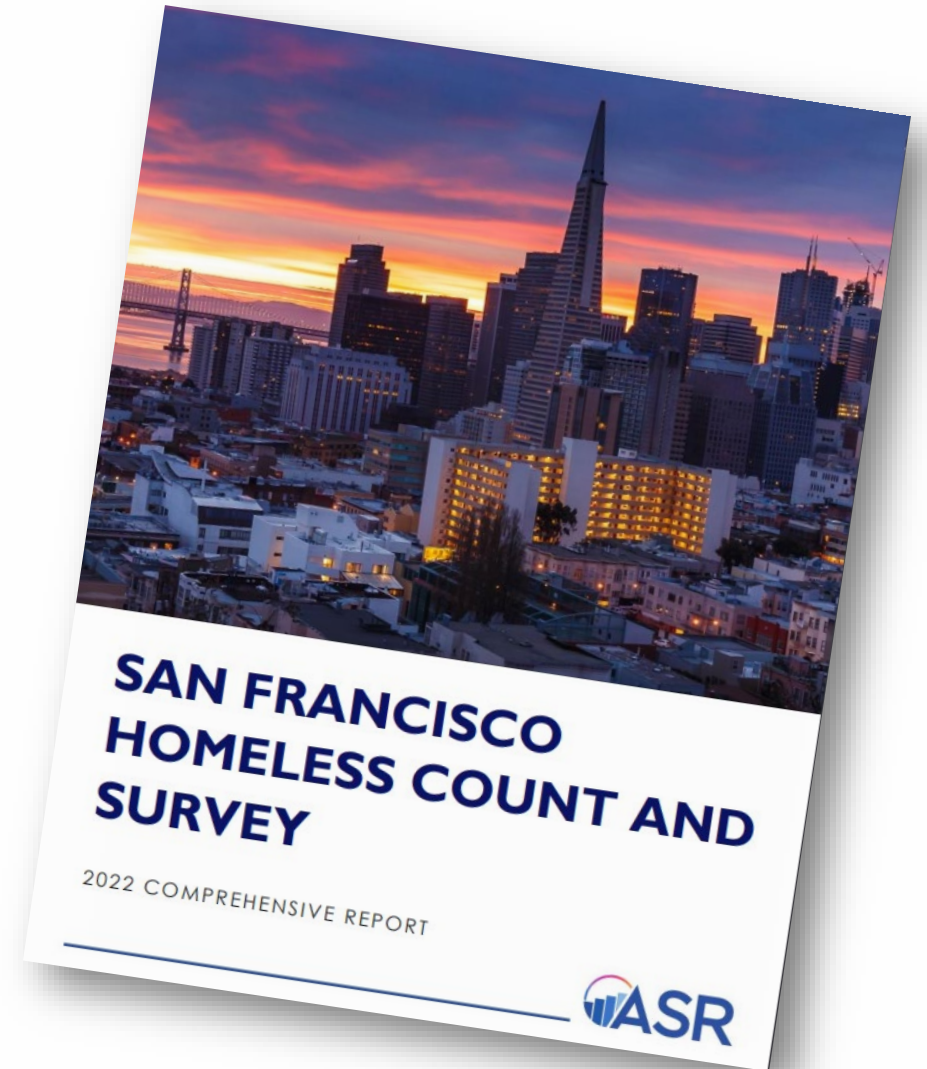


Supplemental Data

Additional data compiled by HSH beyond HUD requirements for added context to the scope of homelessness in SF

2026 PIT Count

- The last full (sheltered & unsheltered) PIT count was conducted January 30, 2024
 - [Past SF PIT & HIC reports](#)
- Our date for the next count is Thursday, January 29, 2026



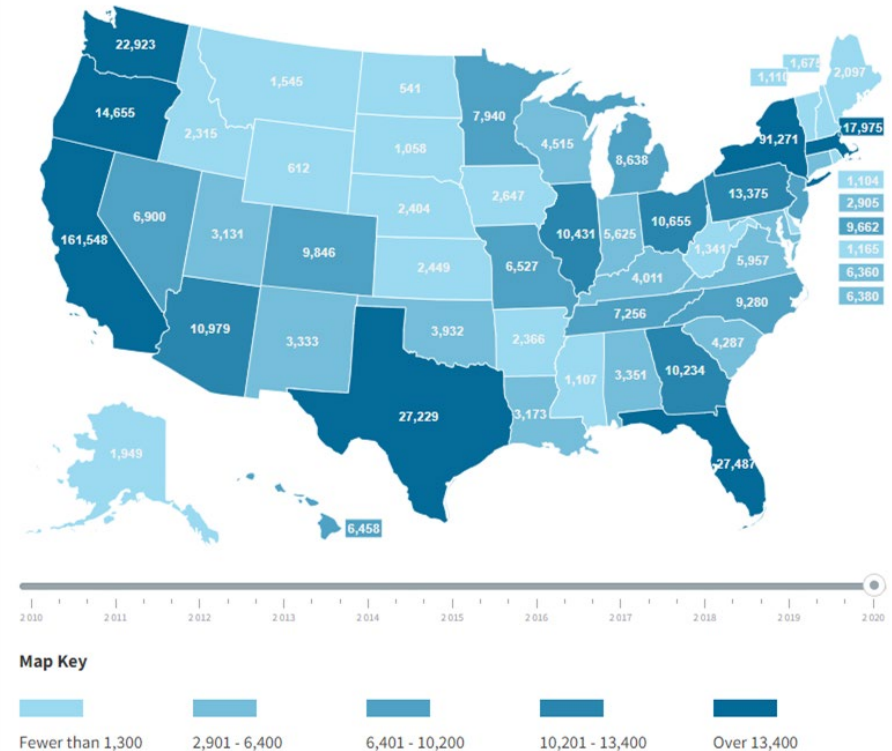
What is the PIT Count used for?

• The PIT Count...

- Increases our understanding of local needs
- Impacts funding for homeless services and meets federal reporting requirements
- Generates nationwide data regarding individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- Drives program and policy decisions

• Limitations:

- The PIT may not capture everyone experiencing unsheltered homelessness due to visibility, timing and access constraints
- It captures a “snapshot” of one single night only, and does not represent homelessness over the full year
- It does not count certain living situations like individuals doubled up, couch surfing, or in certain institutional settings



Tentative Timeline



January – PIT Count

Street count of unsheltered homelessness is conducted late January 2026.

Data is compiled in subsequent weeks for sheltered count and HIC as of the night of 1/29/2026.

May – Initial Release

Summary data is reported to HUD; submission deadline TBD.

Key findings are released to media following the HUD submission.

July – Full Report

Full PIT Report, Youth Count Report, and Executive Summaries are published to HSH website.

Includes supplemental data not reportable to HUD and survey findings.



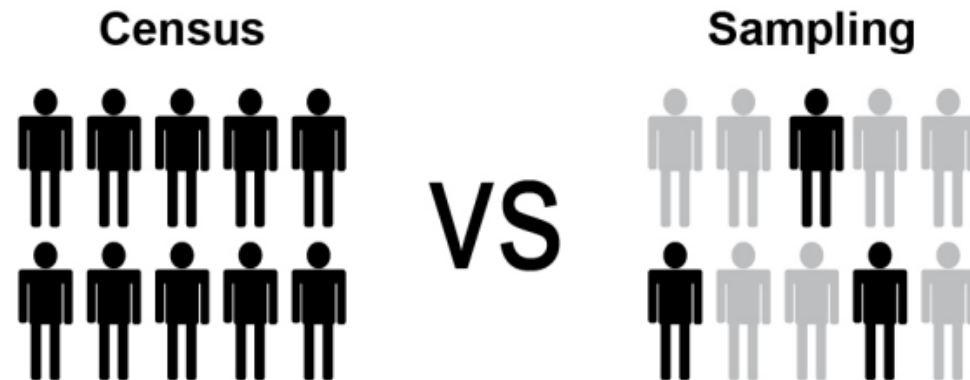
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Methodology



PIT Count Methodology

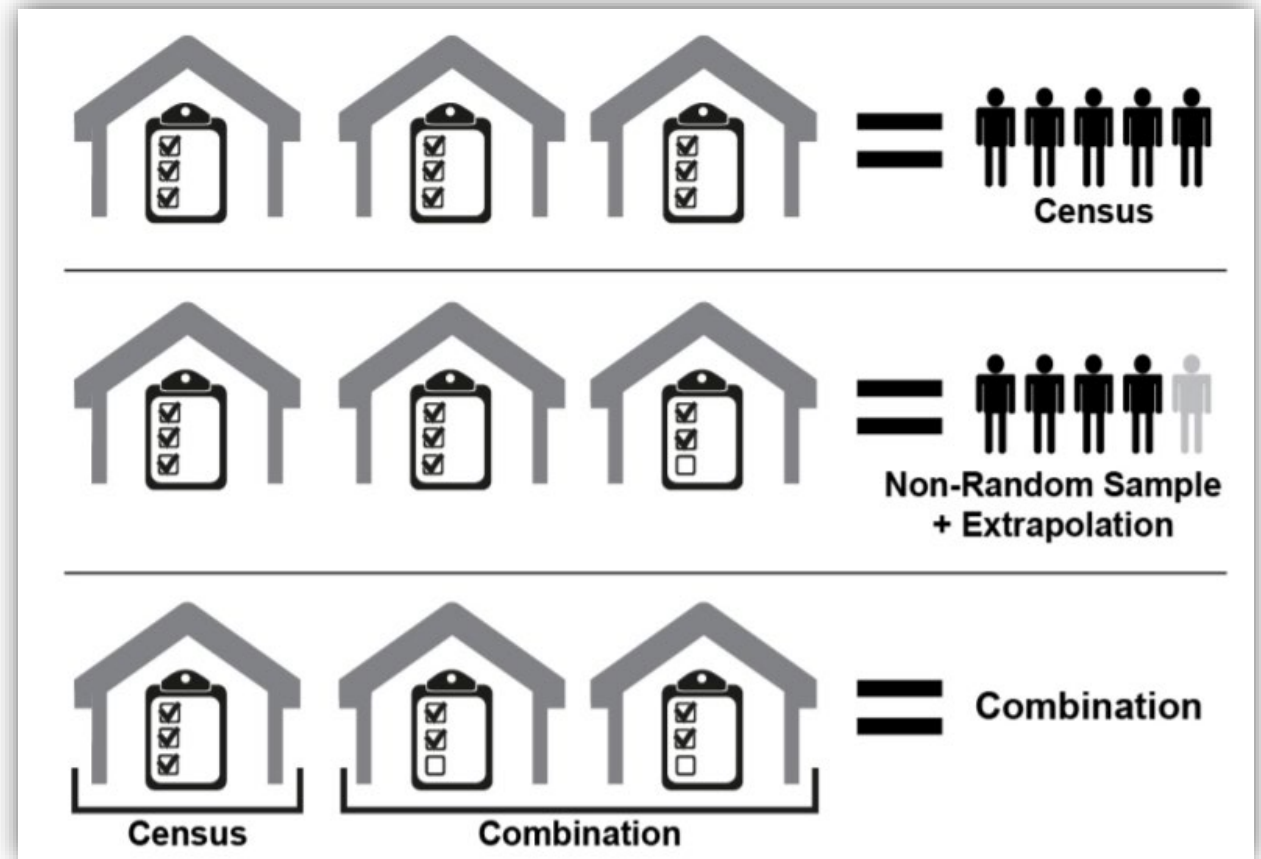
HUD Requires that all CoCs choose and implement a count methodology that meets the minimum standards outlined in the [PIT Count Methodology Guide](#). The final PIT methodology must be approved by the LHCB.



Methodology Recommendation

HSH recommends keeping methodology consistent with past years by using a **combined approach** consistent with HUD standards:

- A **complete census count** of homeless persons
- A **non-random sample** of homeless persons are surveyed to extrapolate demographics





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Feedback & Improvement



2026 Strategy Shifts

2024 PIT Count	2026 PIT Count
Count happened late at night (8pm – 12am)	Count is scheduled for early morning (6am – 10am)
Surveys were administered in the days following the count	Surveys are administered during the count (a survey-first approach)
HMIS data was only used for the shelter count and for safe parking sites	Enable certain skilled outreach workers to leverage HMIS data who are observed during the count in addition to using HMIS data in the same way as it was in 2024

Survey-First Approach

• Benefits:

- Better representation of survey takers
- Less potential for duplication
- Avoid over-counting people who are not experiencing homelessness
- The survey is digital, which will improve data accuracy

• Risks

- Administering the survey will take more staffing on the day of the count



Early Morning Count

• Benefits:

- Better visibility
- Improved safety
- Easier to administer surveys
- Ability to shift resources to staff count

• Risks

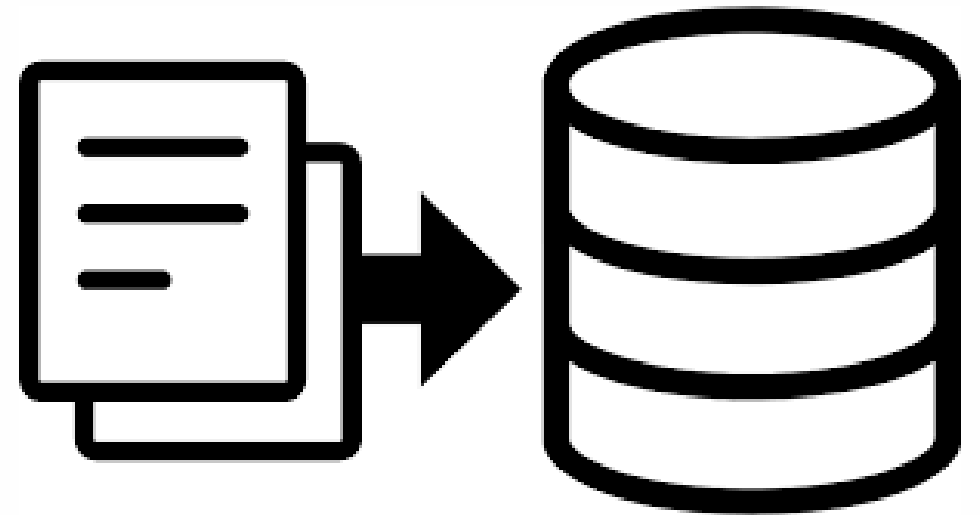
- Increased vehicle traffic
- It may be harder to catch people while they're on the way to school, work, etc.



Leverage HMIS Data

• Benefits:

- Better data accuracy
- Fewer/shorter surveys need to be administered on the morning of the count



Town Halls

- We conducted two town halls – one in late November, and another in early December – to gather feedback on the PIT count. Some feedback we received about the 2024 count and how to improve the 2026 count included:
 - There were discrepancies in trainings that led to inconsistencies in counting strategy
 - Recommendations that we have more proactive outreach to inform people who will be counted
 - Recommendations to engage more with partners to ensure that families and youth aren't under-counted

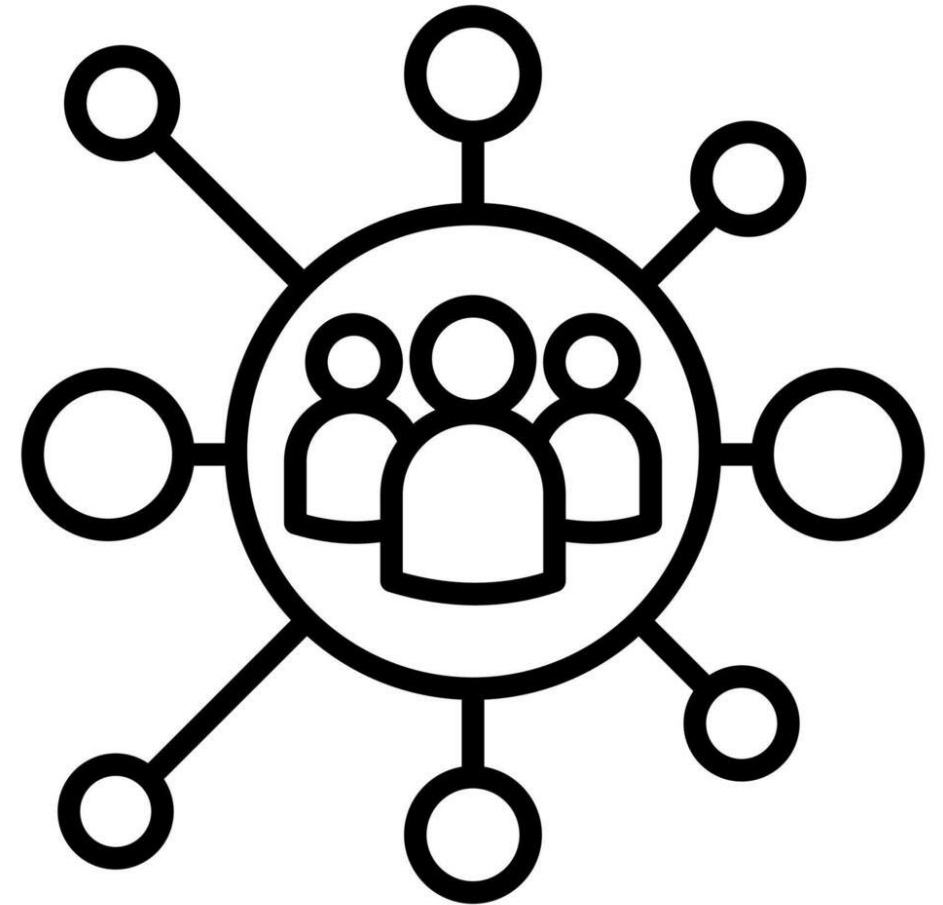
Training Discrepancies

- In 2026 we plan to centralize trainings. Our vendor, Simtech, in partnership with HSH will provide the following trainings:
 - Live and recorded online trainings leading up to the count
 - In-person refreshers on the day-of



Proactive Outreach

- We are hoping to spread awareness in advance of the count, so that people know what to expect. We'll do this by:
 - Distributing informational flyers 1-2 weeks in advance of the count
 - Looping in partners to make sure that they can spread awareness at their sites



Preventing an Undercount of Key Populations

- Certain populations, specifically youth and families, might be more difficult to identify on the day of the count. To help with this we are:
 - Actively engaging family and youth service providers to ensure that we are focusing on key areas.
 - Coordinating with family and youth service provider staff on the count



Questions or Feedback?

Please contact lorraine.albert@sfgov.org