

2014 Point-in-Time Volunteer Information Sheet

What will I be doing as a volunteer?

- Volunteers will be deployed in groups of two or three to count and interview homeless individuals and families in specific geographic areas throughout the County.
- You will be responsible for covering your assigned geographic area, completing a brief survey with each homeless person you encounter in your assigned area, and submitting the completed survey materials as directed.
- You will be outside counting and interviewing for up to four hours, depending on how long it takes to cover your assigned area.
- Volunteers will be required to attend a volunteer training session prior to the count to be trained on how to properly count and interview people experiencing homelessness.

What happens the morning of the count?

- You have from 6am until 9am to conduct the count in your assigned location.
- Meet your team member(s) at a previously arranged time and place.
- Please stay within assigned grid boundaries to minimize duplication.
- Conduct interviews in your assigned area.
- Turn-in your surveys when you are done.

What should I wear for the count?

- Wear warm clothing (layers).
- Wear comfortable shoes appropriate for walking.
- Bring a flashlight.
- Bring a fully-charged cell phone.

Where should I search for homeless persons?

- Behind Buildings/Businesses
- Alleys
- Parking Lots
- Bus Benches
- Public Transit Sites (Light Rail)
- Walking/Panhandling on Streets
- Business Doorways
- Inside 24-hour businesses (i.e. diners/convenience stores, cabs)
- Seek assistance from Police and Fire stations

How do I approach homeless people?

- Approach a homeless person in the same way you do anyone else, with respect.
- A “good morning” and a smile can ease a person’s apprehension and start a dialog.
- Be open and honest regarding your intentions.
- Talk to them at their level, i.e., if they are sitting down, sit down next to them or kneel down in front of them.
- Thank them for their time, it leaves a positive impression.
- **SAFETY** is paramount, if it doesn’t feel right it probably isn’t. Don’t put yourself in harm’s way.

Stay Safe!

- Don’t wake people up.
- No abandoned building checks.
- Drive cautiously (no get out of jail free card).
- Don’t stop along freeway “mainlines”.
- Everyone should carry a fully charged cell phone and flashlight.
- Call 911 in case of an emergency.
- Leave purses locked in trunk.
- Don’t wear expensive watches/jewelry, etc.
- Don’t get into situations that you don't feel comfortable.
- Know where every member of your team is at all times.
- Map out egress routes in advance.

Volunteer Preparation

- Check out the assigned area prior to the count and become familiar with geographical nuances.
- Dress warmly (layers)!
- Bring clipboard/pens etc.
- Arrange a meeting spot before and after count and plan a route through your assigned areas ahead of time.
- Bring extra copies of surveys.

Thank you for volunteering for the 2014 Point-In-Time Street Count!