



2026 Point-In-Time Count Volunteer Manual

FOR RECRUITMENT (SEEDING) AND DATA
COLLECTION AT HUB SITES, MOBILE VAN, OR PHONE
LINE

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Background	3
What is the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count?	4
What is the Unsheltered Methodology for the PIT Count?	4
Where are the Unsheltered Point-In-Time (PIT) Counts Surveys Conducted?	5
What will the Unsheltered PIT Count look and feel like for the community?	5
What does a successful PIT Count look, feel, and sound like at the HUB Site?	7
Interview Best Practices	10
Sample Informed Consent for the 2026 Point-In-Time Count and Survey Questions	11
Survey Protocols and Guidelines	14
Data Usage and Confidentiality	15
Emergency Procedures: Evacuation & Reconvening Protocol	17
Roles for The 2026 Point In Time Count	19
Coupon Printing And Survey Data Entry	22
Who prints and who hands out?	23
Step-by-step: Hub Lead printing procedure	23
Technical requirements	24
Security and troubleshooting	24
Incentives	25
Introduction:	25
Why We Provide Incentives:	25
The Incentives at a Glance:	25
Incentive Tracking & Distribution: Gift Cards	26
Instructional Procedure: Entering Gift Card Data in RDS Mobile App	28
Incentive Tracking & Distribution: Bus Tickets	29
Contingency Plans & Scenarios	31
Introduction: Contingency Plans & Decision Making	31
Our Guiding Principle	31
Safety Is Paramount	31
Incident Reporting – When & How to Use the Form	32



1. How to Use the Incident Report Form	32
Step 1: Take Immediate Action.....	32
Step 2: Submit the Form	32
2. Specific Reportable Scenarios.....	33
A. Medical & Safety Emergencies	33
B. Behavioral Health & Participant Distress	33
C. Staffing & Logistics.....	33
D. Inventory & Asset Exceptions	33
Scenarios.....	34
Scenario A: Participant Without a Coupon (“Walk-Ins”).....	34
Scenario B: Severe Weather Activation	35
Scenario C: Media, PR, or Unsanctioned Groups	35
Scenario D: Technology Failure.....	35
Scenario E: Medical or Behavioral Health Emergency	35
Appendices	36
Appendix A: Bus Ticket Distribution Log	37
Appendix B: Gift Card Distribution Log	37
Appendix C: Transport Manifest.....	37
Appendix D: Daily Hub Close Out Form (Smartsheet Form)	37
Appendix E: Hub Site Incident Form (Smartsheet Form).....	37
Glossary and Acronyms	37



Background

What is the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count?

The Point-in-Time Count (for both sheltered and unsheltered homelessness) is a federally mandated requirement by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) and the State of Washington RCW 43.185C.030. The sheltered portion of the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is conducted annually in municipalities across the United States, while the unsheltered PIT count required every other year. This count provides policymakers, funders, and practitioners with a snapshot of the scale of homelessness in local areas. It aims to provide a snapshot of the unhoused population, and the data gathered from this count is used for grant applications and regional homeless planning efforts. **This is one of several elements in the effort to assist people in finding permanent housing.**

For King County, WA, the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) carries out the count, or estimate, of homeless individuals, including both sheltered and unsheltered people, every other year, typically the first month of the year, and a shelter count every year. This count aims to assist the federal government in funding programs and services for those in need. The term "sheltered" refers to individuals or families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter meant to provide temporary accommodations, such as congregate shelters and transitional housing, as well as hotels or motels funded by charitable organizations or government programs. **On the other hand, "unsheltered" refers to those with a primary nighttime residence not designed for regular sleeping arrangements for human beings, such as a car (vehicle), park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground. This also includes RV/Boat needing to include the following: drinking water, restroom, heat, ability to cook hot food, or ability to bathe.**

Different communities may produce this report in various ways based on their unique needs and circumstances, such as geography, demographics, and weather while considering the legitimate concerns individuals may have with the government when providing personal information for tracking purposes.

What is the Unsheltered Methodology for the PIT Count?

KCRHA uses Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS) to estimate the total number and demographics of unsheltered homeless people in King County. This methodology can help focus on client-centered outreach and use a trauma-informed approach to surveying and connecting with services. It can also help collect better data, explicitly targeting historically difficult-to-reach demographics and providing easier access to services by connecting with an HUB rather than



counting per observation. This approach reduces bias and leads to a more accurate count of unsheltered homelessness, which can aid in securing better funding from the federal government. This is accomplished using a “snowball” or “wave” recruitment method. Each person who completes a survey is given the opportunity to peer-recruit three additional people, creating a “chain.”

The methodology then calculates the lengths of the chains to determine the density of the population of a particular area. To start the initial survey, outreach workers or community advocates will be given a select number of tickets to distribute to people living outside, with a focus on subpopulations such as families with minor children, those in rural areas, in RV or cars, veterans and American Indian/Alaska Natives. The timing of when to start these seeds will depend on external factors such as outreach workers' schedules, locations, and the perceived population density of an area.

Once participants arrive at the designated Hub, they will be asked to complete an anonymous survey. The questions are required HUD questions for the PIT and a few local questions and information to issue gift cards and survey validation (ensuring one survey per participant). They will then be asked to assist with distributing additional coupons to peers, which is optional, and build on the “chain.” If they agree, they will be given instructions and coupons to distribute. Survey collection will happen during the last week of January 2026 and the first week of February 2026 unless there is severe weather or events impacting significant portions of the county that prevents data collection or safe travel. Once the sampling is complete, the estimates for each household type, age category, and demographics are calculated to report to HUD. A final report is later shared online for the public.

Where are the Unsheltered Point-In-Time (PIT) Counts Surveys Conducted?

Hub Sites (27) were selected based on the feasibility of participants travel to the site, familiarity with the site, accessibility, ability to reach subpopulations, and the location of existing resources and service connections. A virtual phone line hub is now co-located with outreach intake line for immediate referrals or seeding of families with minor children. New this year, a families with minor children drop-in center for additional immediate referrals or seeding of families walk-in or from case management. Two mobile vans have been incorporated in order to improve sampling in more rural areas. A complete analysis of the selection process for Hubs sites will be made available later in 2026.

What will the Unsheltered PIT Count look and feel like for the community?



We anticipate surveying over 2,000 individuals or Head of Households during the two weeks (January 26 to February 6; Monday thru Friday). The following steps are to go over how the RDS methodology will look and feel like for volunteers, respondents, and hub sites.

KCRHA and UW have designed the following PIT Count experience for Participants:

1. **A person experiencing unsheltered homelessness receives Coupon(s) and Bus Ticket from a trusted community member (either outreach or peer)- Printed Coupons (individual) and three after survey completion for peer-referral.**
 - a. Individuals will receive a coupon to complete a survey.
2. **Individual or Head of Household contacts phone line or travels to HUB Site**
 - a. Bus tickets (mentioned in Step 1) are provided to Peer recruited coupons.
3. **Greeted at the HUB Site or phone line - by the HUB Lead and Surveyors**
 - a. All potential participants will sign in and be given instructions on wait times.
 - b. Verify that a participant has a coupon and is currently unsheltered by asking a few intro questions and confirm their age.
 - c. If someone arrives to complete a survey without a coupon:
 - i. During the first few days of opening a HUB site, ALL walk-ins will be accepted. HUB Leads will contact their Regional Coordinator for the data specialist to monitor and issue new coupons. Regional Coordinators will communicate to HUB Leads when we will no longer print new coupons, depending on the HUB Site's traffic. If potential participants in their network are also completing surveys, they can wait to get a coupon from someone who already has a ticket they know. They must have a coupon before waiting in line to be interviewed.
 - ii. Confirm with the participant that they are unsheltered. Interviews are reserved for those in unhoused and unsheltered situations, such as outside, in an RV or Car, or in another structure not meant for human habitation.
4. **Coupon is Scanned – or HUB Lead will print a coupon for those without one**
 - a. Once a surveyor is available, the participants' names will be called.
 - i. The Surveyors greet participants, who confirm their name, ensure comfort and safety, review consent, and confirm the coupon.
5. **Interview conducted – confirm Survey Identification**
 - a. HUD-specific questions about self and family are asked. All information is self-reported, and clients can refuse to answer any question.
 - b. An adult with a family with minor children can complete the survey for the whole household, including other adult members. The other adult(s) do not need to be present. If the other adult wishes to complete the survey, they may do that now.



- c. Adult-only households should be interviewed separately and will be counted as single adults.
 - i. Contact information is only collected for gift cards and bus ticket distribution and tracking, and to validate, once survey is completed per individual (survey validation).

6. Gift Card and Bus Tickets and New Coupons Given – HUB Lead only

- a. A \$20 Visa gift card will be distributed for the interview for (individuals).
- b. \$40 for families with minor children.
- c. Participants will be asked if they know anyone who can complete a survey. If so, the surveyor will ask for the first two of their first name and the first two of their last name (if they know it). This will be recorded, and a “child” coupon will be issued.
- d. Once you complete the survey, the data will be logged into the UW PIT Count App, and you can print a QR code for the “child” coupon. HUB Lead will review the data entry and print the QR code that will be applied to each new coupon; a bus ticket will be attached to each coupon, which will be logged on the paper form. Participants are compensated for each completed survey by those they refer (\$5 for each person who completes a survey up to \$15).

Please Note:

If a Site Staff informs you a participant is barred from the facility, the HUB Lead will talk with the participant; options include conducting the interview outside the facility and referring the participant to another location. Confirm appropriate safety measures with Site Staff.

If someone arrives to complete a survey but does not have a coupon, and the HUB Site is closed on issuing new coupons, please inform them we are now only doing surveys for those with coupons. They should not be interviewed.



What does a successful PIT Count look, feel, and sound like at the HUB Site?

Volunteers are expected to arrive 30 minutes prior to HUB site hours of operation. However, please note that some locations, such as the Bellevue Library, may open later. Volunteers will be provided water and snacks as needed, and Site Staff will be there to help ensure that the bathroom facilities, chairs, and rest areas are available. If additional accommodation is needed, please coordinate with HUB Lead, Site Staff, and Regional Coordinator.

Set Up for the Day

What goes up...

Inside

- Depending on the site, you will need to set up the chairs and tables for interviews, aiming for a private to semi-private location. Ensuring that there is easy access for participants and exits for volunteers.
- Post signs at entry points; some locations will have tables to set up table tents.
- Set up computers/iPads to ensure they are hooked to power and the internet works. Set up a hot spot if you are in an applicable location.

Outside

- Some sites will have outside sandwiches or “A” boards to put up; check in with the site lead to determine if that is your site.

Take Down for the Day

Must come down...

- Wipe and sanitize tables and surfaces.
- Account for and store all gift cards, bus tickets, tablets and store them securely in the lock boxes and give to site staff to store in staff office.
- Complete a review of the inventory of the site and indicate if any supplies are needed *ahead of the daily huddle*.
- Hub Leads complete the Daily Hub Close Out [Form](#).
- Take down any posters, remove any fliers from surfaces, and store in bin.
- Store all supplies in the bin and give them to site staff for the evening.
- Communicate with site staff if any tables or chairs need to be returned or reorganized.
- Complete end-of-day meeting.

At the end of the PIT Count HUB Site operation, follow the above mentioned steps to wrap up the project. A KCRHA staff member or volunteer will collect and transport the supplies back to the headquarters. It is important to return any site badges or keys issued to the site staff.

Shift logistics for HUB Leads

All communication must be directed to and come from the HUB Lead; the HUB Lead will report to their Regional Coordinator.

1. HUB Leads will greet volunteers at the start of the shift.
2. When the shift is over, the volunteer will notify the HUB Lead that you are leaving before starting the last survey. Volunteers should bring what will make them



comfortable for the shift, including water, snacks, and personal items. Valuable items can be locked in the location offices or kept on the person. KCRHA is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal items.

3. If interviewing in a private office, notify the HUB Lead so that they are aware and can be available to assist as needed.
4. In the event of being sick, that volunteer MUST call/text their HUB Lead to let them know. The HUB Lead will notify the Regional Coordinators who will arrange for an on-call volunteer to help cover the shift that day on our volunteer tracking application.

What does participant sign up and waiting look like?

- In the event there are multiple people waiting to complete the survey, the HUB Leads will be on point to assist with crowd control, inform people of wait times, assist with any needed accommodation, and ensure a smooth transition.
- HUB Leads will inform any person waiting for surveys before they open and put out the sign in sheet as soon as they arrive. About 30 minutes before the end of the survey time, they will pull the survey sign in sheet and ensure that the surveyors have time to complete the list by the end of the shift. Inform any new participants that the survey time is closed and instruct them where they will need to go to complete the survey, either to another location, or returning the next day.

Daily Huddle (HUB Leads only)

5. HUB Leads will check in with volunteers at the start of each shift and review any updates, adjustments to schedule, any needs for the volunteers on adjustments to schedules, assist with any log in difficulties or training support.
6. At the close of the last shift of the day, the HUB Lead and volunteers will check in with the regional coordinator via a Teams meeting with other regional sites to review the day and troubleshoot any issues for the next day.
7. The sites will remain open for their scheduled days and times. HUB Leads can request additional supplies from Regional Coordinators and in Daily Huddles, via a Smartsheet form. The Hub lead who is closing at the end of the day will submit the form for the whole Hub.

In the event of Inclement Weather

8. Severe Weather activation decision points will occur before the count starts, by January 16, 2026 (“Go/no-go”), and may occur during the Count if KCRHA issues a [Tier 3 level activation](#).
9. If KCRHA issues a [Tier 3 level activation](#), all sites will be closed for the days of activation.
10. Collection days will only be rescheduled if a closure amounts to over half of the total active days at the site.
 - If the site is open for 10 days and 5 or more of the days are closed due to severe weather activation, the Hub location will be reopened for an additional week.



- If the site is open for 5 days and 2 or more of the days are closed due to severe weather activation, the Hub location will be reopened for additional days.
11. Collection dates will be rescheduled as soon as the following conditions have been met (ideally, no longer than 48 hours after the activation ceases).
- The severe weather activation has concluded.
 - The site is able to open & provide space for the surveyors and HUB Leads.
 - Volunteer shifts have been rescheduled.

Communication Strategy for Rescheduling

- As soon as the Tier 3 activation is called, Regional Coordinators will notify the volunteer HUB Lead and all volunteers to notify them of the closure.
- Regional Coordinators will notify the HUB primary point of contact(s) and will work with them to adjust schedules as needed.
- Regional Coordinators will alert Ewan to reschedule the volunteer shifts.
- All KCRHA Severe Weather Protocols and updated information on activations can be found on the [severe weather landing page](#).

Interview Best Practices

To ensure an empathic and effective PIT Count:

Please introduce yourself, wear your name tag, and thank the participant for their time. Ensure they are comfortable, offer water, snacks, bathroom, area to put belongings, etc. Understand that broad questions like, “How has your day been?” may be too general or trigger an emotional response beyond the intake scope.

Interview Spaces in the HUB should also:

Reducing barriers and increasing access can be challenging during the current public health crisis. However, one way to reduce power imbalances is by sitting next to the client on the same side of the table if they are comfortable with it. Clear signage and written documents can also help improve accessibility. □

Ensuring safety by setting clear boundaries by:

- Create privacy and safety—Create as much private space as possible utilizing dividers or other tools.
- Confirm safety—For over-the-phone intakes, ask whether the person is in a safe space to answer the questions confidentially.
- Ask questions confidently—Do not apologize before asking questions, such as beginning with “I am sorry I have to ask this but...” or “I need to ask you this...” These disclaimers may cause a client to be more reluctant to respond. Instead, be prepared to explain how their



- Inform them of their rights—Inform the households verbally or in writing throughout the process. They can quit anytime and still be compensated for their time.
- information is protected and utilized to ensure everyone is treated fairly regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Normalize self-identification—Introduce yourself with your self-identified race, ethnicity, and pronouns to set the tone for the intake (if you feel comfortable).

Sample Informed Consent for the 2026 Point-In-Time Count and Survey Questions

Adult and Youth consent forms are accessible on the 2026 Point-in-Time Count website [Resources](#) section.



Safety and Comfort for Volunteers and Participants

Certain precautions must be taken to minimize the risk of COVID-19, Influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) transmission during the PIT Count. To create a supportive and welcoming environment while reducing distress and risk, please make sure to have the following items:

To lower the risk of exposure¹:

- Masks visible and available for use.
- Hand sanitizer visible and available for use.
- Ensure ventilation and provide social distance when and where possible.
- If possible, have appropriate vaccination.
- If sick, please stay home, call HUB Lead to arrange an alternate volunteer.

HUB site should be maintained as:

- A quiet, warm and well-light space to complete the survey away from foot traffic.
- Accessibility to restrooms and exits.
- Someone is welcomed within 10 seconds of entering the site.
- Participants are escorted from desk to survey space and back to desk for reimbursement (including any restroom breaks).

During the Interview follow the following:

- Interviewers should sit within reach/visual of an exit.
- Maintain a minimum arm's length distance for safety and comfort of all parties. Slightly angled is a better position versus being "toe to toe."
- Offer location options to interviewees and let them decide where to be. (as much as the space allows)
- Make sure your basic needs are met (food, water, bathroom, comfort, accessibility, etc.)
- Ensure participants basic needs are met, breaks, time to debrief difficult conversations, etc.

During the 2026 PIT Count, we will strive to use a Trauma-Informed Approach.

First, understanding that "Trauma" is a term used to describe experiences that are too difficult for an individual to handle, leading to feelings of powerlessness, fear, and distress. Homeless individuals often face different forms of trauma, such as abuse, violence, or loss, which can worsen their problems and make it harder for them to trust others or access services.²

Trauma-informed care principles include creating a safe environment, building trust, offering empowerment and choice, working in partnership, and acknowledging cultural impact. It also requires empathy, active listening, collaborative decision-making, and empowerment by



acknowledging strengths, offering choices, and respecting dignity. Surveyors will ask participants to provide personal information that may cause emotional distress for both parties. It's essential to treat everyone with respect and dignity while ensuring that their experiences are heard and valued.

In case of an emergency, please call 9-1-1 and Regional Coordinator.

If there is any violence, fire, or health-related issue that requires emergency assistance. Any threat of violence qualifies. It is the HUB Lead's discretion to alert the individual that the police are coming if they feel that knowledge would escalate someone further or not. The HUB Lead is the person who will call 911. If the crisis is related to mental health, clearly state that to 911 and request for Crisis Responders to come out. As soon as they are in a safe place to do so, the HUB Lead notifies the Regional Coordinator. The HUB Lead (after confirming with Regional Coordinators and Site Staff) is the person who will decide if the site needs to be closed.

Recognizing Triggers and Responding Appropriately:

It's important to understand that certain words, behaviors, or situations might trigger traumatic responses in individuals. These triggers can manifest as anxiety, anger, or withdrawal. If you're a volunteer and come across someone who is experiencing these responses, it's important to respond calmly, validate their feelings, and, if necessary, de-escalate the situation by providing space or offering choices.

De-escalation Techniques and Crisis Intervention

Despite best efforts, a participant might still be upset. Although we anticipate this happening rarely, it is crucial to be prepared and have a plan. HUB Leads and Site Staff will be the staff to intervene. Below are a few tips to use during and after a crisis:

During Crisis

- Take a few breaths.
- Ask yourself if what you are witnessing is aggressive or violent (there is a distinction, and taking time to think will help you respond more appropriately). Check your bias!
- Aggression in crisis thinking is verbal/non-verbal communication. This is a signal that something is wrong. Listen. Breathe.
- Violence is when there is a physical act of harm toward oneself or others.
- While language can be violent, we want to distinguish between the two in a crisis and not conflate them. This is when people in crisis get harmed.



- At any point, you assess the situation escalating to a point where there is extreme distress or agitation, thank them for their time and for coming, provide resources, and escort them to the door. Do not try to de-escalate or try to continue to finish the interview (if interviewing). It is ok to offer additional bus tickets or gift cards or other resources.
- Ask for assistance from HUB Lead and site management to help with crowd control, separating the person from the group, and escorting them to the door. Make sure your station is secure and locked before leaving it unattended (bus tickets and visa cards put away, laptop closed)
- If an incident occurs outside, continue to provide support, and separate from other interviewees until the person has left the property.

After Crisis

- Talk. About. It.
- Decompress, move your body. We hold crisis responses in our bodies, which can lead to actual physical impacts. Take a walk, jump, pace. Move.
- Return the site to normal and check in with other interviewees who observed or were involved in the crisis to ensure they are ok.
- Check-in with staff/management at the site for any additional follow-up needed per their protocols.
- If you haven't called the Regional Coordinator, do so now. Additional follow-up instructions may be given to you at this time.
- HUB Leads, check in with surveyors, and offer a break or additional debrief time.
- Take some time to re-orientate the space. If needed, let interviewees know you will take a quick 15-minute break before resuming to allow time for processing.



Survey Protocols and Guidelines

Data Usage and Confidentiality

The PIT survey guarantees anonymity to the participants. However, the surveyors will still need to obtain certain personal details such as contact information, birth month and year of the participant, and the first names of other individuals in their network who are experiencing homelessness without shelter. **It is crucial that each surveyor clearly understands how each data element will be used, and they should be able to explain this information to the participants during the informed consent process.**

Data will be gathered through the RDS Mobile Application. Respondent identity is anonymized. The survey will commence on the RDS Mobile App, and the data gathered will be utilized for the following purposes:

- Documenting informed consent.
- Collecting participants' email addresses and phone numbers so \$5 gift cards can be sent when one of the participants' referrals takes the survey. Contact information will also be used to send the participants the finalized PIT report in April if they choose to opt into that.
- Linking the participant's coupon to its "parent" coupon.
- Linking the participant's coupon to its corresponding physical gift card.
- Notes for the PIT data team (for example, noting if a QR code was unreadable due to coupon damage or if the surveyor believes this person has already taken the survey).

The information collected through the RDS Mobile App will be examined to prepare the estimates submitted to HUD for the count and demographics of individuals experiencing homelessness without shelter in King County. The Survey Data Entry section below provides a more comprehensive overview of the survey, but generally, the survey comprises four major sections.

1. **Identification:** In this section, provide the first two letters of their first and last name along with their birth month and year. This will calculate which age tier the participant falls under. It will also be used, along with the first two letters of first and last name, to help the PIT data team identify any duplicate survey participants. This de-duplication process is solely for the accuracy of the unsheltered count.



2. **Network Questions:** Network questions are critical in RDS to help calculate the size and depth of the networks we're trying to measure. Participants are asked to list up to 15 people they know (but are not in their immediate household) and the type of location they sleep in. The names provided by the survey participants should not be complete. They can be first names, nicknames, initials, or any other informal name the participant wants to use. Some form of the name is requested because it helps to increase the accuracy of what the participant is reporting. Often, participants will over or underestimate the number of people in their network. Making them attach a name to each person in their network helps to refine that estimate. It acts as a tool for deciding whether that person is in their network (if the participant doesn't know somebody's name/nickname, they probably shouldn't be considering that person as in their network).
3. **General Experience:** The questions in this section are aligned with the data we are required to report to HUD, like race/ethnicity, gender, time spent homeless, veteran status, and whether the participant is a survivor of domestic violence. KCRHA also adds several custom questions to help us gain insight into the unsheltered experience in King County.
4. **General Experience (Household Members):** The General Experience questions are asked for each participant's immediate household member. We ask for the initials of each household member. This section will not be filled out for single adults.

Handling Sensitive Information and Responses:

The PIT survey is designed to be self-reported, meaning that surveyors should record responses based on what they hear from the participant rather than their observations. For instance, if someone reports a race that the surveyor thinks may be inaccurate, they should still enter the race that the participant reported. If the participant needs clarification on any questions, surveyors should strive to explain the question in simple language without influencing them toward a specific answer.

It's important to prioritize the well-being of the person taking the survey over the quality of the data collected. Although we want participants to answer all survey questions thoroughly, they can skip any question they don't want to answer. Participants will still receive their Visa gift card regardless of the number of questions skipped. In addition, participants can provide partial answers to specific questions. For instance, they can indicate their birth year if they want to keep their birthday private or specify whether they are 25 years old or older.

As part of the survey, we will ask participants a range of personal questions such as their gender and racial identity, the duration of their homelessness, any disabilities they might have, substance use disorders, and whether they have experienced domestic violence. Surveyors



must handle these sensitive topics with care and allow participants to provide answers at their own pace. It is essential to practice active listening and avoid rushing the participants while they answer. Administering the survey in a conversational and friendly tone can also help participants feel more comfortable answering sensitive questions. In addition to the tips provided above, it is essential to prepare well by understanding the survey questions, the background of the group being surveyed, and being able to answer common questions.



Emergency Procedures: Evacuation & Reconvening Protocol

In the event of a fire, safety threat, or site closure, follow these protocols immediately. Your safety is the primary objective.

Part 1: Site Evacuation Plan

1. Immediate Action

- **Stop Activity:** Upon hearing an alarm or instruction from the HUB Lead, cease all surveying immediately.
- **Secure & Go:** If safe, grab your phone and sensitive data (paper surveys/tablets). Leave heavy items behind.
- **Buddy System:** Locate your partner/team members. Do not separate. Assist anyone needing help to evacuate.
- **Exit:** Use the nearest designated emergency exit. **Do not use elevators.**

2. Rally & Headcount

- **Go to Rally Point:** Proceed immediately to the designated meeting spot listed in the Hub Site Contact List (located in the Hub manual).
- **Check In:** Report to the Hub Lead or Regional Coordinator immediately.
 - Critical: Do not leave the rally point until you are accounted for. We need to confirm every volunteer is safe before clearing the scene.

3. Await Instructions

- **Stay Put:** Remain at the assembly point. Do not re-enter the building for personal items until the Fire Department or Police give the “All Clear.”
- **Updates:** KCRHA Staff will issue a formal status update via text/email regarding next steps (e.g., site closure or relocation).

Part 2: Site Reconvening Protocol

How and when to resume operations after an evacuation or temporary closure.

Step 1: The “All Clear” Decision You are not authorized to re-enter a site or resume surveying until you receive official confirmation.

- **Who Decides:** The **Regional Coordinator** in your sub-region will assess safety with local authorities. They must report their decision to **KCRHA Command Center** within 30 minutes.



- **Notification:** You will receive a text or email from KCRHA leadership confirming whether the site is reopening or moving.

Step 2: Relocation (If Site Remains Closed) If the original site is unsafe, operations may move to a backup location.

- **Transport:** Look for instructions on how to transit to the new Hub.
- **Respondent Care:** You may be issued additional bus tickets to help survey participants travel to the new location.

Step 3: Reset & Re-Brief Once reconvened (at the old site or new location):

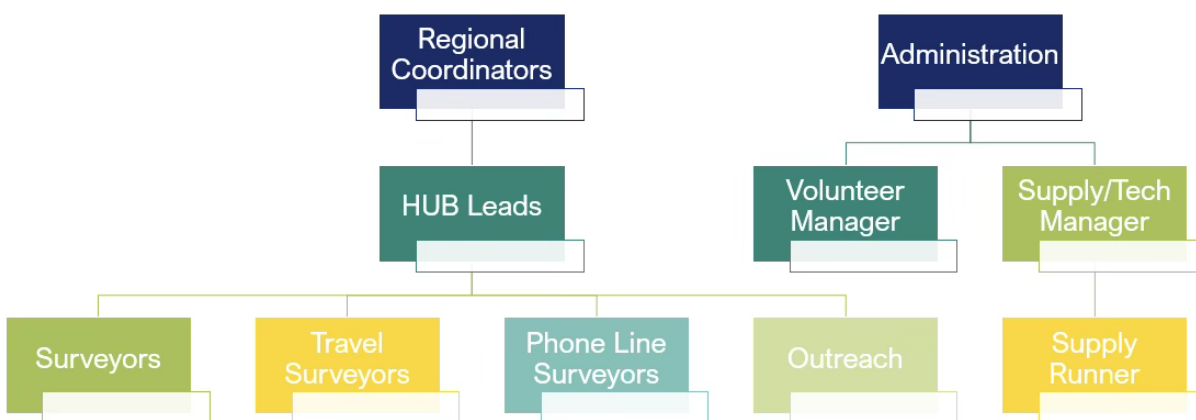
1. **Attend Briefing:** Listen to the Hub Lead's safety briefing regarding any new hazards or protocol changes.
2. **Check Assignments:** Confirm your survey zone or role has not changed.
3. **Resume Count:** Continue data collection.
4. **Report Data Loss:** If you lost paper surveys or data during the evacuation, report this to the Hub Lead immediately so it can be documented.



Roles for The 2026 Point In Time Count

For a successful PIT, the following roles have been developed. Some will be filled by KCRHA staff and some by volunteers. A description of each role is listed below:

HUB Operations Roles:



Regional Coordinators (7) - We will have seven Regional Coordinators, one for each region. They are overseeing the operations of all HUBs sited in their area. They will submit orders to the support staff for additional supplies, troubleshooting volunteer management, handling media, and crisis management. They will communicate with the HUB Leads to understand operations on the ground and be available to be on-site at any of their HUB locations.

For the 2026 PIT Count, these are the Regional Coordinators and their contact information:

<u>King County Sub-Region</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
North King County	Joel Bernstein	206-771-2097
East King County	Claire Guilmette	206-735-6448
South King County	Janelle Rothfolk	425-457-2349
Southeast King County	Ben Mathewson	206-945-6775
Seattle Metro	Ewan Andresen	206-681-5536
Snoqualmie Valley	Daniel Ramos III	206-513-3532
Unincorporated Areas & Vashon	Cathea Carey	206-809-5711



HUB Leads (up to 27) - Each site shift will have a HUB Lead. HUB Leads will communicate to the Regional Coordinator on any issues with volunteer shifts, site issues, critical incidents, need for additional supplies, PR, and media requests. They will support the volunteers with data collection and troubleshoot any technical issues with the Tech support. They greet participants and ensure the safety and security of volunteers and participants. They will communicate with the site staff on any issues. Depending on the shift, either open or close the site. This is primarily a volunteer position except for the Seattle locations, which will have KCRHA staff on site.

Surveyors (Up to 100) - Each site will have 2-4 survey site volunteers. They will ensure participants are comfortable and complete the survey with them. They will notify the HUB Lead if there are any issues with the technology, if they need additional supplies, if the participant has question they cannot answer or needs further assistance, etc. All roles ultimately support this process to proceed smoothly.

Travel Surveyors (4) – These volunteers administer the same survey questions and validation procedures as fixed-site HUB surveyors. They also manage the secure distribution of gift cards and bus tickets from the mobile unit.

Phone Line Surveyors (10) – Phone Line Surveyors operate the “Virtual Hub,” a dedicated phone line primarily designed to allow families with minor children to complete their surveys remotely without needing to travel to a physical site. They administer the standard survey over the phone, ensuring that the participant is in a safe space to answer confidentially before beginning. Because they cannot visually assess the participant’s environment, they must explicitly ask about safety and privacy (e.g., “Are you in a safe space to speak?”) to protect participants, especially those fleeing domestic violence. They perform the same validation steps as in-person surveyors, including verifying eligibility and recording demographic data. They collect necessary contact information to arrange for the distribution of gift cards, as physical hand-off is not possible.

Volunteer Manager (1) – The Volunteer Manager is responsible for the high-level management of the volunteer workforce. Their primary focus is maintaining the master schedule and ensuring all volunteers have access to necessary training and resource. They oversee the master calendar for all HUB Sites and adjust shifts as needed. They act as the central point for staffing adjustments. Regional Coordinators contact the Volunteer Coordinator to request shift changes or coverage. They ensure that training materials and resources are available to the volunteer base.

Outreach Volunteer (100) – Unlike HUB Surveyors who remain at a fixed location, Outreach Volunteers allow for mobile recruitment. They travel to specific areas (such as encampments, rural locations, or spots with high density) to initiate the “snowball” sampling method by



distributing the first wave of coupons (“seeds”). They distribute these initial “parent coupons” to unsheltered individuals, focusing on hard-to-reach subpopulations like families, veterans, and those in vehicles. They explain the survey process and the “peer recruitment” incentive model to potential participants to start the survey chains. They determine the timing and location of seeding based on population and their knowledge of the area.

Supply/Tech Manager (1) - The Supply/Tech Manager is a KCRHA staff position responsible for the logistical coordination of the Count. This role bridges the gap between physical supply management and technical support, ensuring HUB Sites have the materials and functional equipment needed to operate. They oversee the inventory at headquarters, stock resupply boxes for daily delivery, and coordinate with Supply Drivers to ensure materials reach HUB Sites. They also provide over-the-phone troubleshooting for HUB Leads regarding technology issues, specifically focusing on printer functionality or QR code generation. This role also monitors the progress of daily surveys to detect and address data quality issues in real-time.

Supply Runner (1-2) – The supply runner will report each day to KCRHA to pick up the deliveries. They will sign out the items on the tracking sheet before leaving KCRHA and then have the HUB Leads sign indicating the drop-off items.



Coupon Printing And Survey Data Entry

This section explains how QR codes and gift cards will be handled at hub sites. The goal is to keep the process simple, consistent, and secure.

Who prints and who hands out?

- Surveyors:
 - Conduct interviews with participants.
 - Escort participants to the hub lead after the survey is complete.
 - There is no need to operate or handle the printer, laptop, or gift cards.
- Hub leads (KCRHA staff or designated lead):
 - Control the laptop and printer.
 - Print all QR coupons.
 - Pair QR coupons with gift cars.
 - Explain incentives to participants and hand out gift cards.

Step-by-step: Hub Lead printing procedure

1. Confirm the participant is finished
 - A surveyor brings the participant to you and tells you the survey is complete.
 - Keep a small, orderly line; prioritize people in the order they finished.
2. Open the dashboard
 - On the KCRHA laptop, open the RDS Mobile application.
 - Find the list of recently completed surveys for your site.
 - Identify the specific participant just sent to you.
3. Print QR coupons in small batches
 - Select only the participants currently in front of you (e.g., the 2-3 people who just finished).
 - Print the required QR coupons for each person (for example, one set per person, or multiple coupons if the process specifies that).
 - Do not print a large pile “for later”; always print for specific, identified participants.
4. Organize the printouts
 - As the pages come out of the printer, immediately sort them:
 - Make one stack per participant.
 - Keep stacks physically separated so pages do not get mixed.
 - Quickly write a simple identifier on the back of each stack if needed (e.g., initials or a line number) so you can keep them straight while you talk to people.



5. Pair QR coupons with gift cards
 - For each participant:
 - Take that participant's QR coupon stack.
 - Take the correct number of gift cards for that person (for example, one \$20 card per adult, or the amount specified for families at your site).
 - If your site uses a log or packet system, record:
 - Packet number
 - Last 4 digits of gift card number
 - Date, time, and participant code (not name).
6. Explain the incentive to the participant
 - When the participant reaches the front of the line:
 - Thank them for completing the survey.
 - Briefly explain:
 - What the gift card is for (any purchase)
 - The dollar amount.
 - Any important restrictions (where it can/cannot be used)
 - If cards are pre-activated:
 - Tell them the card is already active, and show them where to find instructions on checking the balance or changing the PIN.
 - If cards are not pre-activated:
 - Follow the activation instructions provided in your training (either with them present, or by giving clear instructions for activating later).
7. Close out the interaction
 - Make sure the participant receives:
 - Their gift cards(s).
 - Any printed QR coupon or receipt they need.
 - Answer any quick question they have about using the card or where to go next.
 - Mark the card as "issued" on your paper or electronic log before moving to the next person.

Technical requirements

- All printing must be done from the KCRHA laptop assigned to the Hub Lead at your hub site.
- Connect the printer to the laptop with a cable via hard-line usb connection, not bluetooth.
- Keep the laptop and printer in a stable, dry area that is:
 - Staff-only access.
 - Close enough for surveyors to escort participants to you.

Security and troubleshooting



- Treat all gift cards like cash:
 - Never leave cards or printed QR coupons unattended.
 - Keep them in a lockbox, or designated container out of public reach.
- If the printer jams or stops working:
 - Pause participant flow and let your regional coordinator know.
 - Use the backup procedure provided in training (for example, a paper log and delayed printing if allowed).
- If you suspect a card was lost, stolen, or mis-issued.
 - Note the card number (if available).
 - Notify your Regional Coordinator or staff supervisor as soon as possible.
 - Document what happened in the Hub Site Incident Form.

Incentives

Introduction:

The Point-in-Time Count relies on the time, trust, and expertise of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. To honor their contribution and encourage participation in this critical data collection effort, KCRHA provides direct financial compensation and transportation assistance to all participants.

Why We Provide Incentives:

- Compensation for Expertise: Participants are sharing personal, often difficult, details about their lives. The gift card is payment for their labor and data.
- Recruitment (Seeding): Incentives drive our “Respondent-Driven Sampling” methodology. By compensating participants for referring their peers, we can reach disconnected populations that traditional outreach might miss.

The Incentives at a Glance:

- Visa Gift Cards: Provided immediately upon completion of the survey (\$20 for individuals, \$40 for families).
- Bus Tickets: Attached to “referral coupons” to help peers travel to a HUB Site.
- Referral Bonuses: A \$5 credit for every recruited peer who completes a survey.
- Bus tickets and gift cards are treated as cash equivalents. Observe the “Double-Lock” Rule when storing them, ensure they are always kept under strict chain of custody.

Administrator Note: *De-Escalation First*. Disputes over gift cards can be a source of conflict at HUB Sites. If a situation escalates regarding a participant’s eligibility or a technicality with their



survey, err on the side of providing the gift card. Our priority is safety and maintaining trust with the community, not policing small amounts of funds. If you provide a gift card under these circumstances, please follow the Non-Survey Incentive Protocol and log it in the Hub Site Incident Report form.

Incentive Tracking & Distribution: Gift Cards

To ensure every gift card is accounted for without slowing down data collection, we use a “Packet System.” Cards move in tracked bundles of 25. Please follow the instructions for your specific role below.

1. Regional Coordinator (HQ / Supply Chain)

You are responsible for the flow of resources from Headquarters to the Hub Sites.

- **Preparation:** Ensure all gift cards are pre-sorted into Packets of 25. Each packet must be labeled with a unique Packet ID (e.g. PKT-01, PKT-02).
- **Check-Out:** When a Hub Lead or Supply Runner picks up supplies, use the “HQ Gift Card Packet Checkout” form to issue a batch of 25 gift cards.
 - Type the Packet ID number (or scan, if scanning enabled).
 - Select the Destination Hub site.
 - This automatically updates the Master Inventory to show those cards are “Active” at that site.
- **Monitoring:** Keep the Gift Card Management – Regional Coordinators dashboard open
 - **Reconciliation:** Monitor the “Mismatch Report” to catch data errors early. The Gift Card Checkout Log flags duplicate Packet Ids in the “Duplicate Check Packet Id” column.

Gift Card Checkout Log						
KCRHA						
Grid Filter Arial 10 B I U S A						
	Packet ID	Destination Hub	Courier Name	Transaction Date	HQ Staff Member	Duplicate Check Packet Id
1	PKT-01	Auburn Library (KCLS)	Testy Test	12/16/25	EA Ewan Andreassen	⚠️ DUPLICATE
2	PKT-02	Ballard Branch Library	Testy Test	12/24/25	EA Ewan Andreassen	
3	PKT-00	Auburn Library (KCLS)	Testy Teset	12/18/25	EA Ewan Andreassen	
4	PKT-03	Bellevue Library (KCLS)	Testy Test	12/26/25	EA Ewan Andreassen	
5	PKT-01	HQ	Test Test	12/23/25	EA Ewan Andreassen	⚠️ DUPLICATE
6						



Duplicate Packet ID pictured – In the above example, Packet ID 01 (PKT-01) was entered as a duplicate on 12/23 and will need to be corrected by selecting the next available Packet ID (PKT-04).

- **Printing:** Print the Gift Card Distribution Log for the new Packet Id. Store the log with the assigned gift cards in an envelope and lock in lock box before distribution to Hub Leads. Navigate to Gift Card Distribution Log in [Smartsheets](#) to print the log.

Print Setup (PDF)

Selection

☒ Entire Sheet

☐ Selected Rows

Paper Size

Letter (8.5in x 11in)

Margins

Very Small (0.25")

Orientation

☒ Landscape ☐ Portrait

Scaling

☐ Scale ☒ Fit to Width

100 % 2 pages wide 2 page(s) long 1 page wide 2 page(s) long

Options

☒ Include logo

☒ Include sheet name

☐ Include row numbers

☒ Include date/time stamp

☒ Include page numbers

☐ Include comments

Add note to header (250 characters max)

Sign and secure on receipt.

Hub Lead Name: _____

Hub Lead Signature: _____

Cancel OK

“Add note to header” section is pre-populated.

2. Supply Runner

The Supply Runner is the physical link between the HQ safe and the Hub Site lock box. Their primary responsibility is chain of custody—proving exactly where the tickets were while in transit. The tool you use to do this is the Transport Manifest.

- **Secure Transport:** They transport tickets in a lock tote/box. They must never leave this container unattended in a vehicle.
- **The Handoff:** Upon arriving at a Hub site, the Supply Runner cannot just “drop and go.” They must:
 1. Physically count the incentives with the Hub Lead.
 2. Require the Hub Lead to sign the Transport Manifest to accept custody.
- **Rapid Resupply:** They are deployed immediately when a site reaches 25 or fewer gift cards remaining.

What is the Transport Manifest?



The Transport Manifest is a physical “Bill of Lading” that travels with every delivery. It is the proof that you successfully delivered the inventory.

- What it tracks: It lists specific Packet IDs (e.g., PKT-01 through PKT-05) rather than just a total count of gift cards.
- Why it matters: If a packet is missing at the end of the day, Finance will look at the Manifest. If the Hub Lead signed for “Packet-05,” the liability is on the Hub Lead. If there is no signature, the liability remains with the Supply Runner.

3. Hub Lead

You manage the physical inventory at your site and assign resources to volunteers.

- Receiving Supplies: When supplies arrive, verify you have received the specific Packet IDs assigned to you. Keep full packets in the lockbox provided to your site until needed.
- If there is a technology failure, log the unique Coupon ID on the Gift Card Distribution log. Otherwise, leave this field blank.

Supply Levels:

- Monitor your supply levels. When you are down to 1 unopened packet (25 gift cards), call your Regional Coordinator immediately for resupply.

Instructional Procedure: Entering Gift Card Data in RDS Mobile App

Background: To avoid data mismatches and confusion, we are strictly using the card number on the front of the card. We are not using the serial number found on the back.

The Process:

1. **Retrieve the card:** Select the next gift card from your assigned packet.
2. **Locate the 16-digit Number (Front):** Look at the front of the card. Find the long, 16-digit card number across the center.

Do not turn the card over.

3. **Identify the Last 4 Digits:** Isolate only the last four digits of that 16-digit string.
4. **Enter into the RDS Mobile App:** In the “Gift Card Number” field of the RDS Mobile Application, type only those last four digits.
 - Example: If the card number is 4000 1234 5678 9012, you enter 9012.



5. **Manual Log (Hub Leads):** When recording the card in the physical Gift Card Distribution Log, write these same last four digits in the “Gift Card #” column to match the digital record.

Critical “Do Not” Warnings

- **STOP:** Do NOT use the serial number.
- **LOOK:** Do NOT look at the back of the card for data entry numbers.
- **VERIFY:** Ensure you are entering the last four digits of the 16-digit code, not the expiration date or CVV.

End of Shift:

- Collect all unused cards from volunteers before they leave.
- Verify the count matches their log (e.g., Started with 25, distributed 20, returned 5).
- Record this information in the “Daily Hub Close Out [Form](#)”.
- Return unused cards to the secure lockbox or return to HQ via Supply Runner or locked “Hub Kit”.

Incentive Tracking & Distribution: Bus Tickets

Bus tickets are provided to participants primarily to facilitate their access to Hub sites. Observe the “Double-Lock” Rule when handling bus tickets. Tickets must be stored inside the lock box. When not in active use (e.g., during overnight hours), the lock box itself must be secured inside a locked cabinet, drawer, or office safe at the Hub site.

Bus tickets are a limited resource. Please prioritize distribution in the following order:

1. Survey Completion: Accessing hub sites to complete a survey.
2. Safety/Shelter: Participant requires transport to a shelter, warming center, or medical facility immediately following the survey.
3. General Mobility: Participant requires transport to access a Hub site to complete a survey or to return to their primary sleeping location or job site.

Note: Completion of a PIT Count survey serves as the verification of housing status.

Please follow the instructions for your specific role below.

1. Regional Coordinator (HQ / Supply Chain)

The Regional Coordinator acts as “Air Traffic Control.” They do not physically carry tickets often; instead, they monitor the data to authorize movements and catch errors.



- **Monitoring Burn Rate:** They view the incentives dashboard to see live inventory levels. They identify sites that are distributing tickets too fast (e.g., “Why did Hub A use 200 tickets in 2 hours?”) and intervene.
- **Dispatch Authority:** When a Hub Lead informs the Regional Coordinator that there is low stock, the Regional Coordinator authorizes the Supply Runner to deploy.
- **Audit & Reconciliation:**
 - They review the Daily Hub Close-Out Forms.
 - They check for inventory discrepancy.
- **Incident Management:** If tickets are lost/stolen, the Regional Coordinator reviews Hub Site Incident Report and works with the Finance Director to file the required written report to DCHS within 3 days.

2. Supply Runner

The Supply Runner is the physical link between the HQ safe and the Hub Site lock box. Their primary responsibility is chain of custody—proving exactly where the tickets were while in transit.

- **Secure Transport:** They transport tickets in a lock box. They must never leave this container unattended in a vehicle.
- **The Handoff:** Upon arriving at a Hub site, the Supply Runner cannot just “drop and go.” They must:
 3. Physically count the tickets with the Hub Lead.
 4. Require the Hub Lead to sign the Transport Manifest to accept custody.
- **Rapid Resupply:** They are deployed immediately when a site reaches 30 tickets or less.

3. Hub Lead

You are the primary custodian of the lock box.

- **Distribute gift cards** on survey completion.
- **Monitor your inventory:** When your physical count drops to 30 tickets, inform your Regional Coordinator to request a runner resupply. Do not wait until you run out.
- **Digital Reconciliation:** At the end of every shift, you must complete the Daily Hub Close Out Form.
 - Tally the number of received and distributed bus tickets.
 - Count the physical tickets in the lock box.
 - Enter the count on the form.



- Note any discrepancies in count.
- Log these numbers in the Daily Hub Close Out Form.
- **Loss Reporting:** If tickets are missing and cannot be accounted for, submit a Hub Site Incident report immediately (Category: Incentives (Gift Cards + Bus Tickets)). This triggers the mandatory DCHS notification process.

Contingency Plans & Scenarios

Introduction: Contingency Plans & Decision Making

While we have designed the Point-in-Time Count to run smoothly, we operate in dynamic, real-world environments where the unexpected can occur. This section outlines the specific protocols for responding to emerging situations—from medical emergencies to technology failures.

Our Guiding Principle

As you navigate challenges during your shift, please keep in mind that our primary goal with the Unsheltered portion of the Point-in-Time Count is accurately counting individuals who are unsheltered.

- **Operational Priority:** Our decision-making will reflect this prioritization as we operate and respond to emerging situations. When facing non-emergency logistical hurdles (e.g., a glitchy tablet or a shortage of pens), prioritize solutions that allow the count and surveys to continue, such as switching to paper forms.

Safety Is Paramount

While data collection is our goal, it never supersedes the safety of our volunteers or participants.

Severe Weather: If KCRHA issues a Tier 3 level activation due to severe weather, sites in impacted areas will close, and data collection will pause.

Emergencies: In the event of an immediate threat to life or safety, the priority shifts instantly from “counting to “safety.” Call 911 immediately for medical emergencies or violence.

1. The Chain of Communication

To ensure consistent decision-making across all 27 HUB Sites, we follow a strict communication hierarchy for all incidents.

1. Surveyors/Volunteers: Report issues immediately to your HUB Site Lead.



2. HUB Site Leads: Assess the situation and report immediately to your Regional Coordinator.
3. Documentation: After the immediate situation is handled, the HUB Site Lead must log the event in the HUB Site Incident Report Form to create an official record.

Note: Do not try to solve complex safety or media issues alone. Your Regional Coordinator is your support system and must be notified of any safety concerns, participant conflicts, or external disruptions.

Incident Reporting - When & How to Use the Form

The Golden Rule: ACTION FIRST, REPORT SECOND. The HUB Site Incident Report Form is the official operational log for the Count, but it never replaces immediate action. If there is an immediate threat to life, safety, or severe injury, CALL 911 first. Do not fill out this form until the immediate danger is resolved.

1. How to Use the Incident Report Form

Every HUB Site Lead and Volunteer will have access to the HUB Site Incident Report Form. This form is used to document reportable events after they have been managed on the ground.

Step 1: Take Immediate Action

- Address the emergency (Call 911, de-escalate, etc.).
- **Verbally notify** your HUB Lead (if you are a volunteer) or your Regional Coordinator (if you are a HUB Lead).
- Note: Contact information for your Regional Coordinator will appear on the form automatically once you select your Sub-Region. It is also in the HUB site manual.

Step 2: Submit the Form

- Open the form link provided in your training materials.
- **Select your Sub-Region:** This ensures the report is routed to the correct coordinator (e.g., Ben Mathewson for South East King County, Janelle Rothfolk for South King County).
- **Select the Incident Type:** Choose the category that best matches the situation (e.g., “Safety Threat / Hostile Action” or “Medical / Behavioral Health Emergency”).
- **Complete the “Immediate Action” Checklist:** Confirm that you have already taken the necessary steps (e.g., Called 911, Evacuated Site).

2. Specific Reportable Scenarios



You must submit an incident report for any of the following situations:

A. Medical & Safety Emergencies

- **Medical Emergencies & Overdoses:** *After* calling 911 and stabilizing the scene.
- **Critical Site Incidents:** Fire, criminal activity, weapons observed on site, or credible threats to safety.
- **Physical Site Issues:** Emergency maintenance issues that make the site unsafe (e.g., flooding, power outage, lack of heat).

B. Behavioral Health & Participant Distress

- **Mental Health Crises or Psychosis:** Situations involving severe distress where professional intervention (Crisis Connections or EMS) was considered or contacted.
- **Participant Distress:** Any situation where a participant becomes agitated or distressed and cannot be de-escalated by volunteers using standard protocols.

C. Staffing & Logistics

- **Staff & Scheduling:** If a volunteer calls out, is a “no-show,” or cannot complete their shift, log it here so the Regional Coordinator can deploy floaters or adjust coverage.

D. Inventory & Asset Exceptions

- **Incentives for Non-Survey Distribution (e.x., de-escalation, technical failure):** Volunteer, participant and staff safety is our primary objective. While gift cards are intended for completed surveys, they may be used as a de-escalation tool if a situation becomes tense or threatening. Never withhold a gift card if doing so puts your safety at risk.

If a gift card is distributed to an individual who does not complete a survey (e.g., de-escalation, participant walked away mid-survey, or technical failure), follow the reporting steps below to ensure the card is accounted for in our financial audit.

Procedure:

1. Distribute Immediately:

- Hand over the card. Do not attempt to scan the barcode or delay the interaction.
- Goal: End the interaction safely and quickly

2. Log the “Orphan” Card in the Incident Report Form by

- Within the form select “Gift Card / Inventory Exception” from the Incident Type drop-down. Do not create a fake survey entry in the app to “account” for the card. This corrupts our data.



- **Backup Action:** If you are unable to access the Incident Report Form, then have your Hub Lead send an immediate email to your Regional Coordinator with the following details:
 - Subject: De-Escalation Card Usage
 - Card number
 - Reason: “Given for de-escalation – No survey collected.”
 - Gift card pack ID #, if known.

Note: This email serves as the official “receipt” for the missing card during the financial audit.

- **Lost or Stolen Assets:** Any theft or loss of high-value items (tablets, full packets of gift cards, bus tickets).

External Factors

- **Media / PR / Unsanctioned Groups:** Any interaction with reporters, press, or external groups attempting to intervene. *Reminder: Do not engage; log the group name and notify your Regional Coordinator immediately.*

Administrator Note: All reports submitted through this form are automatically routed to the Regional Coordinator for your specific Sub-Region. Please ensure you select the correct Sub-Region from the dropdown menu to avoid delays in notification.

Scenarios

Please keep in mind that our primary goal with the Unsheltered portion of the Point-in-Time Count is accurately counting individuals who are unsheltered. Our decision making will reflect this prioritization as we operate and respond to emerging situations, including contingency scenarios included here.

Scenario A: Participant Without a Coupon (“Walk-Ins”)

Phase 1 (January 26 – January 28, 2026): Walk-ins at HUB site survey locations ARE accepted. Sites will have a limited supply of “seed” coupons to issue to individuals who arrive without one.

Phase 2 (After January 28, 2026): Walk-ins are NOT accepted. You can use the following script if you are approached by someone who would like to complete a survey during this time. We cannot accept walk-ins after this date because we must count people based on their connection to others (“network chains”), not just random arrivals. Script: “We are now only conducting surveys for those with coupons. Please ask your acquaintances or network if they have a coupon to share.”



Scenario B: Severe Weather Activation

When KCRHA issues a Tier 3 Weather Activation data collection will STOP immediately. Surveys cannot be conducted during severe weather activation because life-safety takes precedence AND because this interferes with an accurate count (HUD requirement). Regional Coordinators will notify HUB Leads and HUB Leads will notify all volunteers of this activation. If a site is close for five or more days, the HUB location will reopen for an additional week once the weather event clears.

Additionally, KCRHA may issue a Severe Weather Activation decision on January 16, 2026 ten days before the start of the Count. KCRHA will email all volunteers January 16, 2026 mid-day to notify them that shifts will be moved to February 2 – 13, 2026.

Scenario C: Media, PR, or Unsanctioned Groups

If reporters, camera crews, or hostile groups attempt to intervene or observe the PIT Count please take the following actions: 1) Do not engage. Volunteers are instructed to politely refuse interviews and may use the following script, “I am a volunteer focused on conducting the count. I cannot provide a statement or interviews. Please contact KCRHA media line for any inquiries”. 2) Report the incident immediately. The HUB Lead must call the Regional Coordinator immediately, 3) Log the incident using the Incident Report Form. Note the name of the outlet or group in the form.

Scenario D: Technology Failure

If the survey application crashes, tablets die, or internet is lost, then switch to paper. HUB sites are stocked with paper surveys as a backup. Please continue counting and log the incident in the Incident Report Form. If there are interpretation issues and the Genie interpretation application fails due to a lack of connectivity, attempt to move to an area with better cell service, or use an alternative device. Please log these incidents in the Incident Report Form.

Scenario E: Medical or Behavioral Health Emergency

In the event of overdose, severe injury or mental health crisis during the count please call 911. These are instances of immediate life-safety threats and should be treated as an emergency. For behavioral health crises where police are not required, please call Crisis Connections. The HUB Lead will contact the Regional Coordinator after the immediate danger is managed. Log the incident in the Incident Report Form.



Appendices

Appendix A: Bus Ticket Distribution Log

LINK: <https://kcrha.github.io/KCRHA-PIT-Count.github.io/#resources>

Appendix B: Gift Card Distribution Log

LINK: <https://kcrha.github.io/KCRHA-PIT-Count.github.io/#resources>

Appendix C: Transport Manifest

LINK: <https://kcrha.github.io/KCRHA-PIT-Count.github.io/#resources>

Appendix D: Daily Hub Close Out Form (Smartsheet Form)

LINK:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/sheets/J25mxHPPM4q6MJrCp623mGwq8m6MHj7q9xr35X21/forms/3009546166901/edit>

Appendix E: Hub Site Incident Form (Smartsheet Form)

LINK: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/8e21239010584be4ac2d08b993c854ef>

Appendix F: University of Washington Provided Trauma Informed Care Training Materials

LINK: <https://kcrha.github.io/KCRHA-PIT-Count.github.io/#resources>

Trauma-Informed Care Toolkit –

[<https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/trauma-informed-trauma-toolkit/>]



Glossary and Acronyms

Adults – Persons age 18 and older.

Adults with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) - This population category of the PIT includes adults with a severe and persistent mental illness or emotional impairment that seriously limits a person's ability to live independently. Adults with SMI must also meet the qualifications identified in the term for "disability" (e.g., "is expected to be long-continuing or indefinite duration").

Adults with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) – This population category of the PIT includes adults with a substance abuse problem (alcohol abuse, drug abuse, or both). Adults with a substance use disorder must also meet the qualifications identified in the term for "disability" (e.g., "is expected to be long-continuing or indefinite duration").

Child – Persons under age 18.

Child Coupon Id – All coupons that follow the parent coupon.

Coupon Id – the QR code listed on the Coupon that is used to identify the ticket as a parent or child and link the chains together.

Disability – An individual with one or more of the following conditions:

A. A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that:

1. Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration;
2. Substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently; and
3. Could be improved by the provision of more suitable housing conditions

B. A developmental disability, as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights of 2000

C. the disease of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or any condition arising from the etiologic agency of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

Family with Minor Children: At least one adult and at least one household member under the age of 18 and that is with the adult at least 51% of the time on average.

Households: Groups of people connected by family or choice.

Note: When a household with one or more members includes an adult or minor head of household who qualified as chronically homeless, then all members of that household should be counted as a person experiencing chronic homelessness.

HUB (HUB Site) – Location in the community where unsheltered PIT surveys are completed

HUB Lead – Person overseeing operations at the HUB Site. They are the primary point of escalation for all incidents and are responsible for contacting the Regional Coordinator regarding safety, media, or supply issues.



HUB Site Incident Report Form – The digital Smartsheet form used by HUB Leads and Volunteers to create an official operational log of emergencies, safety threats, media interactions, or site closures. This form is submitted *after* immediate action is taken.

HUB Surveyor – A volunteer role responsible for conducting Point-in-Time Count surveys with participants in a friendly, respectful, and trauma-informed manner to collect accurate data while ensuring the participant’s comfort and safety. Key responsibilities: conducting surveys, participant engagement, operational support, and escalation.

HUD – Housing and Urban Development. The federal department that mandates the PIT and sets guidelines and methodology.

Individual: A Person of any age without a family or friends in their immediate household

Jeenie - The web-based interpretation service application used on HUB Site tablets (iPads or Surface tablets). It provides on-demand video and audio interpretation for participants with limited English proficiency.

Naloxone (Narcan) - An opioid reversal medication used in medical emergencies involving overdose. Training on its use is required for HUB Leads prior to the Count.

NIRP (Northwest Immigrants Rights Project) - The partner organization that provided the “Know Your Rights” training materials for the Point-in-Time Count, ensuring volunteers understand the legal rights of unhoused individuals, particularly non-citizens.

Parent Coupon Id – The initial Seeded coupon.

Participant – Person completing the survey.

Regional Coordinator – is a designated KCRHA staff member or lead volunteer who oversees operations for all HUB Sites within a specific geographic area, aka “Sub-region” (e.g., South King County, Seattle Metro, Snoqualmie Valley, East King County, etc.). They serve as the primary support system and escalation point for HUB Leads.

Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS) - A survey sampling method where participants are selected not from a sampling frame, but from a social network of existing members of the sample. Incentives are provided for participation and for the recruitment of others.

Seed or Seeding – The process of starting a RDS sample using a small number of seeds from the target population.

Sex (HUD Definition) - A federally required data field distinct from “Gender Identity.” Per HUD requirements for the 2026 Count, this must be recorded specifically as “Female,” “Male,” “Don’t Know,” or “Prefer not to answer.” It is self-reported by the participant.

Snowball Sampling – Begins with a convenience sample of one or more initial participants. Multiple data collection points (or waves) follow. These initial participants called “seeds” are used to recruit the first wave’s participants.

Supply Runner – A designated volunteer or staff member responsible for the daily transport of operational supplies between KCRHA Headquarters and HUB Sites. They report the headquarters each day to pick up deliveries, sign out items on a tracking sheet to ensure



inventory control, and transport materials (such as gift cards, bus tickets, and forms) to HUB Leads, obtaining signatures upon delivery.

Survey Validation – The process of verifying that the participant is unique to the data set, and there isn't an existing record of them completing the survey. This process now relies heavily on the Coupon ID tracking and the "network" relationship. After the first 48 hours, validation strictly requires a valid coupon for participation.

Tier 3 Severe Weather Activation – The specific operational status issued by KCRHA that mandates the immediate closure of HUB Sites and the suspension of data collection. If this activation occurs during the count dates, operations pause until the activation is lifted.

Unoccupied Youth: Unaccompanied youth are persons under age 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian or any other household member age 25 or older, and who are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as his/her child(ren). Unaccompanied youth are single youth, youth couples, and groups of youth presenting together as a household.

Veteran: This population category of the PIT includes adults who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

Veteran Family: A household with at least one immediate member who is a veteran

Person Experiencing Chronic Homelessness – A person who:

- A. Is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
- B. Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least 1 year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined length of time homeless in those occasions is at least 12 months; and has a disability.

Youth or Young Adult: Someone under the age of 25.

