2026 Unsheltered PIT Count Volunteer Training

From Outreach (Seeding) to HUB Site (surveying)

Overview

Updates

Background on PIT Count

Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS) Methodology

BREAK

Regional Points of Contact

Break out into role specific training

HUB Leads and Surveyors

Outreach (Seeding)

HUB Leads and Surveyor Trainings (Select 1)

- December 15 from 5 - 6:30 pm
- December 16 from 5 - 6:30 pm
- December 17 from 5 - 6:30 pm
- December 18 from 12 - 1:30 pm (KCRHA Staff)
- TBD – rolling basis

HUB Leads Only Training

- January 9 from 9 to 9:45 am (KCRHA Staff only)
- January 16 from 9 to 9:45 am (Naloxone Training, everyone)
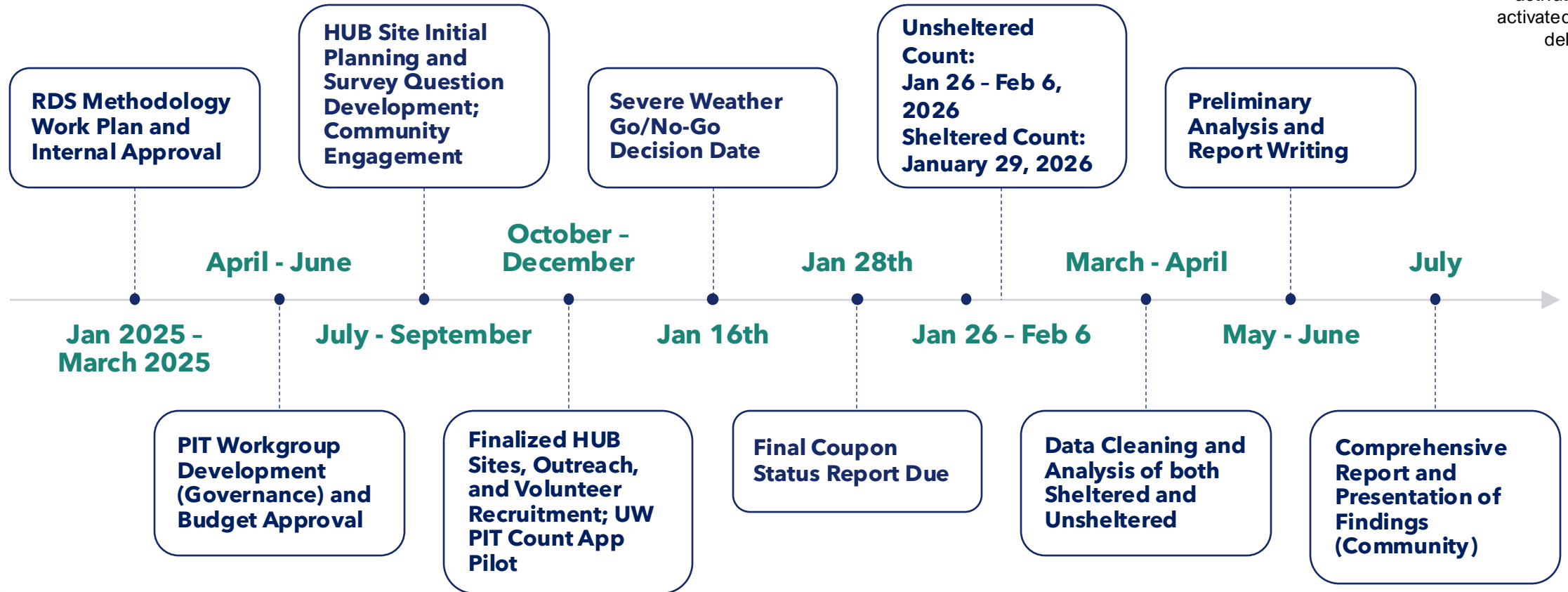
Outreach Training (Outreach Seeding only)

- December 9 from 2 - 3 pm
- December 10 from 5 - 6 pm
- December 11 from 2 - 3 pm
- TBD – rolling basis
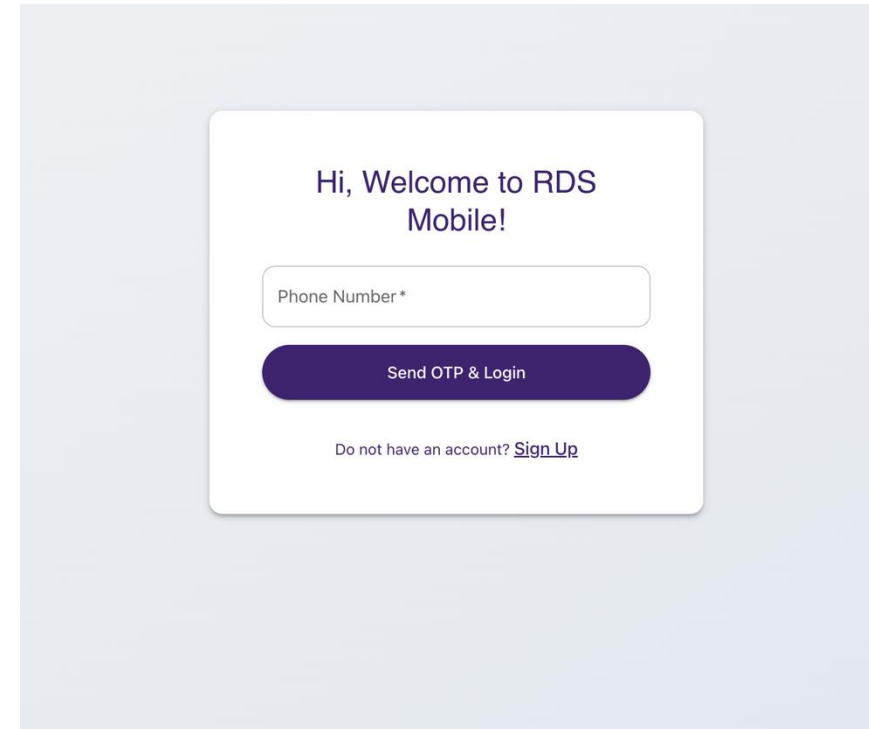
Countdown for 2026 PIT Count

All contingent upon severe weather activation – if activated, 1 week delay.

RDS Methodology Work Plan and Internal Approval

HUB Site Initial Planning and Survey Question Development; Community Engagement

Severe Weather Go/No-Go Decision Date

Unsheltered Count: Jan 26 – Feb 6, 2026 Sheltered Count: January 29, 2026

Preliminary Analysis and Report Writing

April - June

October – December

Jan 28th

March - April

July

Jan 2025 – March 2025

July - September

Jan 16th

Jan 26 – Feb 6

May - June

PIT Workgroup Development (Governance) and Budget Approval

Finalized HUB Sites, Outreach, and Volunteer Recruitment; UW PIT Count App Pilot

Final Coupon Status Report Due

Data Cleaning and Analysis of both Sheltered and Unsheltered

Comprehensive Report and Presentation of Findings (Community)

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Improved collaboration and logistics

- ✓ Increased community involvement in planning
- ✓ Improvements from 2024 Volunteer Feedback
- ✓ Unaccompanied Youth - UW IRB Approval for waived consent
- ✓ Increased coverage with mobile van
- ✓ Improvement to coupon look
- ✓ Improved data collection with a custom web application

Hi, Welcome to RDS Mobile!

Phone Number *

Send OTP & Login

Do not have an account? Sign Up

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PIT Count Methodology

Context of the Street Count and Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS) Methodology in Seattle/King County CoC

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Always a Community Led Project

- In King County's history, the Street Visual Count was large community effort that happened yearly.

- The data from both the one-night visual count and the one-night shelter count gave an approximate number of people experiencing homelessness one night.

Similarly, the RDS Methodology depends on community effort and collaboration.

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Unsheltered PIT Count - RDS in Two Parts
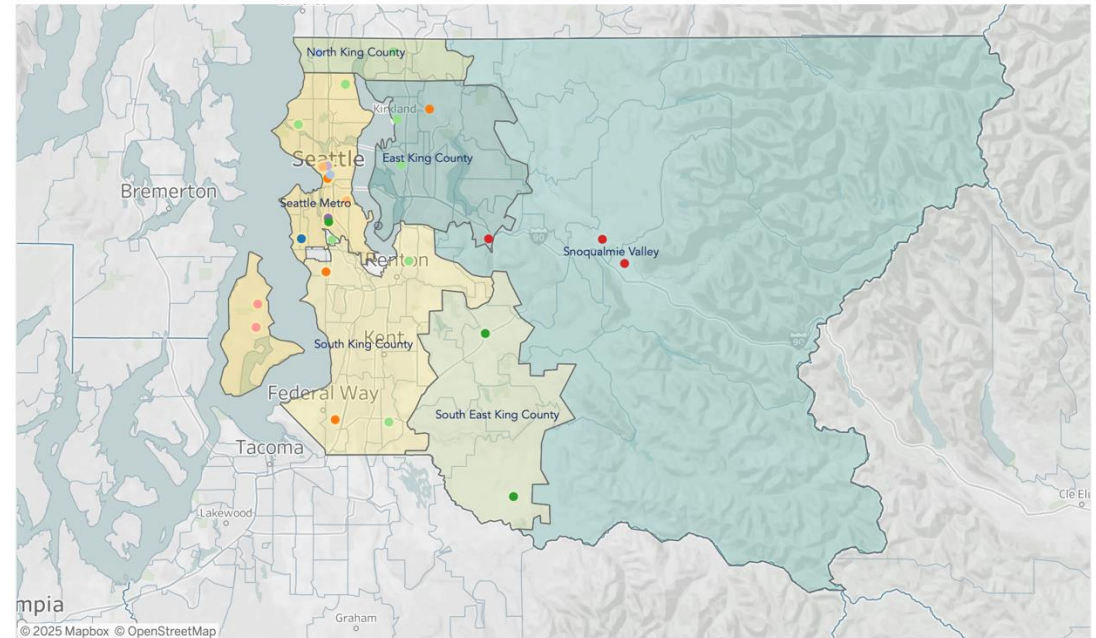
Outreach or Seeding

Coupon Details

- **Jan 19 - 23** Seeding for Snoqualmie Valley and South East King County
- **Jan 23 -26** Seeding for all remaining sub-regions
- **Updates**
  - Sub-Region specific Coupon to increase security and decrease duplication (along with consistent staffing in each sub-region_

Surveying

Data Collection Details

- **Anyone** can complete a survey (New for 2026)
- **Jan 26 – Feb 6:** Data collections across the county at roughly 20 sites (including a family phone line and mobile van locations)
- Gift cards are issued by HUB Leads (only) for individuals ($20) and for families with minor children ($40)
- **Updates**
  - Unaccompanied Youth are now eligible
  - Services Use
  - Pet or Animal Companion

Outreach and Seeding

Goal: Identify roughly 2,000 people across King County experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

RDS is both a sampling strategy and set of statistical estimators

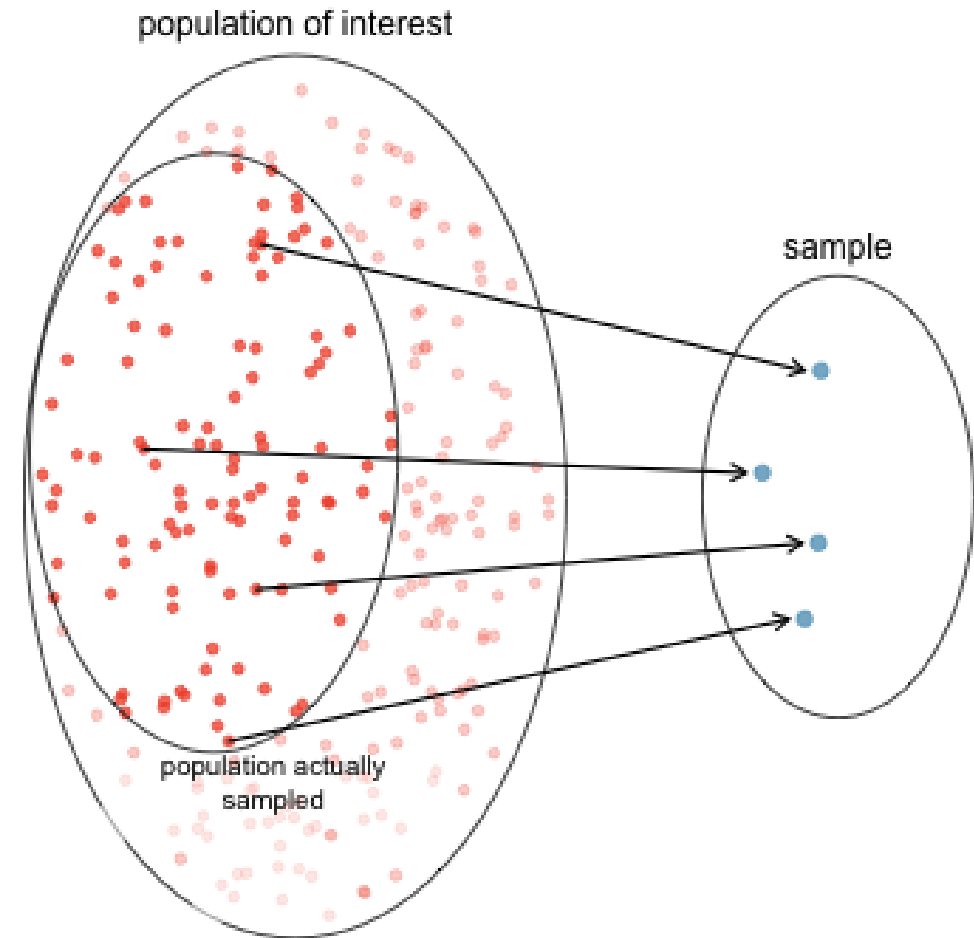Able to go from small sample to population estimate

Measuring hard to reach populations

Has two parts:

      Data collection (sampling)

      Data analysis (statistical estimation)

Note: Those in shelter, transitional housing, or in a Tiny Home will be counted during the Sheltered Count.
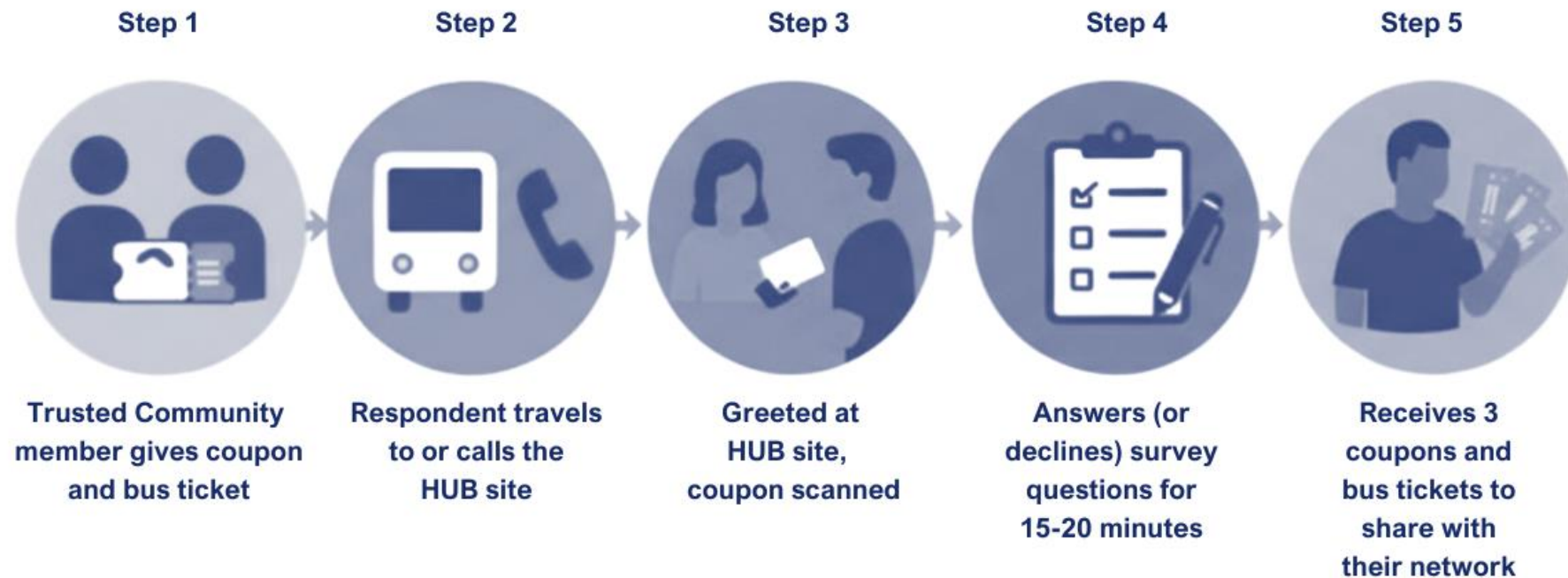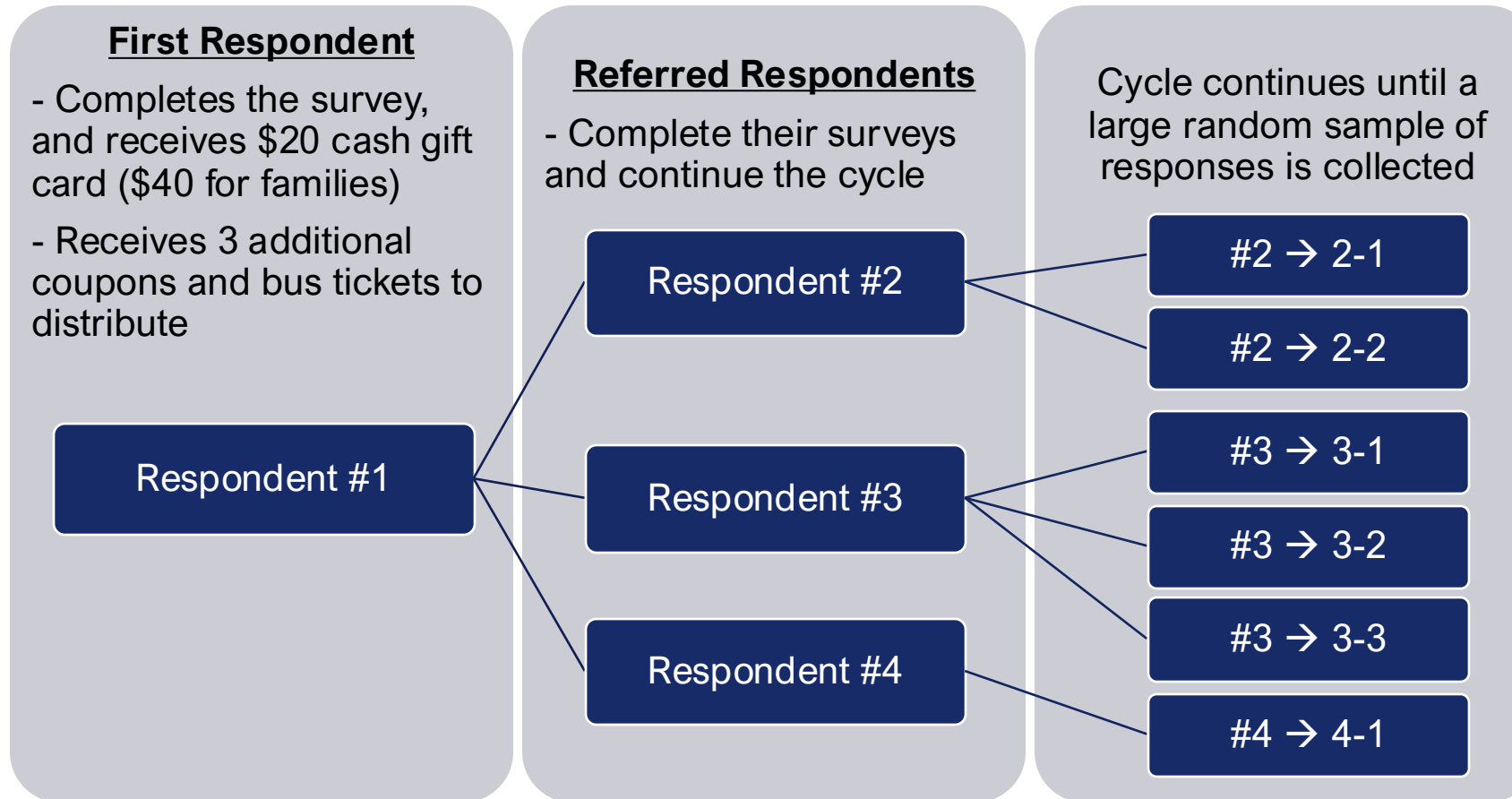
Data Collection at HUB Sites

- ✓ Accessible (Public Transportation, ADA, Bathrooms, etc.)

- ✓ Reach HUD Sub Populations

- ✓ Co-located Services like food banks, meals, and shower/laundry

- ✓ Account for Rural, Urban and Suburban

- ✓ Provides Services

- ✓ Provides safe and comfortable spot for interviews (ex., indoors, allows pets; bike racks)

- ✓ Chosen by Advocates & Lived Experience

Respondents - People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

Step 1 — Trusted Community member gives coupon and bus ticket

Step 2 — Respondent travels to or calls the HUB site

Step 3 — Greeted at HUB site, coupon scanned

Step 4 — Answers (or declines) survey questions for 15-20 minutes

Step 5 — Receives 3 coupons and bus tickets to share with their network

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Subsequent Respondent Chains

First Respondent

- Completes the survey, and receives $20 cash gift card ($40 for families)
- Receives 3 additional coupons and bus tickets to distribute

Respondent #1

Referred Respondents

- Complete their surveys and continue the cycle

Respondent #2

Respondent #3

Respondent #4

Cycle continues until a large random sample of responses is collected

#2 → 2-1

#2 → 2-2

#3 → 3-1

#3 → 3-2

#3 → 3-3

#4 → 4-1

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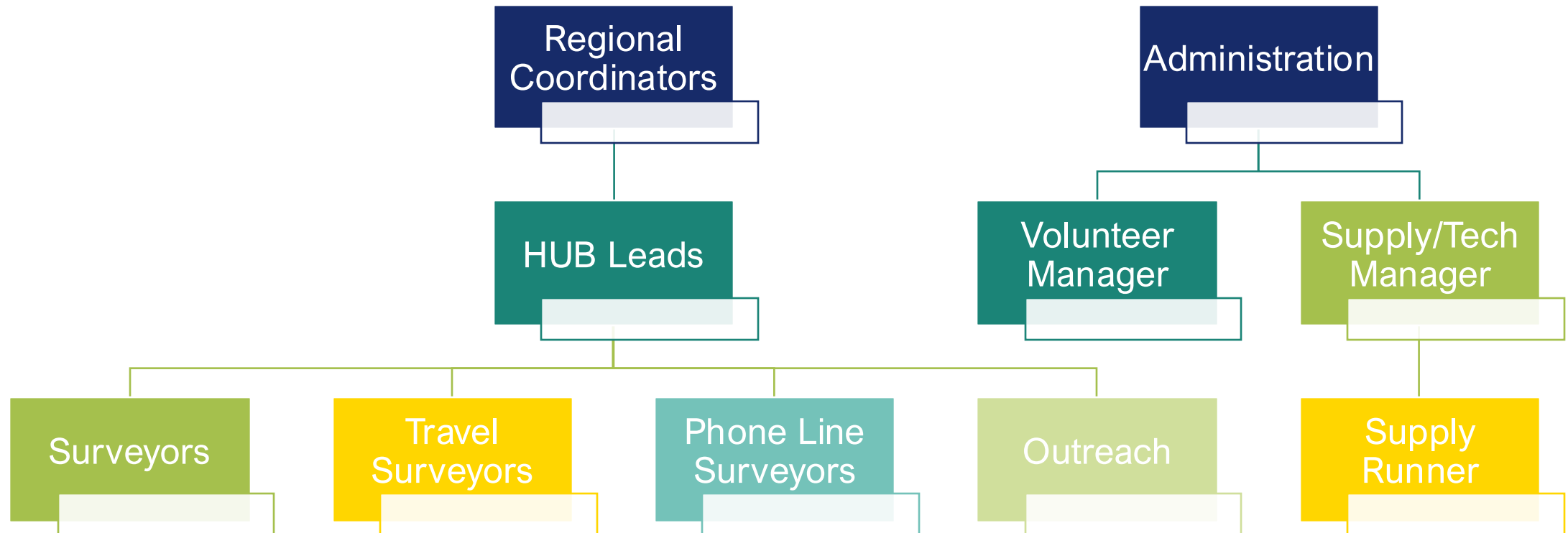
Regional Points of Contact

- Outreach Regional Coordinators:
  - Ewan Andresen
    - East King County
    - Seattle Metro
    - North King County
    - Snoqualmie Valley
  - Cathea Carey
    - Vashon Island
    - South King County
    - South East King County
    - Unincorporated Areas (South Park, White Center, Skyway)

- HUB Sites Regional Coordinators:
  - Ben Mathewson – South East King County
  - Claire Guilmette – East King County
  - Daniel Ramos III – Snoqualmie Valley
  - Janelle Rothfolk – South King County
  - Joel Bernstein – North King County
  - Ewan Andresen – Seattle Metro
  - Cathea Carey – Vashon Island; Unincorporated Areas

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HUB Leads and Surveyors

All volunteers (HUB Leads, Surveyors) will have site specific binders that have images of the site for staging and tracking purpose, site contact information, emergency contact, UW PIT Count App will have link to incident form, staffing with rotate together to increase consistency in the surveying area, safety, and efficiency.
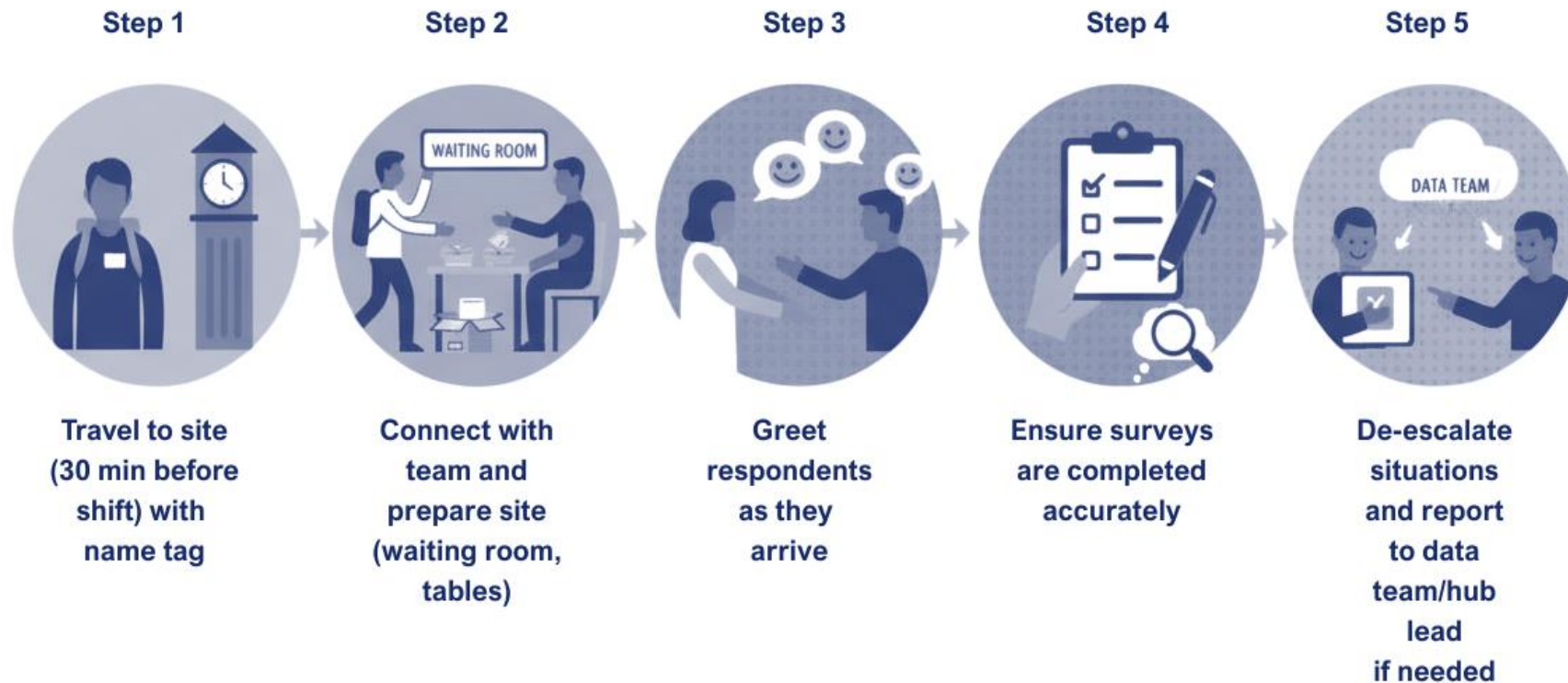
Site Contact or Staff – Hosting Location

- Staff working at the HUB site location

- Operations continues as normal – limited task shifting or change in practice (many of the sites are service providers concurrently operating during data collection)

It is the goal of the PIT Count to minimize disruptions are the site and harm to individuals.

Hub Site Leads / Surveyors (Volunteers)

Step 1
Travel to site (30 min before shift) with name tag

Step 2
Connect with team and prepare site (waiting room, tables)

Step 3
Greet respondents as they arrive

Step 4
Ensure surveys are completed accurately

Step 5
De-escalate situations and report to data team/hub lead if needed

UW PIT COUNT APP

After you provide Name, Email and Phone Number, you will then enter a code texted to you as the OTP. Then you will only have to wait for the UW app team to approve and grant you access.
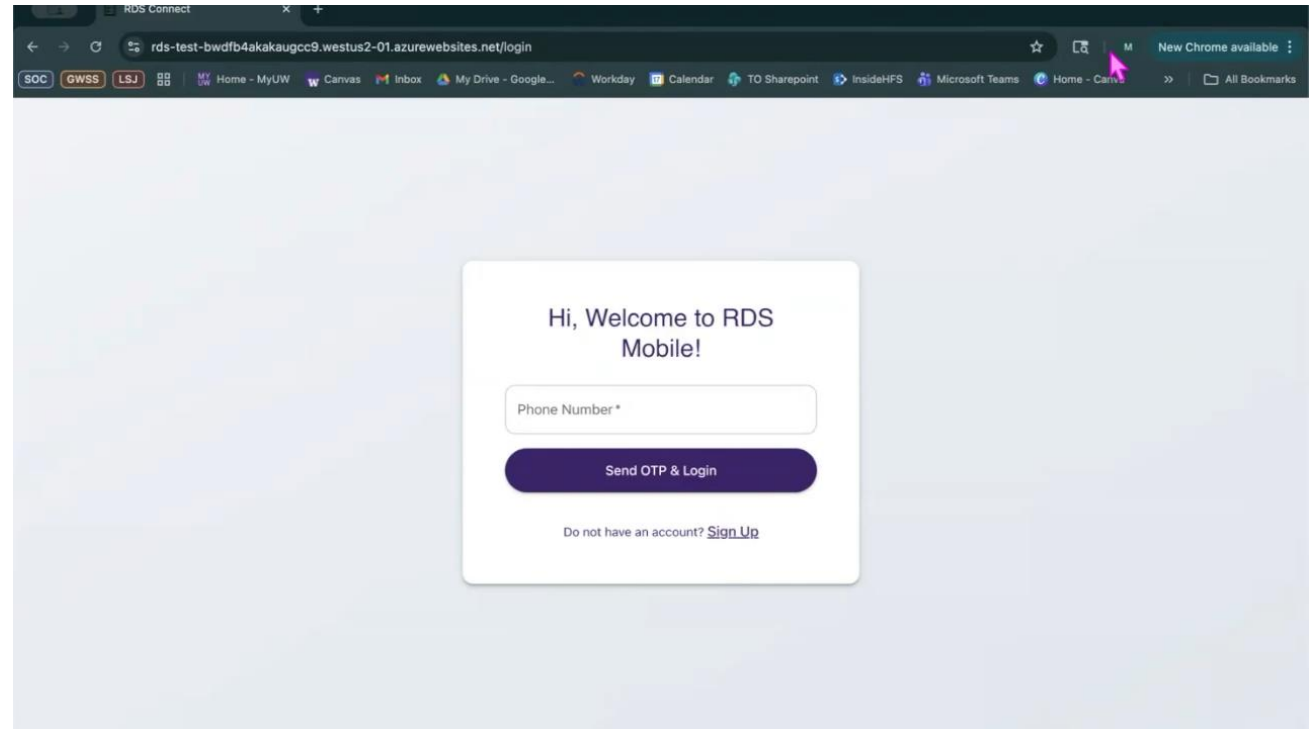
For Practice Purpose:

- Select Any Location

- Select Volunteer Role

Note: Manager is HUB Lead; Admin is for Administration (i.e., Supply/Tech and Volunteer Managers in KCRHA)

For Data Collection:

Assigned roles and locations will be provided by January 12, 2026

In Partnership with:

2026 Survey Section and Purpose

Survey Validation – to confirm age, eligibility, and past survey participation of respondent.

Personal Living Situation – to assess the respondent's current living situation.

Network Questions – to count both the respondent and their network's their living situations (Note: this section is for the overall count).

Living Situation - To assess current homelessness duration (for chronicity) and past experience with the HRS.

Demographic Information – to collect demographics of respondent.

Health Information – to collect funder required information of respondent.

Household Information – to collect household information from respondent.

Special Questions – to collect town/city, city/region where last stably housed, history of homelessness, Precipitating Event(s) to homelessness, Shelter Needs, Pet or Animal Companions, School/Work obligation, Work History, and Type of Work

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Interview best practices

Presence, Safety, Understanding and Communication

It starts with a welcoming environment…

In service for the respondents

- If a couple, interview separately when comfortable

- Make sure they feel safe and comfortable

- Offer masks

- Offer PPE and Hygiene supplies

- Offer to interview outside if more comfortable

- Help to secure belongings/pets as needed

- Connect with site staff for resources as needed

Contingency Plans are provided.

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Followed by how we talk..

A trauma-informed service provider, system and organization:

- Realizes the widespread role of trauma in interactions, and understands potential paths for healing;

- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in staff, clients, patients, residents and others involved in the system; and

- Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices and settings.

The core trauma-informed principles are:

- Acknowledgment – recognizing that trauma is pervasive

- Safety

- Trust

- Choice and control

- Compassion

- Collaboration

- Strengths-based

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In Partnership with: **W**

De-escalation (when needed)

The Five R's of De-escalation:

- Regulate Yourself - Before and after a survey

- Reassure – Throughout the survey

- Reframe - When participants appear hopeless,

- Redirect - When participants appear anxious, or tearful

- Remind – When participants appear agitated, or impatient

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In Partnership with: **W**

How we may experience and react

You may experience

- A focus of attention on the reimbursement available for participating
- Outbursts related to frustration
- A reluctance to provide information you're seeking
- An eagerness to tell their stories

We ask that we all

- Listen respectfully
- Avoid judgment or confrontation
- Express sympathy, understanding
- Allow skipping questions
- Err on the side of handing out gift cards – only reserved for HUB Leads

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In Partnership with: **W**

All of this in action looks like

- Remember to introduce yourself,
- Wear your name tag, and
- Be personable while avoiding oversharing.
- Interview rights and consent
- Language Services if needed
- Limit side conversations to complete surveys promptly.
- Interviews should run between 15-20 minutes but will vary (up to 45).

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Don't hesitate to ask for assistance from your HUB leads.

New Questions: Sex (4.21)

Why we ask:

- HUD now requires a field called **"Sex"** (different from gender identity).
- Question may feel personal; people should answer safely or decline.

How we Ask:

- Options: **Female, Male, Don't Know, Prefer Not to Answer, Not Asked**.
- All data are self-reported; do not infer or assign.
- If someone declines or is uncomfortable, skip and continue.

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How to ask the question: *Sex (4.21)*

Practice:

"Before I ask the next question, I want to let you know why I'm asking it. HUD now requires us to record a field called 'Sex,' which is different from gender identity. I know this question can feel personal or uncomfortable, so you can answer in whatever way feels safe for you, and you can also choose not to answer. The options I can record are: female, male, you don't know, you prefer not to answer. With that in mind, how would you like me to record your answer for this specific 'Sex' question?"
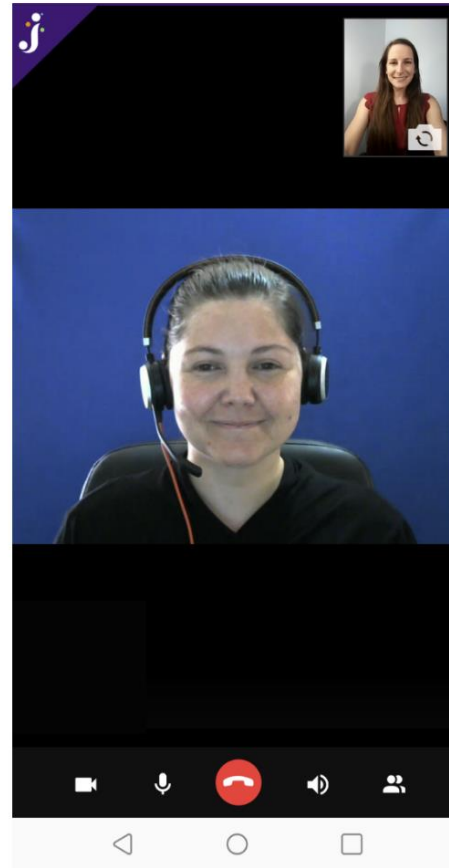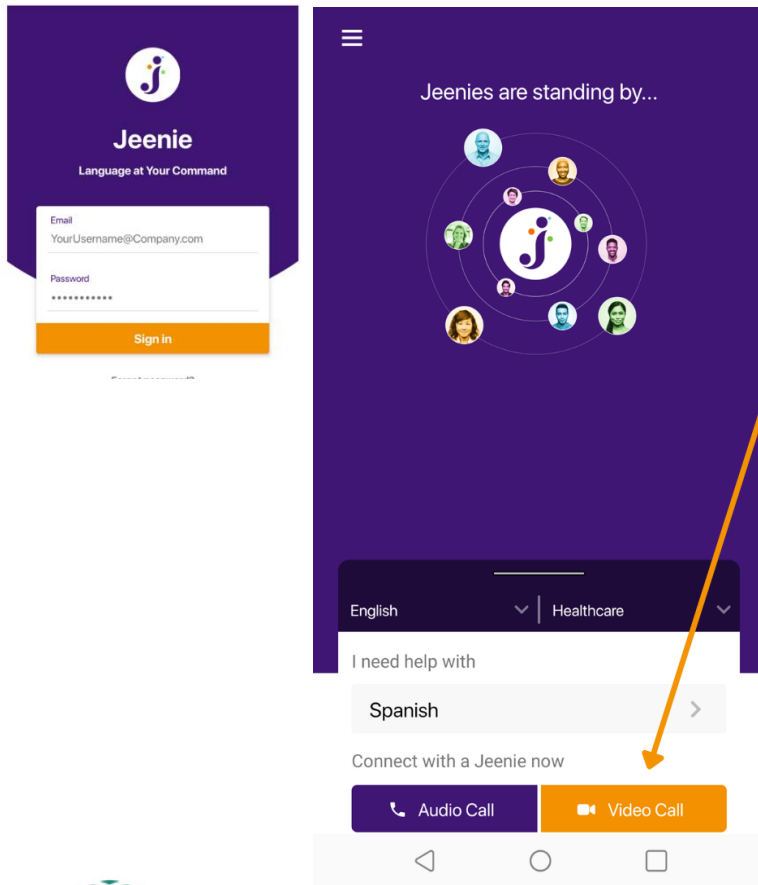
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Interpretation Services

How to conduct the survey in a language other than English

Interpretation Services

TIPS - PRACTICE

- Use two screens on tablet

- Ensure strong cell service

- Secluded area for private and noise control

- Work thoroughly through the questions to guide the Jeenie Representative and respondent – if available provide paper copy to respondent in applicable language.

Volunteer Logistics and Practice

Let's take 5 minutes looking through the UW PIT Count App

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Practice: Putting your training to work

Study the Do's and Don'ts:

- Review Training Videos
  - UW PIT Count App log in
  - HUB Leads
- Review Additional Resources
  - Interpretation Services
  - For those tracking hours – PLE Stipend Tracking Portal
    - This will be a separate email on 12/19/25

Practice with the application:

- UW PIT Count App link – Email required for log-on
  - Shared on January 5, 2026

Next Steps:

- Waiver – email
- UW PIT Count App – email
- Scheduling – email

Key Take Aways

- **Welcome** and register all guests who arrive.
  - Those with coupons will be attended to first, followed by those without or missing coupons.
- All participants will be asked the same **standardized survey** questions.
  - They are allowed to skip any questions they do not wish to answer.
  - If a participant is uncertain, tips are provided to help them answer.
- Due to **high traffic**, some locations may need to limit unrelated discussions to complete the survey quickly.

  The goal is to complete surveys and maintain safety.

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HUB Leads Only

Additional Training at the Start of January 2026

HUB Site Details – Troubleshooting

LINK TO INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Life Threatening Emergencies: Call 911

Call/Email Regional Coordinator:

- Listed in volunteer packet (emailed on January 12th)
- Listed on HUB Site manual

Contingency Plans:

- Severe Weather
- Public Safety Incident/Emergency at a specific site or sub-region

- **QR Codes/Coupon**
  - **If the code if not scanning or readable – report to HUB Lead**
- **Supply Issues**
  - **Including theft, low supplies, etc. – report to HUB Lead**
- **Inclement Weather and Site Closure**
  - **Report to HUB Lead**
- **Site Issues**
  - **Emergency and safety concerns – report to HUB Lead**
- **Participant Emergencies or Conflict**
  - **Need assistance – report to HUB Lead**
- **Volunteer Scheduling and Illness**
  - **Procedures for calling out, how to find replacements and other conflicts – report to HUB Lead**
- **Media/PR Onsite**
  - **Who to notify, what you can say – report to HUB Lead**

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Special Trainings Scheduled

- **Printing, Gift Cards, and Bus Ticket Training** on January 9, 2026 from 10 to 11 am (Online – Teams)

- **Naloxone** – January 16, 2026 from 9 to 10 am (In Person – KCRHA HQ)

- **Know your rights** – April 2025 KCRHA and SKCCH Training provided by NWIRP

- Sensitivity Training - UW's Unsheltered PIT Count Sensitivity Training

Thank you!

Stay up to date by signing up for KCRHA Emails
PIT Count Contact:
pitcount-m@kcrha.org
pitcount-v@kcrha.org

Scan this QR code to sign up for KCRHA emails →

@KingCoRHA   @KCRHA