



LAKE SHORE CAP, INC.

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

POINT IN TIME STREET COUNT Frequently Asked Questions

When is the Count?

The Point in Time Street Count takes place in **January** and **July or August** each year during the overnight hours on a specific Wednesday of the month. Volunteers will be paired with a team member or group and search in an assigned area for those that are without shelter that evening.

What is the purpose of the PIT Count?

Across the nation, every Continuum of Care (*the counties of Manitowoc, Sheboygan & Door belong to the Lakeshore Continuum*) conducts a PIT Count during the months of July and January. This is an important annual benchmark that serves as an indicator of progress, needs, and gaps within our Continuum. PIT Count data is reported directly to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Congress, the State of Wisconsin, and local jurisdictions. The data helps demonstrate the need for services and funding in our area. For more information about Continuums of Care, visit <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/>.

What is the definition of homelessness used for the PIT Count?

The PIT Count focuses on people who are unsheltered and sleeping in a place that is not intended for human habitation. This includes streets, sidewalks, parks, alleys, transportation depots or other parts of transportation systems, all-night commercial establishments (e.g., movie theaters, laundromats, restaurants), abandoned buildings, farm outbuildings, caves, campgrounds, vehicles (e.g. cars, trucks, RVs, trailers), and other similar places.

What are the duties of volunteers?

The primary task of volunteers is to collect Point in Time Count surveys from people experiencing homelessness. You will be responsible for searching an assigned area and approaching those that you suspect may be without shelter to complete a survey. You will also offer information regarding available resources in the community. If you are uncomfortable approaching someone, you will complete a different survey identifying what you observed and who you suspect with reasonable certainty meets the definition of homelessness listed above. In addition, we ask that each team make contact with establishments that are open 24-hours/day to explain what resources are available in the community should they encounter someone in need throughout the year. Posters will be provided for each team to distribute.

What type of gear/clothing should I wear?

Dress comfortably. Prepare for winter or summer weather including gloves, hats & boots. You may want to carry a flashlight. Bring a pen and a charged cell phone.

Where will surveys be collected?

You will drop off your folder and all of the contents to Lakeshore CAP before Friday, January 25th.

What are the qualifications to be a volunteer?

The PIT Count is an important project. Volunteers must complete the training, and complete a 2 hour shift, accurately and carefully collect data and keep information confidential. In addition, volunteers are expected to respectfully and conscientiously work with people from a diversity of backgrounds and maintain personal safety while collecting data (travel in pairs.).

What is the time commitment for Volunteers?

Volunteers must complete a training prior to collecting surveys. You select which training that you are attending when you register.

Will Volunteers receive training?

Yes. All volunteers are required to complete the PIT Count training. Additional questions will be answered at the training and you will be assigned your area to search and team to search with. You will be allowed input as to your preferences.

Do I need to complete training if I have volunteered in the past?

Yes. All volunteers are required to complete the training as some aspects of the PIT Count have changed this year. If you have volunteered in the past, you are encouraged to attend an in-person training to share your expertise with those present.

Will I be asked to look for people experiencing homelessness by myself?

No. All volunteers go out in groups of 2 or more.

Will the Count be cancelled due to inclement weather?

No, the count will not be cancelled. We can modify the count (change times or re-structure search areas), but the Count will not be cancelled. You, as a volunteer, may wish to withdraw from participating in the count; however, the agencies that are required to participate in the Count will still conduct it.

Can I volunteer with a friend?

Yes. All volunteers are sent out in pairs for safety. Feel free to bring a friend or partner with you, but be sure that they register as well.

Will I be outdoors the whole time?

No, but you will be walking outside searching as well as driving around in a vehicle. Dress appropriately for the weather. The summer count in July involves more walking than the winter count in January.

Will any safety/security measures be provided for volunteers?

Volunteers will work in teams of two or more and are instructed not to separate from their teams. No one should conduct the survey without other team members within line of sight. Volunteers should not enter any abandoned building or non-public space. Law enforcement will be alerted and made aware that volunteers will be out that night. If you are in need of emergency assistance, call 911.

Do I need to use my own car?

Yes, each team will require a volunteer driver. If you do not have a car, you may still volunteer and will be assigned to a team with a volunteer who has a car.

Will I be paid to volunteer?

Unfortunately, volunteers are not paid or reimbursed for any expenses.

Do I need to bring anything with me that night?

Bring layers of warm clothing for yourself, including a set of dry gloves and hat in case of wintry weather. For you and your team's safety, do not bring any large sums of money, items/food to pass out to the homeless, or other valuables.

When will the results of the 2019 PIT Count be available?

Following the PIT Count, there is a significant amount of data entry, quality assurance, and deduplication that must be completed. PIT Count information is available to the public after all data has been reviewed and submitted to HUD. It is released in a report called the Longitudinal Systems Analysis, which will be released in several months.

Other Questions or Concerns?

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