# Point-in-Time Count and Registry Week Coordination Packet

## Information to Support Communities in Conducting a Joint Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and Registry Week

**CAEH** Canadian Alliance to **End Homelessness**

**20,000 HOMES**

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a Joint Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and Registry Week

## Introduction

The following guidelines enable communities participating in the 20,000 Homes campaign to conduct their Registry Week in coordination with their Point-in-Time (PiT) Count. They were developed by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, with support from Community Solutions and OrgCode, in consultation with the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to ensure they meet the requirements of the 2018 HPS Coordinated PiT Count.

The survey is conducted in phases, presenting the anonymous PiT survey first, followed by the Survey for the Registry Week. This packet will provide you the details on how to conduct this coordinated approach appropriately in your community.

## Tools for PiT Counts and Registry Weeks

### PiT Counts – Guidelines, Toolkit and further information at:

- Everyone Counts: Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada
- The Point-in-Time Count Toolkit
- The Point-in-Time Count page on the Community Workspace on Homelessness

### Registry Weeks – Toolkit and further information at:

- A full Registry Week Toolkit is included on the 20KHomes website.

- Sample customizable (Word) versions of the Introductory Script, Screening, Tally and Consent as well as sample surveys for single adults, youth and families are available on the 20KHomes Website under Resources (under General Registry Week/PiT Coordination 2018).

Remember, the Registry Week approach is flexible to meet your local needs.  Beyond the approaches presented in the Registry Week Toolkit, you can use any of the ideas and approaches included in the PiT Count Toolkit.  The essential unique components of a Registry Week are that you collect people's names (with their consent) and conduct a common assessment (e.g., VI-SPDAT or other) allowing you to:

- kick-start your By-Name List; and
- follow-up with people to take action to end their homelessness – prioritizing housing support based on their depth of need and your own local priorities.

## Script, Screening, Tally, and Consent Instructions

A customizable sample introductory survey script, screening questions, tally sheet and consent form are included in the Resource section of the 20KHomes website HERE.  These tools are samples for your reference and will need to be modified according to your individual community.

You may choose to keep the PiT question component and the VI-SPDAT portion of your survey together or separate.  Some of the potential advantages and disadvantages to each approach are outlined below:

| | Advantages & Disadvantages & Approach |
|---|---|
| **Keep Two Parts Together** | • If you treat as one package and just require the full consent from all participants up front for both portions of the survey, it is potentially less confusing and cumbersome for surveyors and those being surveyed.<br>• May be confusing to people as to why you are collecting names part-way through the survey – you may or may not want to highlight this in your survey script(s) or consent form.<br>• Feedback from some of the Joint PiT/Registry Week communities in 2016 was to keep it together and keep it simple. |
| **Separate the Two Parts** | • While Registry Week survey refusals are generally less than 10%, there may be some people who are willing to answer the anonymous questions but not provide their names and complete the VI-SPDAT portion.<br>• You would need to identify there are two parts of the survey. |

| | Complete the first part and put in a separate envelope to keep anonymous, then complete the consent that would be attached to the VI-SPDAT with the name included in another envelope. |
|---|---|
| | • You may know that some people already have a VI-SPDAT completed and do not need to ask them that portion again if a) circumstances in their life have not changed and/or you feel you have already obtained the proper consents to use that information as part of your Registry Week. |

## Survey Script

Every surveyor in your community, regardless of what organization they are from or if they are a volunteer, should use the same introductory script for the survey. Again, you may use one script at the beginning or have one part at the beginning and one part before the VI-SPDAT portion. Whichever way you organize it, you should be aware of and highlight (in the survey script and/or consent as appropriate) the following information:

- The name of the surveyor and their affiliation (organization that employs them, volunteer as part of Registry Week, etc.)
- The purpose of the survey, what the information is being used for and where it will be kept
- That the survey usually takes 15-20 minutes to complete (approximately 7-10 minutes for the PiT questions and 7-10 minutes for the VI-SPDAT questions)
- That for the VI-SPDAT portion, only "yes," "no," or one-word answers are being sought
- That any question can be skipped or refused and they can stop at any time
- That if the participant does not understand a question, clarification can be provided
- The importance of relaying accurate information to the assessor and not feeling that there is a correct or preferred answer that they need to provide, nor information they need to conceal

You will want to ensure both your script and consent are as brief and easy to understand as possible while covering all the necessary information. If you already use the VI-SPDAT in your community and have a common script, you can use and/or build off that for your Registry Week script.

## Screening

Screening questions (that align with the PiT Core and COH additional questions) inform the surveyor whether or not to begin the survey with each respondent. The "C" question is required, while C1 and C2 are optional depending on whether or not you want this information and/or to screen in or out hidden or provisionally accommodated homelessness). For those who are screened in, the surveyor starts the survey by noting the responses to question C, C1 and C2. Those who are not screened in are recorded on the tally sheet.

When someone screens in and agrees to participate in the survey, this is when it is suggested to share with them that you have (*an item*) to thank them for their participation.  For guidance on selecting honoraria, refer to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Discussion Paper: Use of Honoraria in Point-in-Time Counts.

## Tally Sheet

The tally sheet in this Packet is the same one that is available in the PiT Toolkit.  At the top of the sheet, surveyors indicate their search area/location, the time of their shift, their name and a contact number. If there are any discrepancies with the entries, or missing data, the surveyor may be contacted to provide clarity. This sheet is used when a respondent declines to answer the survey, has already answered the survey, has been screened out or has been observed only. This sheet captures where the individual was encountered, the reason they were not surveyed; and whether they are included among observed homelessness (clearly homeless, but declined or are unable to respond to the screening questions), as well as observed gender, age and the indications of homelessness.  You can use the information about observed homelessness to try to follow-up with that person to have them complete the survey at some other point during your Registry Week.

## Consent Form

Privacy and confidentiality are of the utmost importance.  Survey respondents are being asked to share identifiable information and must sign or provide verbal consent (acknowledged by signature of surveyor and ideally an additional witness) on a consent form.

You will want to ensure that people are providing informed consent and understand at a minimum:

- what information is being collected;
- what will be done with the information collected;
- who will have access to information collected; and
- who to contact if a participant has questions or wishes to withdraw consent.

All volunteers (including staff) must sign an Oath of Confidentiality.  Without a signed Oath of Confidentiality, a volunteer cannot participate in your community's Registry Week.  A sample customizable Oath of Confidentiality can be found here.

Included in this section is information on the surveys, VI-SPDAT and scoring (with or without HIFIS).  Links to the customizable 2018 Joint PiT-VI-SPDAT Surveys (separate one for singles, youth and adults) are included along with specific scoring information for each.

**HIFIS:**

If your community is using HIFIS as your data system for the count, the HIFIS PiT module will calculate VI-SPDAT scores automatically based on the scoring keys below.

- **HIFIS PiT/Enumeration Module Information (from Community Workspace on Homelessness – includes User Guide, tips sheets and videos) -** https://workspaceonhomelessness.ca/pitcounts/forum~2/hifis_pit_count_module_training_video

If your community is not using HIFIS, you will need to calculate the VI-SPDAT scores yourself and factor responses from Q5 and Q14 of the PiT portion of the survey into the scoring of the VI-SPDAT.  Further information is included below.

The HIFIS PiT Module includes the ability to generate graphs and charts in real-time from the VI-SPDAT Single Adult survey only (NOTE this does not include the youth and family versions of the VI-SPDAT – these would need to be analyzed separately using your raw data).

**VI-SPDAT Training Materials:**

Further information about the VI-SPDAT tools can be found on the OrgCode website.  Short on-line training and training videos are available (time could be further shortened if not needing to train people on the scoring):

- VI-SPDAT On-Line Training (20 minutes – reading information with quiz)
- VI-SPDAT Single Adult Video Tutorial (21 minutes)
- VI-SPDAT Family Video Tutorial (30 minutes)

**Survey Scoring Details:**

**Please note:**

- For each survey below, Questions C1 and C2 are optional for those communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness.

- For numbering consistency, the VI-SPDAT portions of the survey packet include the duplicate questions. They are greyed out and formatted with a strike-through to indicate that volunteers do not need to ask these questions as they are conducting assessments. Please be sure to instruct your volunteers to not ask the questions that are greyed out and stricken through.
- Customizable Word versions of surveys for single adults, youth and families are available on the 20KHomes Website under Resources (under General Registry Week/Pit Coordination 2018).

### Single Adult Survey Scoring Key:

- Note: Questions C1 and C2 are optional for communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness

- PiT Q5 (number of times experiencing homelessness in the last year) replaces VI-SPDAT Q3, and if an individual answers 3 or more to PiT Q5, factor this into scoring of VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

- PiT Q14 (on sources of income) replaces VI-SPDAT Q11, and if an individual answers that they receive no money, factor this into the scoring of the VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this questions

### Youth Survey Scoring Key:

- Note: Questions C1 and C2 are optional for communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness

- PiT Q5 (number of times experiencing homelessness in the last year) replaces VI-SPDAT Q3, and if a youth answers 3 or more to PiT Q5, factor this into scoring of VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

- PiT Q14 (on sources of income) replaces VI-SPDAT Q12, and if an youth answers that they receive no money, factor this into the scoring of the VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

### Family Survey Scoring Key:

- Note: Questions C1 and C2 are optional for communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness

- PiT Q5 (number of times experiencing homelessness in the last year) replaces VI-SPDAT Q7, and if a head of household answers 3 or more to PiT Q5, factor this into scoring of VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

- PiT Q14 (on sources of income) replaces VI-SPDAT Q15, and if a head of household answers that they receive no money, factor this into the scoring of the VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

## Customizing Packets for Your Community

Again, you may use the linked Joint PiT/VI-SPDAT Surveys included on page 6 of this Packet, or you may wish to customize a packet for your community. **Remember, if you are adding customized questions, to not include these in the VI-SPDAT scoring.**

You will want to ensure you include the following in your customized packet:

- Introductory script
- Screening questions
- Consent form
- The PiT Survey (Core Questions and any additional community questions)
- The VI-SPDAT (or other acuity tool used by your community) and any other additional community questions.

**For questions or further information, contact Marie Morrison, Director of the 20,000 Homes Campaign at marie@caeh.ca.**