



CT Point-in-Time Count – Q and A for Homeless Services Providers* **May, 2018**

Please see below additional background information on the Point-in-Time census of homelessness for providers to use in responding to possible questions from press or community members.

What is the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, and who requires it?

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires communities receiving federal funds from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program conduct a count of all sheltered people annually in the last week of January. Unsheltered counts of those living in places not meant for human habitation are required every other year, although Connecticut providers have agreed to administer an unsheltered count annually. During the PIT, communities are required to identify whether a person is an individual, a member of a family unit, or an unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 or age 18 to 24. In addition, communities must identify if a person is chronically homeless, indicating long-time or repeated homelessness and the presence of a disability.

How do national partners use the PIT data, and why?

PIT counts are important because they are seen as establishing the dimensions of the problem of homelessness and help national and local policymakers and program administrators track progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. HUD uses information from the PIT, among other data sources, in the congressionally-mandated Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (AHAR). This report is meant to inform Congress about the number of people experiencing homelessness in the U.S. and the effectiveness of HUD's programs in decreasing those numbers. On the local level, PIT counts help communities across the nation to plan services and programs to address local needs, measure progress in decreasing homelessness, and identify strengths/gaps in the homelessness assistance system.

What are the limitations of the PIT?

The PIT counts are not without limitations. There is variation across the nation in count methodology year-to-year within and across communities, particularly with regard to the unsheltered count. PIT counts are, however, the only measure used nationally that enumerates people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in addition to those who are sheltered. Despite its flaws, the annual PIT counts result in the most reliable estimate of people experiencing homelessness in the United States from which progress can be measured.

What other data points are important in understanding work in Connecticut to end homelessness?

Collecting data on homelessness and tracking progress can inform public opinion, increase public awareness, and attract needed resources. In Connecticut, we have a sophisticated HMIS, and many specialized reports. Our national partners, including NAEH, Abt Consulting – our HUD-assigned technical assistance partner for HMIS, and our HUD colleagues often ask Connecticut to present on our HMIS as a model of a forward-leaning application to help other communities understand what is possible. (Please note: much of this data is not verifiable in HUD reports because it goes beyond what HUD requires, and there is not comparable data collection in other communities.) Please see details next page.

* With thanks to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) PIT resource page
<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/what-is-a-point-in-time-count/>



Coordinated Entry

Coordinated entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. In Connecticut, we have a well refined system that we are able to regularly monitor and evaluate. Data on how the coordinated entry system is functioning in the state can be found on CCEH's website: <http://cceh.org/data/interactive/>

By-Name-List

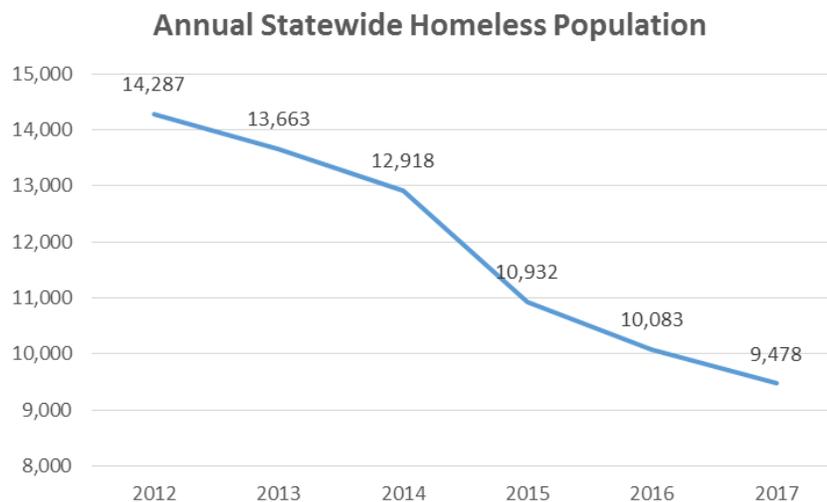
A By-Name-List (BNL) is a real-time, up-to-date list of people experiencing homelessness. People are entered onto that list after 14 days in shelter, or immediately if they are unsheltered. This allows communities to know every person experiencing homelessness by name and facilitate decisions regarding how best to refer individuals and families experiencing homelessness to housing resources. The BNL in Connecticut is a living document and is updated daily with real-time information from providers around the state – giving us an accurate look at homelessness at any day of the year. Data can be provided for any CAN in the state.

- On the night of the Point-in-Time count – the BNL in CT had a total of 2,431 individuals and 328 families.
- In CY2017, homeless providers housed 2,150 people off of the statewide BNL.

Annual Data

Connecticut has a robust Homeless Management Information System that allows the homelessness response system the ability to look at statewide and regional trends in homelessness over time. While the Point-In-Time count is a snapshot of one night of the year, the annual data shows how many people are coming into contact with the homelessness system across the full year. Our aim is to reduce both the PIT census as well as the annual numbers – reflecting solid progress to end homelessness.

- Over the five years from 2012 to 2017, Connecticut saw a 34% reduction in the annual number of people experiencing homelessness.



Please see cceh.org for more information, or email Brian Roccapriore at broccapriore@cceh.org for assistance with any of the reports cited above or with other homeless data questions.