About SARAH

The South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) is the Continuum of Care lead agency tasked by HUD to continuously care for San Antonio and Bexar County. Our goal is to make homelessness a brief, rare, and non-recurring event in our community.

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Donors

USAA Foundation
City of San Antonio- Department of Human Service
Haven for Hope
NuStar Energy
Family Violence Prevention Services
San Antonio Food Bank
San Antonio AIDS Foundation

Acknowledgements

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Speakers

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Chief William McManus, SAPD
Captain Carlos Garcia, SAPD
Morjoriee White, City of San Antonio - DHS
Mike Pacheco, CentroSA Block by Block

Partners

[Image of partnership logos]
The South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) serves as San Antonio / Bexar County’s Continuum of Care (CoC) Lead Agency for TX-500 CoC, which includes San Antonio city limits, Bexar County, and a few miles off of North Interstate 35. A CoC Lead Agency is a regional planning entity designated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to coordinate federal funding, housing, and services for people experiencing homelessness. SARAH’s vision is “to prevent and end homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County”, with a primary goal to “make homelessness a rare, brief, and a nonrecurring event”.

On one night during the last ten days of January, hundreds of volunteers in San Antonio/Bexar County participate in the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count to collect information about sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness. The information impacts local priorities on homelessness and HUD’s funding decisions nationally. The results of PIT Count analyses inform program and system planning, ensuring services are meeting local needs of the community and creating a more efficient use of limited resources.

This report summarizes the analysis of the San Antonio/ Bexar County PIT Count data collected on Thursday, January 23, 2020. SARAH led the planning and implementation of the PIT Count activities, in coordination with service providers, government officials, faith-based leaders, local colleges and universities, law enforcement officers, and people with lived experiences of homelessness. In analyzing the PIT Count data collected from three sources, as explained in appendices B & D, SARAH revealed that the total count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless in 2020 is 2,932, an overall increase of 2% from 2019.
Despite evidence from research that unaccompanied youth are undercounted, this year, there was a spike in the count of youth and young adults. The overall increase was disproportionately occurring among different age-cohorts, shelter status, races, and genders as shown below:

- Two age cohorts encountered a remarkable increase: the count of aging adults (50+ years) encountered a remarkable 50% increase and the count of unaccompanied youth (under 18) increased by 55% since last year.
- The Length of Time (LOT) of experiencing homelessness was positively associated with age-cohort. Aging adults (55+) spend three times longer experiencing homelessness than individuals under 18 years old.
- The count of unsheltered homeless increased by 7%, while the count of sheltered homeless decreased by 2%.
- The percent of Black/ African American individuals experiencing homelessness increased by 2.4%, while the percent of White individuals decreased by 1%
- The count of females experiencing homelessness increased by 12%, while the count of males decreased by 4%

SARAH’s initiatives to address these disparities include expanding existing partnership with San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) to provide 100 vouchers to ensure the most vulnerable residents experiencing homelessness have access to affordable housing, implementing data-supported decisions to revamp housing programs and create housing problem-solving and diversion; prioritizing individuals susceptible to COVID-19 for supportive housing, and coordinate YHDP federal grant to eliminate youth homelessness.
The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count is a national event conducted by Continuums of Care (CoCs) to provide critical data on the numbers and demographic characteristics of those experiencing homelessness in the United States. Each January, thousands of volunteers participate in the PIT Count to collect information that directly impacts national priorities on homelessness and the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) department's funding decisions. Locally, the PIT Count informs program and system planning, ensuring services are meeting the needs and creating a more efficient use of limited resources. HUD defines the PIT Count as including a sheltered and unsheltered count of people experiencing homelessness. As outlined in 24 CFR 578.3, the Homeless Definition Final Rule defines homeless as:

“An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

HUD allows a CoC to determine its methodology for conducting a PIT Count, including complete coverage or a sampling method, so long as data quality standards are met. These data standards are that data is deduplicated; that data is collected in a way that protects participant privacy and the safety of both the participant and the interviewer; and that project staff and community volunteers are appropriately trained (PIT Count Methodology Guide, 2014).

The PIT Count is required to take place on one night during the last 10 days of January to ensure a more precise count of those unwilling or unable to access emergency shelter and those whose public assistance funds have run out. This timeframe is also an important way to raise awareness of those living without shelter during the coldest month of the year and ensures consistency in reporting to HUD. The PIT Count is not intended to represent the extent of homelessness at other times during the year or any other measure outside of a one-night period (PIT Count Methodology Guide, 2014).
Homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County

- The total count of people experiencing homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County is 2,932, which is a 2% increase from 2019. While there is a 7% increase from 2019, sheltered homelessness decreased by 2% since 2019. There is a 1% decrease in families with children since last year, yet an overall 12% increase since 2017.
- Over the past 10 years, there has been a 19% decrease in sheltered homeless, and an 8% increase in unsheltered homeless. During the same time, there has been a 20% increase in unsheltered (street) homelessness in downtown count since 2019 PIT count.
- The Courtyard at Haven for Hope, an outdoor sleeping facility included in the unsheltered count encountered a slight increase of one individual from last year, with a count of 566 (44% of total unsheltered) in 2020 count.
- 57% of people experiencing homelessness are sheltered, and 43% are unsheltered.

Demographics

- Majority (59%) of people experiencing homelessness were males, 40% were females, and 1% are transgender or non-conforming. The average age was 38 (34 for females and 40 for males).
- 12% increase in females experiencing homelessness and 4% decrease in males experiencing homelessness since 2019.
- Of total individuals experiencing homelessness are 72% White and 24.4% are Black, which is more than 300% of the corresponding ratio of Black individuals count in Bexar County, which is also associated with a 2.4% increase since 2019.
- 26% of people experiencing homelessness have had at least 4 episodes of homelessness.
- Over the past ten years, there has been a 9% decrease in homelessness (19% decrease in sheltered, and 8% increase in unsheltered).
- The overall increase in homelessness was disproportionate in Hispanic and Non-Hispanic population (4% increase in Hispanic/Latino homeless and 0.2% increase in Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino since 2019).

Chronic Homelessness

- Although there is a 15% decrease in chronic homelessness since last year and 55% decrease in the past four years, the average length of homelessness for the chronically homeless population is 3.5 years, which is 170% of the average length for the aggregate total count. Average age of individuals with chronic homelessness is 8 years more than the average age of the aggregate homeless.
- Length of Time (LOT) experiencing homelessness increases with age. In addition, while the average LOT experiencing homelessness -for both sheltered and unsheltered combined, is approximately 16 months for sheltered, and 26 months for unsheltered.
- The average length of stay in Emergency Shelter is 11 months, and four months in Transitional Housing.
Key Findings Continued...

**Homeless Youth**
- There is 45% increase in the number of youth and young adults (YYA) experiencing homelessness since last year. Further, there is 73% increase in parenting youth.
- There is a 55% increase in unaccompanied youth since 2019.
- While the average length of homelessness for YYA is six months, it is slightly less than five months for youth experiencing homelessness.

**Aging Population and COVID-19**
- Of people experiencing homelessness, 27% of total homeless are aging adults (50+ years); an increase of 50% from 2019. There are 600 (20% of total count) aging adults (55+ years) that are at a higher risk of COVID-19 than other groups, and 210 (35% of this group) are chronically homeless, 61% are unsheltered, and 210 reported substance use issues.
- 133 are in Chronic Homelessness and 309 with Mental Health issues.

**Domestic Violence**
- 388 (13% of total experiencing homelessness) are domestic violence (DV) survivors. A 5% decrease of from 2019. The majority, 71% or total survivors, are female with a 1:2.5 ratio of male to female. 80% are between the age of 25 and 54 years.
- Average age of survivors is 40 (18 minimum and 82 maximum).
- Average length of homelessness (days) for DV survivors is: 334 (28% less than average length of homeless for the aggregate homeless groups).

**Veterans**
- 4% decrease in veterans experiencing homelessness since 2019, and 10% decrease throughout the past four years. Average age of veterans experiencing homelessness is 52, which is 14 years older than the average age of homeless individuals. Average length of time (LOT) in homelessness for veterans is 83% of the average LOT in homelessness for the aggregate count.

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse**
- There is a 21% increase in population experiencing homelessness with mental health disability from last year, with most of the increase (42%) in transitional housing, 23% in emergency shelter, and 16% unsheltered.
- 18% increase in individuals with substance use from 2019.

**Street Medicine and Outreach**
- When asked about whether they have health insurance coverage, 78% did not have coverage, while only 22% are covered by insurance, including Medicaid/Medicare.

**City Council Districts**
- Districts 5, 10, and 7 encountered an increase of unsheltered homeless +174%, 169%, and 62% respectively.
- Districts 8, 6, and 1 encountered a decrease on unsheltered homeless 57%, 24%, and 21% respectively.
The 2020 PIT Count revealed a slight increase in overall homelessness (2%) since the 2019 PIT Count. There was a 2% decrease in sheltered homelessness (a total count of 1,658), and a 7% increase in unsheltered homelessness (a total count of 1,274). In the past 10 years, there has been a 19% decrease in sheltered homelessness and an 8% increase in unsheltered homelessness. The increase of total count since 2019 was disproportionate among people with different genders. Female homeless count, 40% of total count, increased by 12% and male count, 59% of total count, decreased by 4%. Families with children is only 1% less than the percentage of 2019, with a total 271 families counted this year.

The analysis of PIT Count data shows that the length of time experiencing homelessness, whether in shelter or in the street, increases by the age of individuals. The percentage change in count was distinctly different among different races as explained throughout this report. Aging population (50+) count is 781, or 27% of total count, increased by 50% since 2019. Among this group, there are 600 individuals who are (55+) years old and are mostly unsheltered and, per research findings, are at high susceptibility to COVID-19.

Total Counts of Persons Experiencing Homelessness from 2011 to Date.
Sheltered and Unsheltered

**Overall 2020 PIT Count**

The 2020 PIT Count revealed a total count of 1,658 of sheltered homeless (57% of total count) a 2% decrease from 2019. The total count of unsheltered homelessness was 1,274 (43% of total count), which is a 7% increase. Over the past ten years, there has been a 19% decrease in sheltered homelessness and an 8% increase in unsheltered homelessness.

**Sheltered**

Regarding those who are sheltered, an analysis of the race and length of stay in sheltered programs shows that despite the very low count of Asian people experiencing homelessness, they encountered longest stay in shelters, between (119 to 235 days), followed by White (104 to 206 days), and Black (98 to 193 days).

**Unsheltered**

The total count of individuals experiencing homelessness in Haven for Hop’s courtyard was 566 (an increase of only one individual from last year), and the total count of unsheltered (street) homelessness was 708, which is 14% increase since last year.
Length of Time Homeless

Average length of time (LOT) homeless for individuals counted was 466 days (15.5 months), and the median was 210 (7 months). This means that half of the people experiencing homelessness stayed much longer in homelessness than the other half. Length of Time (LOT) Homeless increases with age range.

Older Adults (25+) spent an average of 1.5 years homeless than other age groups, which is almost three times individuals less than 18 years old, and 2.5 times individuals between 18-24 years. Individuals between 18-24 years old spent almost six months homeless (an average of 184 days), and youth whose age is less than 18 years spent almost five months homeless (an average of 148 days).

Average time experiencing homelessness for Older Adults (25+) is 1.5 years, and for youth (under 18) is five months.
2020 PIT Count revealed the total count of chronic homeless: 293, 15% decrease from 2019 and 5% decrease over the past 4 years. Despite this decrease, the average length of homelessness for chronically homeless people is 3.5 years, which is 170% of the average length time homeless for the aggregate count. Average age of individuals with chronic homelessness is 46, and 8 years more than the average age of the overall homeless. The minimum age of chronically homeless individuals is 19 and the maximum is 82.
2020 PIT Count revealed the total count of veterans experiencing homelessness is 206, a 4% decrease since last year, and a 10% decrease throughout the past four years. The average age of veteran homeless is 52, which is 14 years older than the average age of the total count of people experiencing homelessness (The minimum age is 18 and the maximum age is 80). The average length of stay homeless for veterans is 388 days (13 months), which is 83% of the average length for the entire homeless people.

The Community of San Antonio and Bexar County's challenge to end veterans' homelessness has been successful in maintaining that national status and continue to see declines in the PIT Count of veterans population experiencing homelessness. And it's through the hard work of SARAH's partners who still meet weekly to case conference that we're able to maintain.
The total count of families with children in this year’s PIT Count was 271, a 1% decrease from 2019 and a 12% increase over the past four years. Most of the families with children stayed in emergency shelters, and the ratio of families staying in Emergency Shelters (ES) to those living in Transitional Housing (TH) was 3.7:1.

On the other hand, 60% of adults without children are unsheltered (street) homeless, while 40% stay disproportionately in Emergency Shelters (ES) & Transitional Housing (TH).
In 2020 PIT Count, there was a total of 1,274 unsheltered homeless. 566 of this count (44% of the total unsheltered count) were staying in Haven for Hope Courtyard, and 708 (56% of total unsheltered count) were counted in all ten City Council Districts of the City of San Antonio.

PIT count methodology guide focuses on one night's count, which may not reflect the year-long count, and because the unsheltered homeless move around the City, it is likely that they might be observed on PIT night in one location, and the next day in another location and other Council District. In 2020 PIT Count, three Districts (5, 10, and 7) revealed the largest increase in the count of unsheltered homeless: 174%, 169%, and 62% respectively and three Districts (8, 6, and 1) showed a considerable decrease in the count of unsheltered homeless (57%, 24%, and 21% respectively). The map below shows all districts increase and decrease ratios.
The Downtown Count of unsheltered (street) homeless showed a total count of 169 (a 20% increase since last year). During the PIT night, observations were made to structures & cars, where people experiencing homelessness could be staying. These observations are not part of PIT Count for unsheltered or sheltered people experiencing homelessness. This count is simply to provide more information about the scope of homelessness, and is considered a new data point for this year. The breakdown of these structures' observations could be shown below:

- Almost half (49%) of Structure/ Observations Tally are Makeshift Shelters.
- 10% of Structure/ Observations Tally are Tents.
- 9% of Structure/ Observations Tally are Cars.
- 5% of Structure/ Observations Tally are Vans.
Demographics

Age

In 2020 PIT Count, the average Age of people experiencing homelessness was 38 (with 40 as the average age of males, and 34 the average age of females experiencing homelessness). The median age of the aggregated count of homeless (all genders in shelters or unsheltered) was 39.

The age distribution diagram below shows that there are 168 individuals who are 5 years old or younger and 218 who are 62 years and over.
Data from 2020 PIT Count showed that the total count of males experiencing homelessness was 1,746 (59% of total count of the homeless). Female total count was 1,175 (40% of total count), and 11 (1%) were transgender or non-conforming gender. While the average age of homeless females was 36, it was 40 for homeless males. There was a 12% increase for females experiencing homelessness and 4 % decrease for males since 2019.
In 2020 PIT Count, the percent of Hispanic to Non-Hispanic has slightly changed from last year: 2019 (54% Non-Hispanic to 46% Hispanic); and 2020 (53% Non-Hispanic to 47% Hispanic).

The overall increase of 2% in homeless count happened disproportionately in Hispanic and Non-Hispanic population. More increase in Hispanic homeless than in Non-Hispanic Homeless. The increase in Hispanic/ Latino homeless population from 2019 was 4%, and a slight increase in Non-Hispanic/ Non-Latino people experiencing homelessness from 2019 was 0.2%.

Among all population counted, 57% of the unsheltered were Non-Hispanic, 56% of transitional housing (TH) people experiencing homelessness were Non-Hispanic, and 51% of Emergency Shelter (ES) counted population were Hispanic.
The 2020 PIT Count revealed that 72% of total individuals experiencing homelessness are White (1% decrease from last year), and 24.4% of total homeless individuals are Black/AA (2.4% increase from last year). 2% of total count were Multi-Racial, 1% Native American, 0.5% Asian, and 0.1% Pacific Islander.
In 2020 PIT Count, the total count of individuals experiencing homelessness with mental health disability was 891 (21% of total count). The increase disproportionately represented among the sheltered and unsheltered individuals with the highest increase in Transitional Housing (42% since last year), followed by 23% increase in Emergency Shelters, and 16% increase of the unsheltered individuals.

Most of the homeless individuals with Serious Mental Illness (SMI), (91% of total SMI) were 25 years and older, 6% were between in the age range of 18 to 24, and 3% were under 18 years old.
In 2020 PIT Count, the total count of homeless individuals with substance use issues was 576 (18% increase from 2019). Among those individuals, 408 (71% were male) and 167 (29% were female), and one individual was transgender or non-conforming.
In 2020 PIT Count, the total count of domestic violence (DV) survivors was 388 (13% of total experiencing homelessness), a 5% decrease of from 2019. Majority of those survivors (71%) were female with a 1: 2.5 ratio of male to female DV survivors. Of total counted, 80% are between the age of 25 and 54 years with an average age of all survivors from all genders of 40 (18 years old was the minimum and 82 was the maximum). The average length of homelessness for DV survivors was 334, which is 28% less than average length of time homeless for the aggregated homeless.

Most of DV survivors (62%) were staying in Emergency Shelters (ES) and only were in Transitional Housing (TH). More than quarter (27%) of all DV survivors were unsheltered in 2020 PIT Count.
Housing affordability challenges in most of the US Metro Areas impact aging adults and thus, they age into poverty and become at greater risk of homelessness than any other age groups. In the context of San Antonio/Bexar County, this is due in part to the percentage of aging population living on fixed income, and thus the costs of necessities like health care are rising, leaving older adults at risk of poverty and homelessness.

2020 PIT Count revealed that the total count of aging adults (50+ years and older) was 781, a 27% increase since last year. There was an increase in most vulnerable groups among aging population (50+ and over). 9% increase in Adults (50+ and over) with chronic homelessness, 32% increase in Adults (50+ and over) with Physical Disability, and 27% increase in Adults (50+ and over) with Serious Mental Illness (SMI).
COVID-19 Susceptibility

Research have shown that aging trends among homeless populations in several US Metro areas including New York City, Los Angeles County, and Boston are observed between the age of 50 and 55 years. An evidence of accelerated physical decline of the homeless populations and a likelihood of hospital admission 10-15 years earlier than the public is also observed. In Los Angeles, this is amplified by the physical susceptibility of unsheltered population, which is exacerbated due to the individual’s exposure to poor hygiene and respiratory distress. Recently published COVID-19 studies suggest that older populations face risk and case fatality at a higher rate than younger populations, and several studies observed obstructive pulmonary disease prevalence among homeless population at a rate between 20 and 30% compared to 10% among the general public, which puts unsheltered individuals at a higher risk of infection.

Among the aging adults, 600 (20% of total count) were 55+ years and older who are at a higher risk of COVID-19 than other groups. Majority of this group, a total of 366 individuals, (61% of total 55+ and older) were unsheltered, which puts them at a much higher risk of contracting the virus. Additionally, 211 (35% of this age group) had a Chronic Health condition, 210 (35%) had Substance Use issues, 133 (22%) were Chronically Homelessness, and 309 (52%) reported a Mental Health issue.

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<td>Total</td>
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Aging Adults (55+) by Age range and Project Type

- 781 individuals are 50+ years old
- 600 individuals are 55+ years old
- 218 individuals are 62+ years old
Youth & Young Adults

HUD recognizes that some service providers use a broader age range to define “youth”— e.g., persons who are 24 years old or younger. Communities have the discretion to use a broader definition of “youth” for local program planning or reporting to other funders. However, for the purposes of HUD reporting, CoCs must be able to report separately on unaccompanied homeless children who are under age 18. Defining youth as under age 18 allows HUD to use the same definition for all reporting related to homeless programs.

For youth and young adults, who are between 18 and 24 years old, PIT Count revealed that the total count of youth and young adults: (YYA) was 185 (+45% increase from 2019). While the average length of homelessness for YYA is six months, it is slightly less than five months for the homeless who are less than 18 years old.
Unaccompanied Youth

The challenges to counting the number of unaccompanied youths who are unsheltered are even greater than the rest of PIT Count. This is because unaccompanied youth may hide from providers and the police during a community’s street count because they are minors. Additionally, homeless children may congregate in different areas and at different hours of the day than older and aging adults who experience homelessness. It might also be necessary for PIT Count volunteers to conduct interviews to verify the age and household composition of an individual who appears to be unaccompanied.

The total count of unaccompanied youth who experience homelessness is 152 (this is a 55% increase from 2019). Unaccompanied youth are individuals under 18 years old. Although PIT Count data does not demonstrate a pattern of increase or decrease in the count of “unaccompanied youth” over the past 5 years as the graph below shows, research has always stressed the undercounting of youth and, thus SARAH’s current YHDP funding and the ongoing funding solicitation focuses on youth homelessness. Additionally, among the youth, there was also a 73% increase from last year in parenting youth.

Parenting Youth

Parenting Youth Counts from 2015 - 2020

Average Age of Parenting Youth
In this year’s 2020 PIT Count, we analyzed the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness, who has previously aged out of foster care. Our analysis revealed that in 2020 Count, there was 163 individuals (6% of total count) aged out of foster care at a certain time in their life. Majority (60%) of the individuals who aged out of Foster Care were between 25 to 54 years old; 61% were male, while 38% were female, and 1% transgender or non-conforming gender.

This year’s analysis also showed that the average length of time those individuals experienced homelessness was 546 days (approximately 18 months), which is 3 months longer than the average time of experiencing homelessness by the aggregate count.
Volunteers and community groups are instrumental in the process of an accurate PIT Count for San Antonio/Bexar County’s ability to carry out a successful count each year. SARAH aims to continue strengthening partnerships with community organizations each year during the PIT Count, bringing together experts in a wide variety of subject areas. 2019 was the first year that SARAH partnered with Street Medicine San Antonio (SMSA), which is an initiative led by Dr. Hans Bruntmyer and his medical students at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM). Through this initiative, SMSA teams provide basic medical care to those experiencing unsheltered homelessness on the night of the PIT Count. This helped SARAH to begin collecting data specific to basic needs including medical and other essential services. Building on the 2019 inception of this collaboration, the work was expanded by recommendations of the CoC PIT Advisory Committee. In 2020, SMSA and UIWSOM increased their volunteers to over 40 medical students. During PIT Count data collection, nearly half of the late-afternoon teams included some of the medical students, and all of the late-night teams were accompanied by medical students.

When asked where respondents receive regular medical care, 37% stated at the emergency room and 28% reported at a clinic. With regard to outreach needs, over half of responses (55%) reported needing assistance to obtain a government ID and almost half (48%) said they needed easy access to transportation for medical appointments. With regard to having received a flu shot in the past 2 years, 38% stated they had while 67% had not.

### Health Insurance (HI) Coverage
- 78% with no HI
- 22% Covered by HI
Appendix A: Contributors

PIT Count Committee

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Appendix B: Methodology

PIT counts are a critical source of data on the number and characteristics of people who are without a home in the United States. These data are used to measure homelessness on a local and national level and are published annually on HUD’s HUD Exchange website, which can be viewed by Continuum of Care (CoC) agencies and the general public. HUD’s PIT count data has become increasingly important as a measure of our local and national progress related to preventing and ending homelessness, especially with relation to our progress towards meeting the goals of Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. Therefore, it has become necessary to ask for more detailed information and to ensure that the data submitted to HUD are as complete and accurate as possible. Additionally, collecting valid and reliable data and making progress on reducing homelessness are scoring factors in HUD’s CoC Program Competition and can influence CoC Program funding awards. CoCs are required to submit their PIT count data through the HUD HDX website. It is important to note that PIT Count only identifies a subset of individuals and families that meet HUD’s definition of homeless. As such, the PIT Count does not capture everybody who is eligible for homeless assistance through other homeless assistance funding sources.

Minimum Standards: Legal Requirements

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act authorized HUD to require CoCs to conduct PIT counts. Section 427(b)(3) states: “Homelessness Counts. – The Secretary shall not require that communities conduct an actual count of homeless people other than those described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 103(a) of this Act.” This statutory language establishes HUD’s authority to require PIT counts but limits the count to persons who are defined as living on the streets or in shelters (which is what section 103(a) paragraphs 1 through 4 define). In the CoC Program interim rule HUD further clarified the requirements for conducting PIT counts. In the definition section HUD defines the PIT count as “count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons carried out on one night in the last 10 calendar days of January or at such other time as required by HUD” (24 CFR 578.3). HUD outlined CoC planning requirements in 24 CFR 578.7(c) (2): “(2) Planning for and conducting, at least biennially, a point-in-time count of homeless persons within the geographic area that meets the following requirements:

i. Homeless persons who are living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans must be counted as unsheltered homeless persons.

ii. Persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects must be counted as sheltered homeless persons.

iii. Other requirements established by HUD by Notice."
PIT Count Methodology

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires CoCs to collect reliable data on the count and characteristics of all sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness within the territory of the CoC geographic area who are homeless on a single night. Data collected must be reported to HUD through HUD HDX portal. HUD offers three methodologies for CoCs to choose from to complete their PIT Counts. These include a census count, sampling, or a combination of census and sampling approaches.

SARAH utilized a Census Count methodology to count all people experiencing homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County. The advantage of this approach encompasses the ability to use it as a benchmark for future PIT Counts, and its capability to provide a direct and complete count – not an estimate- of all people and their characteristics, and its strength is the used as a benchmark for future PIT counts. Approximately 385 individuals volunteer for the 2020 Point-in-Time Count with the following statistics:

- Over 50% were first-time PIT Count volunteers.
- Nearly 15% had experienced homelessness at a certain time in their life.
- Approximately 15% were Veterans.
- Approximately 13% were between the ages of 18-24.

In addition to the volunteers, several law enforcement officers volunteered their time to accompany PIT Count teams to assist with counting and surveying process. This includes:

- 68 San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) officers, and
- 5 Bexar County Sheriff’s deputies

A census count should incorporate the entire CoCs’ geography. However, it can be difficult and resource intensive to canvass, count, and survey all homeless persons in the CoCs. To implement the census methodology throughout Bexar County, the county was divided into 45 zones during the PIT Count, covering the entirety of San Antonio/Bexar County.
HUD requires CoCs to collect and report information on the count and demographic characteristics of all people reported as sheltered or unsheltered by household type and, within each household type, by age category, gender, race, and ethnicity. CoCs must also report information by household type for veteran and youth households. CoCs must provide demographic data for both sheltered and unsheltered persons according to the following three household types:

a. Persons in households with at least one adult and one child. This category includes households with one adult and at least one child under age 18.

b. Persons in households without children. This category includes single adults, adult couples with no children, and groups of adults (including adult parents with their adult children).

c. Persons in households with only children. This category includes persons under age 18, including children in one-child households, adolescent parents (under age 18) and their children, adolescent siblings, or other household configurations composed only of children.

In some instances, a CoC may not have certain demographic data for a person experiencing homelessness. This may be because the person refused to provide the information, or it was not possible to collect it during the PIT count. In these instances, a CoC can estimate the missing demographic information using available data and a methodology consistent with HUD PIT methodology standards and guidance.
Methodology Continued...

Data Gathering
Using the census count methodology, three data collection tools were utilized to capture a complete count of all people and their demographic characteristics. In addition to the following description of each methodology, Appendix B illustrates a complete list of San Antonio/Bexar County organizations and their projects, in addition to the methodology used by SARAH to count both homeless types (sheltered and unsheltered).

1. **Sheltered Count Methodology** - This includes counting all people who are homeless and staying in shelter including emergency shelter (ES), safe haven, or transitional housing (TH) project on the night of the count. For projects that participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the census was conducted using a service-based count followed by extracting all the necessary information from the HMIS.

2. **Unsheltered Count Methodology** - To capture the count and demographic characteristics of individuals who’re not staying in shelters or for organizations and projects that do not participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a mobile application “Counting us” developed by Simtech Solutions, was used to collect these data by the volunteers. All data transmitted to a “Regional Command Center”, and the results are synchronized and displayed as they change throughout the count.

3. **Organizations Serving Victims of Domestic Violence (DV)** - Shelter de-identified aggregated report of all DV survivors was attained by SARAH from organizations that are classified as Domestic Violence service providers or receive Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding.

Data Merging & Records Deduplication
Upon the completion of PIT count, data collected from the three sources (HMIS, Regional Command Center, and DV serving organizations) were aligned and a merging process followed. Using different tools or Data Science programming language “R”, an unduplicated data set was produced from the merged data sets. Removing duplicate observations which are two or more records of the same person is a crucial portion of ensuring accuracy of the final PIT Count. (The duplicate counts are likely to occur when there are opportunities to count individuals who travel across various locations of the city at different times, and accidentally, they are counted more than once). Through the process of merging and binding different sources of data, various variables were formatted to be in uniformed and ready for analysis. This included but not limited to; converting numerical variables into factors, binary responses into “Yes” or “No”, and clustering various categorical responses into a uniformed variable.

The deduplication process was reiterated through the logical statements of code written on "R" to filter potential duplicates by matching personal identifying information. All records deemed to have duplicates by the code, were manually verified and removed from the data set. Duplicate records were verified based on the following personal identifying information (PII):

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Date of Birth
4. Gender
5. Social Security Number
6. Geospatial Data
7. Veteran Status
8. Additional Identifying Information (Demographics, Client Case Notes)
Appendix C: Glossary

**Adults**: An individual who is 18 years of age or older or a minor under the age of 18 who has been emancipated to act on his/her own behalf, including the ability to execute a contract or lease.

**Aging Adults**: An individual who is 65 years of age or older. Homeless population age 10-20 years beyond their chronological age. Pulmonary disease among homeless population is at a rate between 20 and 30% compared to 10% among the public, and among unsheltered population, there is 40% infection rate. For that purpose, in this report, we consider aging adults who’re 55 years or older.

**Adults with HIV/AIDS**: This population category of the PIT includes adults who have been diagnosed with AIDS and/or have tested positive for HIV.

**Adults with a 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”). In this report, SMI is also referred to as Mental Health Disability.

**Adults with a Substance Use Disorder**: This population category of the PIT includes adults with a substance use 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**: A minor who is under the age of 18 and has not been emancipated to act on his/her own behalf.

**Chronically Homeless Person**: An individual 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

C. Has a disability.

**COVID-19**: A mild to severe respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus which is transmitted via respiratory droplets or direct interaction with contaminated objects or surfaces. Primary symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath which may progress to pneumonia or respiratory failure.

**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 Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002); or
C. The disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any condition arising from the etiologic agency for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV).

Parenting Youth: A youth who identifies as the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as that youth parent, where there is no person over age 24 in the household.

Survivors of Domestic Violence: This population category of the PIT includes adults who are currently experiencing homelessness because they are fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Unaccompanied Youth: Unaccompanied youth are persons under age 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and 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.

Victim Service Provider: A private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. This term includes rape crisis centers, battered women’s shelters, domestic violence transitional housing programs, and other programs.

Youth and Young Adults: Persons under age 25. HUD collects and reports youth data based on persons under 18 and persons between ages 18 and 24.
### Appendix D: Organization & Projects

#### American GI Forum-National Veteran's Out

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<th>Data Source/ Collection</th>
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#### BEAT AIDS

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#### Crosspoint Inc.

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#### Haven for Hope

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#### Family Violence Prevention Services

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#### San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries (SAMM)

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#### Strong Foundation

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#### Visitation House Ministries

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