



PIT Count Frequently Asked Questions

TRAINING

Can we get a copy of the slides?

Yes, training materials will be available to registered volunteers. The materials will include the slide deck and reference materials related to the survey app. They will also be made available on the BKRHC website at bkrhc.org.

TEAMS

Who chooses the teams?

Teams are created after all training has taken place and will consist of someone with prior PIT experience, someone who is bilingual, and someone who will volunteer as a driver.

Will there be one male in each group?

There may not always be a male in each group, but each group will include an individual that has experience conducting the PIT count and will also include an individual that acts as the look out or safety person.

What is my team number?

Your team number will be assigned shortly before the PIT count. During team creation, team numbers may not be finalized. An email will be sent to you with your team information.

Can I be assigned to a specific team?

We can assign you to a specific team if there are extenuating circumstances that require you to be on a specific team. Otherwise, team assignments are random.

DURING THE PIT COUNT & SAFETY

Are the unsheltered people aware that the survey is going to be taken beforehand?

Yes, days before the unsheltered PIT count, outreach teams provide information to people experiencing homelessness letting them know of the count.

Where is HQ?

HQ is dependent on the location you will be placed on the morning of the PIT count. The main HQ is in Bakersfield and is located at the Mission at Kern County. Rural areas may also have designated HQ locations. Please check with your team lead or BKRHC for more information.



Who do I contact for help while I am out in the field?

We will provide you with information on various people to contact for specific questions.

What do you say when they ask us why we're doing this?

You want to approach individuals as calmly and clearly as possible, with a gentle tone. Let them know who you are and who you are with as well as the reason why you are conducting surveys. You can offer them a care bag as an incentive whether or not they complete a survey. You can let them know that you are completing a survey to gather data that helps get funding for homeless services and projects.

Do you still do an observational survey if they don't say they are homeless and direct you somewhere else?

As much as possible, you are encouraged to complete an observational survey. Use your best judgment. If the individual is sleeping on a park bench and says they are not homeless, you can still complete an observational survey unless the situation is unsafe.

Should we knock on the window of a car?

No, if you cannot see anyone, please do not knock on the car window. Only complete an observational survey if you have a clear view of anyone sleeping in the car and cannot complete a conversational survey.

Do we include people in RVs?

Yes, include people in RVs if the RV is not connected to services such as water or electricity and only if you are able to complete the survey safely.

If someone appears to be homeless but state that they are not, do we refrain from giving a care bag?

Use your best judgment. We don't want to assume that anyone is homeless, but we also want to make sure that we can provide resources if needed. You can ask them where they slept last night to determine if they may possibly be homeless.

How do you approach if there is a dog(s)?

Be mindful to keep you and your team's safety at the forefront. You can ask the individual to put away their dog if it is aggressive, once it is safe, you can continue the survey. If they refuse to put the dog away, then you can do an observational survey after removing you and your team from any unsafe situation.

Has anyone ever encountered violence?

There is very much a possibility that a team may encounter violence. If you or anyone on your team feels unsafe about a situation, please remove yourselves immediately using your team code word or phrase. If your team is experiencing or observes a critical incident, please call 911 immediately and remove yourself from the area.



What if the homeless person is a kid?

Please complete the survey as thoroughly as possible. This information will be used to connect the child to services including the Kern County Network for Children Dream Center.

SURVEY APP

Do we need to create an ArcGIS account to do use Survey123?

No, you can use Survey123 and complete surveys without an account. Volunteers will be using the app without signing into an account.

Is there an alternative way to get the survey for those of us with only a phone and not also a computer?

Yes, we will make every effort to ensure that you have the app on your phone. While we would prefer that individuals have the app and survey on their phone prior to training, we will assist any app issues during the morning of the count. Other members on your team will also have the app on their phone, so surveys can still be completed. Additionally, we will have a paper copy of the survey should there be app issues beyond anyone's control.

How do I enter location information for surveys I am completing?

Location is important in data integrity. At the end of the survey, please use the crosshair icon to select an accurate location for the survey you are completing. With the location permission set to be used, your cell phone should automatically determine your location. Please ensure that the survey shows you a map and map coordinates.

What are some examples of comments?

Some examples of comments include:

- "Can't complete survey. Unsafe conditions."
- "Can't see people in the car. No survey completed."
- "Had to use our code word."
- "Location was not working. Survey location happened at *[enter address or general location]*."

DATA INTEGRITY

What are the statistics on persons surveyed more than once in a PIT count?

We don't have exact statistics on this, but duplicate surveys can occur. We have ways to de-duplicate surveys. As long as teams stay in their area, it is decreased. We use identifying information collected during the survey to de-duplicate individuals that may have been surveyed more than once. While out in the field, you can look for any clues that would help you determine if the individual has already been surveyed such as a care/incentive bag.



What if we make contact with individuals who have the same first two letters of their first and last name?

We encourage all volunteers to be as complete as possible with the information that is entered into the app. At the very end of the app, there is a comments section where you can include notes that will help us differentiate between individuals that may have similar letters in their first and last name. We also use descriptors such as gender, race, ethnicity, and age to help de-duplicate individuals that have been surveyed.

What do we enter for ethnicity and race if a person responds with an option that is not included?

At best, try to enter data as is presented to you by the person you are surveying. Because of our population demographics in Kern County, many individuals will state they are Hispanic/Latino. Unless otherwise stated by the person being surveyed a yes selection for Hispanic/Latino option will typically have White/Caucasian selected for race.

How do we determine household type?

The following will assist with determining household type when you are conducting surveys:

- Household with only adults – a household with only adults and no children
- Household with at least one adult and one child – a household where there is one adult or one child, can also consist of a household with two or more adults and two or more children
- Household with only children – a household with no adults present