



## **Point in Time (PIT) Count Planning Manual**

The Point in Time (PIT) Count is conducted every two years as dictated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In accordance with HUD policy and as the lead agency directing the Sacramento County Continuum of Care, Sacramento Steps Forward maintains the sole responsibility for conducting the PIT Count. The event itself is a collaboration of many community organizations, individual volunteers, and funding sources, including but not limited to, the County of Sacramento, the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency and the City of Sacramento. This manual provides instructions for preparing, conducting and providing follow-up support for the event itself, as well as specific details regarding learned best practices and future planning.

This Count is conducted by internal SSF staff members, as well as contracted consultants; best practices for each year of the event are determined by the SSF Executive Staff members (Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Programs Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Public Affairs Officer) and are subject to change.



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## **Preparing for the Event**

### **Initial Discussions with SSF Staff & Community**

The PIT planning process should begin no later than June of the year prior to the Count. All parties involved in the planning process should be called to an initial meeting to discuss the event itself, develop any necessary role descriptions, and make determinations about any changes being made from previous years. This part of the process will be led by the SSF Executive Staff, specifically the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Programs Officer.

Once the initial decisions have been made, the planning process will continue throughout the course of the summer, fall, and winter prior to the event. The timeline provided in the following section gives an estimate of the activities that will be taking place during each given month leading up to the event itself. It should be noted that items may be shifted, in accordance with internal activities at Sacramento Steps Forward and the capacity of the community to provide support for any necessary components. Ideally, all items will be completed within a month of their scheduled time; the proposed schedule allows for additional room prior to the event, should any urgent changes occur.

### **Consultant Services Acquisition**

As the planning process begins, it will be determined whether the organization will be hiring a short-term contract consultant to provide strong organizational support and direction for the planning process, execution of the event itself, and post-event planning and follow-up. Should an individual be hired for this role, the Executive Staff will conduct a search and make a hiring decision independent of any external contributors.

The consultant will sign a contract for the time period deemed necessary to complete the PIT planning and event execution process. The contract shall be kept on file under the direction of the Chief Operating Officer. The consultant will be hired no sooner than four months prior to the event, as the Executive Staff will begin the planning process seven months in advance of the event and the amount of attention required will steadily increase.

### **Event Preparation Timeline**

**June:** The planning process for the Point in Time Count will begin in June of the year prior to the event. The process will be led by the SSF Executive Staff, under the direction of the Chief Programs Officer or Chief Operating Officer. At this time, the Executive Staff will determine the current staff capacity for supporting this project and initiate the search process for a



Coordinator (in a short-term contracted consultant capacity), if necessary. If Coordinator services are secured via contract, SSF will follow a competitive procurement process.

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Schedule the PIT Count as a topic at ongoing Executive Staff meetings;
- ✓ Review PIT Count Budget;
- ✓ Determine necessity of contracted Coordinator;
- ✓ Initiate search for Coordinator, if deemed necessary.

**July:** During the month of July, the Executive Staff will continue discussing the details and necessary arrangements for the event. If deemed necessary, the hiring process for a consultant Coordinator will continue and be finalized by the end of the month.

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct hiring process for consultant Coordinator, if needed.

**August:** During the month of August, the details for the event will begin to come together and more action will be required on the part of Sacramento Steps Forward and the appointed or hired Coordinator. According to the HUD planning guidelines, the Count methodology is reviewed this month in coordination with and by approval of the Continuum of Care. Event planning meetings will begin in August and will continue on a monthly basis through the month of the event (January).

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct event planning meeting;
- ✓ Review count methodology from previous years and determine proper methodology to be used in this year's Count (with CoC approval);
- ✓ Finalize data consulting services competitive procurement process and render contract with data consulting team;
- ✓ Begin discussing the main deployment site to be used during the Count;
- ✓ Chief Programs Officer to work with event Coordinator (internal staff or external hire) to set guidelines and expectations for planning process.

**September:** During the month of September, the volunteer portal will be tested and launched; information will be distributed throughout the Continuum of Care. Past volunteers will be contacted and team leader selection will begin in cooperation with California State University Sacramento (CSUS) graduate students and County of Sacramento DHA employees. The date for the event and the main deployment site will be chosen; information will be communicated, as needed.



Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct event planning meeting;
- ✓ Launch test volunteer portal and begin communicating with potential volunteers in the CoC;
- ✓ Select leaders for volunteer teams;
- ✓ Determine event date, as dictated by HUD Guidelines (within the specified ten days in January);
- ✓ Determine main deployment site;
- ✓ Submit rental proposal for technological devices (iPads, tablets, etc.) for use during the event.

**October:** During the month of October, volunteer recruitment will begin and will be the main focus of the Coordinator's time. The Coordinator will manage the volunteer web portals and will be the main contact point for any volunteers who are interested or who have already registered. All volunteer training materials will be finalized and the training presentation will be prepared.

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct event planning meeting;
- ✓ Focus on volunteer recruitment and management, dissolving any issues that may occur;
- ✓ Finalize volunteer training guidelines and process;
- ✓ Develop volunteer training presentation;
- ✓ Review all Sheltered and Unsheltered Count data requirements and any current HUD notices, in conjunction with the HMIS Manager.

**November:** During the month of November, the Coordinator will begin contacting potential sources of mapping data and will provide information regarding the event and what is needed. Volunteer recruitment and management will continue. The survey and count materials will be finalized by the data consulting team and Chief Programs Officer. Any materials that are finalized will be printed and preparation of volunteer appreciation gifts will begin.

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct event planning meeting;
- ✓ Contact past and potential data contributors;
- ✓ Finalize survey and count materials;
- ✓ Print any finalized materials, as possible;
- ✓ Print all volunteer training materials;
- ✓ Begin generating volunteer appreciation gifts.



**December:** During the month of December, volunteer recruitment will be in its final stages. All interested volunteers will be contacted and scheduled for training dates, which begin in early January. Time in December must be accounted for holiday vacations; therefore, nothing will be scheduled between December 23<sup>rd</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct event planning meeting;
- ✓ Finalize volunteer recruitment and ensure that teams have been structured properly;
- ✓ Meet with team leaders and provide information regarding training and the event;
- ✓ Develop media and communications plan with Director of Public Affairs;
- ✓ Purchase participant incentive gifts;
- ✓ Finalize volunteer appreciation gifts;
- ✓ Maintain contact mapping data contributors and provide additional information, as needed;
- ✓ Send reminder email(s) to volunteers regarding participation and training.

**January:** The event takes place during the month of January, as dictated by HUD. This will be the busiest month of planning, as many of the details cannot be determined until two to three weeks before the event. The Coordinator will be expected to be on-site at SSF's office on a daily basis and will be overseeing all volunteer training sessions.

Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Conduct event planning meeting(s);
- ✓ Conduct all volunteer training sessions;
- ✓ Finalize all mapping data and maps for the event;
- ✓ Finalize media and communications plan;
- ✓ Meet with local law enforcement agencies to discuss any safety concerns and provide event information, as necessary;
- ✓ Finalize all event space details and ensure that all parties are prepared accordingly;
- ✓ Organize all event supplies and purchase any necessary items;
- ✓ Registration preparation and set-up;
- ✓ Host the event!

**February-June:** Following the successful completion of the Count, debriefing meetings will take place with all involved entities and individuals. Volunteers will have been asked for their input immediately following the event via email and in on-site debriefing surveys (the night of the Count). Immediately following the event, the data consulting team will have access to the data



and will begin the preparation and analysis process. The final report will be published by the end of June 2019.

#### Tasks to be completed:

- ✓ Reorganize all supplies and determine any needs for the next event;
- ✓ Document any changes to procedure and any new policies, as necessary;
- ✓ Host debriefing meetings for community partners, law enforcement agencies, volunteer coordinators, etc., as needed;
- ✓ Ensure that the data consulting team has been given all information and has access to all data;
- ✓ Answer any questions related to the event and the PIT data;
- ✓ Work with the data consulting team to ensure that all questions are answered and all information is properly distributed;
- ✓ Publish the final report and provide a venue for questions and concerns from the community.

#### **Data Analysis Consultant Acquisition & Agreement**

In accordance with HUD requirements and the current capacity of SSF full-time employees, the data preparation, collection and analysis for each PIT Count is conducted by a consultant group. Focus Strategies, a Sacramento-based consulting firm, was contracted to perform all duties related to the PIT Count in 2011, 2013 and 2015. During the planning process for the 2017 Count, the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at California State University Sacramento (CSUS) was engaged to replace Focus Strategies as the lead data consultant. The ISR maintains the existing PIT Count contract and is expected to be engaged in the 2019 planning process.

Should a new data consultant be needed, the Executive Staff at Sacramento Steps Forward maintains the right to perform a recruitment and acquisition process for a new partner. Once the new data consultant has been engaged in conversation and has agreed to participate, a formal contract will be signed. The Chief Operating Officer will lead this process and will relay all necessary information to the Consultant Coordinator.

#### **Use of Technology (future years)**

If technology is to be used as the main form of collecting data in future years, language will be added to the contract between Sacramento Steps Forward and the data analytics team to account for this change. The use of technology must be compatible with the data analytics process and best practices will be determined by SSF. Should technology be used, it is likely that SSF would need to contract with an outside firm to provide the tablets, tools and onsite assistance during the event.





## **Mapping Data Collection Process**

In order to provide the data analytics team with information regarding the homeless encampments and sightings within Sacramento County, SSF must reach out to community partners, law enforcement agencies, community members, etc. During this process, the Coordinator will facilitate the collection of mapping data by contacting organizations and individuals. The individuals who contributed to the 2017 mapping data are included in the 2017 Data Contributor List in the binder. The Coordinator should connect with the Outreach Manager and Navigators to provide more information about homeless encampments, sightings, and potential PBID or other community meetings to attend.

During this process, the Coordinator will also need to work with local law enforcement officers and agencies to gather information about known encampments in the County.

## **Primary Contacts**

Two lists from the 2017 PIT Count have been prepared to assist in the collection of mapping data in future years. They are labeled “2017 Data Contributor List” and “2017 Master Contact List.” The individuals or agencies that provided mapping data for the 2017 count have been included in the 2017 Data Contributor List; when gathering mapping data for future counts, this is the best place to start. The 2017 Master Contact List includes all individuals or agencies who had a role in the 2017 count and who may be involved in future years.

## **Volunteer Recruitment & Management**

The PIT Count event requires a large number of volunteers, typically between 250 and 350 individuals. Volunteers are recruited through a number of networks and partner organizations, as well as publicly through advertisements for the event and local news media. The volunteers for the 2019 PIT Count will be recruited through Sacramento Steps Forward’s volunteer system and will be managed by the internal Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Team Leads and Community Volunteers**

Following the completion of the 2017 PIT Count, it was decided that all teams moving forward will be led by a central team leader – someone who has been trained specifically to maneuver difficult situations and who understands the basics of social work, client interaction and appropriate field behaviors. Team leads will be chosen by the SSF Executive Staff and the PIT Consultant Coordinator, working in conjunction with Sacramento County and California State University Sacramento. As the majority of the volunteers in the past years of this event have been employees of the Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance, SSF will work with their volunteer manager to determine which individuals desire to lead a team during the event. The



other team leaders will be specially trained graduate students from CSUS' Social Work Department, under the direction of Professor Arturo Baiocchi.

In accordance with all previous years, volunteers will be community members, partner organization representatives, local government representatives, and other individuals. To recruit volunteers, the PIT Consultant Coordinator will do the following:

- Send a general email containing all pertinent PIT Count Night information (date, time, meeting location, number of volunteers needed, purpose statement, scope of volunteer commitment, etc.) to the entire SSF contact database.
- Contact local media sources to advertise the event and provide information on volunteer opportunities and the number needed.
- Post information about the event to local websites, such as [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org) or [www.impactfoundry.org](http://www.impactfoundry.org).
- Coordinate with SSF's Volunteer Coordinator to provide information to current organization volunteers and the surrounding community.

In 2019, individual teams organized by partner organizations or community members will not be permitted to participate separate from the larger group of teams. SSF will not be conducting training specific to any particular sub-group; however, all trainings will be comprehensive and will include training specific to sub-group populations, such as Transition Age Youth (TAY). To maintain the integrity of the data and consistency within the methodology, all trainings must be standardized and cannot be conducted by outside parties or individual groups. Individual sub-groups will be invited to participate in the Count Night event as in all prior years; however, the teams on which they participate will be led by SSF-trained team leaders.

### **Training & Use of Technology**

All volunteers who participate in the PIT Count must be trained prior to the day of the event. Training dates and times of day are dependent upon the availability of the trainer(s), but usually begin in early January and continue until the end of the week prior to Count Night. The location for trainings also changes from year to year; in the past, the following locations have been used: Sacramento Steps Forward Offices (1331 Garden Highway, Sacramento), Loaves and Fishes (1351 N. C Street, Sacramento), Goodwill Industries Offices (8001 Folsom Boulevard, Sacramento) and at individually requested locations (Downtown Sacramento Partnership, TAY, etc.).

All trainings will follow the same structure, as outlined in the PIT Volunteer Training Guide. All trainers will be trained by SSF Executive Staff members and/or the PIT Consultant Coordinator prior to the start of all general volunteer trainings. Teams will be assigned a team leader, as described above.



In future years (starting in 2019), technology may be used to streamline the data collection process. As this has not occurred in the past, training would need to include tutorials on how to use the technology (iPad, iPhone, other tablet, etc.) and the importance of data accuracy during the process. The use of technology would be overseen by the SSF Executive Staff as well as the team contracted to do the data analysis for that given year. Please consult with both teams of individuals before moving forward.

### **Reminders & Necessary Information**

Volunteers (both those working the registration tables and those on count teams) should receive several reminders from the PIT Coordinator prior to Count Night. Emails to volunteers should be sent at the following times:

- Immediately after registration in the volunteer system: this should be an automated message from the system, which will provide the volunteer with a thank you message from SSF and the list of possible dates/times for attending a training session.
- Immediately after registering for a training session: this should be an automated message from the system, which will provide the volunteer with the training date, time, location and any other details necessary.
- One week prior to the event: the PIT Coordinator should send an email to all volunteers with a reminder that the event will be taking place in one week and any other details necessary.
- Two days prior to the event: the PIT Coordinator should send an email to all volunteers with a reminder that the event will be taking place in two days. Any volunteers who will not be able to volunteer should let the Coordinator or their team leaders know ASAP. This email should also include parking information, as well as reminders about the event itself – time to arrive for on-site registration, start time, end time, building location, expectations, what to bring, how to dress, etc.
- Day before event: the final reminder email should be sent by the PIT Coordinator one day prior to the event. This email should include any last minute details that the volunteers may need to know, as well as reminders with all previous information (parking, times, expectations, what to bring, etc.).

Due to the weather in January, volunteers should be reminded to wear clothing that is appropriate for the season (i.e. bring an extra sweatshirt or jacket, if the temperature is expected to be lower than usual). Volunteers should also be reminded to bring an umbrella and dress appropriately for the given activity, which includes close-toed shoes, long pants, and comfortable attire. Volunteers need to be prepared to carry forward with the data collection in any weather conditions, except for severe lightning (or other weather conditions that could be potentially dangerous).



Depending on the location and the number of parking spaces available in the immediate vicinity, parking may be difficult. Volunteers should be reminded to carpool, if necessary, and to arrive on time. The volunteer reminder email that includes parking information should be clear and include a diagram of the parking locations and any specific detail necessary. If there are specific locations in the vicinity where volunteers CANNOT park, they should be reminded not to park there (i.e. in the Food Co-op parking lot across from the DHA Bureau on 28<sup>th</sup> Street).

Volunteers should also be reminded to bring a water bottle and a flashlight, which will be explained during each of the training sessions. SSF will need to provide large containers of water for volunteers to fill up water bottles before leaving the deployment site.

### **Event Logistics Preparation**

#### Location

For the past several years, Count Night has started and ended at the DHA Bureau located at 1725 28<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento. This location has been provided to SSF free of charge and is a centrally located point from which to send out teams. Should this location be used for the 2019 event, please contact Tiffany Piper, Administrative Services Officer, Department of Human Assistance, at (916) 874-4511 or [pipert@saccounty.net](mailto:pipert@saccounty.net). She will provide information regarding the use of the space, as well as the plan for the current year's event. In 2017, Tiffany provided a map of the building's interior and attended several meetings before and after the event to ensure proper communication. Should the event location be moved or satellite sites established, the changes will need to be coordinated beginning in June of the year prior to the event (at least six months in advance).

#### Coordination with Law Enforcement

Members of the law enforcement community should be engaged during the planning process and incorporated in the mapping data process. In particular, the Coordinator should contact representatives from the following departments: Citrus Heights Police Department, Elk Grove Police Department, Folsom Police Department, Galt Police Department, Rancho Cordova Police Department (working in conjunction with the Sacramento Sheriff's Department), Sacramento City Park Rangers, Sacramento County Park Rangers, Sacramento Police Department and Sacramento Sheriff's Department.

In prior years, a law enforcement information meeting has been set for two to three weeks prior to the event date. This meeting brings together representatives from all of the agencies listed above and allows for them to voice any concerns or offer input from previous experiences. A sample agenda from the 2017 meeting has been included in the planning materials. Following the meeting, there may be additional individual meetings required depending on the mapping data collection process and any concerns.



As a note, law enforcement was not asked to accompany volunteer counters or participate in any direct manner during the last event. Due to the confidential nature of the surveys and the need for trust amongst those experiencing homelessness, a large police presence during the count is not advised. In previous years, departments have been made aware of the mapping zones and the event details in order to have officers in the vicinity should an issue occur. Generally speaking, this event is very safe and there have not been instances of violence or harm that would warrant a large police presence in future years. Future involvement will be at the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer or Chief Programs Officer, as well as the police departments and agencies themselves.

### Special/Separate Deployment Sites

In the case that cities or police departments within the County would like to serve as deployment sites for volunteers, separate sites will be prepared ahead of the event to accommodate this process. This would need to occur in coordination with team leaders to ensure that teams are aware of their specific deployment instructions in advance of the event. In 2017, the police departments in Citrus Heights and Elk Grove served as deployment sites, allowing volunteers to deploy directly from those cities and not come into Sacramento to the DHA Bureau.

The deployment of teams from sites other than the main deployment site will be at the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer or Chief Programs Officer. It will depend greatly upon the team structure in future years, as well as the apparent need for separate sites. The methodologies used in collecting data, the count materials, and any other associated processes should follow the same process as that at the main deployment site. Volunteers at deployment sites will be under the direction of their team leaders during the event.

### Media Presence

Members of the media will likely choose to be present during the event. In 2017, representatives of six local news agencies attended the event and conducted interviews, took pictures and video segments, and walked along with volunteers throughout the process. As the community is interested in the count itself and what it represents, it is likely that members of the media will participate in future events.

To accommodate the media, a Media/VIP room is typically set up somewhere in the facility that is serving as the event's main deployment site. The Coordinator will need to coordinate with SSF's Chief Public Affairs Officer regarding all media communication and plans for the night of the event. It has been suggested that the media plan include collaboration with other ongoing projects or events occurring close to the count night, such as Winter Sanctuary, the warming centers and the Stand Down event. Any collaboration will be dependent upon timing of other events during the given year and completed at the discretion of the Chief Public Affairs Officer.



### VIP Participants

It is likely that many “VIP” participants will choose to attend and participate in the count. These individuals include Sacramento City Councilmembers, Sacramento County Board Supervisors, California State Assembly members and other local politicians. The current City Councilmembers and Board Supervisors should be contacted at least one month prior to the event to be issued a formal invitation to participate. Please see the example emails sent in 2017 as a reference guide to prepare emails to the City Council and County Board of Supervisors. The Coordinator should consult with the Chief Public Affairs Officer to ensure that all communications are approved.

Current City Council information can be found here: <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/mayor-council>. Current County Board of Supervisors information can be found here: <http://www.bos.saccounty.net/Pages/default.aspx>.

### SSF Staff Participation

The internal staff is expected to participate during the event, helping with either the unsheltered or sheltered count. The majority of the staff will be asked to assist at the unsheltered count deployment site, managing processes such as map distribution, team composition, supply distribution, VIP greeting, and registration. A small group of staff will be asked to support the manager in charge of conducting the sheltered count on the day following the unsheltered count. All staff involvement will be managed under the direction of the Chief Operating Officer; staff will likely not be asked to participate in both the unsheltered and sheltered events.

The Chief Operating Officer should call a meeting of the internal staff prior to the event to inform them of the schedule and their assigned duties. The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for assigning staff members to the sheltered count process. The staff member working closest with the Outreach team (usually, the Outreach Manager) will be assigned to serve as the law enforcement liaison during the event.

The Coordinator should email the internal staff prior to the event, reminding them of their planned participation and necessary details (time, parking situation, dinner, etc.). Depending on the location of the event, staff members should be encouraged to carpool and park in a secure location; they will likely be parked for more than six hours. Dinner is provided for staff members who participate; pizza or another convenient option should be ordered the morning of the event.

### **Main Contact Information (List)**

The contact information for the individuals who are managing the event and will be onsite throughout the evening needs to be distributed amongst the administration team (coordinator,



Chief Operating Officer, Chief Programs Officer, Chief Public Affairs Officer, volunteer manager, event space manager, etc.). The main contact list used in 2017 has been provided in the planning binder as a guide.

### **Incentive Gifts**

For the past several counts, gift cards have been purchased as an incentive for survey participants. The gift cards are purchased in \$5 denominations from McDonald's or another fast food chain, which can be completed online. The Chief Financial Officer can provide more direction regarding the budget and whether or not gift cards are still available from previous events.

### **Execution of the Event**

#### **Event Schedule**

The Count Night event has followed this schedule in the past:

3:00 PM – Set up begins at deployment site (“all hands on deck” – SSF staff and any other designated volunteers arrive to help with setting up the registration flow, map packet distribution, supply distribution, staff area, VIP/Media rooms, etc.).

5:30 PM – Registration volunteers arrive to begin setting up volunteer registration stations and to practice the flow.

7:00 PM – Volunteers arrive to register and be deployed (process takes approximately 1-2 hours to deploy all volunteers).

8:30 PM – Most, if not all, volunteers should be deployed by this time! After all volunteers are deployed, the volunteer staff at the deployment site will break down and clean up the registration flow and any other areas that can be cleaned. While waiting for teams to return, the debriefing materials will be set up and the mapping area prepared for packet return process.

9:00-9:30 PM – The first few teams will begin arriving back at the deployment site. They will be debriefed and thanked for their time.

9:30-11:30 PM – The majority of the teams will return during this time frame. They will all be debriefed and thanked for their time. Map packets or teams will be tracked to ensure that all teams have returned.

11:30 PM – 12:30 AM – The rest of the teams will return to the deployment site voluntarily or will be called and asked to return ASAP. Once all teams have returned and their mapping



packets/information has been accounted for, the SSF internal team will break down the space and return it to its previous set up.

### **Necessary Event Items**

The following list provides an example inventory of items that should be brought to the event location, in the case that they are needed:

- Sharpies (black, at least five)
- Pens (for use by the staff and volunteers, at least twenty)
- Ream of printer paper
- Masking tape
- Blue Painter's tape
- Stapler
- Tape dispenser
- Rubber bands
- Directional signage (pre-printed)
- Banker's boxes (4-6) (for collecting supplies, storage, etc.)
- Water bottles (disposable)
- Snacks (for internal SSF staff)
- Plates, napkins, utensils (as needed, for dinner)
- First aid kit

### **Volunteer Welcome and Registration**

The volunteer welcome and registration should be set up at least one hour before the volunteers have been asked to arrive – VOLUNTEERS WILL ARRIVE EARLY, LATE and NOT AT ALL WHEN YOU EXPECT THEM TO! If volunteers do arrive early and the registration stations have not yet opened, it is best to be able to welcome them into the building and provide information about how to proceed.

While waiting in line, volunteers will be given scenario sheets to use to practice their interviewing skills with other people in line. Please see examples in the appendix of the planning binder.

### **Team Packets**

Each team will receive a packet, which will include information regarding the given geographic region and materials for conducting the count. The packets should include a variation of the following:





- Zone map(s) and copies
- Count forms
- Survey forms
- FAQ sheet
- Key contact lists – main contacts & for the particular map zone
- Pens
- Incentive gifts
- Treats for volunteers, if applicable (the 2017 packets included mints for the volunteers)

All volunteers will also be given a clipboard and a safety vest before being deployed; the expectation is that the safety vests will be worn throughout the event.

### **Media/VIPs**

When members of the media or VIP participants arrive at the count event, they should be escorted directly back to the area where volunteers are getting ready to be deployed. An SSF staff member will be assigned to the VIPs throughout the evening, which involves greeting them, escorting them back to the deployment area, and ensuring that they have the information needed for the evening. A VIP photo sheet should be created in advance of the event to aid the staff person and others; an example of this from 2017 is found in the Appendix section of the binder.

### **Troubleshooting During the Event**

A troubleshooting table or area should be assembled to allow volunteers a place to ask last-minute questions and navigate any registration issues that may occur. One staff member should be assigned to assist in the troubleshooting process throughout the evening to ensure that volunteers have a central point of communication for issues. The PIT Coordinator, Chief Programs Officer or Chief Operating Officer should be contacted in case of any larger issue that occurs during the evening. Volunteers will be instructed to call a particular individual in case of issues while in the field, and all troubleshooting will be handled as appropriate.

### **Lost Volunteer Process**

An SSF staff member working at the event should be assigned to manage lost volunteers and provide mapping information or off-site support, as needed. In past years, an SSF staff member has been stationed in a quiet room at the deployment site or off-site ready to answer any phone calls from volunteers seeking mapping information. If volunteers are lost during the process, they are asked to call one central number (to be determined prior to the next Count).



### **Volunteer Appreciation Items**

A volunteer appreciation gift should be prepared as a way of saying thank you on behalf of the organization. In 2017, “goodie bags” were prepared for the volunteers prior to the event and distributed as they walked in to the registration area. Each goodie bag included a powdered Gatorade packet, granola bar, fruit snacks, mints, cookies and a thank you card from the organization. Items were purchased online (<https://www.uline.com/>, <http://www.candywarehouse.com/>, etc.), at Target and at Costco. Gifts should be small enough to fit into a backpack or purse and applicable to the event. The Coordinator should consult with the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Financial Officer before making any purchases.

### **Law Enforcement/Other Appreciation Items**

In past years, members of the law enforcement community have also been given an appreciation item for their participation and support on the night of the Count. Depending on the budget and level of involvement in 2019, this may be something that is considered.

### **Volunteer Debriefing**

Volunteers will be debriefed at the event immediately upon returning to the deployment site. They will be asked to fill out a written debriefing form, which asks three or four basic questions about the experience and leaves room for any suggestions that may be given regarding the event. Debriefing forms are anonymous and are not required; however, volunteers should be strongly encouraged to complete the form before leaving the deployment site. The volunteer debriefing form and responses from 2017 can be found in the Appendix of the planning binder.

### **Post-Event**

#### **Event Clean-up & Reorganization**

Before the Coordinator and SSF staff can leave the event site, it must be cleaned up and returned to how it was set up prior to the event. Coordinate with the site manager or representative to ensure that everything is returned to its previous state.

Any supplies that belong to SSF should be driven back to the office either immediately after the Count or on the day after the Count is conducted. Supplies should either be labeled for the PIT Count or returned to their general use (i.e. if an SSF computer is used and is returned to the SSF supply closet).



## **Volunteer Communication**

Volunteer follow-up is important, as it fosters open communication and potential interest in participation in future years. Following the conclusion of count night, send a thank you email to all volunteers and affiliated individuals. Depending on the data that is available, it may be possible to include some statistics to help illustrate the impact of their time (i.e. the number of map areas counted, the number of volunteers involved, etc.). Once the PIT report has been released (usually during the summer following the Count), send an email to volunteers with a link to the report.

## **Debriefing Meetings**

### Law Enforcement

The law enforcement officers or agencies who were involved should be included in the debriefing meetings and activities to provide insight on the event and any issues encountered. The Coordinator should also follow up with any involved officers via email immediately following the event to ensure that they are thanked for their involvement and that any issues are addressed in an expeditious manner. Law enforcement officers or agencies involved can be included in a larger community debriefing meeting hosted at the Sacramento Steps Forward office, or the Coordinator may elect to follow up with them individually and not invite them to a meeting.

### Community Organizations

Depending on the timing and the budget, the Coordinator and Chief Operating Officer or Chief Public Affairs Officer may choose to host a debriefing meeting for the community. If a meeting is not held, an email should be sent to all involved parties as an open door for communication regarding any feedback about the event.

If a meeting is preferred, schedule it for approximately 1-2 weeks after the event. Reserve one of the larger conference rooms on site at the Sierra Health Foundation. Provide guests with catered coffee, beverages and snacks or lunch (only if the meeting takes place between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM). Defer to the Sacramento Steps Forward Executive Assistant for lunch suggestions and more information.

### Staff Members

Following the event, the SSF staff members who were involved should be gathered to provide input and information regarding their experiences and any improvements that should be incorporated in planning the next Count.



### Volunteer Staff

If possible, schedule a meeting with any volunteer leaders and staff organizers to gather information regarding the volunteer process, experience and any improvement suggestions for the next PIT Count. It is important to remember that the Count cannot take place without the involvement of hundreds of volunteers; if there are large areas of concern or possible improvement, we want to ensure that they are incorporated in the next planning process.

### **Distribution of Data**

Once the PIT count has concluded, the team hired to manage the data reporting and analytics will be given all data information (depending on how the data is collected, either via electronic or paper format). As the team is conducting the data entry and analysis, SSF should be made aware of any changes or questions. The data will be published publicly once completed and confirmed by the Sacramento Steps Forward Executive Staff.