



SACRAMENTO
STEPS FORWARD

Ending Homelessness. Starting Fresh.

2022 Sacramento Homelessness Point-in-Time Count Safety First Measures

Introduction

Every two years, Sacramento County and its incorporated cities undertake a large effort to estimate the number of individuals and families who experience homelessness within a 24-hour period. This year's count will be held on Feb. 23 and 24, 2022. It is known as the Homeless [Point-in-Time Count](#) (PIT) and is congressionally mandated for all communities that receive U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding for homeless programs.

[Sacramento Steps Forward](#), a private nonprofit 501c3 charity serving the Sacramento region, heads the count as lead agency for the county's [Continuum of Care](#) (CoC). The CoC is a regional planning body made up of 25 members representing local government, homeless service providers, people with lived experience and the broad community of business, health advocates and faith-based organizations.

The Health and Safety of Volunteers and Those They Encounter are of Utmost Importance

- **SSF uses standards provided by HUD and follows Sacramento County's COVID-19 related protocols** in developing guidelines and deploying best practices that take into account safety first for both volunteers and those they encounter while canvassing.
- Comprehensive **training** is provided to all canvassers beforehand to ensure their safety and that of those they encounter.
- Required **use of best practices** on when to engage and not to engage with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

- **Volunteer teams will be supported with professional experienced outreach team leaders in locations of potential concern.**
- Using only **professional outreach teams in areas identified as remote, or needing more support of individuals encountered.**
- **Working closely with law enforcement agencies before and during the count** to identify locations of concern and provide the right resource for that location.
- Dedicated **channels connecting canvassers and law enforcement** in the field on count nights.

Extra Measures to Ensure a Safe and Productive Count

To limit social interactions, **SSF maximizes the use of remote training.** This allows volunteers to train in their own space. [Zoom trainings](#) will occur between 5 and 6 p.m. on Feb. 9, 15, and 22. Volunteers who sign up for canvassing will be sent a link to sign on.

Volunteers must conduct the count in compliance with social distance principles, including remaining at least six feet apart from others.

Teams are kept very small, with only three or four volunteers per team. These teams maintain at least six feet from one another as well as from people experiencing homelessness. Professional outreach staff, who work with unsheltered individuals and families as part of their regular job, conduct additional surveys.

To make sure people living unsheltered know what to expect, **professional outreach workers in the course of their regular interactions with the unsheltered community are informing those living outdoors what to expect,** emphasizing an opportunity to receive food gift cards as thank you for participating.

COVID-19 Related Safety

SSF follows the protocols provided by the Sacramento County Department of Health. [Volunteers who sign up](#) for the count **must show proof to SSF of being fully vaccinated and answer health screening questions before being released to conduct the count.** Hand sanitizer is also provided. Volunteers **must wear a mask** and be **free of any symptoms** of a cold, flu, or COVID. When canvassing, **teams will also have a supply of masks to give to those they encounter** who do not have a mask and are willing to wear one.

Historical Record of Safety

In 13 years, there have been no reports of someone being a victim of a crime as a direct or indirect result of participating in the PIT. There were two occasions SSF was made aware in which volunteers were uneasy because of a perceived threat, and in neither case were the situations emanating from those they encountered for counting.

For More Information

Contact sacpitcount@sacstepsforward.org.

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