

## What feedback should we share to improve next years PIT Count?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 2.2.24

“Even if segregation is gone, we will still need to be free; we will still have to see that everyone has a job. Even if we can all vote, but if people are still hungry, we will not be free. ... Remember, we are not fighting for the freedom of ourselves alone, but for the freedom of the human spirit, a larger freedom that encompasses us all.”

— Ella Baker, 1964

### Evil

Looks like what drives me crazy

Don't have no effect on you –

But I'm gonna keep on at it

Till it drives you crazy, too.

*(from Selected Poems of Langston Hughes, 1987 edition)*

### Suggestions to Improve 2025 PIT Count

- Reduce the movement of people before and after the PIT.
- The sweeping of encampments in Fife was definitely a problem.
- We need to be much more forceful about demanding no sweeps, especially since it's in the dead of winter.
- Hard embargo on ANY forced movements four weeks before, four weeks after. If jurisdictions agree, how will their agreement be enforced?
- Reinforce the dignity and worth of unhoused people in interactions and in materials handed out.
- The interviewers were more concerned about the questions than the people being interviewed. Most people are used to being asked these questions for all services they have received over time.
- Simply being asked personal questions can reinforce the notion that some stranger has the right to ask you to lay your life bare because you are poor.
- The majority of our group did not participate in the count but we did talk about the HUD required count questions and how invasive and inappropriate to the circumstance that long list is. Some found the questions objectifying. Others awkward at best.
- Some of us just left out questions considered invasive so interested in having people being interviewed have more ability to talk about what they want to talk about, not just statistical data gathering.
- Understand why specific questions are asked, which seem overly invasive but may be used for better programming.
- Could the survey be put into an app, so the surveyor could hand a tablet/phone to the interviewee so they could fill out the survey anonymously -- the surveyor could help with any questions.
- Extend the survey time from one day to 3 days.

- Would like follow up with finding out what other counties are doing that might be best practice to get more accurate count, like conducting over a couple weeks if that is permitted by HUD. Perhaps a brief panel discussion with other counties in our state, or even from other states using a zoom format.
- King county doesn't count MORE in their longer-term process but they have conversations that are deeper.
- Some things missed in King Co that relied on “hubs” for interviewing people had some problem ensuring that all categories of folks have transportation to such places. A multi-system problem.
- Not sure there is and “best practice” for counting people. But having things to give out is a gold standard for these interactions. Not just survival supplies but gift cards too—to give back something to honor their participation.
- Possible improvements to the PIT resource card given out to those interviewed. Among comments was that the QR-code may not always be accessible by every person. Another was that these cards might be a wonderful opportunity to also improve the dignity and self-worth of those counted. As a former homeless myself, we are hurting far beyond simply roofs, socks and toothbrushes.
- Barriers to using QR codes need to be understood and addressed.
- If phone numbers are given out, make sure they work. Devon said that they did test the numbers this time.
- Devon wants next year’s event to be “resource rich”. Maybe link with Collaboration for a Cause?
- Suggestion on how to increase number of volunteers is for those of us who work with civic groups to get on their agenda in december to talk about pit. This may gather volunteers and at least increases awareness.
- Send teams out with transport & medical resources to be used STAT (egs: transport vans).
- Have elected officials who participate in the PIT do a facilitated de-brief around what they learned relative to their POLICIES.
- The answer to these policy issues - like the sweeps - is at the ballot box. We need more leaders with empathy. It’s so different when you’re on the front lines and interact with folks.
- One of us stated we had signed up for pit and never received follow up.

### **Other feedback**

- It’s very challenging to work within this sector, but also necessary.
- Need to bring back the TPCCEH workforce development committee.
- We also need to focus more resources keeping people housed who are at risk of homelessness.
- The number of older people who are unhoused is increasing. Our system doesn’t accommodate their needs well.
- While it was recognized that the count is inaccurate the point that the proportions of the inaccuracy are useful was also made.

## Notes and Resources List

### *New and Notable*

**Community Spotlight Opportunity:** Know of any resources that could be particularly helpful for asylum seekers and refugees experiencing homelessness? Please send suggestions for all partner spotlights to Theresa at [tpdrutis@nctacoma.org](mailto:tpdrutis@nctacoma.org)

**Tahoma Unitarian Universalist** is doing a fundraiser to help Tukwila families relocate. Email me for the info [Stacey.soltoff@gmail.com](mailto:Stacey.soltoff@gmail.com)

**The Grand Opening open house for Family Promise of Pierce County** will be happening Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, 11am to 8pm. More info email steve decker at [ceo@familypromisepiercecounty.org](mailto:ceo@familypromisepiercecounty.org)

**Free medical, dental, and vision care.** Seattle/King County Clinic runs 2/15-2/18 at Seattle Center.

**Links for PIT survey:** <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7699277/2024-PIT-Volunteer-Survey>

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Model-Interview-Based-Unsheltered-Night-of-Count-PIT-Survey.pdf>

### **New Shelter Availability Page**

<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/8220/Homeless-Emergency-Shelter-Availability>

**Learn more about specific actions of the National Poor People's Campaign** and State campaign online using the title. <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/> and about the Washington State campaign at <http://www.washingtonppc.org/>.)

### **Rev. Barber's book. Good read. Full of optimism!**

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/250729/the-third-reconstruction-by-the-reverend-dr-william-j-barber-ii/>

**Sign up to receive Action Alerts:** <https://secure.everyaction.com/-gZPY8k0qkaHQyrUqmpC5g2>

**To be added to the monthly Public Health email newsletter,** please share your email here OR email me at: [jschoeppe@tpchd.org](mailto:jschoeppe@tpchd.org)

**Weekly advocates' Zoom meeting,** every Friday at 2pm throughout session -

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0lde-hrzovGtGeucgS5dIStivu78W\\_G7aH](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0lde-hrzovGtGeucgS5dIStivu78W_G7aH)

### **TPCHD has a webpage for homeless service providers and advocates**

<https://tpchd.org/healthy-people/provider-resources/homelessness-providers-toolkit/>

**If you are an agency or org that needs COVID test kit support,** we still have kits to distribute. Please reach out directly to our testing team at: [epitesting@tpchd.org](mailto:epitesting@tpchd.org)

### **Recent press**

**Scarfbombing in the news**

<https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Living/bus-stops-fences-bombarded-handmade-scarves-amid-winter/story?id=106565989>

### **NIMBYs in the News**

<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/kenmores-canceled-affordable-housing-project-draws-sharp-criticism/>

### **Tukwila Asylum Seekers**

<https://www.kuow.org/stories/help-us-tukwila-asylum-seekers-take-refuge-in-hotels-as-permanent-shelter-evades-them>

### **Internal Trans Refugee Crisis**

<https://www.erininthemorning.com/p/us-internal-refugee-crisis-130-260k>

### ***Ongoing Resources and Needs***

**One pager on Housing Alliance priorities:** <https://www.wliha.org/advocacy/2024-public-policy-priorities>

**SVdP is willing to store any** items for sharing- including massive amounts of socks. We have systems in place so outreach workers can pick up supplies every day between 10am-5pm. Just text Dionne. 253-355-5868

**Link for the Coalition's cold weather resources page:** [www.craft.me/s/f0GVFmAubX8YUg](http://www.craft.me/s/f0GVFmAubX8YUg)

### **Outreach and Supply Need/Share Form:**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Kh2OBOLT-SXN8cq7L7Z1Bb04iXxCf6Nfv\\_RBP-FOSZk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Kh2OBOLT-SXN8cq7L7Z1Bb04iXxCf6Nfv_RBP-FOSZk/edit?usp=sharing)

**Free wound care clinic every Friday afternoon**, TNE clinic at the STD room at T-PCHD on S 37th & Pacific. Spread the word.

### **Safe Sites**

<https://ss4a.pchomeless.org>

**Outreach Supply Need and Share form:** <https://forms.gle/2zfK8Y5JvC1K5eXLA>

**Please sign up to the inclement weather listserv at**

<https://www.pchomeless.org/Home/Listserv>

**Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness** can be found here:

<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7309/Comprehensive-Plan-to-End-Homelessness>