

Methodology for NY-604 - Yonkers, Mount Vernon/Westchester County CoC

Sheltered Population Total

1. What data source(s) was used to produce the total number of people included in the sheltered population (staying in an emergency shelter, Safe Haven, or transitional housing) on the night of the count? Please indicate the percentage of the PIT count derived from each of the sources. (If a source was not used, please enter zero).

HMIS Data	0%
Provider-level surveys	0%
Client-level surveys	100%
Observation	0%
Other	0%
Total	100%

2. Was the CoC able to collect information about the number of people being sheltered on the night of the count from all emergency shelters, Safe Havens, and transitional housing projects listed on the HIC or only some? listed on your HIC or only some?

- Complete census count

3. What information or method(s) was used to de-duplicate the count of the total number of people included in the sheltered population?

- Comparison of unique client identifiers (not PII)
- Blitz count of persons in shelters (i.e., count occurred at same time to avoid double counting)
- Interview/survey question(s) with screening questions (e.g., have you already completed a count survey)

Sheltered Subpopulation

4. What data source(s) was used to produce the demographic and subpopulation data included in the sheltered population (staying in an emergency shelter, Safe Haven, or transitional housing) on the night of the count? (select all that were used)

- HMIS Data

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- Client-level surveys

5. Was the CoC able to collect information about the demographic and subpopulation characteristics of all sheltered people or only some?

- All sheltered people

6. Looking at the change in your sheltered count from last year's count, please choose up to three reasons that best explains these changes from the drop down list below.

- Change in homelessness prevention capacity
- Impact of coordinated entry

Please provide a brief description of these specific factors (500 word limit):

Our PIT count of sheltered homeless fell significantly from 1,780 persons in 2019 to 1,616 persons in 2020, a decrease of 164 persons (9.2%).

The number of persons in Adults Only households increased by 1 (from 572 in 2019 to 573 in 2020); the number of persons in Children Only households was unchanged at 3 in both years.

However, the number of persons in Households with at least one Adult and one Child fell by 165 (from 1,205 in 2019 to 1,040 in 2020 = -13.7%).

The significant decrease in Persons in Sheltered Households with at least one Adult and one Child may be due to the effects of our Coordinated Entry process, which is moving families into Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and other permanent housing. In addition, Westchester County DSS expanded a program funding legal assistance in housing court to reduce evictions in 2019.

The passage of the New York State Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019 was also a factor in the reduction in homelessness. When the law started to go into effect last June, there was an immediate reduction in new eviction cases filed in Westchester. The new law provides an increased notice period to tenants before they can be taken to court, requires rent demands to be in writing and 14 days before eviction is started, sets limits on late fees, and stops evictions if a tenant pays all back rent.

Unsheltered Population

7. What approach(es) was used to count the total number of people included in the unsheltered population during the PIT count. (select all that were used)

- "Night of the count" - known locations

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7a. Were certain areas within the CoC geography specifically excluded because the CoC had reason to believe there were no unsheltered people in those areas?

Yes

7b. How did the CoC select the areas that were included for canvassing?

- Areas were not selected randomly, but an effort was made to use local knowledge to target known locations (e.g., areas with known concentrations of unsheltered homeless people)

7b1. Did the CoC adjust the information in some way (e.g., statistical adjustment or extrapolation) to account for areas within the CoC geography that were not canvassed but where unsheltered people might have been on the night of the PIT count?

No

7c. In areas that were canvassed, did the CoC count all unsheltered people in those areas or a sample of people?

- All people encountered during the count

8. What information or method(s) was used to de-duplicate the total count of people in the unsheltered population? (Check all that apply)

- Comparison of personally identifying information (PII), such as name, date of birth, and Social Security Number
- Blitz count of unsheltered people (i.e., canvassing of different areas occurred at same time to avoid double counting)

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- Interview/survey question(s) with screening questions (e.g., have you already completed a count survey)

Unsheltered Subpopulations

9. What approach(es) was used to collect demographic and subpopulation data about unsheltered people included in the unsheltered population during the PIT count?

- Surveys/interviews of people identified as unsheltered on the night of the PIT count
- Surveys/interviews of people identified within 7 days following the night of the PIT count night who may have been unsheltered on the night of the PIT count (e.g., “service-based” surveys at locations where people who are homeless go for assistance)

10. Were all people who were encountered during canvassing on the night of the count or during post night of the count PIT activities asked to complete a survey/interview?

- All people encountered were surveyed

11. What information or method(s) was used to produce an unduplicated total count of homeless people across your sheltered and unsheltered populations?

- Comparison of personally identifying information (PII), such as name, date of birth, and Social Security Number
- Blitz count of unsheltered people (i.e., sheltered and unsheltered counts occurred at same time to avoid double counting)
- Interview/survey question(s) with screening questions (e.g., have you already completed a count survey)

12. Looking at the change in your unsheltered count from last year's count, please choose up to three reasons that best explains these changes from the drop down list below

- Change in PIT count methodology
- More volunteers for PIT count
- Weather

Please provide a brief description of these specific factors (500 word limit):

The number of unsheltered homeless persons counted in our CoC increased significantly from 32 in 2019 to 67 in 2020 (+109%). It is difficult to interpret trends in numbers as small as these – only 4% of the homeless persons we counted on the night of the Point-In-Time count were unsheltered.

The increase from 2019 to 2020 may partially be due to the very heavy rainfall which affected Westchester County on the day of the 2019 Point-In-Time count. The weather was relatively mild on the night of the 2020 Point-In-Time count.

We also continue to improve our unsheltered Point-In-Time count methodology year by year. In 2020 we had more teams of enumerators covering our CoC than ever before. In addition, more of the enumerator teams were led by professional outreach workers and community activists – their knowledge allowed us to count in locations we had not accessed in prior years. We also adjusted the timing of the count to occur later in the evening in order to encounter more homeless persons where they intended to sleep. Finally, we built stronger connections with local police departments.

We are confident that we can continue to keep the number of unsheltered very low by maintaining our outreach efforts to homeless (veterans and non-veterans) on the streets or other places not meant for human habitation, and our robust system of low-demand overnight emergency shelters that house those homeless who are unwilling or unable to comply with the public assistance eligibility requirements imposed by most of our 24-hour emergency and transitional shelters.

