



Simcoe County Homeless Enumeration

January 25-27, 2022

General Information

Simcoe County Homeless Enumeration

The Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness is partnering with the County of Simcoe to conduct the 2021 Simcoe County Homeless Enumeration using a Point-in-Time Count (PiT Count) methodology January 25-27, 2022. The PiT Count methodology includes administrative data, survey data, and a tally count. This activity will serve the purpose of counting and understanding the situations of people who are experiencing homelessness in Simcoe County. Our goal is to end homelessness in Simcoe County.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Point-in-Time Count?

The Point-in-Time Count is done during a 24-hour period to provide an estimated snapshot of the extent of homelessness in Simcoe County on a given night. Surveys will be completed between January 25-27, 2022, always referencing where a participant stayed PiT night (January 25, 2022). The PiT Count will gather anonymous information on both the number of persons/families experiencing homelessness, as well as their demographic characteristics and service needs.

The methodology of the PiT Count has been used in many communities across Canada, making it possible to compare results across the country. The count will take place across Simcoe County during the night of Tuesday, January 25th and will be strategically scheduled during timeframes that enables accurate counts, such as evenings when people are more likely to have settled down where they are planning to spend the night (in shelters or on the street).

Why is the PiT Count Important?

As of 2021, all communities in Ontario are required to conduct a homeless enumeration to help people experiencing homelessness connect to local resources and supports. A Point-in-Time Count captures numbers and basic demographics of people experiencing homelessness at a single point in time. Conducting a Point-in-Time Count also provides an opportunity to connect with people experiencing homelessness in the community to ask if they would like to be included on the By-Name List to receive help from Service Managers to find housing and supports.



Findings from the PiT Count will demonstrate housing and service needs specific to the Simcoe County area. It will also provide information to assist organizations, funders, and all levels of government to plan for the funding and service needs of people experiencing homelessness locally.

What kind of information will the survey collect?

The PiT Count is a voluntary survey that asks participants questions on their age, gender identity, sexual orientation, aboriginal status, military status, immigration status, income sources, how long they have been homeless, whether they have accessed emergency shelter recently, whether they have migrated to Simcoe County recently, and what happened that caused them to lose their most recent housing option.

Who will count?

Surveys will be conducted by staff and outreach workers from social service providers, health care providers, outreach workers, and corrections agencies.

Where will they count?

Street teams will count in outdoor locations where it has been assessed, through a pre-count process, that people experiencing homelessness are likely to be. Encampments that have been previously identified will only be surveyed by experienced outreach workers to protect the integrity of their space and avoid any potential for voyeurism. The methods for the survey include:

- **Indoor Shelter Surveys** - the sheltered surveys will include emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, and transitional housing programs in Simcoe County.
- **Street Surveys** - the street surveys will reach people living in public/outdoor places that are not suitable for human habitation.
- **Service Counts** - these surveys will be in local public locations (ie, libraries and recreational centres) and non-profit service providers (ie, drop-in centres, food banks, and meal programs). (Will be limited during COVID-19).
- **Data from Agencies/Government** - includes those residing in institutions (ie, hospitals, holding cells, detox clinics) who do not have a permanent address.

How will organizations know what to do?

Organizational staff will be trained in safety considerations, interviewing, consistent survey administration processes, confidentiality, and obtaining consent. Training will be provided online during COVID-19.



Why are we conducting enumeration during a pandemic?

Local community discussions have encouraged moving forward with an enumeration for the following reasons:

- To develop an understanding of the unique and unprecedented situations related to homelessness that people are currently experiencing, to which local responses can be developed.
- To gain insight into the experience of homelessness among people who are typically underrepresented in enumerations because they are staying with friends/family/acquaintances (the hidden homeless).

What safety measures will be in place?

All safety precautions recommended by public health will be in place and will be expected to be followed during the Enumeration. Protocols will be reviewed during training.

If a surveyor or survey participants feels their safety is being compromised during a survey interview, they are encouraged to end the interview.

The following changes will be implemented to ensure the Enumeration process is safe for staff and participants during COVID-19:

- No magnet events (i.e., no events that would bring together large groups of people).
- No volunteers will be recruited to conduct surveys. Instead, surveys will be conducted by staff at community agencies, who already have an understanding of and experience in safe delivery of services during COVID-19.
- Use of an online survey, in addition to having paper surveys available.
- Verbal rather than written survey consent.
- No volunteers for data entry.
- Training will be done virtually through the use of videos.
- There will be no headquarter locations in local communities.

How is “homelessness” defined?

People are considered homeless if they are:

1. **Unsheltered** - this includes people living in public or private spaces without consent or contract and people living in places not intended for permanent human habitation.



2. **Emergency Sheltered** - this includes people using emergency shelters programs, including emergency motel accommodations, and Violence Against Women shelters.
3. **Provisionally Accommodated** - this includes people who are using interim housing, such as short-term transitional housing or who are staying in temporary accommodation or whose housing lacks tenure (ie, those commonly referred to as “hidden homeless” or “couch-surfing”).

Indigenous Homelessness Definition

Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nation, Metis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common definition of homelessness, indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot cultural, spiritually or physically reconnect with their Indigency or lost relationships (Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, 2012).

For more information, please visit:

www.scateh.com/enumeration

or

www.simcoe.ca/enumeration

