



DuPage County Continuum of Care Volunteer Training 1/20/26

ONE NIGHT POINT IN TIME COUNT OF
UNSHELTERED INDIVIDUALS

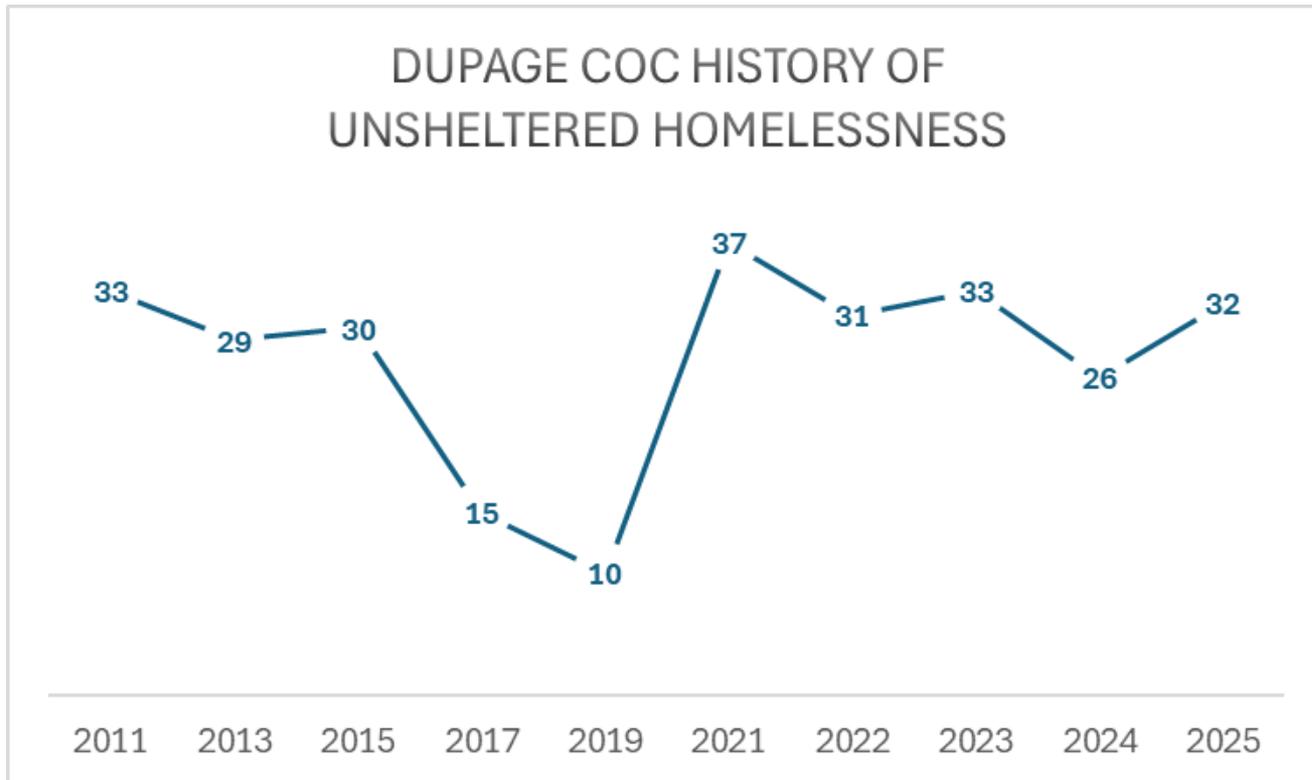
Volunteer Training Agenda

1. Purpose of the Unsheltered Point in Time Count (Lisa Snipes/DuPage CoC)
 - Why, Who, When & Where
2. Goals of the 2026 Count (Lisa Snipes)
3. Point in Time Count Preparations (Lisa Snipes)
 - What to bring/How to Prepare
4. Best Practices in Interviewing Persons Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness (Alex Leone & Tori Shaffer/DuPagePads)
 - Point in Time (PIT) Count Approach
 - Point in Time (PIT) Count Safety
5. Survey Review (CoC & DuPage County GIS Department)
6. Q&A

Why Do We Count?

- All persons (sheltered) across the U.S. are counted during the last 10 days in January 2026. Most CoCs (85%) also count unsheltered persons during this same time.
- Data is provided to Congress, HUD, and other communities to understand extent of homelessness
- Assists local CoC in planning for homeless housing supports and other services
- Accurate counts play a critical role in annual CoC Program Funding Competition

DuPage County PIT Count



Who Do We Count?

Persons Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

This includes:

“An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

Who We Don't Count

- People temporarily staying with friends or family (“couch surfing” or “doubled up”)
- People temporarily staying in institutions (jails, hospital beds, detox or treatment centers, etc.)
- People walking out of bars at 2:00 a.m. or people “sleeping it off” in their cars near a bar
- People on their way home late at night

When Do We Count?



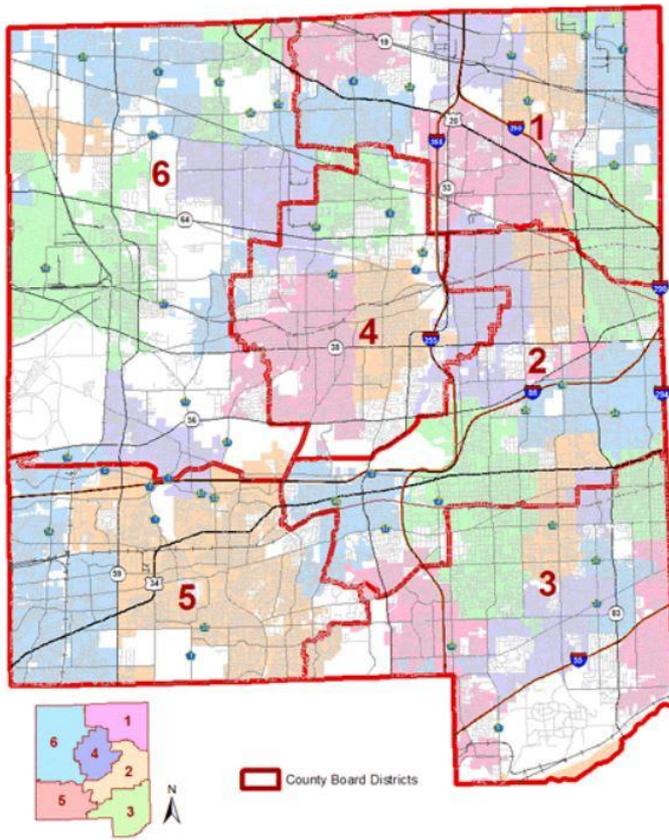
Wednesday
January 28th
(approx.) 10:00 pm



Thursday
January 29th
(approx.) 2:00 am



Where Do We Count?



Addison, Aurora (*), Bartlett, Bensenville, Bloomingdale, Bolingbrook (*), Burr Ridge (*), Carol Stream, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Downers Grove, Elmhurst, Glendale Heights, Glen Ellyn, Hanover Park (*), Hinsdale, Itasca, Lemont (*), Lisle, Lombard, Oak Brook, Oak Brook Terrace, Roselle (*), Naperville(*), Villa Park, Warrenville, Wayne (*), West Chicago, Westmont, Wheaton, Willowbrook, Winfield, Woodridge, and Wood Dale.

(*) indicates cities, towns or villages which span two counties

Where Do We Look?

Every community is different.

Employees at known locations make a great resource.

Make a plan ahead of time.

A word cloud of various locations and businesses, including: laundromat, Denny's, hospital parking lot, train station, community park, WalMart, hotel lobby, hospital ED, gas station, IHOP, outdoor shopping mall, parking garage, McDonalds, prairie path, grocery store, Dunkin' Donuts, forest preserve, vehicle, strip mall, post office, and police station lobby.

PIT Count Goals...

- Locate and document where unsheltered populations reside in DuPage County during the Count
- Interview the persons we encounter who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness using the questions in the PIT Count Survey, and capture their responses in the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) app whenever possible
- Provide complete and accurate information on each survey
- Quality vs. Quantity

PIT Count Preparations

- If possible, check in with the local Police Department before you head out for the evening
- Bring flyers with you to leave behind with your contact information
- Explain what you are doing, how long you will be out, who is with you (bring them in with you if you can)

PIT Count Preparations (Cont.)

- Teams are made up of at least two persons. One driver and one count member
- Each team is assigned a community(s) to search for the night
- Many teams provided with locations (“HOT SPOTS”) in that town to begin their search – it can look different each year

PIT Count Preparations (Cont.)

- Fully charged mobile device for survey purposes
- Ensure access to survey link ahead of time
- Additional paper survey forms and pens
- Flashlight
- 211 Bookmarks to leave on windshields & at certain hotspots
- Dress appropriately (warm & colorful)

Engaging Individuals

- Treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Approach individuals only when the team feels comfortable and safe
- Don't shine flashlight in faces
- Respect personal space, keep an arm's length distance
- Have the experienced team member do the engaging
- Don't take anything said to you, personally

Engaging Individuals (Cont.)

- Your clothing will say a lot about you (don't wear all black/wear colored head gear) and high visibility vest
- Announce your presence and that you're not ICE or police. You're here to help.
- Park about 20 ft away if possible

Engaging Individuals (Cont.)

- Ask the individual if you can ask a few brief survey questions. Do not assume.

- Explain what the survey is for:

to help service and housing providers identify local housing and service needs, and to direct Street Outreach teams to assist with their needs

- Thank them for their time and assistance; ask if you can provide them with a small “care kit” (backpack) as a thank you

PIT Count Safety

- If you see or smell alcohol, don't approach (but count them using your observation skills)
- Do not hesitate to remove yourself from any situation that puts you or the team at risk
- Never approach anyone alone, stay with the team

SAFETY FIRST!

Survey Review – DuPage County GIS

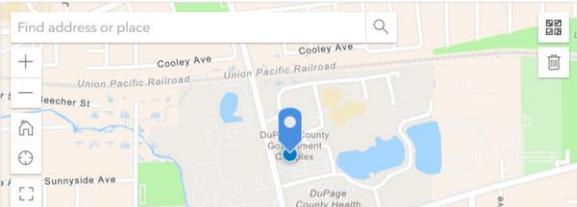
Point in Time Count Survey Hotspot Locations Contact List

Including yourself (Person 1), how many adults are there in your (their) household, who are sleeping in the same location tonight?*

How many children <18 are there in your (their) household, who are sleeping in the same location tonight?*

Household Questions (0) ▾
No records

Location*



The map shows a street view of DuPage County, Illinois. A blue location pin is placed on the map, indicating the survey location. The map includes labels for Cooley Ave, Union Pacific Railroad, Lecher St, Sunnyside Ave, DuPage County Government Complex, and DuPage County Health. A search bar at the top left of the map interface says "Find address or place".

Use the mobile GIS survey (vs. a paper version if possible)

Survey uses conditional logic

Complete the survey using critical thinking and observation skills

Survey Review - Summary

- Please test drive the GIS survey before the Count. Use the word “TEST” BEFORE your name (i.e., Surveyor Name: “TEST John Doe”)
- Do NOT test the survey after Tuesday 1/28/26

[Point in Time Count Survey](#)

- If you DO use a paper form the night of the count, or record any observations using paper notes, please send this information immediately after the count to: continuum@dupagecounty.gov

Reminders

- Team Leads - confirm your Teams!
- Volunteers – have your Team Lead contact info
- Pick up your backpacks/high visibility vests
- Bring copies of the 211 bookmark to leave with persons (observed only or interviewed) & a copy of the flyer for law enforcement
- Didn't locate anyone/located someone – what happens next



THANK YOU!

