

# Point-in-Time Count and Registry Week Coordination Packet

Information to Support Communities to Conduct  
a Joint Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and Registry Week



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## Introduction

The following guidelines support communities who want to conduct a Registry Week in coordination with their PiT Count. These guidelines were developed by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness in consultation with Reaching Home to ensure they meet the requirements of the 2020 Reaching Home Coordinated PiT Count.

The essential and unique components of a Registry Week are that you collect people's names (with their consent) and conduct a common assessment (e.g., VI-SPDAT or other) allowing you to:

- kick-start or verify your [By-Name List](#); and
- follow-up with people to take action to end their homelessness – prioritizing housing support based on their depth of need and your own local priorities.

When you conduct a joint PiT/Registry, the survey you use with participants is conducted in phases, presenting the anonymous PiT survey first, followed by the Survey for the Registry Week. This packet will provide you the details on how to conduct this coordinated approach appropriately in your community.

Remember, the Registry Week approach is flexible to meet your local needs. You can use any of the ideas presented through both PiT and Registry Week tools listed below to conduct your PiT/Registry.

## Tools for PiT Counts and Registry Weeks

### PiT Counts – Guidelines, Toolkits and further information at:

- The [Homelessness Learning Hub](#) (search PiT Count) has many resources including the following courses: [PiT Planning](#) || [PiT Preparation](#) || [PiT Implementation](#) || [PiT Post-Count](#)
- For a general overview in one document, you can also review the [PiT Count Toolkit](#)

### Registry Weeks – Toolkit and further information at:

- A full [Registry Week Toolkit](#) is included on the Built for Zero Canada (BFZ-C) website.
- Sample customizable (Word) versions of the Introductory Script, Screening, Tally and Consent, as well as sample customizable surveys for single adults, youth and families are included in this document.

## Script, Screening, Tally, and Consent Instructions

Review the [Joint Pit/Registry customizable sample introductory survey script, screening questions, tally sheet and consent form](#). These tools are samples for your reference and will need to be modified according to your individual community.

You may choose, as part of the Introductory Script, to describe (and then deliver) the PiT and Registry surveys as one continuous survey OR describe (then deliver) as two separate surveys, pausing to do a second introduction for the Registry Week survey. Some of the potential advantages and disadvantages to each approach are outlined below:

<b>Advantages &amp; Disadvantages &amp; Approach</b>	
<b>Describe and then deliver as one continuous survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you treat as one package and just require the full consent from all participants up front for both portions of the survey, it is potentially less confusing and cumbersome for surveyors and those being surveyed.</li> <li>• May be confusing to people as to why you are collecting names part-way through the survey – you may or may not want to highlight this in your survey script(s) or consent form.</li> <li>• Feedback from some communities who have conducted a Joint PiT/Registry Week was to keep it together and keep it simple.</li> </ul>
<b>Describe and deliver as two separate surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While Registry Week survey refusals are generally less than 10%, there may be some people who are willing to answer the anonymous PiT questions but not provide their names and complete the Registry portion.</li> <li>• You would need to identify there are two parts of the survey. Complete the first part and put in a separate envelope to keep anonymous, then complete the consent that would be attached to the Registry survey with the name included in another envelope.</li> <li>• You may know that some people have already completed the common assessment you are using for your Registry and do not need to ask them to answer that portion again if a) circumstances in their life have not changed and/or you feel you have already obtained the proper consents to use that information as part of your Registry Week.</li> </ul>

### Survey Script

Every surveyor in your community, regardless of what organization they are from or if they are a volunteer, should use the same introductory script for the survey. Again, you may use one script at the beginning or have one part at the beginning and one part before the Registry survey portion. Whichever way you organize it, you should be aware of and highlight (in the survey script and/or consent as appropriate) the following information:

- The name of the surveyor and their affiliation (organization that employs them, volunteer as part of Registry Week, etc.)
- The purpose of the survey, what the information is being used for and where it will be kept
- That the survey usually takes 15-20 minutes to complete (approximately 7-10 minutes for the PiT questions and 7-10 minutes for the VI-SPDAT questions)
- If using the VI-SPDAT for the Registry that only “yes,” “no,” or one-word answers are being sought
- That any question can be skipped or refused and they can stop at any time

- That if the participant does not understand a question, clarification can be provided
- The importance of relaying accurate information to the assessor and not feeling that there is a correct or preferred answer that they need to provide, nor information they need to conceal

You will want to ensure both your script and consent are as brief and easy to understand as possible while covering all the necessary information. If you already use the same common assessment that you are using for the Registry and have a common script, you can use and/or build off that for your Registry Week script.

## Screening Questions

Screening questions (that align with the PiT Core and COH additional questions) inform the surveyor whether or not to begin the survey with each respondent. The “C” question is required, while C1 and C2 are optional depending on whether or not you want this information and/or to screen in or out hidden or provisionally accommodated homelessness). For those who are screened in, the surveyor starts the survey by noting the responses to question C, C1 and C2. Those who are not screened in are recorded on the tally sheet.

When someone screens in and agrees to participate in the survey, this is when it is suggested to share with them that you have (*an item*) to thank them for their participation. For guidance on selecting honoraria, refer to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Discussion Paper: [Use of Honoraria in Point-in-Time Counts](#).

## Tally Sheet

The tally sheet in this Packet is the same one that is available in the PiT Toolkit. At the top of the sheet, surveyors indicate their search area/location, the time of their shift, their name and a contact number. If there are any discrepancies with the entries, or missing data, the surveyor may be contacted to provide clarity. This sheet is used when a respondent declines to answer the survey, has already answered the survey, has been screened out or has been observed only. This sheet captures where the individual was encountered, the reason they were not surveyed; and whether they are included among observed homelessness (clearly homeless, but declined or are unable to respond to the screening questions), as well as observed gender, age and the indications of homelessness. You can use the information about observed homelessness to try to follow-up with that person to have them complete the survey at some other point during your Registry Week.

## Consent Form

Privacy and confidentiality are of the utmost importance. Survey respondents are being asked to share identifiable information and must sign or provide verbal consent (acknowledged by signature of surveyor and ideally an additional witness) on a consent form.

You will want to ensure that people are providing informed consent and understand at a minimum:

- what information is being collected;
- what will be done with the information collected;
- who will have access to information collected; and
- who to contact if a participant has questions or wishes to withdraw consent.

All volunteers (including staff) must sign an Oath of Confidentiality. Without a signed Oath of Confidentiality, a volunteer cannot participate in your community's Registry Week. A sample customizable Oath of Confidentiality can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

## Joint Surveys & Scoring Instructions

Included in this section is information on the surveys, VI-SPDAT and scoring (with or without HIFIS). You will find links to the customizable 2020 Joint PiT-VI-SPDAT Surveys (separate one for singles, youth and adults) along with specific scoring information for each. Note, your community can choose to use any common assessment tool as your Registry Week Survey (the VI-SPDAT tools have been incorporated here given they are the most commonly used Registry Week survey tools in Canada).

### **HIFIS:**

If your community is using HIFIS as your data system for the count, the HIFIS PiT module will calculate VI-SPDAT scores automatically based on the scoring keys below.

- **HIFIS PiT Module Information (includes User Guide, tips sheets and videos) – Coming Soon! – will be posted on the [Homelessness Learning Hub](#) (search HIFIS and PiT)**
- If your community is not using HIFIS, you will need to calculate the VI-SPDAT scores yourself and factor responses from Q15 of the PiT portion of the survey into the scoring of the VI-SPDAT. Further information is included below.

**The HIFIS PiT Module includes the ability to generate graphs and charts in real-time from the VI-SPDAT Single Adult survey only (NOTE this does not include the youth and family versions of the VI-SPDAT – these would need to be analyzed separately using your raw data).**

### **VI-SPDAT Training Materials:**

Further information about the VI-SPDAT tools can be found on the OrgCode [website](#) and in the CAEH [Backgrounder – Homelessness-Specific Common Assessment Tools Currently Used Broadly Across Canada](#) (2018). Short on-line training and training videos are available (time could be further shortened if not needing to train people on the scoring):

- [VI-SPDAT How To Video](#) (29 minutes)
- [VI-SPDAT Single Adult Video Tutorial](#) (21 minutes)
- [VI-SPDAT Family Video Tutorial](#) (30 minutes)

### **Survey Scoring Details:**

#### **Please note:**

- The 2020 customizable Word versions of joint PiT/Registry surveys for single adults, youth and families are linked below.
- For each survey, Questions C1 is optional for those communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness.
- For numbering consistency, the VI-SPDAT portions of the survey packet include the duplicate questions. They are greyed out and formatted with a strike-through to indicate that volunteers do not need to ask these questions as they are conducting assessments. Please be sure to instruct your volunteers to not ask the questions that are greyed out and stricken through.

#### **Single Adult Survey Scoring Key:**

- Note: Question C1 is optional for communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness
- PiT Q14a (how long ago did you lose your housing most recently) replaces VI-SPDAT Q2
- PiT Q15 (on sources of income) replaces VI-SPDAT Q11, and if an individual answers that they receive no money, factor this into the scoring of the VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this questions

#### **Youth Survey Scoring Key:**

- Note: Question C1 is optional for communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness
- PiT Q14a (how long ago did you lose your housing most recently) replaces TAY-VI-SPDAT Q2

- PiT Q15 (on sources of income) replaces TAY-VI-SPDAT Q12, and if a youth answers that they receive no money, factor this into the scoring of the TAY-VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

### **Family Survey Scoring Key:**

- Note: Question C1 is optional for communities who wish to survey hidden homelessness
- PiT Q1 (do you have family members or anyone else staying with you tonight) can be used to answer F-VI-SPDAT Q4 regarding age/DOB of children
- PiT Q14a (how long ago did you lose your housing most recently) replaces F-VI-SPDAT Q6
- PiT Q15 (on sources of income) replaces F-VI-SPDAT Q15, and if a head of household answers that they receive no money, factor this into the scoring of the F-VI-SPDAT based on the scoring methodology for this question

## Customizing Survey Packets

You are likely going to want to customize the survey packets for your community. Please remember that you can add questions but not change any of the existing questions or the order of the questions. Also, any additional questions should not be included in the VI-SPDAT scoring.

You will want to ensure you include the following in your customized packet:

- Introductory script
- Screening questions
- Consent form
- The PiT Survey (Core Questions and any additional community questions)
- The VI-SPDAT (or other common assessment tool used by your community) and any other additional community questions.

**If you have questions or are looking for further information, please contact Marie Morrison, Director Built for Zero Canada at [marie@caeh.ca](mailto:marie@caeh.ca).**