



SAN DIEGO
**Regional Task Force
on the Homeless**

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**CHANGES MADE TO ANNUAL POINT-IN-TIME COUNT OF HOMELESS
SAN DIEGANS WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY TOP PRIORITY**
*Regional Taskforce on the Homeless is Responsible for Significant Amount of Data Outside
of One-Day Census*

NOTE: RTFH will host a virtual media availability at 1:30 pm, today, Dec. 22, to answer questions about the Point-in-Time Count. Zoom link provided upon RSVP to greg@threesixtysd.com

SAN DIEGO, CA., December 22, 2020 – Putting health and safety above all else, the **Regional Taskforce on the Homeless** (RTFH) and its board of directors has decided not to conduct its annual Point-in-Time Count (PITC) of unsheltered San Diegans this year. The region’s Continuum of Care (CoC) applied for and was granted an exception by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) this week.

Given the size of the San Diego region, a typical PITC requires nearly 1,600 volunteers. Coupled with the state of the COVID-19 pandemic, uncertainty of stay-at-home orders, and the need for close interaction with individuals who are being surveyed, the RTFH’s decision was grounded in concerns for the safety and well-being of the individuals experiencing homelessness, volunteers and RTFH staff.

“With stay-at-home orders and all of the other constraints that exist, many of the CoC across California are opting not to conduct unsheltered census this year,” said Tamera Kohler, CEO of the RTFH. **“Collecting accurate, useful data is in the interest of everyone, but because we cannot complete this safely, it is in the best interest of all involved to not conduct the count. Fortunately, we have a wealth of other data that we rely on that represents the true picture of people in our community experiencing unsheltered homelessness.”**

The RTFH is responsible for collecting, tracking and reporting out on a significant amount of real-time data as it pertains to homelessness in San Diego County. While a census of sheltered individuals, as well as the Housing Inventory Count (HIC) will still take place, the unsheltered PITC,

which is a one-day snapshot of who is experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the region, will not.

There are dozens of important statistical categories that are tracked and examined every day by the RTFH that give a truer picture of how individuals and families maneuver into, through and out of the homelessness crisis response system.

“I understand and support the Regional Task Force’s need to cancel the 2021 Point-in-Time Count,” said Mayor Todd Gloria, who has volunteered during the annual survey for roughly the past decade. “As Mayor, my decisions will be driven by data and best practices. The coordinated systems that the City and the region have built are continually improving and providing better and better information. I believe we can use these systems to mitigate the loss of the 2021 count data. I will not allow this to hamper our efforts to connect people experiencing homelessness to much-needed housing and support services.”

In preparing the waiver request RTFH consulted with HUD and other CoC across Southern California. Of the 13 peer CoC in Southern California, 12 are asking for the same exemption and the majority, including the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority and the Orange County Continuum of Care have already received approval from HUD.

“Every year, the Point In Time Count relies on hundreds of county employee volunteers to successfully complete the unsheltered count,” said County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher. “This year, taking into account public health considerations, it is safer for volunteers, staff, and those experiencing homelessness to limit the kind of interaction that the unsheltered count requires. This exception is the right choice for this year.”

The public can also access HMIS data via the public [data dashboards on the RTFH website](#). For more information about the Regional Taskforce on the Homeless, please visit [RTFHSD.org](https://www.rtfh.org).

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