



Statewide Homeless Count Day of the Count Packet

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INTERVIEWER INTRODUCTION SAMPLE SCRIPT / SUGGESTIONS

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWER:

- 1) Wear a name tag: *Statewide Homeless Count*
 [*Your Name*]
- 2) Ask the respondent the questions and record the answers while they follow along on a blank survey that they do not mark in any way.
- 3) If the respondent completes the survey on their own, be available and offer to help. Make sure to collect and review all surveys.
- 4) DO NOT say anything more than is necessary in your introduction. For example, DO NOT SAY “this study has not been done in nearly two decades;” or “this is a different point-in-time survey than has been done in the Denver Metro area;” This additional information only serves to confuse the respondent.
- 5) Try not to feel rushed – each respondent is the “center of attention” for the time period they are being interviewed.
- 6) If the respondent does not want to participate, explain the importance of the count and tell them that, unless they do a survey they and members of their family WILL NOT BE COUNTED. If they still decline, be gracious and say “ok” and “thank you.”

SCRIPT:

Hello, my name is _____ . I am helping the state of Colorado learn more about the housing needs of Colorado residents. We need your help so that the state can develop programs and services to better meet your needs. All of your answers will be private. The survey will take only a few minutes. Can we start now? Would you like a copy of the survey so you can follow along?



STATEWIDE HOMELESS SURVEY QUESTION GUIDE

Agency: Enter the name of your agency (if blank)

Program: Enter the specific program name within your agency (if blank)

Training Issue: *Numerous agencies have various programs within their agency. If a specific program(s) within your agency is administering the survey, please indicate the program name(s).*

City/Town/Community: Enter the name of the city, town or community (if blank)

County: Enter the name of your county (if blank)

Initials: Enter the respondent's first and middle initial and the first 3 letters of their last name

Training Issue: *Enter this information before you ask any questions so that you don't forget. If the respondent refuses to give you their initials, politely move on to the next question.*

Month you were born:

Circle the month in which the respondent was born

Q4 Are you a seasonal resort worker?:

This question identifies persons working in a resort area (e.g. ski area in winter or ranch in summer).

Q5 Do you have a current Colorado ID or Colorado driver's license?:

This question identifies persons in need of Colorado identification.

Q6 Do you consider yourself to be Spanish, Hispanic, Latino?:

Training Issue: *This question is independent of racial identification and is modeled after HUD's question regarding race and ethnicity.*

Q7 Which one category best describes your racial background?:

Training Issue: *Hispanics can be white, black or mixed. We want respondents to give the single best answer. If it isn't listed, they can put their race under "other." However, this question is intended to get at race, not ethnicity; for example, "Italian" or "Mexican" are ethnicities, not races.*

Q8 Are you (Check only ONE response):

This question refers to household situation.

Training Issue: This question should correspond with Questions 11-13 (where respondents indicate family members with them, also without a permanent place to live).

This question offers five responses: single person (including separated or divorced), single parent with children under 18 (including separated or divorced), part of a couple with children under 18, part of a couple without children under 18, and other. The purpose of this question is to identify persons who fit into the first four categories. For that reason, the question is interpreted as follows: if someone fits any of the first four categories, even if there are extended family members in their group, you check the category where they fit. For example, if a woman identifies herself as a single parent with children under 18, but is staying temporarily with her sister, she is still a single parent with children. If a woman is separated or divorced from her spouse/partner and has no children under 18, she is a single person. If a couple without children under 18 is traveling with their extended family, who also are homeless, they are identified as a couple without children – **HOWEVER**, the person filling out the survey must still document the number of family members staying with them who also are homeless. **If you are not sure which category to check, check “in another situation” and describe their situation.**

Single person – A single person is someone who is living alone or living with anyone **other than a spouse/partner or with his/her children under 18**. This category includes any person who is alone, including a child, teenager, adult or senior; any person who is with one or more siblings; someone who is living with an extended family member/members such as aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. If a single person has children **but is not living with his/her children under 18**, then they are counted as a single person. Similarly, if a single person has a spouse **but is not living with their spouse**, then they are counted as a single person. If a single person is staying in a shelter with his/her adult child, they are counted as a single person; however, they must still document their adult child and any other family members who are homeless with them in questions 11-13.

Single parent with children under 18 – This category includes anyone who is a single parent with children under 18, even if he/she is living with other family members as well. For example, if a woman is living with her two children and also with her parents, she is counted as a single parent with children.

Part of a couple with children under 18 – This category includes any couple – married or otherwise – that is living with their children under 18, even if the couple is living with other family members as well. A couple includes a spouse or a same or opposite sex partner. A couple with children that is also living with siblings, aunts, uncles, or other relatives is counted as a couple with children. A person who is living with his/her stepchildren or partners’ children under 18 or, is counted as being part of a couple with children.

Part of a couple without children under 18 – This category includes any couple – married or otherwise – who do not have children under 18. A couple includes a spouse or a same or opposite sex partner. A person who has children – or whose spouse or partner has children – is counted in this category if they have adult children **or if their children usually stay somewhere else.**

A couple without children who is living with siblings, aunts, uncles, or other relatives is counted as a couple without children.

***In another situation** – This category includes people who don't fit into the first four categories. For example, it includes a grandparent or grandparents who are with their grandchild/grandchildren. If the grandparent were alone, he/she would be considered a "single person." If the grandparent were with a spouse or partner, but without any grandchildren under 18, he/she would be considered "part of a couple **without** children."*

Q9 Do you have a permanent place to live?:

***Training Issue:** Homeless individuals often do not consider themselves to be homeless, for example, respondents living in a shelter may say they have a permanent place to live. If that is their response, the interviewer must mark the survey exactly as the person has responded, even if they know it is incorrect. If someone doesn't know if they are homeless and doesn't say where he/she is living, then circle "don't know." We will determine whether or not they meet the definition of homelessness when the survey data are analyzed, so be sure that they answer Questions 10 and 14 through 16.*

Q10 Where will you / where did you spend the night, of Monday, January 29th?

***Training Issue:** If the respondent can't remember where they stayed Monday night, January 29th, ask them where they stayed **last** night.*

*This question offers a number of options. **Do not leave question 10 blank!** Ask the question, then pause to give respondent some time to think. If the respondent volunteers a location, the interviewer should look for the response, confirm with the respondent that it is accurate, and check it. Only read the responses if the respondent does not volunteer a location. Since this question is critical to determining if someone is homeless, be sure that it is completed accurately. If you are not sure where to put someone's response, check "something else" and write in their response in as much detail as possible. If the respondent is unsure where they spent last night – e.g., they don't know if they were in prison or jail – check "somewhere else" and write in that they were either in prison or jail.*

If the respondent indicates they were staying temporarily with family or friends, it is critical that they also answer the follow up question, "Do you have an arrangement to stay there permanently?" to document if the arrangement is permanent or temporary. This is an additional attempt at clarifying the homelessness of those people staying with family or friends or couch surfing – there are numerous issues around this, e.g. these individuals are hard to find and therefore count; this group of people often have their homelessness questioned.

Q11 How many family members are/were with you on Monday night, January 29th, who ALSO are WITHOUT A PERMANENT PLACE TO LIVE? Do NOT include family members who you may have stayed with who HAVE a permanent place to live.

How many family members (NOT INCLUDING YOURSELF)?:

***Training Issue:** Q11 asks for total number of family members with respondent last night who are also without a permanent place to live. Do NOT include family members with a permanent place to live and do NOT include the respondent.*

For respondents who are staying with friends and family, It is especially important to ONLY include persons who do not have a permanent place to live. DO NOT include family members who live in the house permanently and are letting the respondent (and his family) stay with them. This will give us valuable information about the number of homeless persons.

Q12-Q13 Please complete the following table for FAMILY MEMBERS WHO WERE WITH YOU AND ALSO WITHOUT A PERMANENT PLACE TO LIVE.

This question asks for age and relationship to respondent for each of the OTHER persons in respondent's family. DO NOT include family members who have a permanent place to live.

Training Issue: *Spouse/partner includes opposite or same-sex partner – and it doesn't matter if they are married or just living together. The "other relative" category includes any family member that isn't listed – for example, uncle, aunt, sister, brother, sister's husband, brother's wife, stepparent, etc. – someone who is related to respondent in any way. For "other relative," please specify how the person is related to the homeless respondent.*

If someone says they are with their child in question 13, please be sure they fill in the child's age in question 12 so we can distinguish if they are with a child under 18 or an adult child. Without this information, we may not be able to determine if respondent is part of a family with children under 18.

Often, single parents who are somewhere unsheltered try to find a temporary place for their children under 18 to spend the night. These children should be included in the family group as homeless, even if they were NOT WITH the respondent the night of January 29th.

Note that we are only asking about FAMILY MEMBERS, so there is no category for friends (as opposed to partners). Therefore, if someone lists a friend (or several friends) in questions 12-13, DO NOT enter the friend(s) in the table for these questions. GO BACK to Question 11 and make sure that the number listed for this question only includes family members; it should NOT include the respondent or any friends (other than same or opposite sex partners).

Q14 In the next week, are you being evicted or thrown out of the place you are staying?

Training Issue: *This question is important because, even if someone is living in an apartment/house/trailer at this time, if they will be thrown out in the next week they are counted as homeless. It also helps to define the newly homeless.*

Q15 Including now, what is the total number of times you have been without a permanent place to live in the last three years?

Training Issue: *This question is necessary to determine chronic homelessness.*

If the respondent isn't sure of the answer, help them review the past three years and try to come up with an accurate response. If respondent still isn't sure, write in their best guess, e.g., 3-4 times.

Q16 How long have you been without a permanent place to live this time?

We want to know the length of this spell of homelessness.

Training Issue: This question is part of the definition of chronic homelessness and also helps to define the newly homeless.

Q17 In what city/town will you/did you spend the night, Monday, January 29, 2007?

Training Issue: If respondent does not know, leave blank.

If the respondent can't remember where they stayed Monday night, January 29th, ask them the city/town where they stayed **last** night.

Q18 In what county will you/did you spend the night, Monday, January 29, 2007?

Training Issue: If respondent does not know, leave blank.

If the respondent can't remember where they stayed Monday night, January 29th, ask them the county where they stayed **last** night.

Q19 What was the last County and State you considered your permanent place to live?

Training Issue: If they don't know their county, and know a city or town name, enter that. If they weren't in Colorado, put in the last state they considered their permanent place to live or, if they lived outside the United States, the last country.

Q20 As a child or youth, were you ever in foster care or another type of out-of-home placement?

Training Issue: The answer is "yes" if the respondent was in foster care, a group home, or youth detention. The answer is also "yes" if respondent was removed from his home and **placed by Social Services or another government agency** in a relative's home. However, if, as a youth, the respondent **voluntarily** left home to live with other family members (e.g., grandparents, aunt/uncle, etc.) or with a friends' family, then the answer is "no."

Q21 Do you think you have, or have you been told you have: (mental illness, medical or physical condition, etc.):

This question asks if respondent has various "conditions" or problems.

Training Issue: This question is necessary to determine chronic homelessness.

Be sure to read each condition and check all that apply. If someone says "yes" to one condition, continue reading all the other conditions. If someone is not sure if they have a specific condition e.g., they don't know if they have a serious mental illness, ask them to describe their illness/symptoms/problem. See below for how to categorize.

Serious mental illness – if someone isn't sure if they have a serious mental illness but they mention depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder (or say that they are anxious), or say they "hear voices," then check "serious mental illness."

Serious medical or physical condition – if someone isn't sure if they have a serious medical or physical condition but they mention cancer, brain tumor, diabetes, blindness, vision problems, emphysema, severe asthma, etc., then check "serious medical or physical condition." Also check "serious medical or physical condition" if the person mentions problems with mobility such as bad back, bad knees, loss of limb, broken limb, arthritis, rheumatism, inability to walk, etc. Do

NOT check “serious medical or physical condition” if someone has a problem that is not serious such as needing glasses or dental work, or if he/she has a temporary problem like a bad cold or other short-term illness. Also do NOT check “serious medical or physical condition” if someone has recovered from a major illness, such as being a cancer survivor.

Alcohol or drug abuse – if someone isn’t sure if they abuse alcohol or drugs, but say that it has been a problem or that they stopped using in the last day/week/month, then check “alcohol or drug abuse.” Also check “alcohol or drug abuse” if someone mentions an addiction to any kind of prescription drugs such as painkillers.

Developmental disability – only check if someone says they have this.

HIV/AIDS – If someone is HIV positive but says he/she does not have AIDS, check “HIV/AIDS.”

If someone isn’t sure if they have one of the first five problems and, after describing their problem you don’t know how to categorize their situation, check “other” and describe the problem in as much detail as possible. In addition, if someone mentions a problem that we didn’t specifically ask about, check “other” and describe the problem in as much detail as possible.

Q22 In the past month, have you or anyone else in your family received any money from working?

This question asks if respondent or anyone else in his family received any money from working in the past month.

Training Issue: They should say “yes” even if the income is on the side/unreported/etc. For example, if they are getting money for temporary or day labor, including doing odd jobs, then they are working. The answer also is “yes” if whatever they are doing, they consider it to be working. Be sure to ask if anyone in their family is getting any money from working.

Q23 Are you or anyone else in your family receiving ANY of the following government benefits?

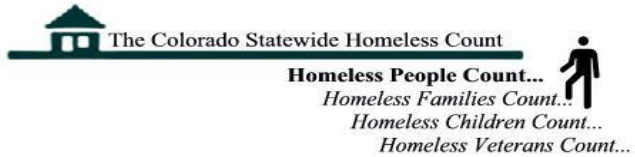
Training Issue: Be sure to read each type of assistance and check all that apply. If someone says “yes” to one type of assistance, continue reading all the other types of assistance. If the respondent replies that they are not receiving any government benefits make sure you have read all the listed benefits before checking response 7 (receiving NO government benefits).

Q24 Why did you become homeless this time?

Training Issue: This question offers a number of options. If the respondent volunteers a reason (or several reasons), the interviewer should look for the response, confirm with the respondent that it is accurate, and check it. Read all the possible responses even if the respondent volunteers one or several reasons. If you are not sure where to put someone’s response, check “other reason” and write in their response in as much detail as possible.

Q25 In the past month, what services did you or anyone in your family need but could not get?

Training Issue: Again, this question offers a number of options. Ask the question, then pause to give respondent some time to think. If the respondent volunteers a service (or several services), the interviewer should look for the response, confirm with the respondent that it is accurate, and check it. Read all the possible responses even if the respondent volunteers one or several responses. If you are not sure where to put someone's response, check "other" and write in their response in as much detail as possible. The response category "Help finding Section 8 or other permanent housing" includes help getting vouchers or money to pay for eligible housing. If the respondent replies they didn't need any services, make sure you have read all the possible services before checking response 15 (Needed NO services we couldn't get).



DAY OF COUNT CONTACTS

- For questions on the day/night of the count, first try contacting your county coordinator, second the statewide coordinator and/or the State of Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

[Name/County Coordinator]

Phone

Statewide Logistics Coordinator

Deanna Hall LaFlamme

National Research Center, Inc.

(303) 444-7863 or 1-877-467-2462

State of Colorado

Department of Local Affairs

Lynn Shine, Housing Initiatives Coordinator

(303) 866-2046

AGENCY REFERRAL LIST



HIPAA RELEASE OF INFORMATION AND DISCLOSURE FORM

The Colorado Interagency Council on the Homeless is conducting a statewide “Count” of individuals and families who are homeless across Colorado. The purpose of the study is to learn more about the needs of persons who are homeless or may soon be homeless, so that the state can develop appropriate programs and services. We are asking people to complete surveys about issues that relate to their homelessness; the survey is completely optional.

The data collected for this “Count” will be housed and analyzed by researchers at the University of Colorado at Denver, and then given to the Colorado Interagency Council on the Homeless. A report will be prepared based on the collected surveys. Information that could be used to tell who you are will never be used for these reports. We will not turn your information over to a national database. We must have your consent to use or disclose your information beyond these purposes.

- You have the right to get services even if you choose NOT to participate in the study.
- You have the right to ask for information about who will see your information.

By signing below you agree to release your information for the purpose of this study.

Signature

Date