



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: November 15, 2022

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TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

**SOLICITING VOLUNTEERS FOR THE ANNUAL POINT-IN-TIME COUNT
(DISTRICTS: ALL)**

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that Continuums of Care (CoC) conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered or unsheltered on a single night in January each year. In San Diego, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) leads a collaboration of community partners and volunteers in conducting this point-in-time count, better known as *WeALLCount*. Communities across the country will be conducting similar events during the last 10 days of January.

Although the figures that come out of this count are used to apply for federal funding, this survey also enables the region to gain a better understanding of the scope, impact, and potential solutions to address this issue. The numbers from this count are broken down into subpopulation categories, including counts of people who are chronically homeless, veterans, youth, persons with HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence.

Each count is planned and coordinated and requires many volunteers to accurately gauge the homeless population across the San Diego region. In 2022, 1,500 volunteers participated in a point-in-time count through the RTFH that numbered a minimum of 8,427 homeless persons in our region. More than 150 County employees participated in the event.

Thankfully, County employees have always come forward in the spirit of volunteerism, whether staffing the polls during elections or in their charitable giving. These actions support the County's *Live Well San Diego* vision of a region that is building better health, living safely and thriving. It is our hope that County employees will once again come forward as volunteers in this effort to

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identify the extent of this critical issue. The count will take place from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Thursday, January 26, 2023.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHAIR NATHAN FLETCHER AND VICE CHAIR NORA VARGAS

1. Authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to establish a volunteer program to allow County employees to participate in the annual point-in-time count on January 26, 2023, on paid County time.
2. Find that allowing County employees to volunteer to participate in the annual point-in-time count on paid County time serves a public benefit by ensuring the region's homelessness can be quantified and federal funding can be secured to support the region's homeless population.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Establishing a program to allow County employees to participate in the annual point-in-time count on January 26, 2023, will support efforts to create effective approaches to assist those who are homeless throughout San Diego County. The count outcomes have multiple benefits, including eligibility to apply for federal funding in addition to enabling the region to gain a better understanding of the scope, impact, and potential solutions to address this issue. The numbers from this count are broken down into subpopulation categories, including counts of persons who are chronically homeless, veterans, youth, persons with HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence. It is anticipated that this action will drive much-needed resources to residents who are disproportionality represented in the homeless system including justice-involved individuals as well as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). In general, the incidence of BIPOC individuals experiencing homelessness mirrors the disparities found at the broader community levels. These population groups are over-represented in homelessness when compared to their proportion in the general community.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed action contributes to the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goals to engage the community and protect health and well-being. Establishing this program for County employees to participate, while also being compensated, creates a public process that encourages people and diverse stakeholders to participate in this program that will have an impact on their community. Additionally, by encouraging employees to participate in this important annual count they will contribute to the region's goals to secure the necessary funding for community partners to address environmental issues and communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding associated with today's recommendations is included in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Operational Plan. The actual costs will be determined by the classification of employees who choose to volunteer. The funding source is a combination of General Purpose Revenues and program revenues. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

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ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that Continuums of Care (CoC) conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered or unsheltered on a single night in January each year. In San Diego, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) leads a collaboration of community partners and volunteers in conducting this point-in-time count, better known as *WeALLCount*. Communities across the country will be conducting similar events during the last 10 days of January.

Although the figures that come out of this count are used to apply for federal funding, this survey also enables the region to gain a better understanding of the scope, impact, and potential solutions to address this issue. The numbers from this count are broken down into subpopulation categories, including counts of people who are chronically homeless, veterans, persons with HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence.

Each count is planned and coordinated and requires many volunteers to accurately gauge the homeless population across the region. In 2022 1,500 volunteers participated in a point-in-time count through the RTFH that numbered a minimum of 8,427 homeless persons in our region. More than 150 County employees participated in the event.

The count will take place from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Thursday, January 26, 2023. Volunteers will deploy across the region in small teams, which include a trained homeless outreach worker to provide guidance and support. A mobile application will be used to record the number of homeless persons they see and collect important demographic information. Additional surveys will be conducted throughout the region from January 26, 2023 through January 28, 2023.

In addition to counting and surveying those who are unsheltered, the RTFH will compile a count of people who sleep in the region's homeless shelters on the night of January 26, 2023. Demographic data regarding those sheltered is derived from the region's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is administered by the RTFH. This data, along with an assessment of the shelter bed capacity for the region, is used to evaluate the unmet needs of the homeless population in the region. Once completed, the analysis is reported to HUD and used with point-in-time count data from communities across the country to produce the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) for Congress.

It is our intent to allow County employees the opportunity to participate in this program during paid County time. All employee organizations will be notified of this program and will be given the opportunity to meet and confer with the County. County staff will be expected to follow all existing public health and safety guidelines at the time of the count.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the Equity and Community Initiatives in the County of San Diego's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, as well as the County's Live Well San Diego vision by increasing the awareness of the demographics of those experiencing homelessness as well as the available resources for this vulnerable population.

Respectfully submitted,

CHAIR NATHAN FLETCHER
Supervisor, Fourth District

VICE CHAIR NORA VARGAS
Supervisor, First District

ATTACHMENT(S)
N/A