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MEMO

To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA
CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA
Date: March 22, 2024
Re: Report Back on Item No. 21 - Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the first directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). The motion gave the following directives:

Directive One: Report back to the Board in writing in 45 days with a summary of the challenges faced in the 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, this summary should include feedback from deployment site leads, volunteers, and LAHSA staff who participated in the count;

Directive Two: Report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a roadmap for resolving the challenges faced in the 2024 count; and

Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

Homeless Count 2024 Overview

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) made key enhancements to the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count (Homeless Count) in 2024: improving the quality assurance process with a fully trained LAHSA staff member at each deployment site to ensure accuracy in count numbers, refining the ArcGIS QuickCapture application (phone app) to be a more effective and user-friendly digital counting tool, and utilizing the skills of a demographer and data scientist to help optimize the Homeless Count analysis. LAHSA also made an effort to improve the volunteer experience with a new hub resource page containing information to help volunteers prepare for the Homeless Count in advance.

Based on feedback from volunteers, deployment site coordinators (DSCs), and LAHSA staff volunteers, the 2024 Homeless Count was a positive experience overall. While there were challenges that need to be addressed, which will be highlighted later in the report, the overwhelming majority of volunteers who responded to the survey (87%) reported that they would participate in the Homeless Count again.



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According to responses from the volunteers' Homeless Count survey, most volunteers found the process of signing up to be easy. LAHSA increased the opportunities for DSC and volunteer training for the 2024 Homeless Count; feedback from volunteers and DSCs indicated that this additional training was appreciated and helpful—most volunteers indicated they were able to view the training videos beforehand and responded that they were satisfied with the training and found the training videos and materials helpful. The presence of LAHSA Technical Advisors (TAs) at all sites also received positive feedback from volunteers. DSCs and volunteers expressed appreciation for LAHSA staff volunteer support and technical assistance.

While there were challenges with the technology, volunteers who responded to the survey reported that downloading the app, setting up an account, and collecting data were, on average, straightforward with the assistance of the training materials. Many volunteer respondents felt the app, while still needing improvements, worked better than in 2023. This positive sentiment underscores the potential of technology to facilitate the Homeless Count process when functioning more seamlessly. Acknowledging the app's utility is crucial for future improvements and developments in this technological domain.

Methods of Collecting Feedback

Prior to the Homeless Count, LAHSA informed DSCs that it would schedule feedback sessions after the Homeless Count. DSCs also debriefed informally with LAHSA's Community Relations team in the days immediately following the Homeless Count. LAHSA sent a survey to all the volunteers, DSCs, and LAHSA staff who supported the Homeless Count. As of March 15, 2024, 458 responses were collected from volunteers, 46 from DSCs, and 53 from LAHSA staff. Feedback was gathered for all Service Planning Areas (SPAs). In addition, LAHSA held video conference feedback sessions with DSCs on January 30 and 31 and February 5. During these sessions, DSCs met with representatives from LAHSA's Government Affairs and Data Management departments to provide site-specific feedback. Each session was 20-30 minutes long; 40 of 150 deployment sites participated, representing all SPAs. LAHSA also held feedback sessions specifically for LAHSA TAs and other staff who participated in the Homeless Count on March 1, 4, 11, and 13. Overall, 147 LAHSA staff participated in the sessions to provide feedback on their experiences.

Directive One: Challenges During the 2024 Homeless Count

Phone App

An ongoing challenge remains with technology reliability. According to DSCs, there were reports of issues with the phone app on the three days of Homeless Count and concerns about the technology infrastructure's reliability. Volunteers and LAHSA staff cited difficulties in navigating the app. Feedback from volunteers, DSCs, and LAHSA staff highlighted the following challenges:

- Difficulties in navigating to the online waiver form, selecting the proper deployment site, and confirming the waiver was completed as required for volunteer check-in and census tract assignment.



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- An excessive number of steps are required to set up the app, including making multiple accounts and going to different websites before logging into the app.
- Using too many QR codes to set up the phone app.
- The absence of a path-tracing feature from last year was important for navigational support and should return.
- Maps in the application were hard to read and follow.
- Various layout and design aspects felt unclear, unintuitive, and not user friendly.

Deployment Site Coordinator Dashboard

Dashboard instructions and processes changed frequently throughout the three days. This included how to assign volunteers and validate data, which was frustrating to DSCs and increased doubts and concerns about the technology and reliability of the data. The dashboard also experienced several technological failures that made it more challenging to operate. DSC and LAHSA volunteer feedback highlighted the following issues:

- Lack of a true tract pre-assignment functionality to reduce the amount of work needed to deploy volunteers.
- Slow process of assigning volunteers to tracts caused delays in deploying teams.
- Significant lags between the phone app and the dashboard made reviewing the data challenging.
- Dashboard design was challenging to work with, causing concern that edits to data input would not be reflected in the final data.
- Insufficient training on contingency plans for when the technology fails.
- An overly complicated and burdensome process to input paper backup forms.
- No path tracing in the dashboard to confirm volunteer progress and completion of their tracts.
- Lack of earlier and deeper involvement of DSCs in the design process that could've helped address many of the issues.

Maps & Special Counting Areas

Several DSCs were happy with the pre-work done this year to ensure the accuracy of their site's maps and the incorporation of requested edits to their count areas. However, many DSCs asked for work on these matters before the next Homeless Count. Volunteers also had challenges reading and navigating from the maps. The feedback highlighted the following challenges related to map and special counting areas:

- Some strangely shaped assignment areas were confusing and difficult to follow.
- Difficulty in assessing the size of census tracts and criteria used for labeling them as "walking" or "driving" tracts, underscoring the need for improved clarity.
- Lack of clarity regarding "do not count areas" on maps.
- Difficulty navigating to the assigned census tracts.



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- Miscommunication about special teams counting designated areas due to safety concerns. Also, the counting of these special tracts needs to be better communicated to the public to maintain confidence in the Homeless Count and its accuracy.
- Changes to the Deployment Site maps that DSCs found made them less clear and further edits to the overall design were requested.

Deployment Site Logistics

Preparation for the Night of the Homeless Count

LAHSA acknowledges reports that not all deployment sites received the materials promptly, and communication between the sites and LAHSA must be improved for the Homeless Count to run smoothly. Challenges related to preparation were:

- Several sites required more copies of materials than were provided, particularly paper contingency documents.
- The need for clearer communication before the night of the Homeless Count around making sure DSCs have everything they need on the night of the Homeless Count.
- The need for better signage leading to the Deployment Site's check-in area.

Night of the Homeless Count

Deployment Sites experienced challenges with the night flow, specifically bottlenecks with checking in volunteers and ensuring all the volunteers had signed electronic waivers. Challenges from the night of the Homeless Count include:

- A lack of communication on needing volunteers to sign the online waivers and its importance in assigning volunteers in the dashboard.
- Long wait times for volunteers to check in and check out hampered the volunteer experience.

Training

LAHSA also received feedback that, while many appreciated the increase in training opportunities, there is still room to improve the training process. Different styles of training, such as live training, video recording, and office hours, were appreciated by the DSCs and could be expanded to make it more accessible to all participants. Feedback highlighted the following training challenges:

- The Centralized Training Academy platform required volunteers to create an account in addition to the accounts used for signing up for the Homeless Count and using the app, which was burdensome.



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- Redundant information across the available training courses; multiple resources cover the same topics, particularly regarding downloading the app, with no clear explanation for the differences or which resources to utilize.
- Training videos were too long and not at times convenient or accessible for all volunteers.
- Trainings focused too much on technology, to the detriment of all other aspects of the Homeless Count.
- Need for clarity on the different accounts that needed to be made before the actual counting.

Communication

DSCs and Homeless Count volunteers raised the following concerns about communication leading up to the Homeless Count:

- An overwhelming number of emails caused confusion, possibly leading to overlooked important information.
- Frustration with emails coming from different sources.

Next Steps

LAHSA has already begun working on solutions to the issues identified through the feedback processes, which we will outline in LAHSA's forthcoming response to Directive Two of the motion. LAHSA will gather feedback on prioritizing technological features and key areas to be improved and provide opportunities for DSCs, Assistants, and LAHSA Staff to test improved features. LAHSA will also consult with the LAHSA Commission and the Homeless Count Advisory Board (HCAB); HCAB represents service providers, independent cities, homeless coalitions, Councils of Governments, SPAs, County Executive Office, education, HUD consulting, and subpopulations.



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To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA

CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA

Date: May 6, 2024

Re: Report Back on Item No.21- Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the second directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). LAHSA submitted its response to directive one on March 22, 2024. The motion gave the following directives:

Directive One: Report back to the Board in writing in 45 days with a comprehensive summary of the significant challenges faced in the 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. This summary should include valuable feedback from deployment site leads, volunteers, and LAHSA staff who actively participated in the count;

Directive Two: Report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a roadmap for resolving the challenges faced in the 2024 count, and;

Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

Directive Two: Report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a roadmap for resolving the challenges faced in the 2024 Homeless Count.

LAHSA is diligently working on developing transparent processes and procedures to effectively address the challenges highlighted in the previous [report](#), submitted March 22, 2024. After the 2024 Homeless Count, LAHSA held feedback sessions with Deployment Site Coordinators (DSCs), volunteers, and LAHSA staff. LAHSA is collaborating closely with DSCs and volunteers throughout the 2025 Homeless Count planning process to address concerns shared in those feedback sessions. LAHSA is working hard to develop internal timelines to address all the challenges that were highlighted in the previous report. To be intentional in developing these solutions, many internal timelines are still being created to create sustainable and realistic internal changes.

Homeless Count Advisory Board and Homeless Count Core Group

LAHSA has had a Homeless Count Advisory Board (HCAB) since 2009. The HCAB is made up of representatives from service providers, independent cities, homeless coalitions, Councils of Governments, County Executive offices, the education system, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



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(HUD) consulting, and various subpopulation representatives. This year, LAHSA is actively seeking to enhance HCAB's representation to ensure a diverse group of geographic regions and communities can provide feedback on the 2024 Homeless Count and the planning for 2025.

LAHSA has also implemented an internal Homeless Count Core Group for the 2025 Homeless Count, consisting of leadership from all departments that work on the Homeless Count. This group meets regularly year-round to ensure that all departments are accountable for their roles in planning and implementing the count.

Roadmap for Addressing Challenges in the 2024 Homeless Count

Phone App

LAHSA has been actively collaborating with Esri, the developer of the Homeless Count phone app and DSC Dashboard, to make significant updates. These updates, which are aimed at improving user-friendliness, include:

- Making it easier to sign waivers.
- Decreasing the number of steps needed to set up an account.
- Reducing the number of QR codes.
- Streamlining the layout and design of the phone app to make it more user friendly.

Timeline: Esri and LAHSA will beta test the app in the summer to give early feedback and continue to iterate and improve into the fall.

Deployment Site Coordinator Dashboard

LAHSA heard from DSCs ways to improve their dashboard. LAHSA is focused on maintaining strong relationships with DSCs to create a year-round feedback loop and incorporate them in conversations around improvements for the 2025 Homeless Count. Other areas of improvement shared with Esri include:

- More efficiency in the process of assigning volunteers to census tracts.
- Decreasing the lag between phone app data and the dashboard to verify data quickly.
- Improving the DSC Dashboard design to be more user-friendly.
- Creating tools to update and validate data from volunteer counters.
- Developing contingency plan guidance for phone app and DSC Dashboard failures.
- Streamlining the paper backup process.

Timeline: LAHSA and Esri plan for DSCs to begin testing the dashboard in the summer to provide early feedback.

Maps & Special Counting Areas

Based on DSC and volunteer feedback, LAHSA has begun work with Esri to update the phone app maps to include:

- Clear census tract boundaries to ensure all tracts are completed.
- Path tracing for navigation support.
- Clearly defined street signs for easy navigation.



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Timeline: The timeline is still under development and LAHSA will share it in the next report.

The paper map development process will incorporate community feedback to ensure it is user-friendly and aligns with the phone app. For paper maps, LAHSA is working internally to improve shape files to include:

- Clear street signs and boundaries.
- Clearly defined walking and driving tracts.
- Clearly defined “do-not-count” areas.
- Changes to Deployment Site maps to make them clearer to view.

Timeline: The timeline is still under development and LAHSA will share it in the next report.

LAHSA is working to ensure there is proper staff support and collaboration from relevant departments to facilitate the accurate count of special or sensitive areas within census tracts. Also, LAHSA plans to communicate to the public about special counting areas to maintain confidence in the Homeless Count and its accuracy.

Timeline: The timeline is still under development and LAHSA will share it in the next report.

Deployment Site Logistics

LAHSA is currently working on creating an internal timeline for Homeless Count preparation and defining staff roles for each action required in the preparation if they are not already established. This detailed planning aims to ensure greater efficiency and accountability. Currently, LAHSA has created a list of procedures and policies that will be developed internally to support a successful Homeless Count. The list was compiled following feedback sessions with DSCs and is aimed at streamlining and standardizing the instructions for conducting the Homeless Count. These materials include:

- Community Partner Agreement Letter (CPAL) procedures
- DSC recruiting criteria
- Deployment Site Support (DSS) guidelines
- Procedures for the oversight and management of gift cards
- Material delivery guidance and checklist
- Deployment site set-up procedures
- Homeless Count supply procedures
- Hotspot and Wi-Fi procedures
- Post-count feedback procedures

Timeline: These documents are expected to be completed by the end of June.

LAHSA is developing a user guide for DSCs to streamline all aspects of DSC preparation, including setting up and running the site the night of the Homeless Count. This user guide is being developed in collaboration with DSCs to ensure their specific needs are reflected in the guide. At least one DSC per Service Planning Area will be included in developing this user guide so that a diverse group of DSCs will be heard. Interviews will be conducted to gather best practices and frequently asked questions. DSCs in the past have referenced the lack of easy-to-decipher, accessible, and quick information on how to manage the volunteers on site and how to set up a deployment site. This guide is being created to address these



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concerns and will help reduce bottlenecks on the night of the count. Finally, it makes sure DSCs have adequate training and support throughout the process.

Timeline:

- Early summer 2024 - gather all feedback and best practices
- Fall 2024 - final approvals and printing of materials
- December 2024 - distribution of materials

Training

Based on volunteer feedback, LAHSA is currently working to:

- Reduce the number of accounts that volunteers are required to create, thus making it easier for volunteers to sign up and be trained.
- Widely disseminate a training checklist ([linked here](#)) that describes all the needed access and accounts for the 2025 Homeless Count based on feedback on the need to clarify the different accounts typically required in past Homeless Counts. LAHSA plans to share this checklist earlier and as part of all our training to ensure it is accessible to all in a timely manner.
- Clarify which training materials are needed for volunteers versus DSCs based on feedback from LAHSA staff, volunteers, and DSCs.
- Continue to provide accessible ways to receive training. As with the 2024 Homeless Count, volunteers will be able to learn from videos, live online training, self-paced e-courses, and one-pagers (electronic and hard copies handed out on the night of the count).

Timeline: The timeline is still under development and LAHSA will share it in the next report.

Communication

LAHSA is clarifying roles for those who will communicate with volunteers and who will work directly with DSCs. LAHSA is developing a communications schedule for all email correspondence with relevant stakeholders during the Homeless Count planning. This schedule will aim to:

- Lessen the frequency of communication on Homeless Count information.
- Personalize it to the needs of volunteers and DSCs.
- Ensure that only pertinent and timely information is disseminated, minimizing the number of redundant email communications from multiple sources.
- Make sure both volunteers and DSCs are made aware of the wide range of training options available earlier. This will provide more time for volunteers to access training before the nights of the Homeless Count.

Timeline: The timeline is still under development and LAHSA will share it in the next report.

Additional Improvements: Greater Transparency with Homeless Count Data

LAHSA is working to provide a more user-friendly explanation of the methodology used to arrive at final Homeless Count numbers. This includes developing a brief document explaining the methodology and providing a timeline for how the Homeless Count numbers are developed and validated. The goal is to instill greater trust and transparency in the Homeless Count and reassure the Board of Supervisors and the public about the accuracy and integrity of the information they receive, which is one of LAHSA's top priorities.



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An essential aspect of the Homeless Count is the collaboration between LAHSA and the University of Southern California (USC) in developing the demographic survey. These surveys were used to estimate the average number of people living in dwellings, such as cars, vehicles, recreational vehicles (RVs), tents, and makeshift shelters. Surveys were conducted by outreach workers and service providers over a three-month period to collect demographic information and to determine the average occupancy per dwelling type in each Service Planning Area (SPA). Daily canvassing took place between December 7, 2023, and March 13, 2024. In 2024, there was greater collaboration between LAHSA and USC on implementing the survey based on feedback obtained from the previous Homeless Count. Improvements were made in the 2024 Homeless Count to increase the reliability of these estimates, which will continue for 2025. These improvements include:

- The hiring of much-needed staff positions by the USC survey team, including a Site Coordinator, Project Assistant, and Driver, increased the capacity of the field staff to reach more people.
- USC's hiring of a new data collection team that worked with LAHSA to develop better relationships with SPA 1 outreach teams to improve survey collection in hard to access areas.
- Increasing survey staff to 35 trained surveyors and administrators. Many experienced field staff, including data collectors and team leads, returned in 2024, resulting in a larger, more effective workforce and full coverage for weekday and weekend shifts. USC began hiring early (mid-September) to secure these valuable workers.
- More robust communication between USC and LAHSA throughout the entire 2024 survey period, including pre-survey planning. This increased collaboration led to more effective surveying and increased survey numbers. LAHSA and USC collaborated to identify hotspots and track programs such as Inside Safe and Pathway Home as they were implemented to ensure the appropriate areas were surveyed.
- Improving Esri Field Maps software and data dashboards to support teams in the field and recanvassing efforts. This includes adding a hotspot verification tool, more stable breadcrumbs, and a daily dashboard. Data collection was monitored daily to address needs immediately throughout the survey period.

In addition, the 2024 USC survey team carried out a pilot program called VetConnect in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Los Angeles County Departments of Mental Health and Military and Veterans Affairs, and other community partners. This pilot consisted of daily referrals of demographic survey participants to the VA who, upon verification, would offer immediate housing and health care services. During the 2024 demographic survey, 35 Veterans were connected to the VA for services, and hundreds more were provided hotline information and additional information if they preferred to follow up directly.

Overall, for the 2024 Homeless Count, 4,264 eligible demographic surveys were completed, 45 sites were visited, and 868 census tract subtracts were completed, an increase from previous years. This highlights the increased efforts to make the demographic survey more reliable and accurate. LAHSA and USC will continue this work for 2025 and assess additional improvements.



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Next Steps

LAHSA continues to work internally on developing solutions for the challenges highlighted in directive 1. This roadmap outlines the development of procedures, policies, and solutions to make the 2025 Homeless Count successful. Future reports outlined in directive 3 will include updates on these efforts.



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To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA

CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA

Date: July 8, 2024

Re: Report Back on Item No.21- Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the third directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). LAHSA submitted its response to directive one on March 22, 2024, and its response to directive two on May 6, 2024. The motion gave the following directives:

Directive One: Report back to the Board in writing in 45 days with a comprehensive summary of the significant challenges faced in the 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. This summary should include valuable feedback from deployment site leads, volunteers, and LAHSA staff who actively participated in the count;

Directive Two: Report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a roadmap for resolving the challenges faced in the 2024 count, and;

Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

LAHSA is diligently working on developing transparent processes and procedures to effectively address the challenges highlighted in the first directive [report](#), submitted March 22, 2024. As mentioned in the previous [report](#) on directive two, submitted May 6, 2024, LAHSA is collaborating closely with Deployment Site Coordinators (DSCs) and other volunteer stakeholders throughout the 2025 Homeless Count planning process to address all the challenges highlighted. Below are the most recent updates on completed improvements and timelines for ongoing work being done by LAHSA and its partners.



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Updates on improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Volunteer registration app

June 2024 updates

The following updates have been made to the Volunteer Registration app process to increase usability:

- There will be one comprehensive website where volunteers will sign-up or register for a specific deployment site, manage their registration, look up registration details, and access training. This will reduce the number of accounts that volunteers are required to create, thus making it easier for volunteers to sign up and be trained.
- Those who register before the night of the count can sign the liability waiver electronically. Only volunteers who are not pre-registered will need to sign the waiver on-site, thus streamlining the waiver process.
- As a part of the overall update for the website and volunteer registration process, we are developing a simpler, more straightforward check-in process when volunteers arrive, with fewer steps and QR codes to scan. This will reduce the potential for technical difficulties and help people get counting more quickly.

Timeline: In development; LAHSA to review the app on June 21st, July 5th, and July 19th with changes made by Esri after each feedback session. Estimated completion September 27th after 2 rounds of DSC testing/feedback.

The following updates are planned for the Volunteer Management administrative workflows to enhance situational awareness of volunteer registration status.

- An internal LAHSA Community Relations Dashboard that allows LAHSA staff to view registration numbers by geographic region and generate CSV reports on demand, and automated reports emailed daily or weekly.
- A Volunteer Stats Dashboard which is on the Homeless Count website will provide a high-level summary of real-time volunteer registration numbers across all SPA's and Deployment sites at any given time. This will be highlighted on The Homeless Count website to inform the public, deployment site coordinators, elected officials of current registration numbers by geography.

Timeline: In development; LAHSA to review the app on June 21st, July 8th, and July 19th with changes made by Esri as needed. Estimated completion September 27th after 2 rounds of DSC testing/feedback.

Deployment Site Coordinator Dashboard

June 2024 updates

LAHSA contracted with Esri starting in May to build a custom deployment site coordinator dashboard to eliminate several challenges encountered in previous years when existing software was adapted to create the dashboard tool. This new system's enhancements will include:

- Instantaneous updates of volunteer assignments, count status, and data edits, thereby reducing bottlenecks in the assignment and review process.
- Decreasing the lag between the time counts are recorded in the phone app and when they appear on the DSC dashboard, which will increase confidence in data quality.



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- Use of icons to easily communicate the current status of such items as volunteer role, waiver submission, and pre-assignment.

Timeline: In development; LAHSA to review seven iterations of DSC App and have three rounds of DSC testing/feedback. Estimated completion October 25th.

LAHSA will assemble up to three DSC focus groups so people with experience in this key role can interact with and give feedback on the new dashboard. LAHSA is focusing on articulating workflows for all volunteers (coordinators and counters), which will guide streamlining and contingency plans. These focus groups will gather feedback to ensure:

- The DSC Dashboard design is user-friendly.
- The correct tools are in place to validate data quickly.
- There are clear contingency plans in case of app failure.
- The paper backup process is easy to implement.

Timeline: Focus groups will be scheduled for early August.

Maps & Special Counting Areas

Based on DSC and volunteer feedback, LAHSA worked with Esri to update the phone app maps. Current updates include:

- Path tracing will be visible both to volunteers and to deployment site coordinators.
- LAHSA consulted with Esri to identify an improved process to generate census subtracts, so that boundaries follow street center lines and relevant jurisdictional borders.

Timeline: Completed

The paper map development process incorporated community feedback to ensure it is user-friendly and aligns with the phone app. For paper maps, LAHSA worked internally to improve our files to include:

- Clear, readable street signs and boundaries.
- Removing the walking/driving designation on census tracts and instead organize tracts by distance from the deployment sites.
- Clearly defined and marked “do-not-count” areas, with a note that these areas will be counted by special teams.
- Changes to Deployment Site maps to make them clearer to view in the app and when printed out.

Timeline: Updates are in process and will be shared in the next report.

LAHSA is working to ensure there is proper staff support and collaboration from relevant departments to facilitate the accurate count of special or sensitive areas within census tracts. Also, LAHSA plans to communicate to the public and partners in local government more clearly about special counting areas to maintain confidence in the Homeless Count and its accuracy.

Timeline: Updates are in process and will be shared in the next report.

Deployment Site Logistics



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LAHSA has created an internal timeline for 2025 Homeless Count preparation and defined staff roles for each action required in the preparation. LAHSA has created a list of procedures and policies for the following items:

- Community Partner Agreement Letter (CPAL) procedures
- DSC recruiting criteria
- Deployment Site Support (DSS) guidelines
- Procedures for the oversight and management of gift cards
- Material delivery guidance and checklist
- Deployment site set-up procedures
- Homeless Count supply procedures
- Hotspot and Wi-Fi procedures
- Post-count feedback procedures

Timeline: Completed. These are living documents and will be continuously updated as needed throughout the planning process.

LAHSA is continuing to develop a user guide for DSCs to streamline all aspects of DSC preparation, including setting up and running a site the night of the Homeless Count.

Timeline: Currently in development; expected completion at the end of summer

Communication

LAHSA is clarifying roles for those who will communicate with volunteers and who will work directly with DSCs. LAHSA is developing a communications schedule for all email correspondence with relevant stakeholders during the 2025 Homeless Count planning. This schedule will aim to:

- Lessen the frequency of communication on Homeless Count information.
- Personalize it to the needs of volunteers and DSCs.
- Ensure that only pertinent and timely information is disseminated, minimizing the number of redundant email communications from multiple sources. The team is also evaluating tools to ensure there is one source for all Homeless Count information.
- Make sure both volunteers and DSCs are made aware of the wide range of training options available earlier. This will provide more time for volunteers to access training before the nights of the Homeless Count.

Timeline: The communication calendar is expected to be completed by mid-July. The communication tool to streamline information will be rolled out at the beginning of August.

Next Steps

LAHSA continues to develop and produce new policies and procedures to improve the 2025 Homeless Count. Further updates will be reported in the next report, which is due at the beginning of September.



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MEMO

To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA

CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA

Date: September 9, 2024

Re: Report Back on Item No.21- Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the third directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). LAHSA submitted its response to directive one on March 22, 2024, and its response to directive two on May 6, 2024. The first response to directive three was submitted July 5, 2024. The motion gave the following directives:

Directive One: Report back to the Board in writing in 45 days with a comprehensive summary of the significant challenges faced in the 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. This summary should include valuable feedback from deployment site leads, volunteers, and LAHSA staff who actively participated in the count;

Directive Two: Report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a roadmap for resolving the challenges faced in the 2024 count, and;

Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

When the previous [report](#) was submitted on July 6, LAHSA had already begun the process of developing a custom volunteer website and dashboard with app developer Esri. These tools will increase usability for volunteers by allowing participants to register for a specific deployment site, manage their registration, look up registration details, and access training. Volunteers will also be able to sign electronic liability waivers, and the new dashboards will streamline check-in on the night of the count. Esri is also developing an internal LAHSA dashboard that allows LAHSA staff to view registration numbers in real-time by geographic region and generate reports on demand, as well as automated reports emailed daily or weekly.

LAHSA also contracted with Esri to build a custom Deployment Site Coordinator (DSC) dashboard to eliminate several challenges encountered in previous years when existing software was adapted and



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combined to create the dashboard tool. This new system's custom enhancements will include instantaneous updates of volunteer assignments, count status, and data edits; a faster data connection between the phone app and the dashboard; and the use of icons to quickly communicate the status tasks, such as assigning and pre-assigning volunteer roles and waiver submission.

These enhancements continue to be stress-tested to ensure better performance in the field. LAHSA is continuing to develop a user guide for DSCs to streamline all aspects of DSC preparation, including setting up and running a site the night of the Homeless Count. LAHSA also developed a communications calendar to lessen the frequency and personalize the information for Homeless Count.

July/August 2024 Updates on improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Volunteer Website

The volunteer website is still in development and remains on track for completion by September 27. The current Homeless Count website has been updated to communicate that it is under construction. Esri shared a draft with LAHSA on August 30. The plan is to launch volunteer registration in October to provide enough time for volunteers to register and get trained before the count. While historically most volunteers register in December and January, having the website and training available and tested will ensure that when volunteers sign up, they will have all the material they need.

Volunteer Counting App

The counting app is also being updated. In September, changes will be made to the QuickCapture app, which shows volunteers the census maps. The app will allow both volunteers and those at the deployment site to view the path traveled during the count and ensure that all census tracts are appropriately covered, and volunteers stay within their assigned tract(s).

Training Materials

Training is in the pre-development stage and more updates will be provided in the next report.

LAHSA Community Relations Coordinator Management Tool

The Community Relations Coordinator Management Tool (CRCMT) is under final review, and LAHSA sent change requests to Esri on August 28. The goal is to complete the CRCMT before launching volunteer registration in October. This tool will enable internal LAHSA staff to view registration numbers and determine where to prioritize outreach to ensure all deployment sites have enough volunteers.

Deployment Site Coordinator Dashboard

The deployment site dashboard is currently being tested. The first demonstration took place on August 5 and 6, 2024, with external stakeholders, including previous deployment site coordinators. An additional test was held on August 7 with internal LAHSA staff. Approximately 60 people participated over the three days. Participants were able to test the following:

1. DSC Dashboard Design, User Interface, User Experience



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- Ability to filter by deployment site
- Ability to filter by census subtract (CST) status
- 2. Night-of Volunteer Assignment at Deployment Site:
 - Ability to view volunteers registered
 - Ability to view volunteers checked in
 - Ability to quickly assign volunteers to census tracts

Based on the demonstration, 63% responded “satisfied” when asked from “Very Satisfied to Very Dissatisfied” how they felt about demonstration. Overall, participants greatly appreciated the opportunity to see what was being developed.

Additional demonstrations of the new tools will gather feedback in early September and early October. Based on feedback from Demonstration #1 and on our website launch schedule, LAHSA will focus Demonstration #2 on the volunteer registration workflow. Demonstration #2 participants will visit count.lahsa.org, register to volunteer at a deployment site (a user account will be automatically created), and manage their registration(s).

Technology Infrastructure improvements

ESRI is making improvements to apps and dashboard to improve response times for both DSCs and volunteers. Esri has upgraded the storage capacity and the server capacity to ensure all the information is uploaded in a timely manner. Esri also plans to do load-testing by simulating thousands of volunteers using the app at once to ensure the servers and storage will handle the volume on a count night.

Deployment Site User Guide

The user guide is being finalized and is expected to be completed by the next report.

Recruitment for Deployment Site Coordinators for 2025

The LAHSA Community Relations Unit has already started contacting former deployment site coordinators to begin securing their commitment for the 2025 count. The process began earlier than that of the last count to ensure that all deployment sites have a coordinator and to ensure these volunteer coordinators are properly trained and feel prepared for the 2025 count. Staff have made significant progress, securing almost 80% of the volunteer coordinators required. The goal is to secure 100% by the end of September.

Deployment Logistics Specialists

Last year was the first time LAHSA assigned staff to support every deployment site, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. LAHSA is building on 2024’s success in this regard by formalizing a new Deployment Logistics Specialist (DLS) role and is already recruiting internally to fill these slots. The DLS will be a LAHSA staff at each site trained on the dashboard and other aspects of the count. Volunteer Deployment Site Coordinators will no longer require the same level of technical training because these LAHSA staff will be available to handle technical dashboard operations, such as capturing census tract assignments and volunteer roles on the night of the count.

Communications Calendar



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LAHSA has developed the content and outline of all Count-related communications and a timeline for sending them out. The final approval for content and dates for communications will happen in September.

Next Steps

LAHSA will continue to prepare and plan for the 2025 Homeless Count and will provide further updates in the next report, which is due at the beginning of November.



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MEMO

To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA

CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA

Date: November 5, 2024

Re: Report Back on Item No. 21 - Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the third directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). LAHSA submitted its response to directive one on March 22, 2024, and its response to directive two on May 6, 2024. The responses to directive three were submitted July 5, 2024, and September 9, 2024. The motion gave the following directives:

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Directive Two: Report back to the Board in writing in 90 days with a roadmap for resolving the challenges faced in the 2024 count, and;

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Directive Three: Report back to the Board in writing every other month after the 90-day report back with an update on progress to improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

In the previous [report](#), submitted on September 8, LAHSA noted it had completed the development of the volunteer website and made updates to the QuickCapture phone app, which volunteers use to navigate their census tract and enter the data from their counting. The app will allow both volunteers and those at the deployment site to view the path traveled during the Count and ensure that all census tracts are appropriately covered.

LAHSA also completed the changes to the Community Relations Coordinator Management Tool (CRCMT). This tool will enable internal LAHSA staff to view volunteer registration numbers in real-time and determine where to prioritize outreach to ensure deployment sites have enough volunteers.



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The Deployment Site Dashboard has undergone feedback sessions with experienced Deployment Site Coordinators (DSCs). This is part of an ongoing feedback session with DSCs to ensure that the dashboard is more user friendly than last year.

These dashboard enhancements will be stress-tested to ensure better performance in the field and improve response times for both DSCs and volunteers. LAHSA's technology partner Esri has upgraded both storage and server capacity to enhance the ability to sustain high usage on count nights, ensuring the information is captured in a timely manner. In addition ESRI plans to stress-test the volunteer and dashboard functions to evaluate and address potential performance issues ahead of the PIT count.

September/ October 2024 Updates on improvements for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Volunteer Website

The volunteer website was updated and completed by Esri in September and it was publicly demonstrated during the October 29th Homeless Count Launch.. Unlike software used in the past, when different web platforms were used to handle sign-up, training, and deployment, this new website is a comprehensive destination where volunteers will sign-up or register for a specific deployment site, manage their registration(s), look up registration details, and access training materials. LAHSA is launching the website earlier than in previous years to give volunteers plenty of time to register and be trained before the night of the Count.

Volunteer Counting App

Updates were completed in September for the Volunteer Counting App to allow both volunteers in the field and those at the deployment site to track teams' progress through census tracts and prevent volunteers from crossing outside the census tract boundaries they were assigned.

Training Materials

Training materials are currently in progress. Updates will be provided in the next report.

LAHSA Community Relations Coordinator Management Tool

LAHSA has completed the Community Relations Coordinator management tool and has already begun using the tool to organize and track volunteers at deployment sites.

Deployment Site Coordinator Dashboard

The final of eight feedback sessions for the Deployment Site Coordinator Dashboard was completed on October 11. Final updates to the DSC dashboard are being incorporated this month before it is finalized.

Deployment Site User Guide



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The Deployment Site User Guide is complete. DSCs will have the opportunity to walk through a simulated deployment site a few weeks prior to the Count while picking up the site's materials. During material pick-up and viewing the deployment site simulation, DSCs can pick up the user guide to help them understand deployment site best practices and night of count information.

Recruitment for Deployment Site Coordinators for 2025

LAHSA continues to recruit deployment site coordinators for 2025 and remains on track for its recruitment efforts. As of November 1, over 80% of the deployment sites have DSCs

Deployment Logistics Specialists

LAHSA had already begun internally recruiting Deployment Logistics Specialists (DLS) for each Deployment site. These LAHSA staff members will oversee the Deployment Site Dashboard.

Communications Calendar

LAHSA has finalized the social media tool kit in preparation for the Homeless County Volunteer launch and is in the process of finalizing materials such emails and press releases for as part of the Communication Calendar.

Additional improvements to the 2025 Homeless Count

LAHSA is shifting the order in which the Service Planning Areas (SPAs) are counted. The new order in which SPAs are counted will still conform to HUD's guidance to count areas with contiguous borders together to minimize the chances of double counting but will increase visibility of the issue of homelessness in areas with the highest concentration of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the change will minimize the number of make-up census tracts to be covered due to lack of volunteer resources. This change will balance more equitably the number of deployment sites and resources across the three nights of the Count and separate SPAs 4 and 6, which have the largest concentration of people experiencing homelessness and could otherwise be vulnerable to technical issues that may occur on the same night. Finally, this change will ensure technical resources are more equitably provided to areas where the Count is conducted in the morning.

Before deciding to make this shift, we consulted with a wide range of stakeholders including elected offices, staff at cities around the County, the Homeless Count Advisory Board, service providers, and our local Continuum of Care partners in Long Beach, Glendale, and Pasadena.

The Point-In-Time (PIT) Count dates for the 2025 Homeless Count are Tuesday, January 21, Wednesday, January 22, and Thursday, January 23, 2025. Here is a table that provides the past and new SPA schedule:

	Past PIT Schedule			NEW Homeless Count 2025 SPA PIT Schedule		
	PIT Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	PIT Day 1 – Tuesday,	Day 2 – Wednesday,	Day 3 – Thursday,



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				January 21	January 22	January 23
SPAs	2	5*	1*	2	3	1*
	3	7	4	4	7	5*
		8	6			6
						8
	Glendale Pasadena	Long Beach		Glendale	Pasadena	Long Beach
Estimated # of Deployment Sites	59	55	35	51	53	45

**Full SPA 1 Count and some areas within SPA 5 are counted in the morning. The rest of the SPA Counts are done at night.*

Next Steps

LAHSA will continue to prepare and plan for the 2025 Homeless Count and will provide further updates in the next report, which is due at the beginning of January.



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To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA

CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA

Date: January 6, 2024

Re: Report Back on Item No. 21 - Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the third directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). LAHSA submitted its response to directive one on March 22, 2024, and its response to directive two on May 6, 2024. The responses to directive three were submitted on July 5, 2024, September 9, 2024, and November 5, 2024. The motion gave the following directives:

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Directive Three: After the 90-day report, report back to the Board in writing every other month with an update on progress toward improving the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

The preparations for Homeless Count 2025 remain on track. In the previous [report](#), submitted on November 5, we noted that the custom volunteer website and dashboard were updated and completed by Esri and Launched on October 29. The updates to the Volunteer Counting app were also completed, and load testing was performed to ensure that it would not crash the nights of the count. Additionally, Esri completed the development of the internal LAHSA dashboard called the LAHSA Community Relations Coordinator Management Tool and LAHSA staff has been using it to organize and track volunteers at deployment sites. Below are the most recent updates made to improve the 2025 Homeless Count.

November/ December updates on improvements being made for the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count



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Volunteer Recruitment

As of January 6, 2025, over 1,200 volunteers have registered for the 2025 Homeless Count. LAHSA finalized the social media tool kit and promotional video, and they are available on the Homeless Count Website on the Resources Page.

Volunteers can continue to sign up at theycountwillyou.org, which has been upgraded to be more streamlined and user-friendly. In addition to registering for a specific deployment site, volunteers can now actively manage their registration, allowing them to cancel it and sign up for a different location or sign up for multiple locations, look up registration details, and access training. Volunteers can also sign electronic waivers, and thanks to the new systems and dashboards, check-in at the Deployment Sites on the night of the Count will be streamlined as well.

Deployment Site User Guide

LAHSA has completed the development of a user guide for Deployment Site Coordinators (DSCs) to streamline all aspects of DSC preparation, including setting up and running a site the night of the Homeless Count. DSCs will have the opportunity to walk through a simulated deployment site a few weeks prior to the count while picking up the site's materials. During material pick-up and while viewing the deployment site simulation, DSCs can pick up the user guide to help them understand deployment site best practices and night-of-count information.

Volunteer Communications

LAHSA developed a communications calendar to reduce the frequency of emails and personalize the information volunteers receive for Homeless Count. This calendar is being used to send emails to volunteers in preparation for the count.

Homeless Count Training

Training resources (videos, reference guides, and office hours) have been released via email and are available on the resources page of the Homeless Count website. Based on feedback from stakeholders, LAHSA has streamlined the training process, including offering Deployment Site Coordinators, one-on-one streamlined Dashboard walkthroughs, and training videos they can review on their schedule. LAHSA has developed a training calendar and office hours to ensure that Volunteer counters, DSC, LAHSA staff, and special teams are all trained appropriately. Examples of training for general volunteers include

- Homeless Count Overview
- How to Download the App
- How to Use the App to Count People Experiencing Homelessness and Dwellings/Vehicles used as Homes

Hard-to-Count Area Improvements

LAHSA is updating processes for hard-to-access areas to ensure completeness and consistency in data collection. As part of this process, LAHSA has increased coordination and collaboration with our key partner organizations, including CalTrans, State Park Rangers, and Metro, among others, to address areas requiring special consideration or approaches, such as the Sepulveda Basin, highways, and sandy beaches.



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Next Steps

LAHSA will continue to prepare and plan for the 2025 Homeless Count, which will take place January 21-23, 2025.



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To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

From: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Chief Executive Officer, LAHSA

CC: Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA

Date: May 19, 2025

Re: Report Back on Item No. 21 - Improving the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count

Introduction

This memorandum responds to the third directive from Item No. 21 from the February 6, 2024, agenda for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting ([the motion](#)). LAHSA submitted its response to directive one on March 22, 2024, and its response to directive two on May 6, 2024. Responses to directive three were submitted on July 5, 2024, September 9, 2024, and November 5, 2024. The motion gave the following directives:

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Directive Three: After the 90-day report, report back to the Board in writing every other month with an update on progress toward improving the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

In the most recent [report](#), submitted on November 5, we noted that the custom volunteer website and dashboard were updated and completed by Esri and launched on October 29. The updates to the Volunteer Counting app were also completed, and load testing was performed to ensure that it would not crash the nights of the count. Additionally, Esri completed development of the internal LAHSA dashboard called the LAHSA Community Relations Coordinator Management Tool. LAHSA staff used this platform to organize and track volunteers at deployment sites. Below is a summary of how the 2025 count went, key improvements made to the count this year, and notable areas LAHSA has identified for continued progress in 2026.



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Overview of the 2025 Homeless Count

During February 18-20 2025, LAHSA conducted the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, the nation's largest annual census of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. With approximately 5,500 volunteers canvassing 3,400+ census tracts across the county, this year's Count was successful despite unexpected challenges due to the Los Angeles Wildfires and having to change the dates of the Count. The Count continues to be a foundational tool for informing policy, funding decisions, and service strategies at the local, state, and federal levels. Overall, data from 87% of census tracts was digitally submitted during the volunteer nights of count with 10% by the end of 10-day period. LAHSA outreach teams and other partners such as the City of Los Angeles' Field Intervention Team and local service providers covered approximately 400 makeup census tracts. Special Consideration Census tracts and Areas were counted by LAHSA's Access and Engagement Team with partnership from CalTrans, Metro, and Service Providers. Some areas included partnerships with Supervisorial and Council districts, along with the Mayor's office.

After the Count, LAHSA met with deployment site leads, and LAHSA volunteers, and sent a survey to every registered volunteer to solicit their feedback. Overall, volunteer surveys reflect improvement in ease of sign-up, application usage, and training compared to the previous year, and 88% of post-Count survey respondents said they would volunteer in the future and/or recommend volunteering to others; this was up from 86% last year.

Key improvements

LAHSA made significant enhancements in response to feedback and operational challenges from previous years. These improvements focused on training, data quality, and field coordination:

- *Updated Volunteer Training:* New scenario-based training videos and tailored modules for different populations (e.g General volunteer, Deployment Site Coordinator) improved confidence and accuracy in the field. Deployment Site Coordinators received personalized training, online resources, and office hours, which improved preparedness. Of the volunteers who responded to LAHSA's post count survey, 90% agreed with statements that the training was clear and understandable, helpful, covered the topics they expected, and left them feeling confident, up from 80% in 2024.
- *Volunteers sign up and app usage:* LAHSA simplified sign-up and sign-in by eliminating the need for redundant accounts and QR codes. Of the volunteers who answered the LAHSA post count survey, 96% rated the signup process as easy or very easy, with only 4% saying it was difficult. In 2024, 85% rated it as easy or very easy, and 15% as difficult or very difficult. Additionally, volunteers found the app easier to download than last year. Volunteers also found that using the app was easier this year with 70% of survey respondents finding it easy or very easy to use the



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app to collect data and 12.4% finding it difficult or very difficult. This is a significant improvement from 2024, in which only 51% said it was easy to use the app.

- *Improved Mapping Tools:* Updated encampment maps and enhanced digital navigation enabled better coverage of hard-to-reach areas. Additionally, volunteers and coordinators could track their progress in real time on the in-app map, reducing counting beyond the census tract border and ensuring a complete count.
- *Stronger Field Coordination:* LAHSA contracted with Esri to build a custom deployment site coordinator dashboard for 2025 to eliminate several challenges encountered in the previous two years when existing software was adapted to create the dashboard tool. This new system's enhancements included: Instantaneous updates of volunteer assignments, count status, and data edits, thereby reducing bottlenecks in the assignment and review process. During the count, 349 LAHSA staff volunteered on Special Teams as Deployment Site Logistics Specialists, and in phone banking. This highlights LAHSA's effort to improve technical support at each deployment site to ensure all census tracts were covered.
- *Expanded Demographic Surveying:* The addition of new demographic teams and outreach partner coordination helped increase the number of Demographic Surveys collected, will help produce a more accurate representation of who is experiencing homelessness across the region.

2025 challenges and areas for improvement

While 2025 marked notable progress, several challenges were identified that impacted the night of the count:

- *Volunteer Attrition & Last-Minute Cancellations:* Some areas experienced volunteer shortages. Due to a range of factors, fewer volunteers registered to count and some Deployment Site Coordinates anecdotally noted that more volunteers seemed to have dropped out the night of the Count. This year, there were 5,465 registered volunteers, an 8% decrease from last year's 5,969. This continues a downward trend since the COVID-19, and LAHSA believes this year's decrease was further influenced by the wildfire emergency in LA County in January, which not only delayed the Count but limited volunteer capacity.
- *Logistics Delays:* Delays in team deployment and supply distribution created bottlenecks in a few high-volunteer zones.
- *Technology Limitations:* There were scattered reports of issues with app connectivity and map syncing, especially in areas with poor cell reception. LAHSA worked with Esri in real time to address other small technological challenges as the Count progressed, including trouble finding the confirmation button when reporting 0 people experiencing homelessness for the census tract,



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some census tract outlines not appearing clearly in the counting app, and different web browsers showing deployment site coordinators some different information.

Improvements for 2026

To build on the successes of 2025 and address outstanding issues, LAHSA is implementing a multi-pronged improvement plan for the 2026 Count:

1. *Volunteer recruitment:* LAHSA will pilot a year-round volunteer engagement strategy to recruit and retain volunteers earlier and sustain those relationships between annual Counts. This work will include partnerships with local schools, businesses, faith communities and other groups capable of activating significant numbers of their own stakeholders. LAHSA has hired a Sr. Community Relations Coordinator dedicated to building up volunteer recruitment for the Count.
2. *Pre-deployment:* LAHSA staff will continue to work with stakeholders to improve the preparation of deployment sites for 2026, including individualized trainings, better supply coordination, and continued year-round communication with Deployment Site Coordinators.
3. *Technology upgrades:* LAHSA is working with vendors to improve offline access and real-time syncing for the counting app and make other improvements to both the volunteer app and the deployment site dashboard.
4. *Equity-focused adjustments to the demographic survey:* LAHSA and its partner USC are refining the demographic survey strategy to ensure outreach teams reach historically undercounted populations, including transitional age youth, BIPOC individuals, and unsheltered families. Further Special Count Collaboration: LAHSA will engage further with local stakeholders to more extensively address hard to reach areas.

Conclusion

The 2025 Homeless Count demonstrated clear operational improvements. LAHSA remains committed to continuous improvement and is already preparing for a more efficient, inclusive, and impactful Count in 2026. Stakeholder support, especially for volunteer recruitment, technology improvement, and community engagement, will be areas for improvement to ensure that the 2026 Homeless Count runs as smoothly as this year's count.