

2011 Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time Homeless Count

Wichita-Sedgwick County Continuum of Care
Coordination Team

Summary Report



The Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time (WSC-PIT) Homeless Count was conducted to collect accurate data on the number and characteristics of persons experiencing homelessness. Information gathered through each point-in-time homeless count informs planning related to housing, program and service needs; serves to measure progress towards preventing and ending homelessness; raises public awareness about the issue of homelessness; and complies with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) requirement for communities that receive HUD Homeless Assistance Program funding.

The Count provides a snapshot of homelessness on one designated night in the Wichita-Sedgwick County area. In 2011, the Count was conducted on January 26th. During the 2011 Count, 634 people were identified as being literally homeless, according to HUD's definition.

Demographic characteristics and living situation data collected during the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count help paint the local picture of homelessness.

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Summary Report

2011 Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time (WSC-PIT) Homeless Count

The WSC-PIT Homeless Count was conducted on January 26, 2011. Information was collected during face-to-face interviews and through service data reported by homeless providers. The majority of data were gathered from people attending an event conducted as part of the Count. The event was modeled after Project Homeless Connect with the purpose of helping link WSC-PIT participants with needed services and support. In addition, to be inclusive of individuals not attending the event, experienced homeless outreach providers were on the streets from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. canvassing locations where people experiencing homelessness had previously been encountered. Additional information was gathered through electronic surveys from residents at two area domestic violence shelters and extracted from the Wichita-Sedgwick County Continuum of Care computer database operated by United Way of the Plains on behalf of homeless service providers. Information was gathered from a total of 875 contacts including 605 surveys completed on January 26th. The largest number of surveys was collected through the WSC-PIT Event (N = 402) followed by survey data extracted from the Community Information Management System (CIMS-HMIS) (N = 112).

Efforts were made to ensure that data were gathered in a consistent way across volunteer surveyors by requesting all WSC-PIT Volunteers review the web-based training modules distributed to them prior to the Count. Volunteers were asked to confirm completion of the training modules before assisting with surveys. Another strategy used to minimize confounds and elicit reliable data was the use of specially trained Team Leaders assigned for each volunteer activity. The Section Team Leaders provided on-going Volunteer support throughout the Count. Information provided by survey respondents was scrutinized in an attempt to determine duplicate surveys. Duplication of data was minimized through an analysis of the unique identifying information provided by survey respondents. As in previous point-in-time counts, in order to control for the possibility that the same person may have completed more than one survey, respondents were asked to provide the first letter of their first, middle, and last names, as well as their date of birth. De-duplication was accomplished by analyzing the first letters of respondents' first, middle, and last names, compared with their dates of birth and the locations in which surveys were completed. Each potential instance of duplicate surveys was reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

This summary report includes data representing 494 respondents whose living situation met the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of being literally homeless (see Appendix A for the definition). Respondents were accompanied by 140 other adults and/or children, resulting in a total of 634 people identified in the WSC-PIT process who were literally homeless. HUD requires each continuum of care to conduct a count and report data for each odd numbered year. Table 1 contains data the Wichita-Sedgwick Count Continuum of Care reported to HUD in the last three biennial counts.

Trends Across Biennial Point-In-Time Homeless Counts				
Table 1.	2007	2009	2011	Percent Change Since 2009
Literally Homeless	526	384	634	65.1
Persons in Families with Children	158	74	52	- 29.7
Unsheltered Living Situation	53	32	108	237.5
Chronically Homeless	56	71	140	97.2

Ages of respondents in the 2011 WSC-PIT ranged from 18 to 85 years. The average age of respondents was 44.6 years. Age variation was found across genders with male respondents having an average age of 46.5 years and female respondents having an average age of 38.6 years. Table 2 presents information on age categories of respondents and includes a comparison with the age categories reported in the 2009 Count.

Table 2. **Comparison of Respondent Age Categories Between the 2009 and 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Counts**

Age Categories	2009 WSC-PIT (N = 295)		2011 WSC-PIT (N = 492)	
	Number	Percent	Percent	Number
Under 18 Years	4	1.4	0	0
18 – 24 Years	48	16.3	5.3	26
25 – 34 Years	42	14.2	14.6	72
35 – 44 Years	59	20.0	21.1	104
45 – 54 Years	94	31.8	43.1	213
55 – 64 Years	39	13.2	13.8	68
65 or More Years	9	3.1	1.8	9
Subset of Youth Ages 18 – 22 Years	Not Reported	Not Reported	4.3	21

Table 3 presents age categories for all respondents in the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count compared with those of the veterans and chronic homelessness subpopulations. The largest response category in the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count was respondents 45 to 54 years of age. When compared to the 2009 WSC-PIT Homeless Count the frequencies represent a 126.6 percent increase in the number of respondents in the 45 to 54 age category. Veterans showed an even more pronounced shift towards the 45 to 54 age range with 58.8 percent of respondents falling into this category (N = 40). The 45 to 54 age range was also the largest age category among respondents who met HUD’s definition of experiencing chronic homelessness (50.7 percent; N = 71).

Table 3. **Comparison of Respondent Age Categories Across Subpopulations in the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count**

Age Categories	All Respondents (N = 492)		Veterans (N = 68)	Chronically Homeless (N = 140)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Under 18 Years	0	0	0	0
18 – 24 Years	26	5.3	0	2.1
25 – 34 Years	72	14.6	8.8	7.9
35 – 44 Years	104	21.1	16.2	20.7
45 – 54 Years	213	43.1	58.8	50.7
55 – 64 Years	68	13.8	14.7	15.7
65 or More Years	9	1.8	1.5	2.9

The gender characteristics of the 494 respondents in the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count (75.7 percent male, N = 374; 24.3 percent female, N = 120) were proportionately similar to those of respondents in the 2009 WSC-PIT Homeless Count (71.9 percent male, N = 242; 27.5 percent female, N = 87).

Figure 1. **2011 WSC-PIT Respondent Gender**

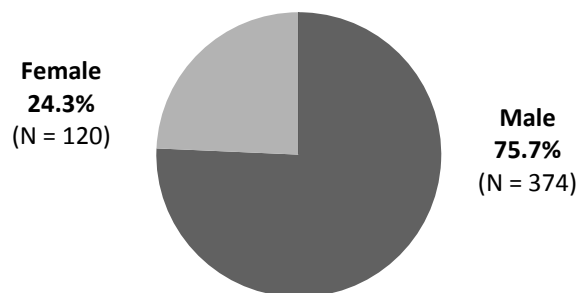


Table 4 compares race and ethnicity data reported by WSC-PIT respondents with that of the general public in the urban city area and the broader county area. Percentages for the 2011 WSC-PIT data were adjusted for 38 missing responses for race and 40 missing responses for ethnicity.

Race	2011 WSC-PIT (N = 456)		2010 Census Data by Percent	
	Number	Percent	City of Wichita (N = 382,368)	Sedgwick County (N = 498,365)
Asian	6	1.3	4.8	4.1
Black/African American	125	27.4	11.5	9.3
Native American/Alaskan Native	16	3.5	1.2	1.2
White	288	63.2	71.9	76.3
Pacific Islander	3	0.7	0.1	0.1
Multi-Racial	13	2.9	4.3	4.0
Other	5	1.0	6.2	5.1
Ethnicity- Hispanic (2011 WSC-PIT N = 454)	43	9.5	15.3	13.0

The data in Table 4 shows that persons who were Asian, white or multi-racial were under-represented among the WSC-PIT respondents when compared to the general public in either the city or county areas. The percentage of homeless respondents who were of Black/African American race was more than twice the percentage found in the general public. Persons who were Native American/Alaskan Native or Pacific Islander were also over-represented among the homeless respondents when compared to the general public although not to the extent of Black/African American respondents.

Subpopulations. Table 5 displays the HUD defined subpopulation data delineated by the living situation categories of sheltered and unsheltered. Appendix A includes definitions for unsheltered living situations and chronic homelessness. HUD requires each Continuum of Care that receives funding through the Homeless Assistance Program to report subpopulation data for both sheltered and unsheltered living situations.

	2011 WSC-PIT		Sheltered	Unsheltered
	Number	Percent	Number	Number
Veterans (N = 489)	68	13.9	47	21
Victims of Domestic Violence (N = 381)	54	14.2	48	6
Severe Mental Illness (N = 494)	141	28.5	119	22
Chronic Substance Abuse (N = 494)	159	32.2	127	32
Persons with HIV/AIDS (N = 494)	8	1.6	7	1

Veterans. Among the 489 respondents who indicated veteran status, 68 (13.9 percent) respondents reported they were veterans. The two response categories from which veteran status was inferred were service in the U.S. Armed Forces (N = 67) and/or active duty as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist (N = 27). Among the 68 veterans, 47 (69.1 percent) were sheltered and 21 (30.9 percent) were unsheltered. Among the 99 overall respondents who were unsheltered on Jan. 26th, 2011, approximately one in five (21.2 percent) were veterans.

Disabling Conditions. Among the 230 respondents who indicated they had at least one disabling condition, the most frequently cited disabling condition was chronic substance abuse (69.1 percent; N = 159). The chronic substance abuse category represents an unduplicated count of persons who identified they had either chronic alcohol or chronic drug abuse, or both. The second most frequently reported disabling condition was a severe mental illness (61.3 percent; N = 141). Percentages were adjusted for 264 responses that were missing or had indicated they did not have a disabling condition. Multiple responses were possible.

Table 6 presents prevalence data for disabling conditions reported by respondents in each of the last two biennial WSC-PIT Homeless Counts (2009 WSC-PIT and 2011 WSC-PIT). The percentage of respondents who reported having a chronic physical disability or illness decreased in the 2011 WSC-PIT when compared to the 2009 WSC-PIT. It was the only category of disabling condition to decrease when compared to the 2009 WSC-PIT. The disabling condition that had the largest increase between 2009 and 2011 Counts was in the category of chronic substance abuse that included either chronic alcohol abuse and/or chronic drug abuse. In the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count there was a 287.8 percent increase in the number of respondents reporting a chronic substance abuse when compared to respondents in the 2009 WSC-PIT.

Disability	2009 WSC-PIT (N = 160)		2011 WSC-PIT (N = 230)	
	Number	Percent	Percent	Number
Severe Mental Illness	88	55.0	61.3	141
Chronic Physical Disability or Illness	94	58.8	39.6	91
Chronic Substance Abuse	41	25.6	69.1	159
Chronic Alcohol Abuse	N.A.	N.A.	56.1	129
Chronic Drug Abuse	N.A.	N.A.	43.9	101
Developmental Disability	24	15.0	17.0	39
HIV/AIDS	3	1.9	3.5	8

Contributing Factors in Chronic Homelessness. Living situation, age, household status, and presence of disabling condition are all contributing factors in determining chronic homelessness. The definition of chronic homelessness appears in Appendix A. In situations when the living situation meets HUD’s definition of literally homeless, the duration of homelessness and/or number of times the person was homeless previously also serve as the criteria for chronic homelessness.

Number of Times Homeless. In Figure 2, percentages were based on 387 responses to the question, “How many times have you...been homeless or without your own place to stay within the past three years, including this time?” The largest response category indicated that for almost half of respondents the current situation was the first time they had been homeless (48.8 percent; N = 189). The second largest response category was four or more times homeless (22.5 percent; N = 87). Percentages were adjusted for 107 missing responses.

No statistically significant differences were detected among first-time versus not-first-time homeless individuals based on gender. Among respondents for whom number of times homeless could be determined (N = 387) half were male (50.0 percent; N = 148) and 45.1 percent were female (N = 41).

Among those who were homeless for the first time, there was a statistically significant difference in the average age of males (47.5 years) compared to the average age of females (40.1 years). The statistical significance was confirmed at a 95 percent level of confidence.

Among the 189 respondents who had been homeless for the first time in the past three years, the largest response category was 45.0 percent (N = 85) who had been homeless at least one year. The second largest response category was 37.6 percent (N = 71) of respondents who had been homeless between 31 and 364 days. The remaining 16.9 percent (N = 32) of respondents had been homeless 30 days or less.

Figure 2. Number of Times Been Without a Place to Stay

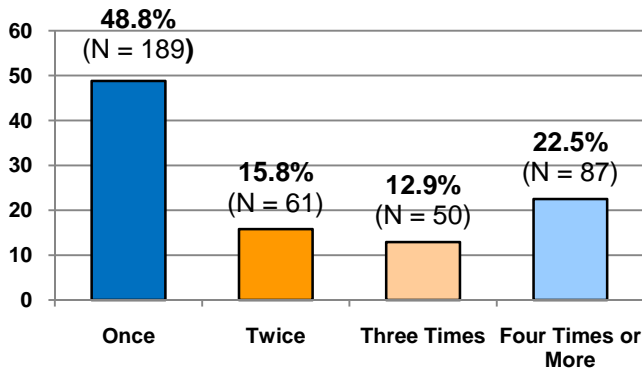
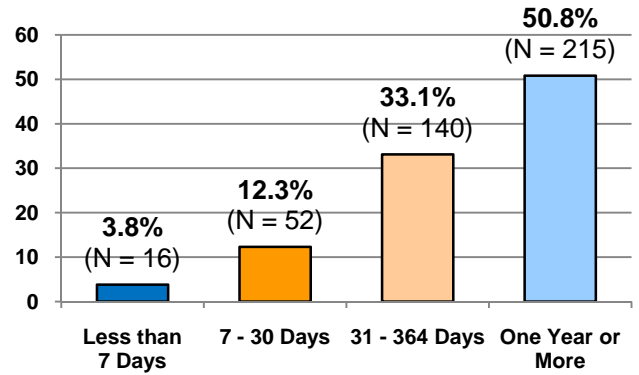


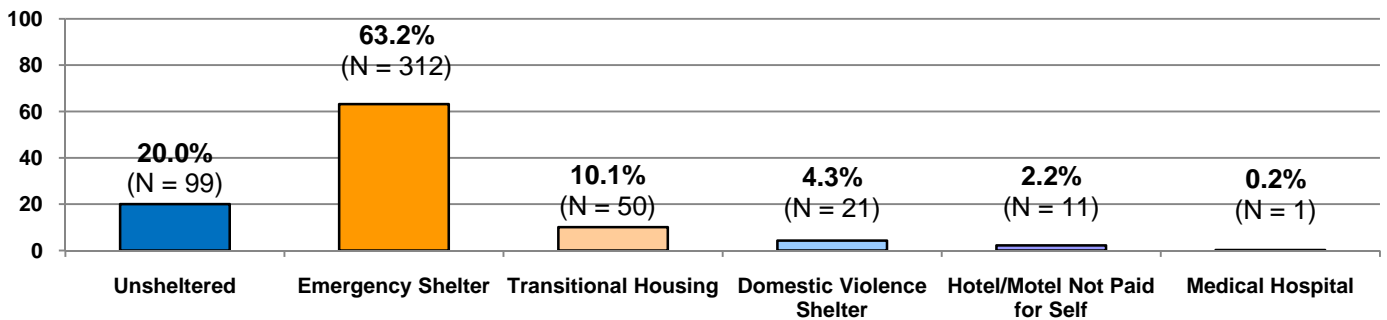
Figure 3. Duration of Current Living Situation



Duration of Homelessness. Percentages previously noted in Figure 3 were based on 423 responses to the question, “How long have you...been without your own place to stay/homeless?” The majority of respondents had been homeless at least one year (50.8 percent; N = 215). Percentages were adjusted for 71 missing responses.

In order to determine whether a respondent met HUD’s definition of being literally homeless, respondents were asked, “Where did you stay last night (night of January 25th)?” Figure 4 displays data reported by 494 respondents. The primary determinant for literal homelessness was living situation on January 25th. Respondents who cited a living situation for January 25th that would not meet HUD’s definition for being literally homeless were asked follow-up questions regarding whether they would stay in the same situation overnight on January 26th and, if not, where they would stay on January 26th. Appendix A includes definitions of the living situations listed on Figure 4 and subsequently in this report.

Figure 4. Where Stayed Overnight on January 25th



Number of persons noted in Figure 4 represents respondents only. Table 7 reflects the number of people, both respondents and the accompanying adults and children, categorized by household type for each living situation.

Living Situation	Single Person	Two Persons With No Children	One Person with Child(ren)	Two Persons With Child(ren)	Missing Responses
Unsheltered	87	14	2	3	2
Emergency Shelter	286	20	100	13	0
Transitional Housing	31	0	47	15	0
Safe Haven	14	0	0	0	0
Total	418	34	149	31	2

Figure 5 displays the reported living status of both the 494 respondents and the 140 accompanying family members (N = 634). Living situations for Figure 5 were categorized as either a sheltered situation (i.e., living in an emergency shelter, transitional housing program, or a safe haven) or an unsheltered situation (i.e., living in a car, under a bridge, in other places not meant for human habitation). Figure 6 displays the reported living status of the respondents only (N = 494). In the 2009 WSC-PIT Homeless Count, 91.2 percent of all homeless (N = 394) were sheltered and 8.8 percent (N = 32) were unsheltered.

Figure 5. **All Homeless – Sheltered-Unsheltered Status**

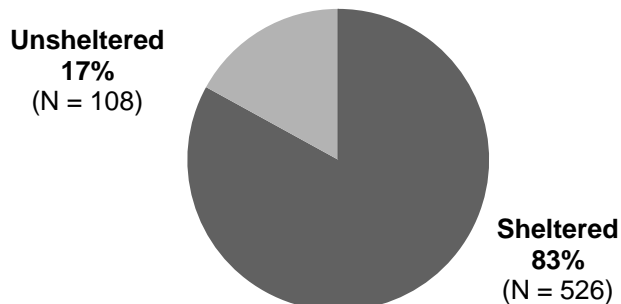
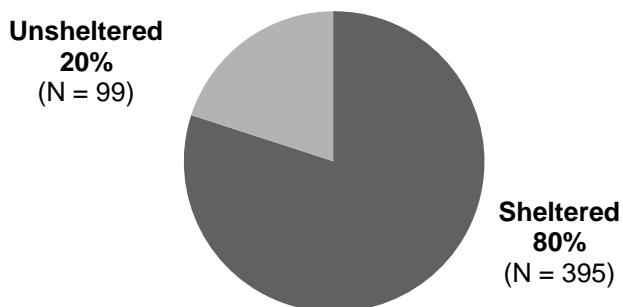


Figure 6. **Respondents - Sheltered-Unsheltered Status**



Beginning in 2011, HUD required that point-in-time surveys include a new category of sub-population defined as chronically homeless families. HUD modified the definition of chronic homelessness to acknowledge people who would otherwise meet the definition for a chronically homeless individual except that they are accompanied by one or more other people in their household. A chronically homeless family is one in which one or more adults has a disabling condition AND has either been homeless four or more times during the last three years OR has been continuously homeless for one year or more.

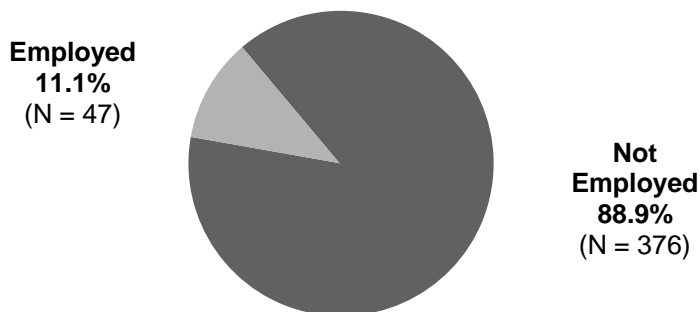
Table 8. **Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families**

Living Situation	Chronically Homeless Individuals		Chronically Homeless Families			
	Persons (N = 140)	Percentage of CH Individuals	Households (N = 15)	Persons (N = 34)		
				Adults	Children	Total
Unsheltered	43	30.7	7	14	1	15
Emergency Shelter	78	55.7	6	12	3	15
Transitional Housing	12	8.6	2	2	2	4
Safe Haven	7	5.0	0	0	0	0
Total	140	100	15	28	6	34

Among the seven chronically homeless family households living in unsheltered situations, one family was comprised of two adults and one child. The remaining six households were each comprised of two adults with no children.

Figure 7 displays responses from the 47 WSC-PIT respondents who were employed on January 26, 2011. The number of hours worked ranged from 4 to 50 hours per week and averaged 27.2 hours (or about 27 hours and 9 minutes) per week. Percentages were adjusted for 71 missing responses.

Figure 7. **Respondent Employment**



Summary of Key Findings

Key findings in the 2011 Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time (WSC-PIT) Homeless Count include:

→ Changes in methodology:

- The 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count incorporated an event modeled on Project Homeless Connect, acknowledged as a Best Practice by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness for helping end homelessness. The majority of surveys (63.8 percent; N = 630) were completed at the event.
- Emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven occupancy data for January 25th was extracted from the Wichita-Sedgwick County area Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) used by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funded homeless service providers to document service delivery. The survey data extracted for 112 respondents comprised the second largest source of information for the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count. Data analysis scrutinized the surveys and HMIS data for potentially duplicate information.
- Staff from COMCARE of Sedgwick County-Homeless Program, the Robert J. Dole Veterans Administration Medical Center-Homeless Outreach (VA), and the Wichita Children's Home-Street Outreach combined efforts to canvas the geographic area on Jan. 26th and conduct survey interviews among people they encountered in the community. For more than two weeks before the WSC-PIT Homeless Count, Homeless Outreach providers, especially VA staff, helped prepare the community by posting flyers and making presentations to other service providers and persons experiencing homelessness about the purpose and timing of the 2011 Count. Taken together, the tireless efforts of all the Homeless Street Outreach providers who volunteered, both before and on the day of the Count, helped ensure stakeholders were informed and involved.

→ A **65.1 percent increase in the number of respondents and their accompanying family members who were determined to be literally homeless** in the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count when compared to the 2009 WSC-PIT Homeless Count (N = 384 in 2011; N = 634 in 2009).

→ Among respondents who had a disabling condition, there was a **287.8 percent increase in the number of respondents** who have received treatment or been offered services for chronic substance abuse when compared to respondents in the 2009 WSC-PIT (25.1 percent; N = 159 in 2011 compared to 10.7 percent; N = 41 in 2009).

→ Among the 230 respondents who indicated they had at least one disabling condition in 2011, **the most frequently cited disabling condition was chronic substance abuse** (69.1 percent; N = 159). The second most frequently reported disabling condition was a severe mental illness (61.3 percent; N = 141).

→ When compared to 2009, there was a **decrease in the percentage of homeless veterans** identified in the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count (18.8 percent; N = 57 in 2009 compared to 13.9 percent; 68 in 2011). In 2011, respondents self-identified themselves as veterans by responding affirmatively when asked if they had been in the U.S. Armed Forces or had been activated, into active duty, as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist. From another perspective, approximately one in five (21.2 percent) respondents who was unsheltered was a veteran.

In conclusion, when compared to 2009 data, the 2011 WSC-PIT Homeless Count was successful in identifying a greater number of people who were literally homeless, especially chronically homeless individuals, homeless persons living in unsheltered situations, and persons who have received treatment or been offered services for chronic substance abuse. These numbers are a reflection of the personal toll that homelessness has on the people who find themselves in these situations, and the multiple, complex barriers that need to be addressed in order to end homelessness.

Appendix A

Definitions Included in the Summary Report

The 2011 Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time (WSC-PIT) Homeless Count was designed to reach people whose homeless situation would meet HUD's definition of being "Literally Homeless" including those whose living situation is unsheltered.

Literally Homeless. This includes people who for various reasons have found it necessary to live in emergency shelters or transitional housing for some period of time. This category also includes unsheltered homeless people who sleep in places not meant for human habitation (for example, streets, parks, abandoned buildings, and subway tunnels) and who may also use shelters on an intermittent basis (A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People: Second Revision, January 2008, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Community Planning and Development, 2.1;4)

HUD definitions of other concepts used in the 2011 Summary Report include:

- **Chronically Homeless Individual:** An unaccompanied literally homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been homeless four or more times during the last three years OR has been continuously homeless for one year or more.
- **Chronically Homeless Family:** A new category for 2011, a literally homeless family is one in which one or more adults has a disabling condition and has been homeless four or more times during the last three years OR has been continuously homeless for one year or more.
- **Emergency Shelter:** A facility that provides homeless persons with basic shelter and essential supportive services.
- **Domestic Violence Shelter:** An emergency shelter that provides a safe, supportive, and confidential environment for victims of abuse Domestic Violence (DV) shelters help victims survive the immediate crisis caused by leaving the abuser, while helping them to secure independent housing and financial stability.
- **Episode of Homelessness:** A separate, distinct, and sustained stay on the streets and/or in an emergency homeless shelter.
- **Transitional Housing Program:** A program aimed at helping homeless individuals and families make the transition from homelessness to more independent living; its residents are limited to a maximum stay of 24 months.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** A program that offers homeless people who have a disabling condition an assurance of permanent housing with appropriate supportive services. In HUD-defined permanent supportive housing, there is no time limit to the length of stay.
- **Safe Haven:** A form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness and/or other debilitating behavioral conditions who are on the street and have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services. It is expected that clients will be reengaged with treatment services as they become stabilized and learn to trust service providers.

Appendix B

In Acknowledgement and Thanks for Contributions to the 2011 Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time (WSC-PIT) Homeless Count (in alphabetical order)

Volunteers who made the Wichita-Sedgwick County Point-In-Time Homeless Count possible represented:

- Catholic Charities, Inc.
- Center for Social Work Innovation
- Christian Faith Center
- City of Wichita (multiple departments)
- Community at Large
- Department of Veterans Affairs-Wichita Regional Office
- Inter-Faith Ministries
- Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center
- Sedgwick County (multiple departments)
- The Salvation Army-Homeless Services
- United Methodist Open Door
- United Way of the Plains
- Vets US
- Wichita Children's Home
- Wesley Medical Center
- Wichita State University

Agencies/Groups/Businesses that Provided Informational, Services and/or Resources:

- Advocates to End Chronic Homelessness
- Baptist Homeless Ministries
- Building Economic Stability Together (BEST) Coalition of South Central Kansas
- Catholic Charities, Inc.
- Child Start, Inc.
- City of Wichita-Housing and Community Services
- COMCARE- of Sedgwick County-Homeless Program (Center City)
- Department of Veterans Affairs-Wichita Regional Office
- Dress for Success
- GraceMed Health Clinic
- Hunter Health Clinic
- Independent Hair Stylist
- Jehovah Jireh
- Kansas Legal Services
- Kansas Department of Corrections
- Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS)
- Metropolitan Community Church (transportation)
- Miracles, Inc.
- People's Net
- Riverside Hair Station
- Robert J. Dole Veterans Administration Medical Center
- Sedgwick County-Department of Housing
- Sedgwick County Health Department

Agencies/Groups/Businesses that Provided Informational, Services and/or Resources

(Continued):

- Shadyway Plaza Tower
- Social Security Administration
- The Salvation Army-Emergency Services
- UniCare
- United Way of the Plains 2-1-1 Kansas
- Vet Center
- Wichita Children's Home
- Wichita Child Guidance Center
- Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas

Agencies/Groups/Businesses that made Contributions to the Overall WSC-PIT Homeless Count, such as contributing door prizes, facility, food for attendees, etc.:

- Advocates to End Chronic Homelessness (AECH)
- Catholic Charities, Inc.
- City of Wichita – Century II Convention Center
- City of Wichita –Housing and Community Services
- City of Wichita – Police Department
- Ellsworth Correctional Facility (bicycles)
- Miracles, Inc.
- QuikTrip Corporation
- Robert J. Dole Veterans Administration Medical Center
- Rotary Club of Wichita
- Sedgwick County-Department of Human Services
- Sedgwick County – Division of Information and Operations (DIO)
- Sedgwick County - Sheriff Department
- Target Stores
- The Salvation Army
- United Methodist Open Door
- United Way of the Plains
- Wal-Mart

2011 WSC-PIT Section Team Leaders:

- **Data Entry** – Gloria Summers (United Way of the Plains)
- **Event Surveyors** - Deann Smith (United Methodist Open Door)
- **Greeters-Hospitality** - Lynn Tatlock (The Salvation Army – Homeless Services)
- **Home Base/Overall Project Operations** - Luella Sanders & Kandi Miller (United Way of the Plains)
- **Participant Logistics** - Mary K. Vaughn & Brad Snapp (City of Wichita – Dept. of Housing and Community Services)
- **Photography** - Rhonda Walker (Miracles, Inc.)
- **Services & Resource Support** - Leslie Church (Inter-Faith Ministries, Inc.)
- **Street Surveyors** - Traci Addington (COMCARE of Sedgwick County)
- **Volunteer Coordination** - Vivion Moore (United Methodist Open Door)