



KCRHA
King County Regional Homelessness Authority

Measuring Unsheltered Homelessness: 2026 PIT Count Overview

January 7, 2026
Research & Data

Agenda

 Countdown for the PIT

 Survey Locations

 Why we changed and how we count

 Our Method: Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS)

 Not a "show up to be counted" process

 What the Hub sites are for

 Your role as board delegate

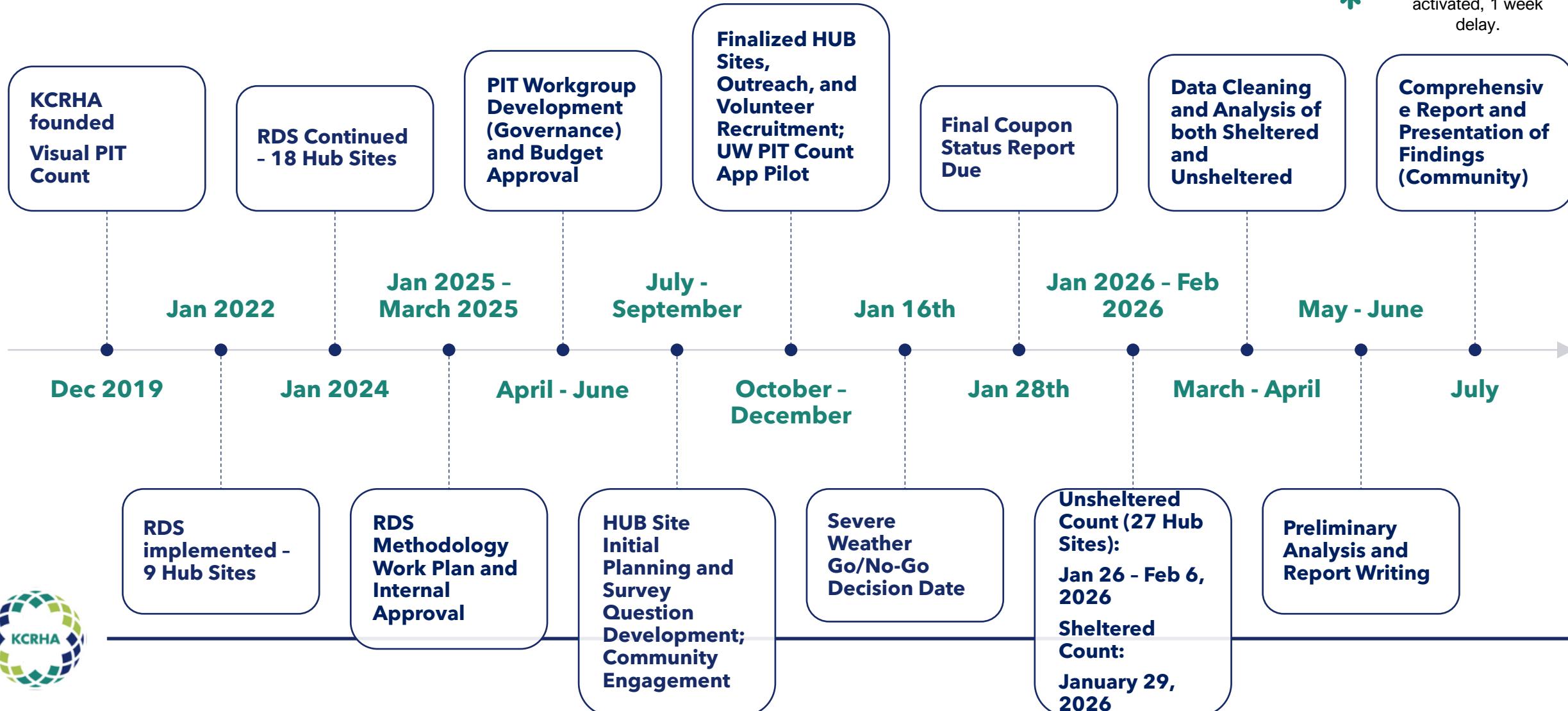
 Where you can dive deeper

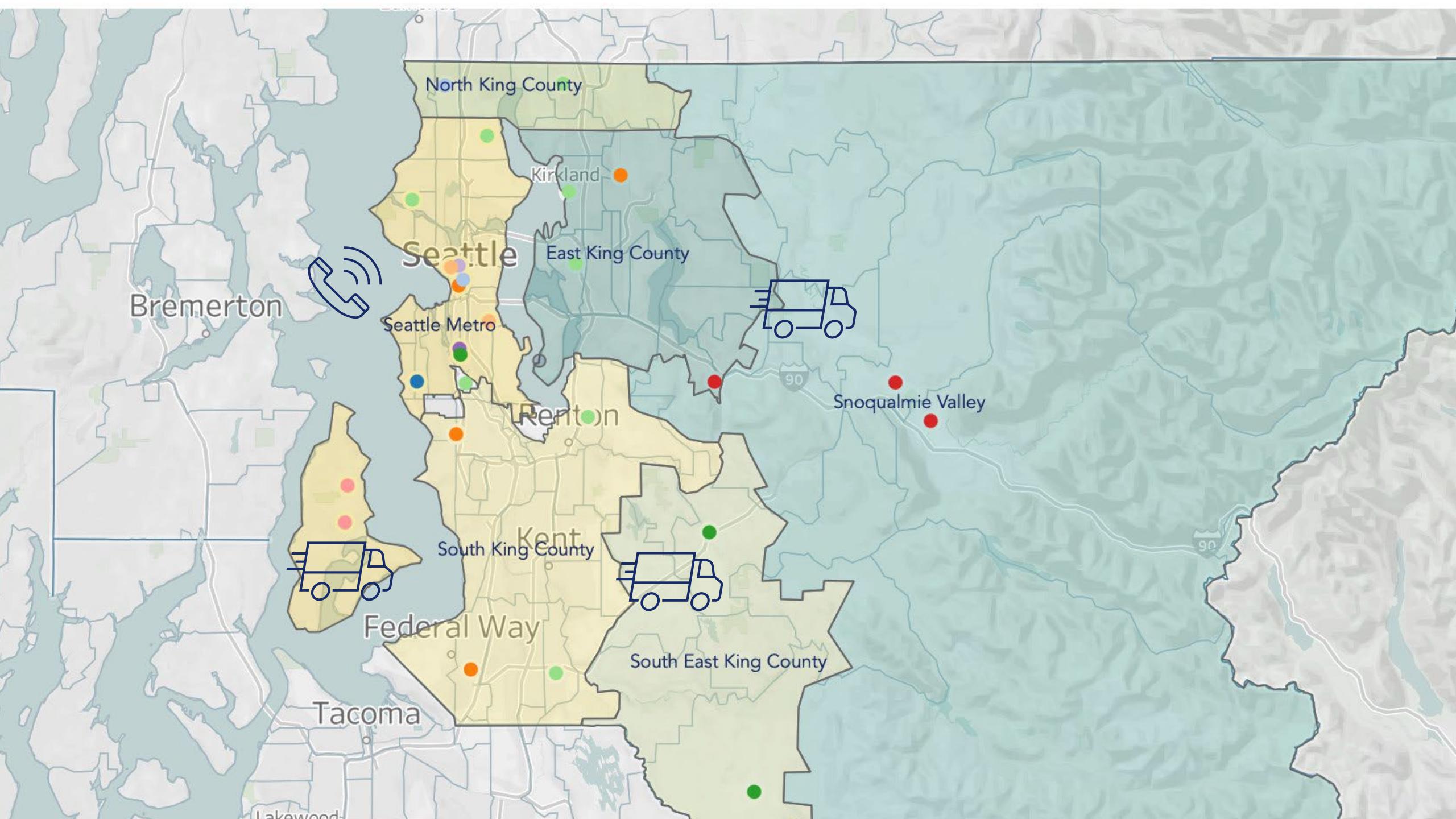


Countdown for 2026 PIT Count



All contingent upon severe weather activation – if activated, 1 week delay.





Why We Changed How We Count

- Traditional street counts miss thousands
- Hidden, rural, vehicles, and unsafe areas are overlooked
- Data has limited reliability for funding + planning

The old ‘walk around at night and count people’ approach misses large parts of the population. In some areas, it undercounted by 4–10 times. HUD has approved our new approach in 2022, 2024, and again in 2026.



Our Method: Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS)

- 1** **Seeds:** trusted participants start
- 2** **Referrals:** invite people they know
- 3** **Networks grow:** relationships, not events
- 4** **Estimate:** model fills in what we can't see

This is a proven, globally recognized method used by the CDC, WHO, and universities that measures the full population through trusted networks, especially for hard-to-reach groups.



This Is NOT a “Show Up To Be Counted” Process

MYTH: Everyone should go to the hubs.

REALITY: We measure network chains, not attendance.

Please don't direct people to hubs to 'be counted.' That actually harms the study and creates confusion.



Role of the Seeder

Seeders = trigger for data collection

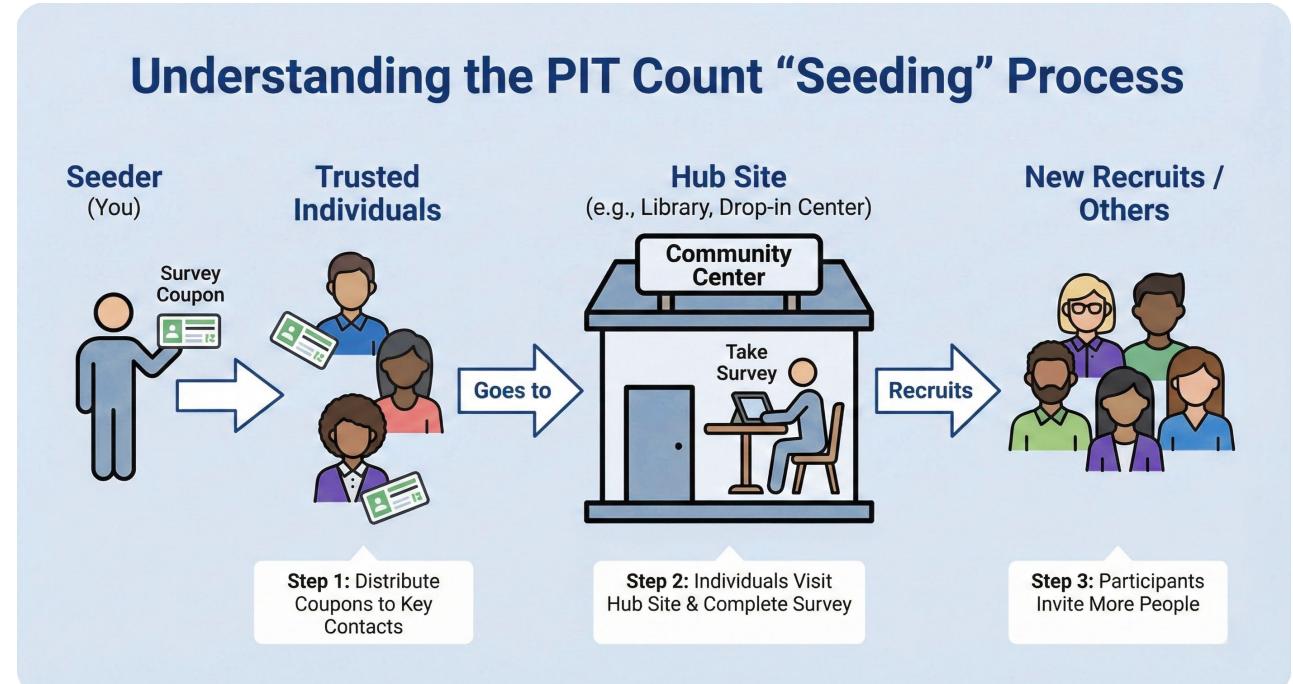


Coupons: 50 (most seeders)

Geography: Coupons are subregion specific

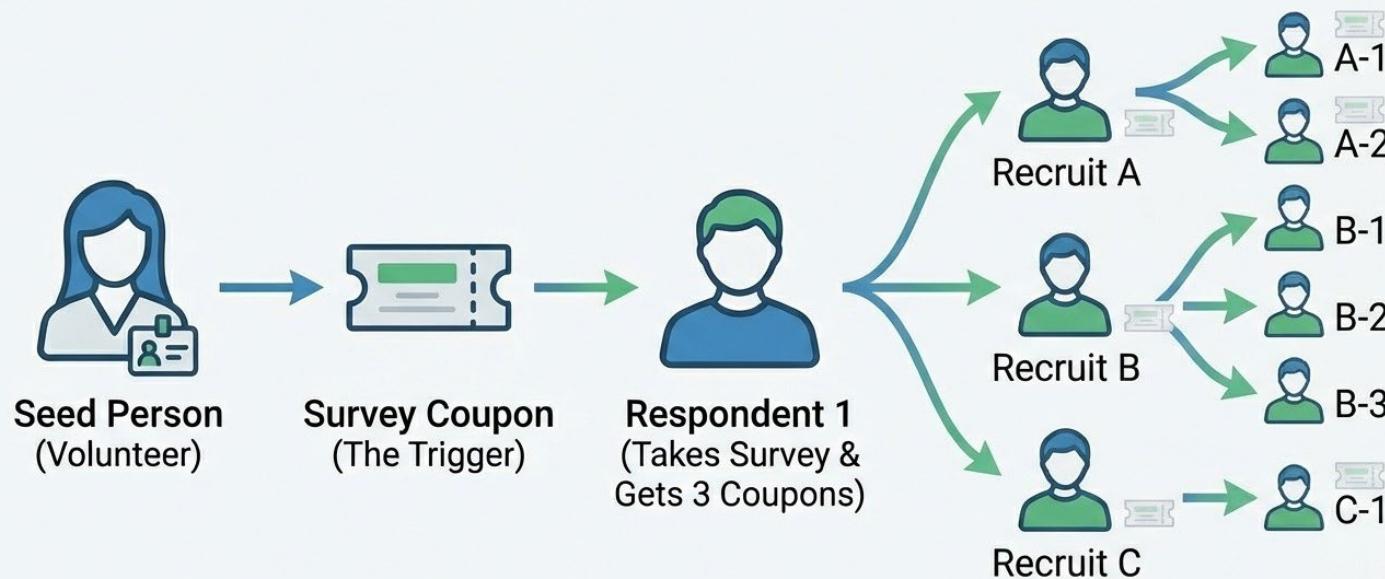
Target Audience: Unsheltered individuals only

Seeding dates: Jan 23rd – Jan 26th, 2026 (weekend prior to the count)



Expanding the Referral Chain

Expanded RDS “Coupon Trigger” & Multi-Cycle Referral Chain



The chain continues: secondary recruits become the next wave of seeds, expanding the network further.

How You Can Champion the 2026 PIT Count

- Validate the Methodology
- Build Trust with Providers
- Promote the "Why"

How to describe this to others: *"We aren't just counting people; we are listening to them. By using peer-to-peer recruiting, we can reach neighbors who are usually invisible to traditional counts, ensuring resources go where they are needed most."*

Count Begins: January 26, 2026 (weather permitting) | Questions? Contact Pitcount-m@kcrha.org



Your Role as Board Delegates

- Help people understand seeds → referrals → networks
- Correct gently when people say “just show up”
- Reinforce accuracy and dignity
- Bring questions back to staff don’t improvise

We need your voice, not as scientists, but as trusted messengers who help explain why this method is fair and accurate. We aren't chasing a headline number. We're trying to understand reality so resources match need.



Where You Can Go Deeper

- You can watch our comprehensive volunteer training
- Review the KCRHA 2024 Unsheltered PIT Report
- Receive updates from the CoC PIT Workgroup
- Volunteer and learn get hands on experience
- Attend PIT presentations later in the year to see final results
- View our world wide web page aka volunteer portal
- Ask questions anytime



PIT Count Volunteer Roles

