

# STREET NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## Outdoor Count Methodology Key Points

### Canvassing your Study Area

- Study Areas are carefully chosen in advance – do not canvass areas other than where you are assigned and do not count anyone while you are travelling to your Study Area, unless they are one of your assigned Study Areas
- Teams should familiarize themselves with the maps in advance and plan for navigation
- Canvass only public areas. Do not enter private buildings or property or any area you feel is not safe to enter. If you see someone staying in these areas, you **must** count them on the Outdoor Count CheckMarket Form
- Prioritize covering Study Areas you feel are safer to cover earlier in the night
  - Encampments are being covered from 9 am to 12 pm
  - Non-encampment areas are being covered from 7 pm to 12 am
- For **higher density areas** (where there are many people experiencing homelessness outdoors), please be systematic in canvassing the Study Areas so you are not double-counting individuals
- Canvass **only the interior side of the street** for those streets that form the boundary of your Study Area so that you are not counting people in adjacent Study Areas more than once
- For **lower density areas** (where there are only 1 to 2 people experiencing homelessness outdoors), you can go directly to count these individuals. You do not have to canvass low-density areas where you know individuals are not staying
- If your team is having difficulty completing your Study Areas, the Outdoor Site Coordinator should contact SNA Central as soon as possible. Do not wait until the end of the night to contact SNA Central if you are having difficulties finishing your Study Areas. There will be a backup Streets to Homes team that can support.

### Counting Individuals

- Make sure to complete the Outdoor Count CheckMarket Form for each individual you encounter who you know or you reasonably believe is staying outdoors that night (based on your professional judgment)
- This includes people who say they **don't know** where they will be staying that night
- This year, since outreach teams are leading the count, you do not have to approach every individual you encounter on the street (e.g., the person who is clearly heading into a restaurant). Use your professional judgment.
- If you are certain the person is staying outdoors that night (e.g., person is known to outreach team as someone who consistently stays outdoors), you don't need to ask them if they are staying outdoors – just count them

- If you are unsure if the person is staying outdoors that night (e.g., the person is either unknown to you or the person moves between staying outdoors and in shelters), you must ask them "Are you staying outdoors tonight?" and count them on the Outdoor Count CheckMarket Form if they are staying outdoors that night.
- If people say they **don't know** where they are staying, follow-up with another question to find out further. They should be counted if they still say they don't know where they will be staying
- **Do not** count people:
  - Who stayed outdoors the night before
  - Staying in a shelter, 24-hour respite/24-hour drop-in, overnight winter service, Covid-19 response site or isolation/recovery site that night
  - Staying in housing
  - Staying at someone else's place (including couch surfers and hidden homeless)
  - Staying in a motel/hotel (shelter program or paid by self)
  - Staying in jail, hospital, or treatment centre

### **Completing the Outdoor Count CheckMarket Form**

- Complete a row for each individual you know or believe is staying outdoors that evening. If you counted 10 people, there should be 10 rows filled out
- Do not record on the Outdoor Count Form people who are not staying outdoors
- You **must** record the **study area number** – this is a critical part of the methodology and essential for calculating the outdoor estimate. Without it, we cannot count the person.
- You can check off all of the reasons why you believe the person is staying outdoors that evening
- Also check off if the person is staying in a ravine, lane/alley, or encampment
- Give the same encampment number to individuals staying in the same encampment so we can also count the number of people per encampment