



**TO: Mr. William Snow
Senior Program Specialist
US Department of Housing and Urban Development**

**FROM: CA-511 Stockton/San Joaquin Continuum of Care, AKA
The San Joaquin Continuum of Care**

**RE: Request for Full Exception to the 2021 Point in Time
Count requirements**

Date: November 18, 2020

Dear Mr. Snow,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and in consultation with the Collaborative Applicant of the San Joaquin Continuum of Care, I am respectfully requesting a full exception to the requirements of the Point in Time Count of the Unsheltered Homeless per HUD guidance issued November 16, 2020.

Why the CoC cannot conduct a full unsheltered PIT count

San Joaquin County is the geographic border of CA-511. As of this writing, we are currently experiencing the worst outbreak of COVID-19 in San Joaquin County to date. On November 17, the State of California downgraded San Joaquin County's status to the "purple tier," the most restrictive designation in the State system. For several months, grave concerns have been expressed by many members of our Continuum regarding the safety of volunteers, the vast majority of whom are over age 55 and therefore particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the virus. Although earlier in the year we remained hopeful that an improvement in the COVID situation in our Continuum would contribute to a higher level of confidence and comfort for volunteers, it has become clear that in fact the opposite has occurred and we will be unable as a Continuum to field a sufficient number of volunteers to conduct a viable count in an area of the size and geographic complexity of San Joaquin County regardless of methodology. Even if we were somehow able to engage volunteers under these circumstances, the safety of those individuals would be at serious risk considering the local rates of infection we are expecting to see in the next two months; the Continuum has also considered the health and safety of the unsheltered homeless population in this decision. The risk factors involved would make organizing and conducting a PIT count of any kind in CA-511 irresponsible under these circumstances.

Whether the CoC is requesting an exception to some or all of the requirements of the unsheltered PIT count

CA-511 is requesting an exception to all of the requirements of the unsheltered PIT count.

If the CoC is conducting a count, what exactly will be included in the count (e.g., a head count only)

Please see above.

Other efforts they are taking to understand the needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in their community

A supplemental survey of the unsheltered homeless has been conceived and implemented by a standing committee of the San Joaquin Continuum of Care. This survey was never intended to supplant the PIT count, and was designed as a smaller and more intensive process to be conducted over an approximately

one-month period only in Stockton, the largest city in the Continuum with the greatest number of unsheltered homeless per the most recent PIT count. Over the course of approximately 18 months, the Continuum engaged technical assistance to develop a comprehensive strategic plan which included extensive feedback from local stakeholders and those experiencing homelessness. The goals and strategies elucidated in the plan, along with the supplemental survey, provide our Continuum with an up-to-date and accurate picture of the needs of the unsheltered homeless.

On behalf of the San Joaquin Continuum of Care Board of Directors,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JM', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jon Mendelson
Chair, San Joaquin Continuum of Care