



## Santa Cruz HMIS News December 2024

Welcome to the Santa Cruz HMIS December 2024 newsletter!

**In this edition you'll find the following:**

- Season's Greetings & Help Desk Holiday Hours
- Community Poll
- Upcoming Events
- New Assessment Policy Changes
- Preparing for the Point-In-Time Count on 1/29/2025-1/30/25
- Special Announcements: Data Analysis Cohort
- Data Quality Dashboard and Report Content
- Report Spotlight: Review Your Data for the 2025 Point-In-Time Count



### Updates

### Season's Greetings

🎉 Wrapping Up the Year with Gratitude and Cheer! 🎉

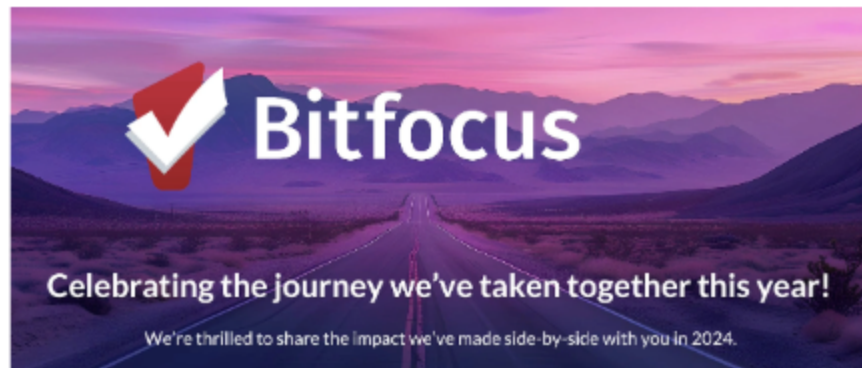
As we say goodbye to 2024, we want to take a moment to celebrate you! Your incredible dedication, collaboration, and hard work have made this year truly special. We're so grateful for all that you've accomplished, and we can't wait to keep the momentum going as we leap into an exciting 2025 together!

Bitfocus will be closed from Wednesday December 25, 2024 through January 1, 2025 to allow for our team to relax, recharge and enjoy quality time with their loved ones. This time off helps ensure that our team can return refreshed and ready to make 2025 our best year yet!

Thank you for being such an important part of our journey. Wishing you a joyful and peaceful holiday season! See you in the New Year! 🎄 ✨

### A Special End of the Year Video

Click here to watch!



### Help Desk Holiday Hours

As the holiday season approaches we'd like to remind you of our adjusted Help Desk Hours.

The Help Desk will be closed on the following days:

- Christmas Day - December 25, 2024 🎄
- New Year's Day - January 1, 2025 ✨

From Thursday, December 26th to Tuesday, December 31, 2024 the Help Desk will remain available but at limited capacity and will be processing tickets submitted by email to [santacruz@bitfocus.com](mailto:santacruz@bitfocus.com). On those days, please expect longer than usual response times. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Help

Desk if you need any general support, and they will get back to you as soon as they are able to!

### Important Note:

- All phone lines will be temporarily closed during this period. When you call, you will be prompted to leave a voicemail, which will automatically generate a support ticket.
- To assist you effectively, please leave a brief message with details of your need for support and a callback number.
- Tickets will be prioritized based on the urgency and the order in which the messages are received.

**We'll be back to business-as-usual in the New Year on Thursday, January 2nd.**

Thank you for your understanding and we wish you a safe and joyful holiday season!



## News

## Welcome to your Community Poll

### Check Out This Fun Poll:

If you shop for holiday gifts, what's your preferred shopping method?

[Take the poll!](#)

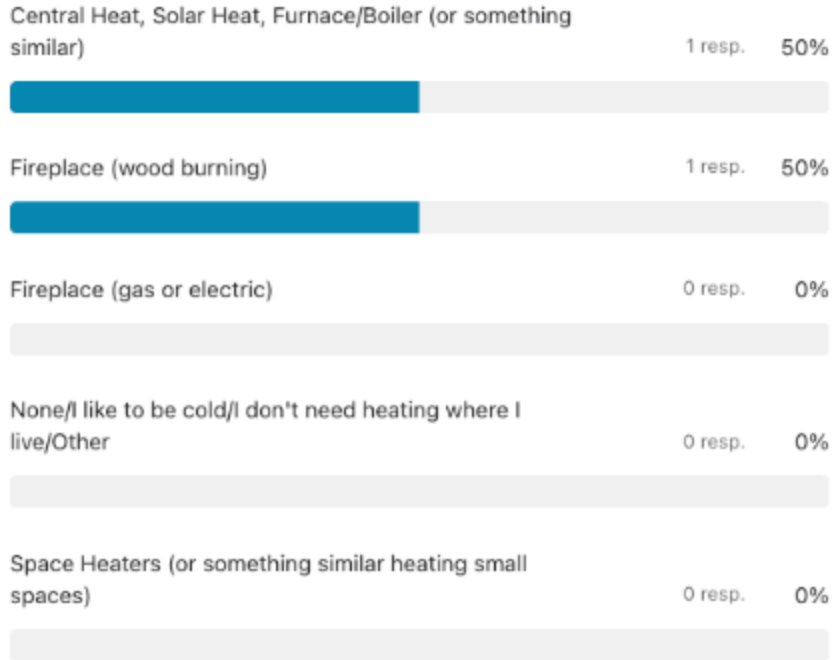


Check out the newsletter next month to see what your colleagues said! Please note that your individual response is anonymous.

**Results from last month's poll:** One person prefers central heat and one person prefers a fireplace. Thanks for taking the time to respond!

**✓ 1 As temps are dipping, what's your preferred (or most common) way to heat your home/space?**

2 out of 2 people answered this question



## Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Events

#### Housing for Health - HMIS Office Hours

Housing for Health and Bitfocus host office hours every **fourth Monday of each month** (in lieu of HMIS Workgroup meetings). Drop in for as long or as short as you'd like to ask any and all questions related to the HMIS. All users are welcome. Please join us within the first 15 minutes or we will assume nobody will be joining us for Office Hours. Happy holidays!

Please register for the next Office Hours below.

- Monday, January 27 | Register [HERE](#)



## Announcements

### New Assessment Policy Changes

#### Upcoming Change to 90-Day Assessment Policy

In an effort to simplify the 90-day assessment process, Housing for Health will be updating its policy beginning **February 2025**. Currently, Status Update Assessments and Current Living Situation (CLS) assessments are due every 90 days based on each client's enrollment date. Starting in **February 2025**, these assessments will instead align with **four specific "assessment months": February, May, August, and November**.

#### What Will Change in February 2025?

- Every client enrolled in an HMIS program must have a Status Update Assessment and CLS completed **during the months of February, May, August, and November**.
- This cycle will continue quarterly until the client exits the program.

#### Why the Change?

The aim of making this change is to prevent users from having to track the following:

- Prevent tracking numerous assessment dates that vary client to client based on their different enrollment dates.
- We hope to make it easier to know when assessments are due.
- Improve compliance and ensure more accurate, complete HMIS data.

#### Preparing for the Transition

To help users prepare for this change, Housing for Health, in partnership with Bitfocus, will launch a **communication campaign in January 2025**.

Additionally, we will use the January **HMIS Office Hours** to explain in detail the new process, and allow users to raise their questions and concerns.

- **Date:** January 27, 2025

- [Registration Link](#)

In the lead-up to the meeting, if you have any questions or comments, please reach out to Loren White, [loren.white@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:loren.white@santacruzcountyca.gov).



## Announcements

### Preparing for the 2025 Point-In-Time Count on 1/29/2025-1/30/25

#### Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count: Why It Matters

The annual PIT Count is essential for securing funding and creating policies to help resolve homelessness in Santa Cruz County. This year, Santa Cruz County's unsheltered PIT Count will occur in the early morning of January 30, 2025.

#### *Unsheltered PIT Count:*

**Sign up to Volunteer!** Join the 2025 Point-In-Time Count

Mark your calendars, Santa Cruz! On **Thursday, January 30, 2025**, from **5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.**, we're coming together as a community for the **2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count**.

#### 🌟 **What's Happening?**

Volunteers including community members, staff, and those with lived experiences of homelessness will use an app-based data collection tool to count individuals experiencing homelessness across Santa Cruz County on **Thursday, January 30, 2025**, from **5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.**



### 🌟 Who Can Help?

- Santa Cruz County needs YOU! Join as a volunteer and work in teams led by trained guides. If you have lived experience, we'd love for you to step in as a peer guide (with compensation for your time and expertise).

🌟 For more information on Santa Cruz County's 2025 PIT Count efforts, visit the Housing for Health websites below:

- Visit: [2025 Point-In-Time Count](#)
- For questions, please contact [alex@appliedsurveyresearch.org](mailto:alex@appliedsurveyresearch.org) or 877-728-4545

### *Sheltered PIT/HIC Count:*

It is critical that all emergency shelter and transitional housing projects in the HMIS reflect accurate enrollments, exits, and night-by-night services for the night of January 29, 2025 as part of this annual count of households experiencing sheltered homelessness in Santa Cruz County.

### **What's Required for Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Projects**

- All emergency shelter and transitional housing projects in HMIS must reflect **accurate enrollments, exits, and night-by-night services** for the

night of January 29, 2025

- This ensures we capture an accurate count of sheltered households experiencing homelessness.

### **What About Permanent Housing Projects? Yes!**

HUD also requires reporting the **unduplicated number of persons served** on the night of the PIT Count for all bed types reported on the **Housing Inventory Count (HIC)**. This includes:

- Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Permanent Housing

### **How to Provide Best Quality Data to HUD?**

Agencies must review and ensure that all relevant client records are up-to-date and complete for the PIT count date. This includes the following are complete and up-to-date:

- Profiles
- Enrollments
- Exits

For all projects, please let us know if the number of available beds, units, and/or vouchers have increased or decreased over the past year.

### **What you need to do to by February 3, 2025**

Ensure all clients served by your projects on January 29, 2025 are accurately represented in the HMIS. This includes all available demographic data, all enrollment/exit data, and accurate housing bed night services (for night-by-night emergency shelters). **If there are household move-in dates that you haven't recorded yet in your clients program enrollments, please be sure to add the move-in dates by the PIT count date.**

You can run the **[GNRL-220] Program Details Report** to review a spreadsheet containing all profile, enrollment data (including move-in dates for permanent housing projects), and exit data. The report also includes housing service start and end dates for each client which is especially important for night-by-night shelters to review and confirm.

**In particular, you should review:**



- **Move-in Dates** - For Housing programs, it is critical that clients have an **accurate move-in date** to show if they were in housing on the date of the PIT count.
- **Bed nights:** For night-by-night shelters, confirm attendance services, it's critical that clients have bed night services entered for the count period.
- **Review Demographics:**
  - Date of Birth - Even approximate dates of birth ensure that adults and children are categorized correctly.
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
  - Race
- **Chronically Homeless** - Missing answers to Living Situation questions at enrollment can result in inaccurate counts. Even one missing answer will result in a client not being counted in this category.
- **Disability** - HUD is particularly interested in counts of those who have mental health and/or substance abuse disabilities.
- **Veteran Status**
- **Total counts of people enrolled** - Do your counts seem too low or too high?

### Want more information?

Learn more about the PIT Count and HIC processes by visiting [HUD's information regarding the PIT/HIC count.](#)



## Announcements

### Special Announcements: 2025 Data Analysis Cohort

Announcing our 2025 Data Analysis Cohort Schedule! Bitfocus is offering Beginner Cohorts for all levels of need. Check out some key details of the offerings below:

#### Beginner Cohort (5 weeks)

- Data Analysis Tools Orientation

- Building a Basic Query
- Pivoting, Custom Groups, and Merging
- Dashboards and Sharing\*
- Open Workshop
- \$400 per participant
- \*\$350 for embedded users not attending the session on dashboards

For more details check out our [flyer here](#) and for an overview of the courses explore [syllabus here](#).

Check out the PDF!



**Bitfocus**

## Data Analysis Cohort 2025 Schedule

We are rolling out our schedule for the 2025 calendar year. We have scheduled two beginner back-to-back series that starts in March and June. See below for the dates and times that best suit your needs!


Beginner Series 1	Beginner Series 2
Thursdays: March 6 - April 3	Thursdays: June 5 - July 3*
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM ET	3:30 PM - 5:00 PM ET



## Announcements

### Data Quality Dashboard and Report Content

Please see the pictures below for the agency-level data quality dashboard and report content updates. This is updated monthly - check it out!

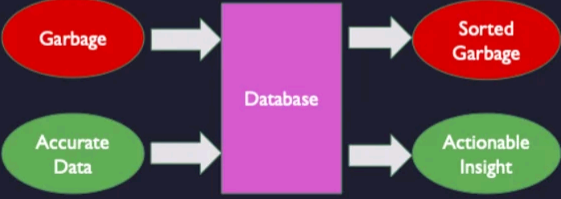


## Data Quality

- Completeness – data is complete
- Timeliness – data is entered timely
- Accuracy - data is entered accurately
- Consistency – data is consistent , no contradictions of data

**Why is Data important?**

- Data is used to drive the decision-making process of how funding is allocated.



\*HUD Data Quality Toolkit

Check out the PDF!



## Report Spotlight

### Review your Data for the 2025 Point-In-Time Count

#### Review Your Data for the Point-In-Time Count

The Santa Cruz County Sheltered Point-in-Time (PIT) Count will take place on the **night of January 29, 2025**. To ensure accurate reporting, we need your help in reviewing and updating your program data.

#### Here's what you need to do:

- **Verify your data:** Check that all enrollments (including housing move-in dates), exits and services for the night of **January 29, 2025** are complete and accurate.
- **Enter data in HMIS:** Make sure this information is entered into HMIS no later than February 3, 2025.
- **Run your Reports:** Use the report listed below to review your data as soon as your **January 29, 2025** are entered.

#### Step 1 Check Occupancy

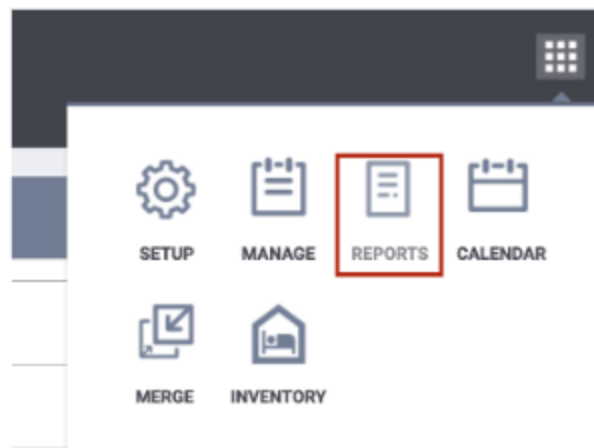
**The purpose** of this report is to get a detailed day-by-day view of your occupancy for housing programs on the night of January 29, 2025 with important key points in these areas:

- Emergency Shelter - Night-by-Night includes bed nights
- Permanent Housing Programs - Housing Move-In Dates are considered
- For Program Bed Inventory of all programs - the maximum bed occupancy is displayed

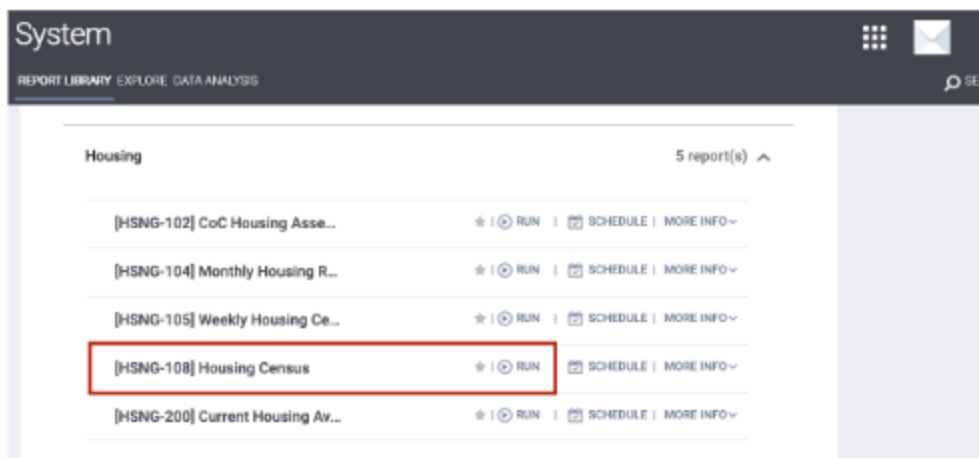
Check your occupancy by running the [[HSNG-108](#)] **Housing Census Report** for one night: January 29, 2025. This report can be found in the “Housing” section of the Report Library.

**Here’s how to run the report:**

- **Log in to Clarity Human Services:**
  1. Click on the “**Launchpad**” at the top right of the screen, to the left of the mail icon.
  2. From the launchpad, click on “**Reports.**”



- **Find the Report:**
  1. Locate [[HSNG-108](#)] Housing Census under the “Housing Reports” section and click Run.



- **Setup the Report**

1. Select the project type and program name. You may select multiple programs. Data for each program will display separately on the report.
2. Under Veteran Status, select All Clients.
3. Enter **January 29, 2025** for both the start and end date
4. Select your preferred Report Output Format
  - i. "PDF," or "Excel." (good for saving or printing)
  - ii. "Web Page" will allow you to click on the client name or ID and automatically open up the client profile within Clarity Human Services.

System

REPORT LIBRARY EXPLORE DATA ANALYSIS PREVIEW

Housing > [HSNG-108] Housing Census

Project Type(s) Choose...  
All  
Emergency Shelter – Entry Exit  
Emergency Shelter – Night-by-Night  
Transitional Housing

Program Status All Programs

Program(s) Program 1 Transitional Housing  
Program 2 Emergency Shelter

Veteran Status All

Whom do you want to generate the report for?  
 persons  households

Report Date Range 01/27/2025 – 01/27/2025

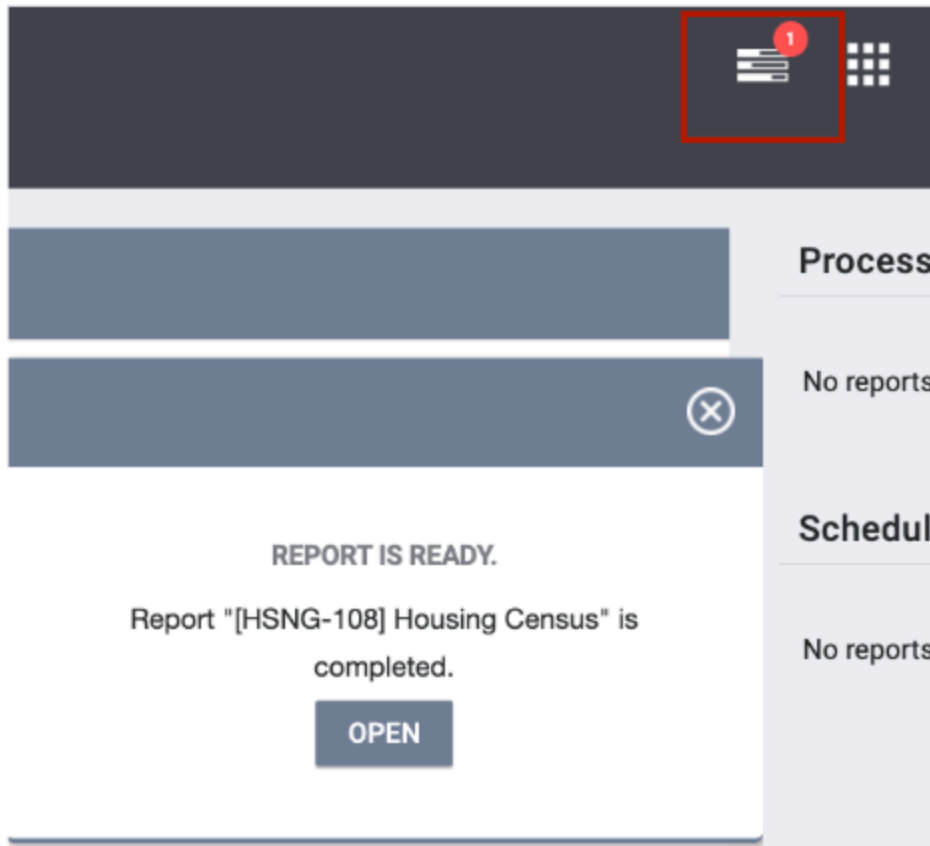
Report Output Format  Web Page  PDF  Zip with XLSX


Note: If the report contains more than 10,000 rows, the Report Output Format will be automatically changed to Zip with XLSX

SUBMIT

- Click the “Submit” button.

1. Once your report is finished processing, it will show you a notification in the top right of your screen, next to the Launchpad icon.



 **Pro tip:** If it's taking a while to process your report, refresh the page to check if your report is ready.

<b>Housing Census</b>		<b>Andrea B. Testy Tester Agency</b> Veteran Status: All Report generate for: persons Report Date Range: 01/29/2025 - 01/29/2025
<b>Awesome RRH</b>		<b>Max Occupancy: Varies</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b># Clients</b>	
01/29/2025	1	
01/29/2025	1	
<b>Total Clients Served</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Total Bed Nights Provided</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Test MH Program AB</b>		<b>Max Occupancy: 0 beds</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b># Clients</b>	
01/29/2025	1	
01/29/2025	1	
<b>Total Clients Served</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Total Bed Nights Provided</b>		<b>2</b>

The Housing Census Report will tell you how many beds the project in the HMIS are set up to provide and how many people were served on that night. If the

numbers don't match up, you may have an explanation, like the program just opened or had some units offline for repairs. If the reason is that exits or entries have not been entered, make sure they get entered immediately, and back-date them so they are counted on the day of the HIC. You can check who is missing by using the drill down in the report, or when you run the next report.

**Questions? Your HMIS Administrator is happy to help.**

**Phone: 831-713-2288**

**Email: [santacruz@bitfocus.com](mailto:santacruz@bitfocus.com)**



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