

**Census 2000 Service-Based Enumeration**  
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This paper reports the results of research and analysis undertaken by Census Bureau staff. It has undergone a Census Bureau review more limited in scope than that given to official Census Bureau publications. This report is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress.

**Key Words:** Coverage Improvement, Shelter, Soup Kitchen

**Abstract** The goal of Service-Based Enumeration (SBE) is to provide people without conventional housing an opportunity to be included in the census. The Census Bureau enumerated people at shelters on March 27, 2000. During the day and evening of March 28, 2000 we enumerated people at soup kitchens during the meal serving the largest number of clients and also at regularly scheduled mobile food vans. On March 29, 2000 we enumerated people at targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations. This paper will document the coverage yield of the service-based enumeration and the quality of data collected from the SBE operation as measured by the completeness of information provided on the questionnaires.

**Census 2000 Service-Based Enumeration Definitions**

For Census 2000, we considered the following as service-based enumeration sites:

- **Emergency shelters** include shelters that operate on a first-come, first-served basis where people must leave in the morning and have no guaranteed beds for the next night or where people are guaranteed they have a bed for a specific period of time (even if they leave the building every day). Emergency shelters also include facilities that provide temporary shelter during extremely cold weather (such as churches) and facilities that provide emergency shelter for runaway or neglected children or abused women.
- **Transitional shelters** include shelters providing a maximum stay for clients of up to 2 years and offering support services to promote self-sufficiency and help clients obtain permanent housing.
- **Shelters for children who are runaways, neglected, or without housing** include shelters and group homes that provide temporary sleeping facilities for juveniles.
- **Hotels, motels, or other facilities** for which vouchers are provided or that operate under contract to provide shelter to people without housing.
- **Soup kitchens** include soup kitchens, food lines, and programs that distribute prepared breakfasts, lunches, or dinners. These programs may be organized as food service lines, serving bag or box lunches, or tables where people are seated, then served by program personnel. These programs may or may not have a place for clients to sit and eat the meal.
- **Regularly scheduled mobile food vans** include mobile food vans that are regularly scheduled to visit designated street locations for the primary purpose of providing food to people without housing.
- **Targeted Nonsheltered Outdoor Locations** are geographically identifiable outdoor location open to the elements where evidence shows that people, who do not usually receive services at soup kitchens, shelters, and mobile food vans, might be living in March 2000 without paying to stay there. Sites must have a specific location description that will allow a census enumeration team to physically locate the site; for example, "the North Bridge at the corner of East Drive and First Street" or "the 700 block of South Street behind the old warehouse." This excludes pay-for-use campgrounds, drop-in centers, post offices, hospital emergency rooms, and commercial sites, including all-night theaters and all-night diners.

## History of the Service-Based Enumeration

### 1980 Census

In the 1980 Census, the Mission Night operation enumerated people until midnight in shelters, low-cost transient quarters, all night movie houses, bus and railroad stations, and local jails. There were no procedures specifically designed to count people living on the streets or in open public places.

We conducted a daytime operation called the “Casual Count” after the 1980 Census during the summer in selected large central cities. Only persons 15 years and over were interviewed. Enumerators interviewed people in pool halls, employment offices, food stamp centers, welfare offices, and designated street corners. Enumerators asked the people at these sites if they had a usual residence outside of the city; if they said they did, the interview was ended. If they said they did not, enumerators asked if they had been counted in the 1980 Census. If they said “no” they were asked to fill out a census form.

### 1990 Census

The Census Bureau conducted a one-night shelter and street enumeration (S-Night) in the 1990 Census to include people not covered by regular census procedures.

- **The shelter phase** took place on March 20, 1990 from 6:00 p.m. until midnight and enumerated people in shelters pre-identified by local governments as places where homeless people stay.
- **The street phase** occurred on March 21, 1990 from 2 a.m. until 4 a.m. and enumerated people at selected pre-identified street locations, such as, abandoned buildings, public facilities such as bus depots and train stations, all night restaurants, parks, vacant lots, and other places where homeless people may spend the night. We also counted people leaving abandoned buildings from 4 a.m. until 8 a.m. on March 21, 1990.

### 1995 Census Test

The 1995 Census Test was the first attempt at a fundamentally different approach to enumerating people without conventional housing. We anticipated that by enumerating people where they receive services we had additional opportunities that insured us contact with people.

In the 1995 Census Test, we enumerated people at shelters on the evening of March 6, 1995 using an Individual Census Report (ICR).

On March 7, 1995, we enumerated people at soup kitchens during the meal serving the largest number of clients. We used an Individual Census Questionnaire (ICQ). We conducted a follow-up visit one week after the initial enumeration at a sample of emergency shelters and soup kitchens in the Oakland, CA test site, to enumerate a sample of clients.

We tabulated soup kitchen respondents who indicated they had a usual residence at the address they provided and tabulated respondents who did not provide an address at the soup kitchen.

We also distributed Be Counted questionnaires at service locations that were not identified as enumeration sites, such as drop-in centers for the homeless, and clothing distribution centers. If a Be Counted questionnaire was marked to indicate that the respondent did not have an address on Census Day, the person was included in the census as part of the service-based enumeration universe.

Results from the 1995 Census Test indicated the service-based enumeration methodology was feasible within the census environment, but some refinements were needed, such as simplified procedures and improved enumerator training.

### Small Scale Test

To further refine the methodology, we conducted a small-scale test of procedures and questionnaires in September 1996 in New York City. The goals of the test were to simplify the questionnaire and adapt them to mobile food van enumeration.

## **Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal**

In the Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal we expanded the list of enumeration sites to include targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations, such as outdoor encampments where groups of people with no usual residence live and/or stay and who do not usually receive services provided for the homeless.

The Census Bureau also distributed Be Counted forms (BCFs) at targeted locations in the Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal. People who indicated on a BCF that they had no address were included in the SBE universe.

## **Census 2000 Service-Based Enumeration Procedures**

We visited each SBE location several weeks before the enumeration. We collected information on how many people were expected to be housed at each shelter, how many meals were served and which meal served the most people at each soup kitchen, and how many people received services at each regularly schedule mobile food van site.

### *Pre-Enumeration Procedures*

Prior to the enumeration, we instructed enumerators to:

- check their materials
- complete the Group Quarters (GQ) Listing Sheet
- prepare the questionnaires by copying the GQ identification number from the GQ Listing Sheet onto the back of each questionnaire

### *Enumeration Procedures*

For the most part, the enumeration procedures were similar for all SBE locations. One or more teams were assigned at each location depending on the expected number of clients served. A separate questionnaire was used to enumerate each person, including children.

Upon arriving at each SBE location, we instructed enumerators to:

- introduce themselves to the contact person
- explain how the enumeration would be conducted
- ask the contact person to make an announcement encouraging participation in the census enumeration

## *Shelters*

We conducted a complete enumeration of shelters on March 27, 2000. A shelter enumeration team consisted of two enumerators.

The enumerators were instructed to:

- list each person on the GQ Listing Sheet annotating their sex and race (which could be used as last resort information)
- distribute an enumeration packet containing an ICR, a privacy act notice, a pencil, and an envelope
- give every sixth person a long form ICR
- convert refusals if possible

Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it to the enumerators in the sealed envelope.

## *Soup Kitchens*

On March 28, 2000 we conducted a complete enumeration of soup kitchens during the meal that served the largest number of clients. Each soup kitchen enumeration team consisted of seven enumerators.

Five of the enumerators were instructed to:

- divide the lines into segments
- list each person on a GQ Listing Sheet annotating their sex and race (which could be used as last resort information)
- hand the respondent a privacy act notice,
- conduct a personal interview using the short form ICQ
- convert refusals if possible
- note last resort data on the ICQ if they were unable to complete the interview

Two members of each enumeration team completed long-form ICQ personal interviews only.

## *Regularly Scheduled Mobile Food Vans*

On the evening of March 28, 2000 we conducted a complete enumeration of regularly scheduled mobile food vans. The enumeration teams had seven members and followed the regularly scheduled mobile

food vans from site to site. No census long-form questionnaires were completed at these facilities.

We instructed enumerators to:

- list each person on the GQ listing sheet annotating their sex and race (which could be used as last resort information)
- hand the respondent a privacy act notice
- conduct the personal interview using the short form ICQ
- convert refusals if possible
- note last resort data on the ICQ if they were unable to complete the interview

#### *Targeted Nonsheltered Outdoor Locations*

We also conducted a complete enumeration at targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations on March 29, 2000. Through partnerships, each targeted nonsheltered outdoor location had a contact person or gatekeeper who was familiar with the location and accompanied the enumerators during the enumeration. No census long-form questionnaires were completed at these sites. Upon arriving at each targeted nonsheltered outdoor location, we instructed enumerators to:

- introduce themselves to the respondent
- hand the respondent a privacy act notice
- conduct a personal interview using the short form ICR
- convert refusals if possible
- note last resort data on the ICR if they were unable to complete the interview

#### *Post-Enumeration Procedures*

After the enumeration, enumerators were instructed to:

- check forms for accuracy and completeness
- report time and expenses
- sign the checklist of tasks they were required to complete and give it to the team leader
- place enumeration materials in messenger envelope and give to the team leader.

#### *Be Counted Forms*

The Census Bureau distributed Be Counted forms in the Census 2000. People who completed a Be Counted form and indicated that they had no address by

marking the “No Address on April 1, 2000” box on the form or indicated in the address section they were homeless were included in the SBE universe.

#### **Census 2000 Service-Based Enumeration Questionnaire Processing**

Since the SBE operation was conducted over a three day period, it was possible to enumerate people more than once. For example, if someone used a shelter on March 27 and received services at one or more soup kitchens and/or mobile food vans on March 28 they may have been enumerated at each of these services. An attempt was made to unduplicate the SBE enumerations and count each person only once in the census.

SBE enumerated person records had to contain at least two person characteristics to be included in the SBE universe.

Be Counted Form persons had to meet the following criteria to be included in the SBE universe:

- (1) First and last name (combined fields contained at least 3 alphabetic characters)
- (2) The “No address on April 1, 2000” box was marked and a city and/or county and state was provided; *or* the address was a searchable Usual Home Elsewhere (UHE) that matched to a shelter address; *or* the word “homeless” was conveyed in the address field of the Be Counted Form and the city and/or county and state was provided.

In order to be included in the unduplication process, person records were required to contain the following information:

- (1) First and last name (combined fields must contain at least 3 alphabetic characters)
- (2) At least two person characteristics, one of which is *date of birth or age*

All persons who met the requirements to be included in the SBE universe were counted in the Census 2000, irrespective of their records containing insufficient information for unduplication.

The unduplication of people was performed using a matcher developed by Statistical Research Division of the Census Bureau. Person records were sorted and unduplicated within Local Census Office (LCO). As part of the unduplication process, individual demographic characteristics were assigned a weight based on whether or not they agreed or disagreed.

People on Be Counted Forms who indicated they were homeless and did not match to a SBE respondent were proportionately allocated to emergency shelters and soup kitchens in the area by LCO for tabulation purposes.

### Census 2000 Service-Based Enumeration Results

Table 1 provides the number of service locations by service type. There was a total of 14,224 SBE enumeration sites. More than one-half (52 percent) of the locations were shelters.

**Service locations by service type (Table 1)**

Service Type	Number
Shelters	7,371
Other	6,853
- Soup kitchens	
- Regularly scheduled mobile food vans	
- Targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations	

Table 2 provides the percent of person records data captured at all of the service locations. Nearly two-thirds of the person records were from shelters.

**Person records data captured by type of service location (Table 2)**

Service Type	Percent
Shelters	63
Other	37
- Soup kitchens	
- Regularly scheduled mobile food vans	
- Targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations	

Table 3 provides the number of people who responded that they were homeless on a BCF. The first row represents the total number of people who responded they were homeless on a BCF. The second row indicates the number of person records received that did not contain a first and last name, or a city and state as required and were **not counted** in the census. The third row represents the number of person records that were matched to another census person record and this person record was a duplicate and was **not counted** in the census. The fourth row provides the total number of unique (unduplicated) people which were included in the Census 2000 results that were allocated to service locations.

We were able to match a total of 1,165 (3 percent) of the people who submitted a BCF to people enumerated during the SBE operation.

A total of 34,033 people were added to the SBE universe and therefore added to the Census 2000 as a result of the Be Counted Program.

**People enumerated on a Be Counted Form (Table 3)**

Service Type	Number
SBE respondents who completed a Be Counted Form	37,269
SBE Be Counted Form respondents with insufficient data	2,071
SBE Be Counted Form respondents who matched to a SBE enumerated person	1,165
Total number of people added to the Census	34,033

Table 4 provides the total number of people tabulated in the Census 2000 by type of SBE location.

The majority of people were tabulated at emergency shelters and soup kitchens and Regularly Scheduled Mobile Food Vans. Targeted Nonsheltered Outdoor Locations accounted for only eight percent of the people tabulated.

**People tabulated in the Census 2000 by service location type (Table 4)**

<b>Service Type</b>	<b>Number</b>
Shelters	183,414
Soup kitchens and regularly scheduled mobile food vans	74,033
Targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations	23,080
Total number of people	280,527

### **Conclusions**

The majority of the SBE respondents (89 percent) reported enough information on their questionnaires so that they could be included in the unduplication process.

Most people who completed a Be Counted Form and responded that they did not have an address on April 1, 2000 were included in Census 2000.