



Overview

WHO: People who are are living unsheltered, with focus on people who do not currently access the homelessness system

WHAT: Interview up to 1,000 people about their experience, what they want us to know, why they aren't accessing services, what they'd like to see

HOW: Asking LEC members, outreach teams, and RHA staff to go out and do interviews at different locations by King County subregion

1. Start at places like encampments, day centers, etc. to interview people. Ask them to give coupons/flyers about interviews to people in their network to be interviewed too
2. Stationary places/hubs where people who received coupons/flyers from others can come to be interviewed if they want to

WHEN: Aiming to start week of March 7 for 4-5 weeks

Setting

It is important that interviews take place in a safe, private, and comfortable location, so that the interviewee feels comfortable sharing their story. In addition, a quiet location will ensure good audio quality for taped interviews. Prior to beginning the interview, all participants will be informed of potential risks and will sign an informed consent.

Contingencies

If the interviewee ends the interview early, ask if it is possible to meet a second time to continue. Document this time and share back with your RHA lead to build into the schedule. Try to understand the reasons for the interruption of the interview and address them with the participant.

Introduction

My name is XX and I am working with the King County Regional Homelessness Authority. We are interviewing people to learn more about improving social services across King County. Are you free to speak with me for a moment?

Informed Consent

Review and obtain informed consent, go through the “quiz of understanding,” and emphasize that they may decline to answer any question and may leave at any time. If they agree to audio record the interview, make sure the person knows what you will do with the tape. People can agree to be recorded and give us permission to a) use non-identifiable clips of their recordings in presentations to policy-makers etc., or b) recordings are used solely for transcription and coding.



If the person does not want to be recorded, ask them if they'd still like to speak with you. At the end of your discussion, ask them if they'd be willing to share demographic information. If no, thank them for their time.

Make sure the interviewee has RHA contact information, the contact information for the PI, and any local contacts offering support. Provide opportunity for interviewee to ask questions. Explain incentive and when it will be given - \$25 preloaded debit card that will be given at the end of the interview.

START RECORDING

SAY ALOUD THE CONTROL# (IF SEED) OR CHAIN # ON COUPON (IF NOT SEED) INTO RECORDER

I. Opening Questions

Instructions: *Tailor the questions as necessary to the particular context of the interview, mirroring the interviewee's language choices for describing their situation.*

3. How are you today?
4. What brings you here today (if the interview is in a service setting)? How long have you been coming here?

II. Experiences of Homelessness and Access to Services

5. What is your current housing situation?
6. Where are you sleeping? *[Modify language as needed – idea is to learn about the person's current situation and how they describe it in their own words.]*
7. How long have you been in this situation? *[mirror their language/description from #1-2 above]?*
8. What has it been like for you? (i.e. tell me more about your current experience of homelessness)
9. During this time, what things or people have been helpful to you?
10. During this time, what things or people have not been helpful – or may have been harmful – to you?
11. What are the main factors that led to this situation?
 - a. **Ask follow up questions** to explore/clarify the person's life situation prior to this episode of homelessness.
 - b. **Explore their history** of housing, employment, family, and personal situation prior to this episode of homelessness.
12. How many times have you been homeless? How long, on average, did each episode last?



13. What led to your first experience of homelessness (*If this is not their first*)? Explore.
14. What have your experiences been like in the homeless services system? **Explore with follow up questions:**
 - a. What services have you accessed? (follow-up: food bank, hygiene center, overnight shelter, Recovery Cafe, pop-up mutual aid stations, library, etc...)
 - b. What has your experience been like accessing XX services? Go through each one mentioned.
 - c. How have you been treated by staff?
 - d. How do other clients treat you?
15. Are you accessing services at other agencies that you haven't mentioned?
 - a. **If yes:** can you tell me more about what services you are accessing and what your experience has been like?

III. Life and General Experiences

Now I am going to switch topics and ask you a little bit more about your life and general experiences. Is that ok? [if interviewee agrees proceed. If they are uncomfortable, ask them if there's anything you can explain or clarify.]

16. What brought you to [current city]?
17. Did you serve in the military? **Explore:** how long, where, what did you do, what was experience like?
18. How do you earn money now? How about during the pandemic? Before the pandemic?
19. How is your health? How has your health affected your living situation? How has your living situation affected your health?
20. Do you currently have health insurance?
21. What have been your experiences with the police and justice system?
22. Can you estimate the total cost of any fines, tickets, or impounds you have received in the last year?
23. What have been your experiences with the child welfare/child protection/foster care systems?
24. Where did you go to school?

V. Demographic Questions

Last I'd like to ask you some general questions about yourself. *[Note: It may make sense to ask these questions throughout the interview, as you clarify aspects of the person's experiences]*

25. How do you identify in terms of race/ethnicity?



26. What is your age?
27. How would you describe your gender identity?
28. How would you describe your sexual orientation?
29. Have you been married?
30. Do you have children?

V. Closing Interview

31. Is there anything else you think I should know?

Coupons for Their Network

1. Can you give these coupons to three people you know? Refer to coupon protocol form
They can bring the coupons back to the location listed to be interviewed. They'll receive a \$25 debit card at the end of their interview too.

HUD and Network Question Form (after you're done with the interview and stopped recording)

Before we end, I'd like to ask for some information—I know it's a narrow set of choices, but we're required to collect this for our federal funder (HUD). This is a paper form in your packet that you will fill out with the participant, if they agree.

1. Where did you sleep last night? (checkboxes for places like unsheltered outdoors/street/park, outside in a tent, etc.)
2. Race (check all that apply)
3. Ethnicity
4. Gender
5. Total number of persons (adults & children) in your household
 - a. Number of children (under age 18)
 - b. Number of youth (age 18 to 24)
 - c. Number of adults (age 25 or older)
6. Disability
7. Veteran
8. Chronic homelessness
 - a. Length of time experienced homelessness
 - b. How many times in past 3 years have experienced homelessness
9. Mental illness
10. Substance use disorders
11. Demographics of other people listed in household from #5a-c (paper form)



12. How many people do you personally know who are unhoused or experiencing homelessness with whom you interact with at least occasionally? [followup: Folks you would consider friends; or folks you hang with, pass the time with, eat with, sleep near at least weekly]
13. Of the people you mentioned who are unhoused or experiencing homelessness, about how many currently sleep
 - a. outside in a tent? (or tent-like structure)
 - b. outside, not in a tent?
 - c. in a car? /truck/van (smaller vehicle)
 - d. in an RV? /trailer/school bus (larger vehicle)
 - e. in the park? (uncovered, like on a bench)
 - f. in an overnight shelter (e.g., Mission, church, resource shelter, etc.)?
 - g. in a hotel/motel?
 - h. in an abandoned building/ backyard or storage structure?
 - i. in a public facility or transit (bus/train, station, transit center, airport, hospital waiting room)?
 - j. in another place not listed?

Thank you very much for sharing your experiences with me; I am deeply grateful.

Give interviewee preloaded debit card.

Reiterate contact information in case questions come up.
