

HMIS Community Reporting Standardization Policy

HMIS, as implemented in the TX-700 Continuum of Care (CoC), is a system that will generate reports required by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the CoC, and other stakeholders. This will be at a level that does not identify individuals but can provide accurate statistical data such as numbers served, and trend assessments based on data entered by participating agencies. Data from HMIS will be used to produce CoC and local level statistical reports as well as corresponding reports.

The goal of the CoC's HMIS Community Reporting Standardization Policy is to ensure that this data and reports are shared as a means to measure progress and aid in decision-making practices aimed at ending homelessness in the community. This standardization is essential for accurate data analysis, to make it easier for the community to draw clear conclusions, and to streamline the interpretation process so that the data means the same for all entities (i.e. a common "data language" is being spoken).

Outlined in this policy are the parameters around which data points will be shared within the TX-700 Continuum of Care (CoC), as well as standard definitions on what these data points represent.

Policy Access and Amendment

The HMIS Lead Agency will post this policy on its official website and provide a copy to any individual upon request. The HMIS Lead Agency may amend this data sharing standardization policy, subject to the recommendation of the HMIS Support Committee. The HMIS Lead Agency may bring issues to the CoC Steering Committee as necessary. Any amendments will then be shared with the community as necessary. This policy is consistent with current privacy standards for HMIS issued by HUD.

Applicability

The HMIS Community Reporting Standardization Policy applies to the HMIS Lead Agency and any entity requesting data from the HMIS Lead Agency. HMIS Data Dashboards will be made available to the community on the HMIS Lead Agency's official website on a monthly basis. The data shared via these dashboards will include only that which is defined within this policy. Print-outs will be provided to the CoC Steering Committee meetings only. Any requests made outside of these parameters will not be honored.

HMIS Data Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following data definitions will be followed:

- Household or Family – one or more persons who live together.
- Young Adult – Persons between the ages of 18-24.
- Literally Homeless – an individual or family who is living in a place not meant for human habitation or in an emergency shelter.
- Chronically Homeless – an individual or adult head of household with a disability who is living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter and who has been living as described continuously for at least 12 months, or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the combined occasions total a length of time of at least 12 months.

- Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) – a housing intervention designed to provide rental assistance and case management to help singles and families that don't need intensive and ongoing supports to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Rapid Re-Housing is a temporary intervention. In order to be eligible for RRH an individual or family must be literally homeless.
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – a housing intervention for singles or heads of households with disabilities that combines rental assistance paired with supportive services. PSH is permanent and designed to serve the most vulnerable in a community. In order to be eligible for PSH an individual or family must be chronically homeless.
- Returns to Homelessness – also known as recidivism, when an individual or family accesses a homeless intervention within a certain number of days after having previously exited to permanent housing. The number of days typically used are 90 days, 6 months, 1 year, and 2 years.
- Housing Length of stay (LOS)– the number of days that an individual or family spends in a housing intervention such as RRH or PSH.
- Exit Destination – a place where an individual or family ends up after exiting RRH or PSH. The goal for both of these interventions is for the exit destination to be permanent.
- Coordinated Access (CA) – a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing homelessness have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. CA is not a project but rather a housing assessment. The assessment generates a vulnerability score. Individuals and families are referred to housing based on this vulnerability score, with the highest scores being referred first.
- Coordinated Access Referral – a referral to a RRH or PSH project, which is generated in HMIS. This serves as formal notification to the project that an individual or family is being referred for a housing intervention.
- Project Start Date (aka Enrollment Date) – the date that the household begins receiving services from a RRH or PSH project. This is not necessarily the move-in date, although in some cases these can be the same.
- Move-In Date (aka lease-up date) – the date that the household moved into RRH or PSH.
- Project Exit Date – the date when the household left the project and no longer receives services.

HMIS Dashboards

For the purpose of this policy, the following dashboards will be provided on a monthly basis based on the data defined above. The numbers reported will be monthly totals. Due to small delays in HMIS data entry by HMIS Users, these monthly totals will be reconciled every quarter.

- Number of individuals & households housed in each permanent supportive housing (PSH) project. Transfers between PSH projects will not be reported in this dashboard. The numbers will be broken down by the following:
 - Veterans
 - Chronically Homeless
 - Youth
 - Filtered by project
- Number of persons & households housed in each rapid rehousing (RRH) project. Transfers between RRH projects will not be reported in this dashboard. RRH projects that are part of the CoC's RRH collaborative will be shown as a subset of the total. The numbers will be broken down by the following:

- Veterans
- Youth
- Filtered by project
- Exit destinations from RRH & PSH
 - Filtered by project
- Number of households enrolled in RRH and PSH vs moved in
 - Filtered by project
- Number of returns to homelessness at 6 months, with data pulled from PH exits from 6 – 18 months ago
 - Filtered by project
- Length of stay in RRH & PSH
 - Filtered by project
- Increase in total household income at exits from RRH & PSH
 - Filtered by project

HMIS Data Requests

The HMIS Lead Agency at times receives requests for raw or aggregate data from academic institutions, government entities, agencies, individuals, etc. for the purpose of research or funding applications. The HMIS Lead Agency team will make every effort to accommodate these requests but will follow a priority level when responding to inquiries, depending on staff capacity, deadlines, and demand.

Stakeholders will be required to complete an HMIS Data Request Form. Stakeholders requesting data will provide a minimum of 7 business days lead time for the HMIS team to be able to review and respond. Request will be completed within 7 business days upon return of the response by the HMIS Lead Team. This policy will allow for these requests provided they adhere to the following:

- **Priority 1 –**
 - Reports or data related to projects required to use HMIS, including those funded by: CoC, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Veterans Administration (VA), Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY), Housing Opportunities for Person with AIDS (HOPWA), and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH).
- **Priority 2 –**
 - Reports related to grant applications for homeless and housing services with an imminent funding deadline. This includes Federal, State government, local government, foundations, or other funding sources.
- **Priority 3 –**
 - Ad-hoc queries for media, marketing such as annual reports, campaigns, legislation, or research. CFTH may require a Data Sharing Agreement depending on the nature of the reporting request.

Finally, requests for data may be denied or significantly delayed if the request is made during times that required annual reports are due to HUD and during preparations for the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) which typically occurs August – September. Examples of these reports include: System Performance Measures (SPM) in late May, Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) early December, Point in Time (PIT) late April, and Housing Inventory Count (HIC) late April.