

CoC Program HMIS Manual – SSO

Introduction:

The CoC (Continuum of Care) Program HMIS Manual excerpt is intended to support data collection and reporting efforts of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agencies and CoC program recipients. This manual excerpt provides information on HMIS project data collection guidance specific to the CoC Program and the legacy programs: Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Shelter Plus Care (S+C) and Single Room Occupancy for the Homeless (SRO) that have not yet renewed under the CoC Program.

This document excerpt is not a replacement for any specific program guidance, requirements, regulations, notices, and training materials on the CoC Program. This manual only addresses the use of HMIS for CoC Program-funded projects.

Please note that this manual contains excerpts only from the full HUD CoC Program HMIS Manual. For more information, please click [here](#) to access the complete 2021 CoC Program HMIS Manual.

Universal Data Elements (UDE):

All ESG (Emergency Solutions Grants) recipients and subrecipients for all project types are required to collect all the **Universal Data Elements** which include:

3.1 Name	3.917... Living Situation – Chronic Homelessness
3.2 Social Security Number	3.10 Project Start Date
3.3 Date of Birth	3.11 Project Exit Date
3.4 Race	3.12 Destination
3.5 Ethnicity	3.15 Relationship to Head of Household
3.6 Gender	3.16 Client Location
3.7 Veteran Status	3.20 Housing Move-in Date
3.8 Disabling Condition	

Special notes about UDE's:

1. A portion of these elements constitute the basic demographics about a Client that are critical to an HMIS's Client search functionality and the HMIS's ability to deduplicate Client records. HUD required reports check and report on Data Quality for many of these basic demographic elements.
2. Two elements (**3.8 and 3.917**) are required to identify a Client as chronically homeless.
 - Because street outreach and emergency shelter projects are critical in the identification of chronically homeless Clients, HMIS administrators should pay special attention when training street outreach and emergency shelter end users on 3.08 and 3.917 data entry.
3. **Ethnicity, Race, and Gender** data element responses were updated in the **FY 2022 HMIS Data Standards** to provide more inclusive and representative response options.
 - Please review the [FY 2022 HMIS Data Standards Manual](#) for specific descriptions of these updated responses.

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- Additional data collection guidance related to Race, Ethnicity, and Gender will be made available on the HUD Exchange.
4. **Project Start Date** - Below is information on when each project type is expected to begin data entry with **Project Start**:
- **Street Outreach projects** – The Project Start Date is the date of first contact with the Client.
 - **Safe Havens and Transitional Housing** – The Project Start Date is the date the Client moves into the residential project (i.e., the first night in residence).
 - **All types of Permanent Housing, including Rapid Re-Housing** – The Project Start Date is the date the Client was admitted into the project.
 - ✓ See the Special Data Collection Instructions for Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing for additional information on Project Start Date for PH projects.
 - **All other types of Service projects (including but not limited to: services only, day shelter, homelessness prevention, coordinated entry, health care)** - The Project Start Date is the date the Client first began working with the project and generally received the first provision of service.

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Common Program Specific Data Elements:

Common Program Specific data elements are collected by most projects funded by a federal partner. CoC funded projects must collect most of the common data elements and are necessary to generate the Annual Performance Report.

The following chart indicates which elements are required for each of the CoC components:

	HMIS Program Specific Data Element	Homelessness Prevention	Permanent Supportive Housing	Rapid Re-Housing	Supportive Services Only - CE	Supportive Service Only – non-CE	Transitional Housing
4.02	Income and Sources	X	X	X		X	X
4.03	Non-Cash Benefits	X	X	X		X	X
4.04	Health Insurance	X	X	X		X	X
4.05	Physical Disability	X	X	X		X	X
4.06	Developmental Disability	X	X	X		X	X
4.07	Chronic Health Condition	X	X	X		X	X
4.08	HIV/AIDS	X	X	X		X	X
4.09	Mental Health Disorder	X	X	X		X	X
4.10	Substance Use Disorder	X	X	X		X	X
4.11	Domestic Violence	X	X	X		X	X
4.12	Current Living Situation				X	Only for SSO-Street Outreach	
4.13	Date of Engagement					Only for SSO-Street Outreach	
4.19	Coordinated Entry Assessment	CES	CES	CES	X		CES
4.20	Coordinated Entry Event	CES	CES	CES	X		CES
C1	Well-being		X				
C2	Moving On Assistance Provided		X				
C3	Youth Education Status		X*	X*	X*	X*	X*
R7	General Health		X				
W5	Housing Assessment at Exit	X					

X = data collection is required

* YHDP-funded projects must collect C3

CES = data collection is determined by how the CoC has structured the coordinated entry system across their geographic area. Placement of the element would be required for any project that is participating in the CoC's the coordinated entry system.

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Special Data Collection Instructions:

HMIS administrators and users should be aware of several special data collection issues that apply to CoC Program funded projects:

Supportive Services Only:

SSO projects are often the most complicated to set up and manage in an HMIS. Consideration of the CoC's privacy and security policies for the HMIS will often determine how the project is set up. Pay careful attention to the project typing instructions.

1. Data collection must include an annual assessment for all persons in the project for one year or more.
 - Data elements required for collection at annual assessment must be entered with an Information Date of **no more than 30 days before or after the anniversary of the Head of Household's Project Start Date**, regardless of the date of the most recent 'update' or any other 'annual assessment.'

Supportive Services Only – Street Outreach:

1. **Data Collection Challenges:** A street outreach project is likely to encounter difficulty engaging homeless persons.
 - Street outreach projects may record a project start with limited information about the Client and improve on the accuracy and completeness of Client data over time by editing data in an HMIS as they further engage the Client.
 - The initial entry may only include the project start date and a "made-up" name (e.g., "Redhat Tenthstreetbridge") that would be identifiable for retrieval by the worker in the system.
 - Over time, the data must be edited for accuracy and completeness (e.g., replacing "Redhat" with "Robert") as the worker learns more about the Client.
2. **De-Duplication of Client Records:** It is possible in a street outreach setting that a single Client may be contacted by multiple street outreach workers over a period of time in different locations.
 - Local protocols should be established to determine how coordination among street outreach projects effectively manages the identification of and data collection for Clients.
 - In smaller CoCs, it may be possible to coordinate street outreach efforts and reduce duplication of Client records through case conferencing or other efforts to coordinate within outreach and with other services in the CoC.
 - In all CoCs, a "Client search" functionality may be available in HMIS so that street outreach workers can perform queries or Client searches by de-identified name or alias, or other informal identifiers shared with street outreach workers in order to manage the identification of Clients.

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- The use of temporary de-identified names should not be an excuse for excessive duplicate Clients or poor data quality.
 - Street Outreach projects and local HMIS leadership should work together to minimize the use of “made-up” names and attain high data quality.
3. **Current Living Situation (formerly “Contacts”):** A street outreach project is expected to record every contact made with each Client in the HMIS via 4.12 Current Living Situation.
- A contact is defined as an interaction between a worker and a Client designed to engage the Client.
 - Contacts include activities such as a conversation between the street outreach worker and the Client about the Client’s well-being or needs, an office visit to discuss their housing plan, or a referral to another community service.
 - A contact must be recorded anytime a Client is met, including when an engagement date or project start date is recorded on the same day.
4. **Engagements:** Per the HMIS Data Standards and by agreement across all federal partners, an engagement date is the date on which an interactive Client relationship results in a deliberate Client assessment or the beginning of a case plan.
- The date of engagement should be entered into HMIS at the point that the Client has been engaged by the outreach worker.
 - This date may be on or after the project start date and must be prior to project exit.
 - If the Client exits the project without becoming engaged, the engagement date should be left blank.
 - The date of engagement will also be recorded as a contact with the same date.
5. **Data Quality:** Reporting on data quality for street outreach projects is limited to Clients with a date of engagement. Therefore, it is important that outreach workers record the engagement date and also review all Universal Data Elements and applicable Program Specific Data Elements for completeness and accuracy.
- The Date of Engagement coincides with the requirement for HMIS data quality; therefore, all Universal Data Elements should be entered into HMIS at or before the Date of Engagement.
6. **Project Exit:** Project exit represents the end of a Client’s participation with a project.
- The project exit date should coincide with the date that the Client is no longer considered to be participating in the project.
 - This standard should be applied consistently across all Street Outreach projects.
 - Reasons to exit a Client include any of the following:
 - ✓ The Client has entered another project type (e.g., TH, PSH) or otherwise found housing
 - ✓ The Client is engaged with another outreach worker or project
 - ✓ The Client is deceased
 - ✓ The outreach worker has been unable to locate the Client for an extended period of time and there are no recorded contacts.

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- If this situation arises, and the Client is to be exited from the project due to a lack of regular contact and the project exit Destination (3.12) should be listed as “No Exit Interview Completed.”
 - The possibility that the Client may not be seen again is not a reason to exit a Client from a project, and project exit should only be recorded once project participation has ended, or after the locally-determined period of time has passed without a contact with the Client.
7. **Annual Assessments:** Data collection must include an annual assessment for all persons in the project one year or more.
- Data elements required for collection at annual assessment must be entered with an Information Date of **no more than 30 days before or after the one-year anniversary of the head of household’s Project Start Date**, regardless of the date of the most recent ‘update’ or any other ‘annual assessment.’

Supportive Services Only – Coordinated Entry:

In May 2019, HUD released guidance on the finalized set of Coordinated Entry data elements that must be collected and entered into HMIS for CoC-funded Coordinated Entry projects beginning October 1, 2020.

These data elements standardized collection on core components of Coordinated Entry – access, assessment, referral, and prioritization and include the Coordinated Entry Assessment (data element 4.19), Coordinated Entry Event (data element 4.20), and Current Living Situation (data element 4.12).

These data elements are used in conjunction with other Universal Data Elements and Program Specific Data Elements to populate the Coordinated Entry Annual Performance Report (CE APR) that communities will run for their entire Coordinated Entry System and submit via Sage.

CoC Program Reporting Requirements:

1. CoC Program recipients are required to submit Annual Performance Reports (APR) within 90 days from the end of their grant operating year. All CoC recipients submit their APRs in the Sage HMIS Reporting Repository, regardless of when HUD initially funded their grants.
2. CoC Program recipients must submit data from their HMIS or comparable databases via a Comma Separated Value (CSV) import.
3. CoC Program recipients can find additional information about CoC Program reporting requirements including how to access Sage and submit an APR in the [Sage CoC APR Guidebook for CoC Grant-Funded Programs](#).

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I hope you found this manual helpful. ☺ Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Candy Petticord,

Support Specialist, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

cpetticord@uws Summit Medina.org