

# HMIS Lead / Sys Admin – Q&A

## Questions from 11/18/20 Webinar

For any questions that were not addressed on the webinar, or if there are specific questions to your own systems, please submit an HMIS AAQ to receive a thorough answer: <https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/my-question/>

**Q:** How do we join the HMIS Lead Webinar distribution list?

**A:** If you are not a member of the hub please send an email to [hmis@cloudburstgroup.com](mailto:hmis@cloudburstgroup.com) to be added.

**Q:** Where can we submit our 2022 data standard suggestions?

**A:** All data standard suggestions can be made through the HUD AAQ portal here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/my-question/>

**Q:** Do vendors have a deadline for making reports available for submitting FY2020 SPMs?

**A:** No, there is not a specific deadline for SPMs, though there were minimal changes to the programming specifications this year, so it shouldn't require much re-programming for this year's submission. If your vendor has a specific concern, please have them submit an AAQ.

**Q:** When will the new HMIS lead tools be available?

**A:** Very soon. They are all finalized, and are in a post-production phase now.

**Q:** Can you please provide links to the NHSDC presentations that were reviewed?

**A:** Plenary: CARES Act and HMIS: Equity, Housing, and Safety - Norm Suchar, HUD and Amy Bickford, City of St. Louis: <https://nhsdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NHSDC-Plenary-Slides.pptx>

ESG-CV Reporting session is here: <https://nhsdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NHSDC-ESG-CV-Quarterly-Reporting-Requirements-10.29.20.pptx>

**Q:** If all of our coordinated entry is entered under a single provider, regardless of assessor's employer, can VSP staff utilize that shared provider?

**A:** No. VAWA is clear about VSPs and data entry into HMIS, regardless of the provider setup.

## **PIT questions:**

**Q:** Will PIT be submitted in HDX2.0 or HDX1.0?

**A:** HDX1.0

**Q:** What do we do about bed inventory changing due to COVID? Do COVID non-congregate shelters need to be included in the HIC and the PIT?

**A:** Please see this document, which addresses inventory changes in HMIS and the HIC: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HMIS-Project-Setup-and-Inventory-Changes-during-an-Infectious-Disease-Outbreak.pdf>

**Q:** What is the difference between observation and head count?

**A:** Head count reflects "what" is being submitted - not "how" it is being submitted. You can use different methods to get a head count, including observation or survey. Under normal circumstances (non-COVID), CoCs that conduct observation counts tally the number of people they visually identify as homeless and use a sample of data they collect in their PIT count process to understand demographic and subpopulation data. So that limited sample is then extrapolated to account for those other elements. If a CoC wants to do an observation count in 2021 they

may choose to not do a sample at all and just tally the number of people who appear homeless. This would require counting at times of day when people who have housing are not likely to be where you are counting.

**Q:** If a CoC gets an exception on the unsheltered PIT will they have to do the count later in the year or wait until the next PIT count?

**A:** They will be exempt until next year.

**Q:** What is the deadline for submitting a request for an exception for the Point in Time Count?

**A:** There is not an official deadline, no. Communities should come to this decision soon so they can make the appropriate planning steps.

**Q:** What happens, say if we plan to do the PIT using a very short survey, but comes last week of January, a local lockdown is issued and people can't leave home unless they have essential jobs?

**A:** Please request an exemption. This is another reason HUD isn't dictating timing on requesting exemptions. If that happens, HUD will support your request.

## **VASH questions:**

**Q:** We asked our vendor about HUD-VASH data sharing and they say they have not received information from HUD about VASH.

**A:** Vendors received these resources in early November. They are also publicly available on the HUD Exchange. If the vendor has any questions - ask them to submit an AAQ.

**Q:** Is there a HUD-VASH reporting period?

**A:** CoCs and VAMC staff should work together to identify the appropriate date ranges for HUD-VASH participation, and ultimately establish a process for how often this data is shared.

**Q:** Who should we contact at the VA about the VASH data sharing?

**A:** Please start with your local VAMC HUD-VASH point of contact, and reference the [October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 HUD Exchange message](#) to provide context around roles and responsibilities associated with HUD-VASH data sharing..

**Q:** What is HUD's official stance on the HUD-VASH data inclusion in HMIS?

**A:** HUD's stance is that it is hard to make strategic planning decisions without a complete knowledge of your system. HUD-VASH is a key part of many CoCs' response so including that data in HMIS is important. It will impact all data you use and report. Much of that is used for competitive purposes. But more importantly, it is used to make your local decisions. HUD can't make it required but there are repercussions for not having it. That's partly the issue this tool is trying to help address.

**Q:** What happens if a VAMC covers multiple CoCs?

**A:** Data in HOMES, the VA's database, is recorded by VAMC catchment area, and not by CoC geography. However, the data can be filtered by Public Housing Authority or at individual Veteran level. CoCs should work with their VAMC to correctly identify which Veterans should be included in the export from the VA.

**Q:** Is the report an import file, or just a spreadsheet?

**A:** The report from the VA is a CSV file, but it's not in HMIS CSV standard format.

**Q:** Is using the tool and importing the VASH data a requirement?

**A:** No, it's not a requirement to use the tool or perform a direct import into HMIS. If a CoC already has a data sharing partnership or data entry process that meets their local need, there is no need to replace that existing solution.

## LSA Questions:

**Q:** Our vendor is having issues with the LSA report in our system and because of that, we have not been able to actively engage in the data review process.

**A:** Please submit an AAQ with any active vendor concerns.

**Q:** Can we reupload a new LSA file to check issues as they have been fixed?

**A:** Yes. you can reupload as many times as needed to reach a place where you are confident in your data submission. Please note there is a delay in the error/warnings files generation.

**Q:** Roughly what time on Tuesdays and Thursdays will the LSA data quality files be run?

**A:** Those files are run after business hours. Files should be submitted by 3pm ET to make it into the file run.

**Q:** Do bed inventories need to be updated for all projects back to 2012 look back for LSA?

**A:** The inventory section of the LSA does not have a look back period and should be accurate for FY2019 and FY2020.

**Q:** If we have questions about the file, we should reach out to the liaison first, before we upload our errors/warning files into HDX?

**A:** Correct.

**Q:** When is Stella expected to be re-enabled for LSA data?

**A:** Stella will not be available until later in November / early December.

**Q:** Have all of the error files been sent out? We have not received an error file but I can view the Data Quality Report in HUD 2.0.

**A:** If an Official HUD Review File was Submitted for review before last Sunday, you should have a file. If you do not, you can reach out to your liaison at AHAR\_Region#@abtassoc.com where # is the region your CoC is in.

**Q:** Does the LSA upload submissions have to be an "official" upload to get the error/warning list?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Did the LSA files that we submitted at the end of Oct need to be submitted as "official submissions" or as "local use" in order to be reviewed for the Nov 27 deadline?

**A:** Only Official Submissions will be processed for errors/warnings. If you submitted a Local Use file, you can change it to an Official file. There are instructions for this in the Submission Guide here:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5775/an-introductory-guide-to-submitting-lsa-data-for-the-ahar/>