Homeless Status: Recordkeeping Requirements

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Presenters:
- Ann Oliva
- Tom Albanese
- Theresa Silla

Virtual Help Desk Representative:
- Marcy Thompson
Webinar Format

• Webinar will last approximately an hour
• Recording will be posted on the HUD’s Homelessness Resource Exchange
• Materials will be posted within one week of today
• Audience members are “muted” due to the high number of participants
Audio Issues During the Webinar

- For audio, please use the telephone, not your computer
- If you have technical difficulty with the audio or video portions of this webcast, try:
  - Logging off, then logging in again
  - Requesting help through the “questions” function in the “Go To Webinar” toolbar
• During the webinar, use the “Questions” function in the “GoToWebinar” toolbar

• After the webinar, submit questions to HUD’s Virtual Help Desk
  – Program/System: CoC Policy
  – Topic: Homeless Definition
  – Sub-topic: Homeless Definition

• Reference this presentation *Homeless Status: Recordkeeping Requirements* in your question
Context of Presentation

• Preceded by *Determining Homeless and At-Risk Status, Income, and Disability*
  – Recording available on [Homelessness Resource Exchange](#)

• To be followed by *At-Risk Status and Income: Recordkeeping Requirements*
  – Scheduled for delivery on May 15, 2012
Objectives of the Webinar

Webinar participants will be able to:

• Understand requirement to develop local policies and procedures for recordkeeping
• Incorporate and use HUD’s preferred order for documentation in policies and procedures
• Adopt and use documentation standards
• Identify acceptable documentation for each Homeless Definition Category
Homeless Status: Recordkeeping Requirements
1 Overview of Recordkeeping Requirements
Applicability of Requirements

• Projects funded under the Emergency Solutions Grants program

• New and Renewal projects funded in FY 2011 CoC Competition for:
  – Supportive Housing Program (SHP)
  – Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program

• All future CoC Program new/renewal projects
Overview of Requirements

• Require recipients to develop and use local policies & procedures for recordkeeping
• Specify preferred order for documentation
• Specify documents that are sufficient to demonstrate compliance
• Provide examples of acceptable documentation by Homeless Category
Policies & Procedures
Written policies and procedures must:

• Require intake staff to document:
  – At intake/screening for eligibility
  – For ALL persons seeking assistance
  – Evidence relied upon to establish and verify Homeless status

• Be consistent with recordkeeping requirements & reflect HUD’s preferred order
Preferred Order for Documentation
HUD’s preferred order:

1. Third Party
   - Written, including already available documents
   - Oral
2. Intake Staff Observations
3. Self-Certification
Exceptions to Preferred Order

Listed in Homeless Final Rule:

• Type of assistance provided
  – emergency shelter
  – street outreach
  – victim services

• To protect the safety of individuals/families fleeing or attempting to flee DV
Tips for Policies & Procedures

• Adopt checklists that reflect preferred order
• Incorporate guidance & examples on exceptions to preferred order
• Have staff check for existing documentation first
  – E.g., HMIS records or discharge paperwork
• Create forms for tracking & documenting due diligence
True/False: Emergency shelters must obtain 3rd party documentation of homelessness before accommodating persons seeking shelter.

| True | False |
Standards for Documentation
Standards for Documentation

• Adopt standards in policies and procedures
  – Strategy for addressing requirement that records must be sufficient

• General examples include
  – Clearly identifies entity/party providing verification
  – Pertinent to and identifies individual/family
  – Pertinent to the condition/criteria

• Specific examples of standards for each type of documentation to follow
Written Letters/Referrals

- Official communication (issued on agency stationary or program template)
- Signed and dated by appropriate third party representative
- Additional standards depend on criteria/condition of the Homeless Definition Category being used
Third Party – Oral

Recorded Oral Statements

• By intake staff
• Of 3rd party providing verification
• Signed and dated by intake staff as true and complete

** Recommend standardized form for program
  – Create clearly labeled sections for including relevant details and certifications
Recorded Intake Staff Observations

- Intake staff notes on their observations and assessments
- Signed and dated by intake staff as true and complete

** Recommend standardized form for program
  - Create clearly labeled sections for including relevant details and certifications
Self-Certification

Individual/Head of Household Statement

• Written statements certified (signed and dated) as true and complete
  – Regulations specify when oral statements can be used.

• If self-certification must be verified:
  – Confirmation that certification was verified OR
  – Due diligence documentation

** Recommend standardized form for program**
Due Diligence

Recorded Intake Staff Efforts
(Due Diligence)

• Describe efforts to obtain third party documentation
  – May include phone logs, email correspondence, copies of certified letters etc.

• Outcome of effort, including obstacles

• Signed and dated by intake staff as true and complete

** Recommend standardized form

Standards for Documentation
5 Examples of Acceptable Documentation
Examples of Acceptable Documentation

• By Homeless Definition Categories:
  – **Category 1**: Literally Homeless
  – **Category 2**: Imminent Risk of Homelessness
  – **Category 3**: Homeless Under Other Federal Statute
  – **Category 4**: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV
Category 1: Literally Homeless

If Unsheltered Homeless

• HUD’s preferred order applies
  – Exception for providing emergency shelter, street outreach services, domestic violence

• Third Party – Written examples:
  – HMIS street outreach service record
  – Homeless Certification/Written Referral from local law enforcement or emergency medical service agencies

Examples of Acceptable Documentation
HMIS Records

• Standards for system:
  – Retains auditable history of all entries
  – Prevents overrides or changes to dates entries are made

• Standard for verifying homeless status:
  – Dates of stay/services should be concurrent with application for assistance.
Certifications of Homelessness

• Standards for Homeless Certifications:
  – Confirm homeless status
  – Document any applicable criteria

• General standards for written letters/referrals:
  – Official communication
  – Signed and dated by appropriate third party representative

** Recommend standardized form for program
If In Shelter

- HUD’s preferred order applies
- Third Party – Written examples
  - HMIS shelter stay record
  - Homeless Certification/Written Referral from shelter
Category 1: Literally Homeless

If Exiting An Institution

**Condition: Unsheltered OR in emergency shelter prior to entry**

- HUD’s preferred order applies
- Third Party – Written records available may include
  - HMIS shelter stay/street outreach service record
  - Homeless Certification/Written Referral

Examples of Acceptable Documentation
If Exiting An Institution (cont’d)

**Condition: Length of stay is 90 days or less**

- Appropriate documentation in preferred order:
  - Third Party – Written
    - Discharge paperwork
    - Written Referral
  - Third Party – Oral
  - Self-Certification & Due Diligence
- Documentation standard: must specify entry/exit dates or duration of stay

Examples of Acceptable Documentation
True/False: An HMIS record of shelter stay has the same weight as written, signed, and dated verification on shelter letterhead.

True
False
3 Conditions:

1) Housing Loss within 14 days
   - Documentation requirements vary by condition and type of housing

2) No subsequent residence

3) Lack of resources and support networks to obtain other housing
Housing loss within 14 days

*If tenants/homeowners*

- Appropriate documentation in preferred order:
  - Third Party – Written:
    - Court order to leave OR
    - Other equivalent notice under State law
Housing loss within 14 days (cont’d)

If in hotel/motel: lack of financial resources

- Self-Certification, supported by other documentation when practical

If in other housing situation (i.e., doubled-up)

- Self-certification, supported by
  - Third Party Verification OR
  - Due Diligence

Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness

Examples of Acceptable Documentation
Category 2: 
Imminent Risk of Homelessness

No subsequent residence

• Self-Certification, supported by other documentation when practical

Lack of resources & support networks to obtain other housing

• Self-Certification, supported by other documentation when practical

** Recommend standardized assessment form**
Defined as Homeless under applicable Federal Statues

• Third Party – Written only
• Must be from agency administering Federal program
• May be in the form of
  – Homeless certification OR
  – Letter from provider
Category 3: Homeless Under Other Federal Statute

No lease, ownership interest, occupancy agreement in permanent housing during preceding 60 days

- Third Party – Written
  - HMIS service/stay record
  - Homeless Certification/Written Referral from housing provider
  - Written statement from a tenant/homeowner

- Third Party – Oral

- Self-Certification
Persistent Instability
(2 or more moves during preceding 60 days)

- Self-Certification, supported by
  - Third Party –Written
  - Third Party –Oral OR
  - Due Diligence to obtain third-party verification
  - Third party verification not required for move prompted by flight from DV
Expected to retain status for extended period due to special needs or 2 or more employment barriers

*If special needs:*

- Third Party --Written
  - Written diagnosis from professional licensed by state to diagnose and treat condition OR
  - Intake observation confirmed by written diagnosis from licensed professional within 45 days.
Expected to retain status for extended period due to special needs or 2 or more employment barriers

*If 2 or more employment barriers:*

- Third Party – Written
  - Employment records;
  - Department of corrections records;
  - Literacy, English proficiency tests; or
  - Other reasonable documentation
- Third Party – Oral
What type of documentation is used to confirm that an unaccompanied youth is Homeless under applicable Federal Statutes?

a. Third Party - Written  
b. Third Party - Oral  
c. Intake Observation  
d. Self-Certification  
e. All of the above
3 Conditions:

1) Flight/Attempt to Flee DV
2) No subsequent residence
3) Lack of resource to obtain other housing

• Self-Certification requirements vary by type of provider determining Homeless status
If Victim Service Provider:

- Self-certification of all three conditions
  - Signed and dated by individual/head of household OR
  - Oral statement recorded by intake staff, signed and dated as true and complete by intake staff
If Non-Victim Service Provider:

- Self-certification of fleeing/attempt to flee DV by individual/head of household AND, *if no threat to safety*, supported by
  - Third Party written referral source from whom assistance was sought for DV, OR
  - Intake worker observation
  - Need only contain minimum amount of information necessary
  - Confirm household is fleeing/attempting to flee DV
If Non-Victim Service Provider:

- Self-certification of no subsequent residence, resources or support networks

** Recommend standardized form
True/False: Only victim services providers can issue written certification of flight from or attempt to flee domestic violence.
You should now be able to:

- Understand requirement to develop local policies and procedures
- Incorporate and use HUD’s preferred order for documentation
- Adopt and use documentation standards
- Identify acceptable documentation for each Homeless Definition Category

Please complete the on-line survey to rate how well this webinar met its objectives
Answers to Quiz Questions
**Quiz 1**: (True/False) Emergency shelters must obtain 3rd party documentation of homelessness before accommodating persons seeking shelter.

FALSE. Although 3rd party written documentation is preferred, HUD recognizes that there are circumstances where it cannot be obtained. The interim rule specifically states that the lack of third party documentation should not prevent a person from being admitted to emergency shelter or receiving street outreach services.

**Quiz 2** (True/False): An HMIS record of shelter stay has the same weight as written, signed, and dated verification on shelter letterhead.

TRUE. HMIS records are a form of already available documentation and have the same weight as a written verification of stay.
Quiz 4: What type of documentation is used to confirm that an unaccompanied youth is Homeless under applicable Federal Statutes?

A) THIRD PARTY – WRITTEN. The only form of documentation that can be used to confirm Homeless Status under another Federal Statute is written verification provided by the agency administering the Federal program.

Quiz 3: (True/False) Only victim services providers can issue written certification of flight or attempt to flee domestic violence.

FALSE. DV certification can be issued by an organization from whom the individual or Head of Household has sought assistance related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. This may include housing service providers, social workers, law enforcement, legal assistance, health care provider or pastoral counselor.