



PATH Program HMIS MANUAL

A Guide for HMIS Users and System Administrators

Released December, 2016

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Version 5

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
HMIS Related Documents.....	1
HMIS Data Standard Documents.....	1
Definition of Terms.....	2
HMIS Project Setup.....	4
Identify Projects for HMIS Participation.....	4
Identify Projects Funding Components.....	4
PATH Project Descriptor Data Elements.....	4
PATH Data Collection Requirements.....	7
Data Element 4.14A Services Provided –PATH Funded.....	9
Data Element 4.16A Referrals Provided –PATH.....	10
Special Data Collection Instructions.....	12
PATH Reporting Notes:.....	15
PATH Data Collection Workflow.....	15
HUD System Performance Measures.....	17

Release & Update Information

First Release: March 2015

Second Release: December 2016

Introduction

The *PATH (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness) Program HMIS Manual* is intended to support data collection and reporting efforts of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agencies, State PATH Contacts and PATH program grantees. PATH Program participation in HMIS provides for client care coordination and the generation of the PATH Annual Report, in addition to other benefits to clients and PATH program grantees. This manual provides information on HMIS program setup and data collection guidance specific to the PATH Program.

The guidance provided in this document aligns with requirements around using HMIS as stated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and refers to the data elements required for PATH in an HMIS as established in the [2014 HMIS Data Standards Version 5.1](#). This document is not intended to replace the HMIS Data Dictionary or the HMIS Data Manual, but to complement them and relate PATH Program-specific requirements. This document is not a replacement for any specific program guidance, requirements, regulations, notices, and training materials on the PATH program. This manual only addresses the use of HMIS for the PATH program.

For additional assistance please refer to the following:

- Guidance about the PATH Program and its requirements can be found on-line at the [PATH Program](#) page:
 - [PATH Annual Report Manual](#)
 - [PATH HMIS Participation Guidance](#)
 - [State PATH Contact HMIS Self-Assessment](#)
 - [PATH Data Exchange \(PDX\)](#)

To ask a question about any PATH Program HMIS requirement go to the [Ask A Question](#) section of the HUD Exchange. Please be sure to select “HMIS” for your question under “My Question is Related To.” HUD and PATH program staff are working together to answer questions that come in on Ask A Question related to PATH and HMIS.

HMIS Related Documents

There are a variety of documents that comprise the suite of HMIS Data Standard resources. **All HMIS Data Standard related documents updated and released in the Fall of 2016 are labeled Version 5 – to support version control at all levels of use.** Each of the documents has a specific purpose and intended audience. The HMIS Lead should be familiar with all of the documents and collectively use them as their HMIS reference materials along with specific materials provided by the software vendor.

HMIS Data Standard Documents

The Data Standard Dictionary and Manual contain the core foundations for the data contained within an HMIS. The PATH HMIS Manual builds upon information in the Data Dictionary to provide further information for an HMIS Lead on the elements required by PATH projects for set up in the HMIS.

Manual Name & Link	Intended Audience	Contents
HMIS Data Standards Dictionary	HMIS Vendors & HMIS Lead Agencies	<p>The dictionary provides the detailed information required for system programming on all HMIS elements and responses required to be included in HMIS software. It delineates data collection requirements, system logic, and contains the XML and CSV tables and numbers.</p> <p>The dictionary also includes critical information about data collection stages, federal partner data collection required elements, and metadata data elements.</p>
HMIS Data Standards Manual	HMIS Lead Agencies & HMIS Users	<p>The manual provides a review of all of the Universal Data Elements, Program Specific Data Elements, and Project Descriptor Data Elements. It contains information on data collection requirements, instructions for data collection, and descriptions that the HMIS User will find as a reference.</p>
HMIS Project Descriptor Data Elements Manual	HMIS Lead Agencies	<p>The Project Descriptor Manual is designed to provide specific information about the Project Descriptors required to be set up in the HMIS by the HMIS Lead Agency.</p>

Definition of Terms

PATH providers conducting street outreach may encounter challenges related to data collection in HMIS due to factors such as the infrequency of contacts or the length of time it takes to collect accurate information from a client, among others. The data collection process is designed to support PATH projects as they connect to individuals and families that are experiencing homelessness, and as relationships are built between the street outreach worker and the client. A number of key terms specific to the PATH Program are defined below:

- Contact:** An interaction between a PATH-funded worker or workers and an individual who is potentially PATH eligible or enrolled in PATH. Contacts may range from a brief conversation between the street outreach worker and the client about the client’s well-being or needs, to a

referral to service. A contact may occur in a street outreach setting or in a service setting such as an emergency shelter or drop-in center.

- **Engagement:** The point at which an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment or beginning of a case plan. Engagement is a one-time event, may occur on or after the project entry date, and must occur prior to PATH enrollment and project exit. Clients cannot be enrolled in PATH without being engaged. Although some interactions with a client may result in a positive outcome (such as assisting a client access a shelter bed), without a deliberate client assessment or the beginning of a case plan, those interactions are not considered to be an engagement.
- **Enrollment:** A PATH-eligible individual and a PATH provider have mutually and formally agreed to engage in services and the provider has initiated an individual file or record for that individual. HMIS Data Element 4.20 (PATH Status) provides additional information regarding PATH enrollment.

Project Exit: No Contact with Client

SAMHSA has not established a policy regarding the specific amount of time that must pass from the date of last contact in order for the client to be considered exited from the PATH project. However, each State PATH Contact is encouraged to set a standard length of time that must pass without a client contact before the client is exited from the PATH project. In general, the period of time that passes from the date of last contact until project exit should be between 30 days and 90 days (or other length of time as established locally). Reengagement may happen within this timeframe, but cannot occur after project exit has occurred. In this case the Exit date will be dated as the date of last contact.

- **Reengagement:** The process of reestablishing interaction with PATH-enrolled individuals who are disconnected from PATH services in order to reconnect the client to services based on the previously developed case management or goal plan. Reengagement must occur after enrollment and prior to project exit.
- **Referral:** Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service. Referrals are only reported for PATH-funded referrals provided to a PATH-enrolled individual.
- **Services:** A specific PATH-funded assessment, benefit, or form of assistance provided to a PATH-enrolled individual. PATH-funded services may include screening, clinical assessment, community-based mental health services, substance use treatment, and housing assistance. Services are only reported for PATH-funded services provided to a PATH-enrolled individual. Descriptions of PATH-funded services may be found in the [PATH Annual Report Manual](#).

Additional terms related to the PATH program workflow, referrals, and services may be found in the [PATH Annual Report Manual](#).

HMIS Project Setup

It is important to be sure that communities understand the difference between a **program** and a **project** because they have distinct meanings in this context. A program is the source of funding that the organization is receiving to run its project (e.g., PATH Program funding for ABC Street Outreach project). A **project** refers to a distinct unit of an organization, which may or may not be funded by HUD or the federal partners, that provides services and/or lodging. For data collection purposes, HUD and its federal partners refer to categories of funding within a program as **components**.

Identify Projects for HMIS Participation

Identify all the **projects** within the HMIS implementation that receive PATH funding. Each state/territory's [State PATH Contact](#) can provide specific information about PATH projects in each jurisdiction.

Identify Projects Funding Components

Identify the **component** for each project funded by the PATH grantee (the state or territory). The PATH Program includes two components:

- The **Street Outreach** component of PATH is used by PATH projects that provide outreach and engagement to those living in places **not meant** for human habitation. These PATH activities are designed to meet the immediate needs of unsheltered homeless persons by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, and/or critical health services. Examples of persons who are living in places **not meant** for human habitation are those who sleep on the streets, under bridges, in camps, in camp grounds, in abandoned buildings, in buildings meant for animals, in vehicles, and/or in public places.
- The **Supportive Services** component of PATH is used by PATH projects to provide outreach and engagement to those living in places **meant** for human habitation. This includes both persons who are residing in shelter, and those doubled up in housing or at-risk of homelessness.

Note: A single PATH project in a local community may be funded to do both Street Outreach and Supportive Services.

PATH Project Descriptor Data Elements

For projects new to HMIS, the HMIS Lead will need to follow the normal setup procedures that are required for HMIS. Existing projects, in HMIS, should be checked to make sure they meet the requirements outlined in this manual. All projects with existing HMIS records should be checked for accuracy and consistency with the 2014 HMIS Data Standards Version 5.1 and this guidance. This must include setup of the following Project Descriptor Data Elements (PDDE):

- **Organizational Identifiers (2.1)** – The name of the agency or organization receiving PATH funding who is operating the program must be entered or identified with the PATH specific project. An identification number will be generated by the HMIS. There should be a single record in HMIS for each agency or organization, regardless of how many projects they operate.
- **Project Identifiers (2.2)** – The name of the project receiving PATH funding must be entered or identified with the PATH specific project. An identification number will be generated by the HMIS. HMIS administrators should note that often the name of the project on the grant agreement is not the same as the name the project is called by the organization and/or the common name in the community and often not the same name as is used on the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC). System administrators should maintain mapping information to correlate grant names, HIC names, and common names with the project identifiers either within the HMIS itself or separately. Projects which are operating more than one [component](#) serving two different populations may not be set-up in the HMIS as a single project, for example if your project is funded by both PATH and ESG each project must be set up separately. Projects in HMIS implementations which cross state boundaries must be set up as separate projects in order to support proper PATH state reporting.
- **Continuum of Care (CoC) Code (2.3)** – Each CoC is associated with a geographic area and has a code assigned by HUD. Select the CoC Code based on the location in which the project operates. A project with multiple CoC jurisdictions within its service area should list all the applicable CoC.

Multi-State HMIS Implementation

The PATH Program funds states and territories who then distribute the funding to projects throughout their jurisdiction that operate PATH. If an HMIS implementation includes more than one state in its implementation (which is the exception), then two separate projects must be established in the HMIS (one for each state or territory) in order to support proper PATH reporting.

- **Project Type (2.4)** – Select the correct project type for each project. Each project in an HMIS must be set up for the correct project type. Although a single project may be funded to provide both Street Outreach and Supportive Services components, for reporting purposes no single project within an HMIS may have two project types. Therefore, no agency that receives an award consisting of multiple components may have both components set up in the HMIS as the same project.

The PATH Program Components (Street Outreach and Supportive Services) by themselves cannot be used for HMIS Project Typing. In order to correctly type a project in an HMIS the HMIS Lead must consult the State PATH Contact and the PATH provider to determine if the project serves persons who reside in a place **not meant** for human habitation or persons who reside in a place **meant** for human habitation.

Continuum Project should be answered ‘Yes’ for all projects funded under programs listed below. Appropriate project types will be critical to the CoC ability to produce HUD System Performance Measures. PATH project types should be set up as follows:

PATH Program Component	Population of Focus	HMIS Project Type
Street Outreach	Persons who generally reside in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. streets, abandoned buildings, etc.)	Street Outreach
Supportive Services	Persons who generally reside in a place meant for human habitation, or who are at risk of homelessness	Supportive Services

Understanding and Identifying PATH Project Type:

PATH projects are not typed within an HMIS by where the client is contacted by the project, but rather by the client’s primary place of residence at the point of first contact (which is the same as project entry). For example: a street outreach program focuses on outreaching to persons experiencing homelessness who are living on the streets and will collect and enter data under the Street Outreach PATH Program Component. While the worker may find it helpful to contact these clients who generally reside on the streets on an on-going basis at a health clinic, drop-in center, or a shelter lobby because the client is residing on the streets they should be entered into the Street Outreach project, even though they were contacted in a service setting.

PATH projects should use available data to determine the client’s primary place of residence when selecting PATH Project Type in HMIS. In some instances a client may be contacted in a project or living situation that is not representative of their general place of residence. To aid in the proper identification of a client’s primary place of residence to assure the client is entered into the correct program use the below guidance:

Identify Client Primary Place of Residence

HUD is providing guidance on the question of “generally reside” that directs at first contact (Project Entry), determine the client’s primary place of residence by using the following:

- Where did you stay last night?
 - If the client responds with an answer consistent with a place **not meant** for human habitation, then enter the client in the Street Outreach project.
 - If the client responds with an answer consistent with a place **meant** for human habitation, including emergency shelters, then enter the client in the Supportive Services project.
 - If the client does not provide an answer, wait until you can get an answer and enter the client in HMIS at that point.

Determining a client's primary place of residence should be carefully considered for the following programs: winter shelter, temporary shelter, night-by-night shelter (with no guaranteed bed), mobile outreach, mobile health clinic, homeless hotline, 211, and coordinated entry projects. These project types do not clearly equate to a client's primary place of residence and should prompt the question, "Where did you stay last night?"

If the PATH project initially enters a client in a project type based on the identification of client's primary place of residence, but later learns additional information about the client's primary place of residence that indicates that another PATH HMIS Project Type more appropriately represents that client's living situation, the PATH project is not required to exit the client from the program or otherwise alter the client's record in HMIS.

It is possible for one PATH-funded project to serve both persons generally residing in places **not meant** for human habitation and persons generally residing in places **meant** for human habitation. In such cases, the PATH project must have two projects set up in their HMIS – one as a Street Outreach project type and another as a Supportive Services Only project type.

When Supportive Services Only is selected as a PATH Project Type, the response to the dependent field "Affiliated with a residential project" should be "no," unless the project is funded as a Street Outreach component and is operating within an emergency shelter. Then the affiliation would be "yes" and the shelter(s) the project operates with would be listed.

- **Method for Tracking Emergency Shelter Utilization (2.5)** – This element is not relevant as the PATH Program does not fund emergency shelter projects.
- **Federal Partner Funding Sources (2.6)** – Projects funded in whole or in part by PATH funds are to be identified as **HHS: PATH – Street Outreach & Supportive Services Only**. The grant identifier for a PATH project may be whatever identifier the local HMIS system elects to use. There are no requirements by PATH for this to be the state grant number received from SAMHSA or the local grant number received from the State.
- **Bed and Unit Inventory Information (2.7)** – This element is not relevant as the PATH Program does not fund housing projects.
- **Site Information (2.8)** – This element is not relevant as the PATH Program does not fund housing projects.
- **Target Population (2.9)** – This element is not relevant as the PATH Program does not have a specific target population.

PATH Data Collection Requirements

All PATH projects are required to collect all of the Universal Data Elements and the relevant Program-Specific Data Elements. The Program-Specific Data Elements to be collected by each PATH project are as shown below:

Element Number	HMIS Program Specific Data Element	Street Outreach	Services Only
4.1	Housing Status	x	x
4.2	Income and Sources	x	x
4.3	Non-Cash Benefits	x	x
4.4	Health Insurance	x	x
4.5	Physical Disability	x	x
4.6	Developmental Disability	x	x
4.7	Chronic Health Condition	x	x
4.8	HIV/AIDS	Δ	Δ
4.9	Mental Health Problem	x	x
4.10	Substance Abuse	x	x
4.12	Contact	x	x
4.13	Date of Engagement	x	x
4.14 A	Services Provided – PATH Funded	x	x
4.16 A	Referrals Provided - PATH	x	x
4.20	PATH Status	x	x
4.21	Connection with SOAR	x	x

X = data collection required

Δ = data collection is not required but encouraged

SAMHSA has recently updated several key terms and definitions related to services and referrals. An overview of these changes is listed below.

Data Element 4.14A Services Provided –PATH Funded

The HMIS data element 4.14A Services Provided –PATH Funded is used to determine the PATH-funded services that are provided to a client during program enrollment, following program enrollment and prior to program exit. The PATH Annual Report only requires that you collect one response for each service provided, however PATH providers may choose to collect multiple instances of each service. PATH providers are not required, but encouraged to record each instance of PATH-funded services provided to PATH-enrolled clients, this is allowable as long as it does not create duplicative service data in the PATH Annual Report (PATH providers should work with their local HMIS Lead to assure this data entry methodology does not contradict the PATH Annual Report logic within the local HMIS).

Prior Response	New Response	Definition
Outreach	Re-engagement	The process of engaging with PATH-enrolled individuals who are disconnected from PATH services.
Screening/Assessment	Screening	An in-person process during which a preliminary evaluation is made to determine a person's needs and how they can be addressed through the PATH program.
New data response category	Clinical assessment	A clinical determination of psychosocial needs and concerns.
Habilitation/rehabilitation	No change	Services that help a PATH client learn or improve the skills needed to function in a variety of activities of daily living.
Community mental health	No change	A range of mental health and/or co-occurring services and activities provided in non-institutional settings to facilitate an individual's recovery. <i>Note: This category does not include case management, alcohol or drug treatment, habilitation, or rehabilitation, as they are standalone services with distinct definitions.</i>
Substance use treatment	No change	Preventive, diagnostic, and other services and supports provided for people who have a psychological and/or physical dependence on one or more substances.
Case management	No change	A collaboration between a service recipient and provider in which advocacy, communication, and resource management are used to design and implement a wellness plan specific to a PATH-enrolled individual's recovery needs.
Residential supportive services	No change	Services that help PATH-enrolled individuals practice the skills necessary to maintain residence in the least restrictive community-based setting possible.
Housing minor renovation	No change	Services, resources, or small repairs that ensure a housing unit is physically accessible and/or that health or safety hazards have been mitigated or eliminated.

Prior Response	New Response	Definition
Housing moving assistance	No change	Monies and other resources provided on behalf of a PATH- enrolled individual to help establish that individual’s household. <i>Note: This excludes security deposits and one-time rental payments, which have specific definitions.</i>
Housing technical assistance	Housing eligibility determination	The process of determining whether an individual meets financial and other requirements to enter into public or subsidized housing.
Security deposits	No change	Funds provided on behalf of a PATH-enrolled individual to pay up to two months’ rent or other security deposits in order to secure housing.
One-time rent for eviction prevention	No change	One-time payment on behalf of PATH-enrolled individuals who are at risk of eviction without financial assistance.
Other PATH funded service	Removed	Removed

Data Element 4.16A Referrals Provided –PATH

The HMIS data element 4.16A Referrals Provided –PATH is used to determine the referrals that are provided to a client following and during program enrollment. A referral has been attained once the PATH-enrolled client begins receiving services as the result of PATH assistance. PATH providers are not required, but encouraged to record each instance of PATH-funded referrals provided to PATH-enrolled clients, this is allowable as long as it does not create duplicative referral data in the PATH Annual Report (PATH providers should work with their local HMIS Lead to assure this data entry methodology does not contradict the PATH Annual Report logic within the local HMIS).

A PATH referral is recorded each time a referral is made. If a worker makes three referrals for the same service between project entry and exit then all three referrals should be recorded. Each referral should be marked as “Attained”, “Not attained” or “Unknown” at least by the point of project exit.

- “Attained” means the client was connected and received the service.
- “Not attained” means the client was referred to, but may not have ever been connected with, the service or did not actually receive the service.
- “Unknown” means the status of the client’s connection or receipt of service is unknown to the provider entering the data.

Prior Response	New Response	Definition
Community mental health	No change	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that stabilizes, supports, or treats people for mental health disorders or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

Prior Response	New Response	Definition
Substance use treatment	No change	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers preventive, diagnostic, and other services and supports for individuals who have psychological and/or physical problems with use of one or more substances.
Primary health services	Primary health/dental services	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers physical and/or dental health care services.
Job training referral	No change	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that helps prepare an individual to gain and maintain the skills necessary for paid or volunteer work.
Educational services	No change	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers academic instruction and training.
Relevant housing services	Housing services	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers assistance with attaining and sustaining living accommodations.
Housing placement assistance	Permanent housing	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers residence in a stable setting where length of stay is determined by the individual or family without time limitations, as long as they meet the basic requirements of tenancy.
New data response category	Temporary housing	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers shelter in a time-limited setting.
Income assistance	No change	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers benefits that provide financial support.

Prior Response	New Response	Definition
Employment assistance	No change	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers assistance designed to lead to compensated work.
Medical assistance	Medical insurance	Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service that offers coverage that provides payment for wellness or other services needed as a result of sickness, injury, or disability.

Only PATH-funded services and referrals are required to be collected in HMIS. Many PATH projects and HMIS Lead Agencies, however, may find value in collecting the services and referrals provided to a client prior to enrollment or funded by a source other than PATH, for local reporting needs. The HMIS implementation may be configured to allow these services and referrals to be collected. However, any service or referral provided to a client prior to enrollment, or provided to the client post enrollment that are not PATH-funded, must be excluded from the PATH Annual Report.

PATH Services and Referrals are provided to enrolled clients only. The only service that should be provided before enrollment is outreach which is recorded as “contacts.” PATH providers may provide referrals without enrolling someone in PATH and record that referral in HMIS. However, a referral to a PATH-funded service may not be provided until the person is enrolled in PATH. For example a PATH provider can provide referrals such as a referral to another program the client may be eligible for, to the local soup kitchen, and the day shelter, however, a PATH provider cannot provide a PATH referral (where the PATH worker plays an active part in making the referral) to someone who is not enrolled in PATH. PATH only records services that are PATH-funded. If providers want to collect other services provided, then a separate element must be created to distinguish PATH-funded services from non-PATH funded services.

Additional information on the rationale, collection point, subjects, and instructions for each element can be found in the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

Special Data Collection Instructions

HMIS System Administrators and HMIS users should be aware of several special data collection issues that apply to PATH-funded projects.

- Data Collection Challenges:** A street outreach project is likely to encounter difficulty engaging persons experiencing homelessness. Street Outreach projects may record a project entry 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 engage the client. The initial entry may be as basic as the project entry date, an alias or other “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 (e.g., replacing “Redhat” with “Robert”) as the worker learns that detail.

- 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 PATH projects and other street outreach programs effectively manage the identification and data collection of clients. In smaller CoC, it may be possible to coordinate street outreach efforts and reduce duplication of client records through case conferences or other efforts to coordinate outreach services. In larger CoC, client search functionality may be made available in HMIS so that street outreach workers can perform queries or client searches by “made-up” name or alias, or other informal identifier shared with street outreach workers in order to manage the identification of clients. The use of temporary “made-up” names should not be an excuse for excessive de-identified clients or poor data quality. PATH projects and local HMIS leadership should work together to minimize the use of “made-up” names and attain high data quality.
- Contacts:** A street outreach project is expected to record every contact made with each client in the HMIS. For PATH, a contact is defined as an interaction between a PATH-funded worker or workers and an individual who is potentially PATH eligible or enrolled in PATH. Contacts may 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 during “in-reach” or when the client is contacted in another service setting. Contacts must also be recorded if an engagement date or project entry date is recorded on the same day. PATH providers should refer to the [PATH Annual Report Manual](#) for PATH reporting guidance and to review the PATH definition of a contact.
- 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 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 entry date and must be prior to project exit. If the client exits 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.
- 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 of the 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.
- Enrollments:** An enrollment date is the date when a PATH-eligible individual and a PATH provider have mutually and formally agreed to engage in services and the provider has initiated an individual file or record for that individual. The date of PATH enrollment should be entered into the HMIS at the point that the client has become enrolled, using the PATH Status element (4.20). It may be on or after the project entry date or engagement date and prior to project exit. If the client exits without becoming enrolled, the PATH Status element (4.20) needs to be completed, indicating that the client was not enrolled and the reason the client was not enrolled. If the client was contacted on the date that PATH Status was determined, a contact must also be entered for that date.

SAMHSA GPRA Measure

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) has set the threshold of outreached, eligible clients that become enrolled in the PATH program at 58% for FY2017. That means that of all persons contacted by the PATH Program, 58% of those who are determined to be eligible will ultimately become enrolled by agreeing to participate in services.

- **Project Exit:** Project exit represents the end of a client’s participation with a project. For non-residential projects, project exit will be the last day a service was provided. For PATH projects, the 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 PATH projects. Reasons to exit a client include:
 - 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 (length of time defined by the State PATH Contact, typically 30-90 days). Once this period of time is defined for the State or Territory, the date of last contact becomes the exit date for the PATH project, not 30-90 days (or other length of time defined by the State PATH Contact) following date of last contact, which may result in artificially inflated lengths of enrollment.
 - If this situation arises, and the client is to be exited from the project due to a lack of regular contact the project exit (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.
- **Data Collection for Household Members:** HMIS Universal Data Elements and PATH Program Specific Data Elements are required to be collected for heads of households. Most PATH Program Specific Data Elements (PSDE) are required to be collected for both head of households and adults in the household. In some instances, PATH street outreach workers may contact households with more than one individual. Street outreach workers should be aware of which data elements are required for heads of households only and which data elements are required to be collected for all adults.
- **Documenting Chronic Homelessness:** The [Defining Chronically Homeless Final Rule](#) specifies that a written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living may serve as evidence that the individual lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter, for the time which the observation was made. Additionally, third-party documentation of a single contact with a homeless service provider on a single day within one month is sufficient to consider an individual as homeless and living or

residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter for an entire calendar month (e.g., an encounter on May 5 counts for May 1 –May 31), unless there is evidence that there have been at least 7 consecutive nights not living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter during that month. Specific documentation of chronic homelessness may be necessary to both prioritize clients for housing and to document eligibility for certain permanent housing resources. If necessary, PATH street outreach workers are expected to provide evidence of a client’s chronic homeless status through participation in the CoC. As such, PATH street outreach workers should coordinate closely with their CoC and participate in the local coordinated entry system to ensure that clients have access to the appropriate permanent housing resources.

PATH Reporting Notes:

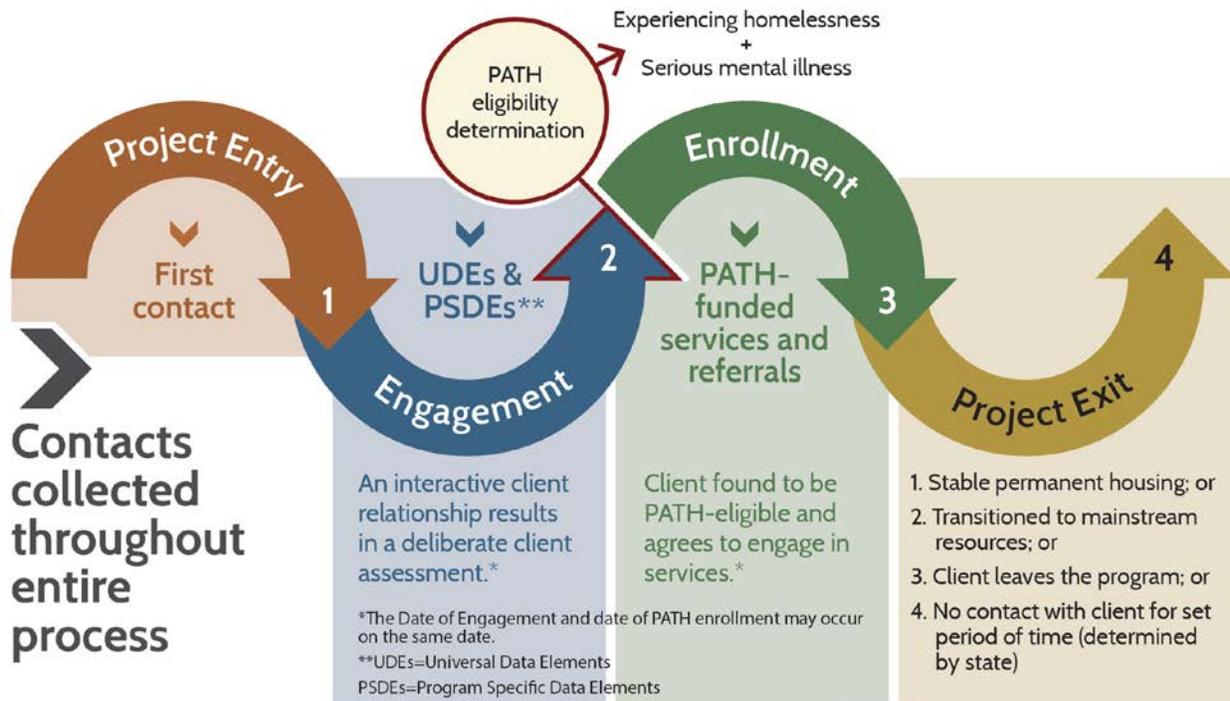
- The PATH Annual Report does not require the name of PATH enrollees or contacts; however, the name of PATH clients will be necessary for the HMIS to determine an accurate count of client contacts and enrollees through a de-duplication process within HMIS.
- The PATH Annual Report does not report each service that is provided to the client, but rather if each service category is provided or not. PATH providers may wish to collect every instance of service, which is allowable as long as the PATH report does not return duplicative service data.
- The PATH Annual Report details clients with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders. The 2014 HMIS Data Standards Version 5.1 collect data, that when combined, can determine whether or not a client has a co-occurring substance use and mental health disorder.
- The PATH Annual Report requires that clients receiving services be enrolled in PATH and that services reported upon are PATH-funded (4.14 A Services Provided – PATH Funded).
- The PATH Annual Report requires that clients receiving assisted referrals be enrolled in PATH (4.16 A Referrals Provided – PATH).
- Both a Street Outreach and Supportive Services Only project setup should be identical. All Universal Data Elements and Program Specific Data Elements are the same.

PATH Data Collection Workflow

PATH data collection workflow is designed to support the interactions and developing of relationships with clients over time. As such, HMIS data quality does not begin until the date of engagement, or the point at which an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment. The date of enrollment may be on or after the project entry date and on or after the date of engagement.

It is possible that project entry, engagement, enrollment, and project exit may all occur during a single contact at a single point in time. However, it is much more likely that project entry will be followed by multiple contacts prior to date of engagement. The chart below illustrates the necessary sequence of data collection, which may happen in a day, or over a number of days, weeks, or even months, depending on the client’s willingness to engage with the PATH project, eligibility for PATH-funded services and referrals, and continued connection to the program.

PATH Data Collection Workflow



The only data that must be captured prior to Date of Engagement is: Project Entry Date, Contact Date (all contacts from Project Entry/First Contact to Date of Engagement) and some form of name/alias that allows the street outreach program to identify the client in HMIS. Any data collection beyond that, whether it be “data not collected” or “refused” or a default category that details the data has not yet been collected is a local community decision and not a HUD requirement.

Universal Data Elements	At Project Entry	By Date of Engagement	At Date of Enrollment	At Project Exit
3.1 Name	X			
3.2 Social Security Number		X		
3.3 Date of Birth		X		
3.4 Race		X		
3.5 Ethnicity		X		
3.6 Gender		X		
3.7 Veteran Status		X		
3.8 Disabling Condition		X		
3.917 Living Situation		X		
3.917A Living Situation		X		
3.917B Prior Living Situation		X		
3.10 Project Entry Date	X			
3.11 Project Exit Date				X
3.12 Destination				X
3.13 Personal ID	X			

Universal Data Elements	At Project Entry	By Date of Engagement	At Date of Enrollment	At Project Exit
3.14 Household ID	X			
3.15 Relationship to Head of Household		X		
3.16 Client Location	X			

Program Specific Data Elements	At Project Entry	By Date of Engagement	At Date of Enrollment	At Project Exit
4.1 Housing Status		X		
4.2 Income and Sources		X		
4.3 Non-Cash Benefits		X		
4.4 Health Insurance		X		
4.5 Physical Disability		X		
4.6 Developmental Disability		X		
4.7 Chronic Health Condition		X		
4.8 HIV/AIDS		X		
4.9 Mental Health Problem		X		
4.10 Substance Abuse		X		
4.12 Contact	X	X	X	X
4.13 Date of Engagement		X		
4.14A Services Provided: PATH Funded				X
4.16A Referrals Provided: PATH				X
4.20 PATH Status			X	
4.21 Connection with SOAR		X		

HUD System Performance Measures

Data collected for PATH projects in HMIS affects the HUD System Performance Measures that are reported for the entire CoC. Below is a brief explanation of the HUD System Performance Measures that affect Street Outreach and Supportive Services Only projects.

- Measure 7a: Successful Placement from Street Outreach
- Client Universe: Persons In Street Outreach Projects that exited from Street Outreach during the reporting period.

Measure 7a evaluates how successful street outreach projects are at helping people move off the “street” and towards permanent housing, recognizing this process may be direct or may involve other temporary situations along the way. This is important because we know that people living on the street and other places not meant for human habitation are at an increased risk of death.

Measure 7a does not require a Date of Engagement for a client record to be included in the performance measure, only a project exit. Additionally, while data quality is only measured following the Date of Engagement, System Performance Measure 7a measures placement from street outreach beginning at the first contact/project entry. This means that HMIS leadership and PATH providers need to work together to assure that street outreach data is of high quality at the time the [HUD System Performance Measures](#) are calculated regardless of the Date of Engagement.