
INFORMAL STAFF REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT:

On May 21, 2019 Council Member Armintor requested a report on how individuals are assessed, scored, and prioritized in the community's Coordinated Entry (CE) System and Housing Priority List (HPL).

DISCUSSION:

As described in the Denton County Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures (**Exhibit 1**) adopted in June of 2017 and revised April 2019, "this community has been in transition from a set of homeless services that only alleviate the immediate crisis of homelessness to a Housing Crisis Response System (HCRS) that ensures that homelessness is prevented, and if not, that it is rare, brief, and a non-recurring experience."

CE is a part of an effective Housing Crisis Response System that:

- Identifies all people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness across a community
- Prevents homelessness whenever possible
- Provides immediate access to Coordinated Entry, shelter, and other crisis services without barriers to entry, as permanent housing options are being secured
- Quickly connects households to assistance tailored to their unique strengths and needs which enable them to achieve and maintain permanent housing.

Coordinated Entry Assessment

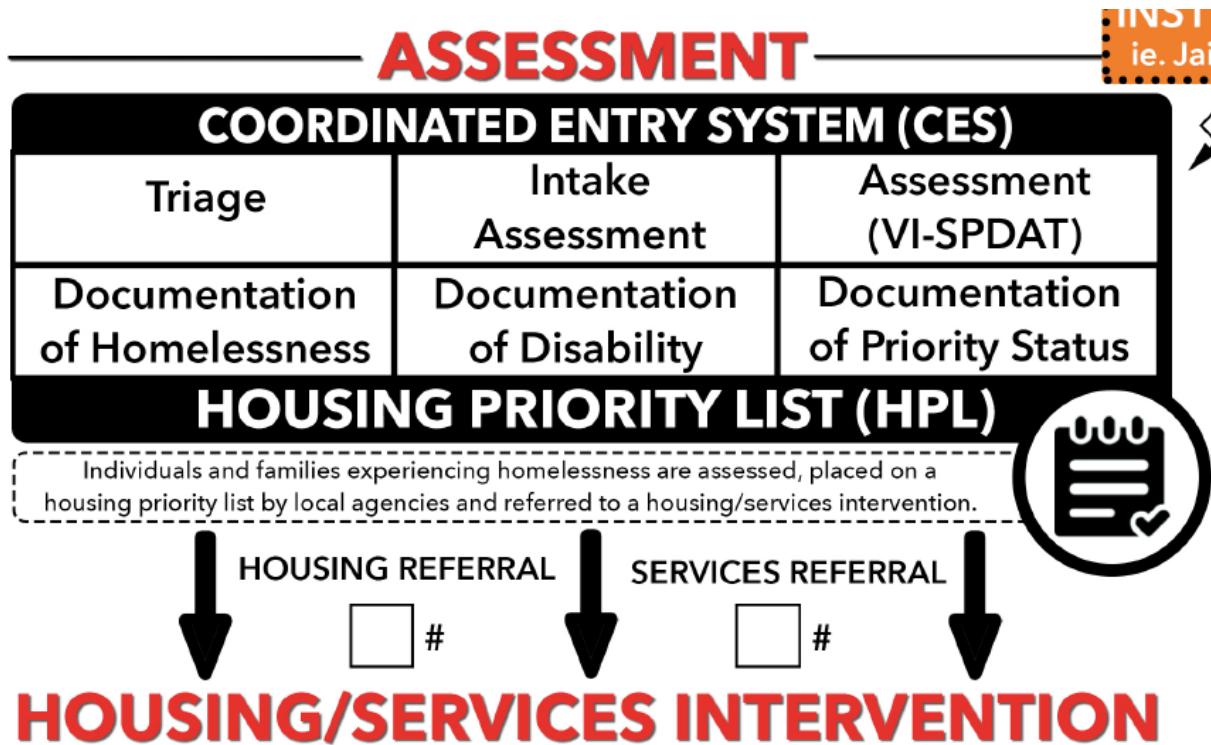
Denton County's CE process utilizes an assessment process developed by our planning partner, the Texas Balance of State (BoS) Continuum of Care (CoC). This partnership provides a connection to emerging and best practices in CE. This led to Denton adopting and implementing a uniform CE process that includes utilizing a standard assessment tool called the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) for individual households or the Family – Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (F-VI-SPDAT) for households with more than one person.

As a part of our Housing Crisis Response System (**Exhibit 3**) emergency services and housing assistance agencies in the community are partnering in a coordinated CE process (**Exhibit 2**). Through collaboration they use the same assessment tool through a shared database, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), so that people experiencing are assessed, scored, and prioritized in a process that is collaborative, coordinated, and equitable.).

Prioritization is a necessary part of the current process. Most communities, including Denton, lack the resources needed to meet all of the needs of people experiencing homelessness. Coordinated entry (CE) processes help communities prioritize assistance. Where we are faced with limited resources, one of the primary purposes of coordinated entry is to ensure that people with the most severe service needs and levels of vulnerability are prioritized for housing assistance.

As explained in the 2017 Point-In-Time Count Report, “Just like battlefield triage, doctors don’t prescribe the same treatment to patients on a first-come-first-served basis and without regard for their particular injuries or ailments, neither should we function this way to reach a goal toward ending homelessness.” ([Homeless in a Day: A snapshot of Homelessness in Denton County](#), p. 11)

Figure 1 -Coordinated EntryAssessment



VI-SPDAT and F-VI-SPDAT

The VI-SPDAT and F-VI-SPDAT are standard assessment tools used to measure a household’s vulnerability. Households receive a score based on self-reported responses. The score is used to match participants to the most appropriate housing referral. The score also assists in prioritization – the process by which all persons in need of assistance who participate in CE are objectively ranked in order of priority.

Figure 2 – Scoring

VI-SPDAT Score	Housing Intervention
0-3	Minimal intervention/ Diversion, if any
4-7	Rapid Re-housing (RRH) or Transition Housing (TH)
8+	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
F-VI-SPDAT Score	Housing Intervention
0-3	Minimal Intervention/ Diversion, if any
4-8	RRH or TH
9+	PSH

The assessment looks at several factors to identify who is most vulnerable, such as:

- Significant health or behavioral health challenges or functional impairments which require a substantial level of support to maintain permanent housing;
- High utilization of crisis or emergency services, including emergency rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities, to meet basic needs
- The extent to which people, especially youth and children, are unsheltered
- Vulnerability to illness or death
- Risk of continued homelessness
- Vulnerability to victimization, including assault or engaging in trafficking or sex work

Housing Priority List (HPL)

Households that complete the CE assessment process are then included in the HPL and referred to the most appropriate housing solution based on the VI-SPDAT score. Households are pulled off the HPL in order of priority status as housing assistance becomes available. Coordinated Entry and Housing Priority List data are provided in the [Data Dashboard](#).

ATTACHMENT(S):

Exhibit 1 – Denton County Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures

Exhibit 2 – Denton County Coordinated Entry Ad

Exhibit 3 – Housing Crisis Response System Map

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**DENTON COUNTY
COORDINATED ENTRY
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Continuum of Care (CoC) – A community wide funding and planning approach that helps communities plan and provide necessary homelessness services like emergency, transitional, and permanent housing to people experiencing a housing crisis.

Coordinated Entry (CE) – Aims to assess every person experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and based on their need connect them to the most appropriate housing intervention

Diversion – A tool used to assist households seeking housing outside of an emergency shelter by helping them identify immediate alternative housing arrangements, and if necessary, contacting households with services and/ or financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

Emergency Shelter (ES) – Provides temporary shelter to households experiencing a housing crisis while more permanent housing solutions are being secured

Front Door (FD) – A designated location where individuals and families experiencing homelessness undergo a common assessment process to quickly and equitably gain access to available community resources.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) - a database used for collecting, using, storing, sharing, and reporting participant data associated with the Coordinated Entry process and other supportive services for persons experiencing and at-risk of homelessness

Homelessness Prevention – Program that provides services like financial assistance and diversion to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless.

Household – Families that include one or more persons.

Housing Crisis Response System (HCRS) – Aims to identify and quickly connect people who are experiencing homelessness to housing assistance and other services.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – A housing intervention that provides long-term rental assistance along with intensive wrap around services to chronically homeless households that could not independently support themselves otherwise.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) – A housing intervention that provides medium to long-term housing to bridge households from homelessness to permanent housing.

Receiving Agency (RA) – Receive housing referrals through HMIS from Front Door Agencies and provide housing and/ or funding to stably house qualifying households when available and if not, record unmet needs

Street Outreach (SO) – Program that connects unsheltered literally homeless persons to critical resources like emergency shelter, housing, and other supportive services that meet basic needs.

Texas Balance of State (TX BoS) – Made up of all service providers, advocates, local government officials, and citizens who work to eliminate homelessness in 215 of Texas' 254 counties.

Transitional Housing (TH) - Medium- term housing intervention where households experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence may stay and receive supportive services that enable households to move into permanent housing.

VI-SPDAT & F-VI-SPDAT– The (Family) Vulnerability- Service Participation Decision Tool is an assessment tool used to identify household need and vulnerability used to prioritize households to receive appropriate housing assistance.

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Emergency shelters, street outreach, and other crisis services are the front line as first responders in a community's response to homelessness. While these entities meet a household's basic survival needs like shelter, food, clothing, and personal hygiene, this only addresses the symptoms of homelessness. Homelessness will only truly end when households obtain and are able to maintain housing. This will require a transition from a set of homeless services that only alleviate the immediate crisis of homelessness to a Housing Crisis Response System (HCRS) that ensures that homelessness is prevented, and if not, that it is rare, brief, and a non-recurring experience.

An effective Housing Crisis Response System:

- Identifies all people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness across a community
- Prevents homelessness whenever possible
- Provides immediate access, through Coordinated Entry, to shelter and other crisis services without barriers to entry, as permanent housing options are being secured
- Quickly connects households to assistance tailored to their unique strengths and needs which enable them to achieve and maintain permanent housing.

Coordinated Entry is critical to a successful Homeless Crisis Response System. It is the tool that connects households to the most appropriate resource they need to obtain and maintain housing, and it measures the needs of households that our system is currently unable to serve.

DENTON COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS (adapted from the HEARTH Act)

Category 1: Chronically Homeless or Literally Homeless

- A. Chronically Homeless: Someone living with a disability and that has lived in a shelter, safe haven, or place not meant for human habitation for 12 continuous months or for 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years (must total 12 months).
- B. Literally homeless: People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided

Category 2: At-risk of homelessness

People who are losing their primary residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled-up situation (staying with family or friends), within 14 days

Category 3: Youth

Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state.

Category 4: Domestic Violence

People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

SECTION 2 – PLANNING

1. Coordinated Entry Proposal

The Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team (HLT) Data Workgroup and the Denton County Homeless Coalition (DCHC) Coordinated Entry (CE) Steering Committee reserve the right to amend this document based on areas of need identified through system performance measurements, homelessness and housing best and emerging practices, and the needs of the Denton County Community.

The Coordinated Entry Proposal was submitted to the TX BoS CoC on September 1, 2017

Implementation Date – October 4, 2016

HUD Compliance Date –

2. Coordinated Entry Planning Entity (CEPE)

The DCHC CE Steering Committee and the DCHLT Data Workgroup are tasked with managing the Coordinated Entry process in Denton County. These teams work collaboratively as the Coordinated Entry Planning Entity (CEPE) to ensure that the policies and procedures outlined in this document are implemented appropriately at the system, provider, and client level and regularly monitor progress toward making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The CEPE is comprised of diverse representatives from the community, Front Door and Receiving Agencies as well as the back-bone support entity – The United Way of Denton County. See Appendix A, P. 19 for current list of CEPE members and sub-committees.

Maintenance of the policies and procedures, evaluation of CE, review of partners and the procedures for assessment review requests, grievances, and ongoing feedback will be managed by the CEPE.

3. TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards

These policies and procedures describe the Coordinated Entry Process in Denton County. This document adheres to the requirements in the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards adopted by the Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team and the Denton County Homeless Coalition.

This is a living document and revisions will be made as Denton County furthers the implementation of Coordinated Entry to target other populations and subpopulations of homelessness, and as HUD and the TX BoS CoC update the Coordinated Entry Written Standards. If changes are made to this document, community homeless service providers, and THIN's Systems Coordinator will be updated accordingly.

4. Coordinated Entry Overview

Coordinated Entry (CE) stitches together agencies that strive to end homelessness to effectively place households experiencing homelessness into stable housing by offering the same intake assessment, and housing referral processes.

Denton county has adopted a decentralized approach in its implementation of CE. This means households experiencing homelessness can access the CE process throughout multiple designated homeless and housing agencies across Denton County.

The CE Process is completed within a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a database used for collecting, using, storing, sharing, and reporting participant data associated with the Coordinated Entry Process and other supportive services for persons experiencing and at-risk of homelessness.

5. Front Door Agencies

Denton County Front Door Agencies include:

- **Salvation Army Denton**
- **Salvation Army Lewisville**
- **Monsignor King Outreach Center**
- **Our Daily Bread**
- **Denton County MHMR**
- **Giving Hope Inc.**
- **Grace Like Rain**
- **Denton County Friends of the Family (victims of domestic violence only)**
- **Denton County Veterans Center**

Agencies that administer coordinated intakes and assessments are called Front Door Agencies. A Front Door is a designated location where people experiencing homelessness can undergo a common assessment process to quickly and equitable gain access to available community resources. Households qualifying for a housing intervention are prioritized by their vulnerability (length of homelessness, living with a disability, severity of additional service needs, or overall risk of dying if homelessness continues) onto a Housing Priority List (HPL) and referred to the most appropriate housing solution.

a. *Subpopulation Specific Entry Points*

- i. Families with Children: Denton CEPE recognizes that a growing number of families with very young children are seeking assistance through its CE process, has designated Grace Like Rain as a separate access point for families to better address the unique needs of households with dependent children. To ensure that there is sufficient coordination and specialized attention given to households with children, Denton CEPE has identified a specialized access point at Grace Like Rain, to ensure that families experiencing homelessness receive the appropriate services and housing to resolve their housing crisis.
- ii. Veterans: Although the Denton County Veterans Center primarily serves Veterans and their families, the organization is committed to upholding all responsibilities of a Front Door agency, including serving all populations experiencing homelessness.

6. Receiving Agencies

Denton County Receiving Agencies Include:

- **Denton County Friends of the Family**
- **Denton County MHMR**
- **Giving Hope Inc.**
- **Grace Like Rain**

Agencies that receive referrals are called Receiving Agencies. Receiving Agencies receive housing referrals from Front Door Agencies that assess and match households to housing programs based on eligibility. Receiving Agencies provide housing or funding to stably house qualifying household when resources are available.

A list of Receiving Agencies specializing in housing services can be found on the Denton County Eligibility Matrix (see Appendix X, P X).

All Front Door and Receiving Agencies have entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with backbone support entity – The United Way of Denton County to participate in a county wide CE initiative. All Parties have signed the MOU have agreed to follow the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

SECTION 3 – ACCESS

1. CE Coverage & Operating Hours

Denton County has adopted a decentralized approach in its implementation of CE. This means households experiencing homelessness can access the CE process across multiple designated homeless and housing agencies throughout Denton County.

Front Doors that provide emergency services such as domestic violence shelters and emergency shelters should operate with as few barriers as possible to ensure that anybody who wants or needs services can access them. Emergency shelter services should continue to be made available to households outside CE operating hours and to households that refuse to participate.

If a household presents at a Front Door agency seeking assistance outside CE hours, staff will connect the household to another Front Door Agency within their operating CE hours by providing the household with a copy of the Coordinated Entry Advertisement. The Advertisement provides. If the Front Door is an emergency shelter, staff should make an appointment to complete CE within CE operating hours the next day.

Giving Hope Street Outreach Case Manager provides Mobile CE assessment to households that are unsheltered and do not access mainstream community resources. You can contact Wendy Noble for Mobile Coordinated Entry Assessment at: wendy@hopeincdenton.com

If a household is having difficulty accessing a Front Door due to differing ability or limited transportation mobile CE assessment will be provided by Giving Hope's Street Outreach Case Manager (Coordinated Entry Advertisement in Appendix X, P X).

2. Access for Differing Abilities & Limited English Proficiencies

a. Differing Abilities

- i. Per HUD CPD Notice 17-01 Coordinated Entry process must identify and document processes to ensure effective communication with individuals with differing abilities. This includes ensuring that information is provided in appropriate and accessible formats as needed (i.e., Braille, audio, large type, assistive listening devices, and sign language interpreters).
- ii. The following Front Door Agencies are ADA Accessible:
 1. Salvation Army Denton
 2. Denton County MHMR

- 3. Salvation Army Lewisville
- iii. For participants with visual impairments seeking assistance through CE, agency staff will read necessary documentation aloud.
- iv. Hearing Impaired: Front Door agencies may utilize the following alternative interpretation services to communicate participants with specific language needs.
 - a. Sign Language & Other Languages: HandsUp Communications Virtual Remote Interpreting
 - i. <https://www.handsupcommunications.com/>
 - b. Hearing Impaired
 - i. Hired Hands
 - 1. 817-236-3323
 - 2. <https://hiredhandsinc.com/request-an-interpreter/>
 - ii. Fisher Interpreting
 - 1. 817-575-9843
 - 2. requests@fisherinterpreting.com
 - iii. Trinity Interpreting Services
 - 1. 682-231-3323
 - 2. kschlomach@trinityasl.com; jjacobs@trinityasl.com
 - iv. Deaf Action Center
 - 1. <https://dactexas.org/services/interpreting/>
- b. Limited English Proficiencies
 - i. The below Front Door Agencies have Spanish-speaking assessors available. Spanish-speaking participants will be directed to these agencies for assessment, and if outside of CE hours an intake appointment will be scheduled.
 - 1. Salvation Army Denton
 - 2. Giving Hope

3. Target Population

During initial phases of implementation, Denton County's CE process will serve households that are literally homeless or fleeing domestic violence and other special populations as identified in the community's Housing Priority List (HPL). The Section titled 'Domestic Violence Service Providers' will describe the process for survivors accessing the CE process.

Category 1- Literally Homeless Definition
Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation or
Are living in a publically or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, and local government programs) or
Are exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Category 4 – Fleeing or Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence Definition

Is fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence and
Has no other residence and
Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing

SECTION 4 – ASSESSMENT

Denton County's CE process utilizes an assessment process developed by the TX BoS CoC that includes:

- Gathering household general and demographic information called Universal Data Elements (UDEs)
- A common assessment Tool called the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) for individual households (see Appendix X, P X)
 - Or the Family – Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (F-VI-SPDAT) is utilized for households with more than one person (See Appendix X, P X)

1. HMIS Universal Data Elements

Collection of UDEs is a requirement for all projects participating in HMIS, regardless of funding source. UDEs are the basis for producing unduplicated estimates of the number of people experiencing homelessness or accessing services from homeless service providers; basic demographic information and patterns of service use; information on shelter stay; and length of time homeless.

2. VI-SPDAT and F-VI-SPDAT

The VI-SPDAT and F-VI-SPDAT are common assessment tools used to measure a household's vulnerability. Households receive a score based on self-reported responses. The score is used to match participants to the most appropriate housing referral. The score also assists in prioritization – the process by which all persons in need of assistance who participate in CE are objectively ranked in order of priority, see section titled 'Prioritization'.

VI-SPDAT Score	Housing Intervention
0-3	Minimal intervention/ Diversion, if any
4-7	Rapid Re-housing (RRH) or Transition Housing (TH)
8+	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
F-VI-SPDAT Score	Housing Intervention
0-3	Minimal Intervention/ Diversion, if any
4-8	RRH or TH
9+	PSH

3. Coordinated Entry Procedure for Front Door Agencies

- a. Front Door Agencies complete the 'Coordinated Entry Workflow' within HMIS with household presenting as literally homeless (Category 1 and 4 – see section title 'Target Population')
- b. Assessors search HMIS to see if presenting household has an existing HMIS file
- c. If household exists in HMIS assessor complete the Coordinated Entry Workflow within the existing household file and updates any contact information
- d. Assessor collects client basic demographic information including forms of contact and where they can be found if they do not have phone or email
- e. This is important when Receiving Agencies need to contact households to receive assistance
- f. Assessor documents household's homelessness status
- g. Assessor completes a VI-SPDAT or F-VI-SPDAT with the household
- h. Once VI-SPDAT or F-VI-SPDAT is completed a vulnerability score will be given that corresponds with a recommended housing intervention
- i. Households may be informed of their suggested housing intervention
- j. **Do not give out the household's total VI-SPDAT score**
- k. Assessor makes a housing referral using the Denton County Eligibility Matrix
- l. See Appendix X, P X
- m. Assessor updates the household's CE status to "Assessed"
- n. This can be done on the household's HMIS dashboard under services
- o. CE status informs the HPL of the household's progress toward housing
- p. If recommended housing intervention does not exist, assessor will record unmet need and refer household to a secondary housing intervention based on vulnerability score, see figure X.
- q. Unmet need only includes services that do not exist in the community. This does not include existing services that lack funding or space.
- r. After completing the CE Workflow the household, and making an appropriate referral in HMIS, Assessors will contact the Receiving Agency via phone or email to give households warm handoff.

VI-SPDAT Score	Housing Intervention
0-3	Minimal Intervention/ Diversion, if any
4-7	RRH or TH
8+	PSH
F-VI-SPDAT Score	Housing Intervention
0-3	Minimal Intervention/ Diversion, if any
4-8	RRH or TH
9+	PSH

4. Reassessment

Households must be re-assessed (complete an updated VI-SPDAT/F-VI-SPDAT) under the following circumstances

- The number of member in the household has increased or decreased
- A household returns to homelessness after being permanently housed
- More than six (6) months have passed since the last assessment
- The household has been diagnosed with a disabling condition since last assessment
- After client requests re-assessment, and has been approved by the CEPE

5. Assessment Review Request

Front Door Staff, Receiving Agency Staff, and households who have concerns about the accuracy of assessment outcomes may request an assessment review by submitting an Assessment Review Request (see Appendix X, P X).

- Assessor or household files Assessment Review Request
- Assessor contacts notifies the CEPE of the Assessment Review Request within 24 hours
- CEPE Case Conferencing committee will communicate via email or person if necessary, and notify household of the planned action and appeal procedure outcome within ten (10) business days from the Assessment Review Request date.
- Assessment Review Request should be tracked within the household's HMIS record in a case note. Outcomes of the Assessment Review Request should be updated within the case note in a timely manner.
 - Assessment Review Request forms can be stored within the client's HMIS record within 'documents' on the household's dashboard. Front Doors may keep a hard copy as back-up if desired
- Tracking and reporting of Assessment Review Requests is overseen by the back-bone support entity – United Way of Denton

6. Housing Priority List

Households that have participated in the Denton County CE process will be included onto a Housing Priority List (HPL).

- The HPL is populated when a household completes the CE assessment process in HMIS
- Households are pulled off the HPL as housing assistance becomes available
 - Providers can find their agency specific HPL on their provider dashboard populated by referrals made to their agency via the HMIS.
- The HPL is updated based on CE status outcomes (Accepted, Assessed, Denied, Housed, Permanently moved away from area, Unable to contact).
- The HPL will be managed by the CEPE HPL Committee

SECTION 5 – REFERRALS

1. Making a Referral – Coordinated Entry Procedure for Front Door Agencies

Front Doors are responsible for making referrals to Receiving Agencies via the HMIS. When households complete the CE assessment process, it ensures that:

- Referrals made to Receiving Agencies are appropriate
- Response times for households to receive assistance are recorded and tracked

- All people experiencing homelessness have equitable access to housing assistance
- All housing and supportive service referrals are made within the HMIS per the TX BoS CoC Written Standards

Assessors at Front Door Agencies will utilize the Denton County Eligibility Matrix to make appropriate housing referrals for each household assessed through the CE process. The Denton County Eligibility Matrix can be found in Appendix X, P X

2. Acknowledging a Referral – Coordinated Entry Procedure for Receiving Agencies

- Receiving Agencies only accept referrals made through the HMIS CE Workflow
 - If a literally homeless household presents to a Receiving Agency without completing the CE assessment process, they must be directed to a Front Door Agency
- Household is contacted to meet the Receiving Agency to verify eligibility, if still interested in services
- If a household is contacted and declines assistance, the Receiving Agency will move onto the next household that meets prioritization standards
- If the household is contacted but is no longer eligible, the Receiving Agency must determine if the household is eligible for other housing interventions. If not, the household must be directed to the assessing Front Door Agency where an attempt to divert the household from homelessness is made.
 - The Receiving Agency will make this referral for diversion within the HMIS with a short case not explaining why the household was not eligible for housing assistance.

Per the TX BoS CE Written Standards, if a household is contacted and declines four (4) offers of assistance, the Receiving Agency must contact the assessing Front Door Agency to set up case conferencing with the household

- Case Conferencing will be utilized when the household and Receiving Agency are unable to come up with a housing solution
- The Front Door Agency contacts the household via phone or email to set up case conferencing with the Front Door, participant household, and Receiving Agency
- The household may follow up an appeal procedure if they disagree with the outcome of the Case Conference by
 - Submitting an appeal request to the Case Conferencing members
 - Case Conferencing members notify the CEPE Case Conferencing Committee within 24 hours
 - CEPE Case Conferencing Committee communicate via email, phone, or meet if necessary. CEPE Case Conferencing Committee will notify household of planned action within ten (10) business days
 - Case Conferencing will be tracked within the household's HMIS record and in an external excel document

3. Outcomes of a Referrals -Coordinated Entry Procedure for Receiving Agencies

Outcomes of housing referrals must be recorded and tracked within the HMIS. If a Receiving Agency is able to provide assistance and house the household, Receiving Agency is responsible for updating the Household's Coordinated Entry Status to 'Housed' within Services in their HMIS

File. If a receiving agency is unable to provide assistance due to household ineligibility or lack of space or funding the Receiving Agency is responsible for creating a case note on the household's referral on the Provider Workspace. The Front Door agency who assessed the household and made the referral should be contacted and informed about ineligibility and/or lack of funding. Receiving Agency is also responsible for contacting the household to inform of unavailable space and/or funds and redirect to the Front Door Agency where an attempt to Divert the household from homelessness is made.

If the Receiving Agency is unable to contact the household, the Receiving Agency

- Attempt to contact the household at least five (5) times within five (5) business days using all forms of contact provided by the household, including phone, secondary contact, email, and mailing address
- Notify street outreach programs that you are looking for the household, and places they can most be commonly found (captured as part of contact information)
- Inform the assessing Front Door and other Front Door Agencies that the Receiving Agency is trying to contact the household in case they present for services.
 - Setting up the notification feature in HMIS as described in the CE HMIS Data Guide (See helpful resources)
- Records due-diligence in attempting to contact the household by creating case notes within the household's HMIS file.
- If the household is not responsive after all attempts the Receiving Agency should move onto the next household that meets the prioritization standards, see section titled 'Prioritization'.

4. Rejecting a Referral

If a Receiving Agency receives a referral in which the household is ineligible to receive housing services or assistance, the Receiving Agency should:

- Acknowledge the Referral on the Program's Provider Workspace, with the appropriate date and select 'Client Ineligible' under result along with any other case notes.
- Receiving Agency contacts assessing Front Door agency and informs them that the household is ineligible to receive services
- Receiving Agency contacts households to inform of ineligibility and directs them back to the assessing Front Door Agency.
 - Front Door Agency will attempt to Divert the household from homelessness

5. Eligibility Matrix

The Denton County Coordinated Entry Eligibility Matrix (See Appendix X, P X) is to be utilized by Front Door Assessors when ready to make an appropriate housing referral within the CE Workflow. The Denton County Eligibility Matrix is a tool that provides all existing housing projects serving Denton County and is updated frequently to reflect available funding and capacity

- Requests to add, remove, or update information within the Denton County Eligibility Matrix can be submitted to the Denton County HMIS Administrator at: Katherine@unitedwaydenton.org

- Changes made are tracked by keeping older matrices stored outside of the HMIS in an excel workbook

6. Prioritization Matrix

The Denton County Prioritization Matrix (see Appendix X, P X) is to be utilized by Receiving Agency staff to prioritize households with the most severe service needs and highest levels of vulnerability. This process ensures that limited housing resources will go to households that need it most. Emergency shelters should operate with as few barriers to entry as possible and services should be made available to anyone who wants or needs them. Therefore, these standards do not apply to emergency shelters.

Prioritization Standards can be applied in a variety of ways:

- Receiving Agencies can apply the prioritization standards for their housing intervention type to referrals received in the HMIS
- Receiving Agencies can contact assessing Front Door Agencies to determine whom they need to contact to fill their vacancy
- A combination of one (1) and Two (2)

Receiving Agencies must follow the proceeding processes to fill availabilities in their housing programs.

ESG and CoC Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) funded programs must follow the prioritization standards adopted by the Tx BoS CoC and the Denton County CoC

The Denton County Coordinated Entry Prioritization Matrix will be comprised of the following prioritization standards to assist Receiving Agency staff select households from the HPL. This Matrix allows staff to objectively select households from the HPL with the highest vulnerability and most severe service needs and prioritize them into available housing resources.

Permanent Supportive Housing Projects Dedicated to the Chronically Homeless

Priority	Description
First Priority	Chronically Homeless individuals and families with the longest history of homelessness and the most severe service needs
Second Priority	Chronically Homeless individuals and families with the longest history of homelessness
Third Priority	Chronically Homeless individuals and families with the most severe service needs
Fourth Priority	All other Chronically Homeless individuals and families

Other Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Projects

Priority	Description
First Priority	Literally homeless individuals and families with long periods of episodic homelessness and severe service needs
Second Priority	Literally homeless individuals and families with a disability with severe service needs

Third Priority	Literally homeless individuals and families with a disability coming from places not meant for human habitation, safe haven, or emergency shelter without severe service needs
Fourth Priority	Individuals and families with a disability coming from Transitional Housing

Rapid Re-Housing Projects

Priority	Description
First Priority	Individuals and families with most severe service needs
Second Priority	Individuals and families sleeping in an unsheltered location
Third Priority	Individuals and families with the longest history of homelessness
Fourth Priority	Individuals and families with the earliest enrollment date in HMIS

7. Grievances

Households participating in the Denton County Coordinated Entry process must be made aware of their right to submit grievances including non-discrimination and equal access complaints within the CE intake, assessment, referral and housing process. All Front Door and Receiving agencies must follow the process below when CE participants wish to submit a grievance.

- The Coordinated Entry Grievance form can be found in Appendix X, P X
 - Grievance form is to be completed by the household wishing to submit the grievance.
 - Front Door Assessor or Receiving Agency staff are to assist the household with any clarifying questions, concerns, or completing the document with households with limited English proficiency
 - Grievance forms are to be scanned and submitted via email to United Way of Denton County Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator at katherine@unitedwaydenton.org
 - Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator is responsible for storing physical copies of grievances and tracking outcomes in an excel spreadsheet.
- UWDC Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator will present grievance to the Denton County Case Conferencing Committee via email and/or during in person meetings for resolution.
 - Client must be contacted with resolution within 10 business days.

8. Appeals

If all local options or remedies have been exhausted, outcomes of Assessment Review Requests or grievance may be submitted to the TX BoS CoC Systems Change Coordinator at THN. Systems Change Coordinator contact information can be found of the THN Webpage - <http://thn.org/about/staff/>

9. Ongoing Feedback

HMIS – CE Participants: Front Doors must make CE Survey, See Appendix X, P X available to CE participants. Front Door and Receiving Agencies will review, record, and follow-up on surveys

per their established internal agency processes. Surveys will be submitted to THN on a regular basis.

HMIS – CE Assessors & Administrator: Back-bone support entity – The United Way of Denton County Will collect ongoing feedback during monthly DCHLT Data Workgroup and DCHC CE Steering Committee meetings. Any HMIS or CE related feedback from providers will be submitted to THN.

10. Monthly Evaluation

The DCHLT Data Workgroup and the DCHC CE Steering Committee Meet on a monthly basis at the United Way of Denton County to evaluation the Coordinated Entry Process and track the progress toward making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. This meeting is led by United Way's Director of Homeless Initiatives and the Coordinator of Homeless Initiatives, also known as Denton County's HMIS Administrator. Minutes and Agendas for the meeting are kept on United Way of Denton County's Webpage under DCHLT 'Our Archives' - <https://www.unitedwaydenton.org/DCHLT>.

The DCHLT Data Workgroup and DCHC CE Steering Committee will continue to:

- Review data generated from HMIS reports including but not limited to System Performance Measures, Coordinated Entry Housing Report, VI-SPDAT/F-VI-SPDAT summary reports, and enrollment reports
- Review feedback
- Make adjustments to CE process based on data and feedback
- Address grievances and Assessment Review Requests
- Review the Housing Priority List

11. Yearly Evaluation

The Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team (HLT) Data Workgroup and the Denton County Homeless Coalition (DCHC) will conduct a yearly in-depth evaluation of the Denton County CE process within a specific time frame and evaluation date determined under the DCHLT, DCHLT, and the TX BoS CoC. The evaluation will address the quality and effectiveness of the entire CE experience for participating organizations and households. Organization and households that participated in the CE process during the previous year will be included. Final evaluations will be sent to THN's Systems Change Coordinator to help inform any overarching policy changes to the TX BoS CoC CE Written Standards.

APPENDIX A

Coordinated Entry Planning Entity Current Members and Subcommittees

DENTON COUNTY HOMELESSNESS LEADERSHIP TEAM (DCHLT) HOUSING WORKGROUP

Name	Position	Organization	Contact Information
Terry Widmer	Housing Workgroup Chair	United Way of Denton County	tbwidmer@gmail.com
Courtney Cross	Director of Homelessness Initiatives	United Way of Denton County	courtney@unitedwaydenton.org
Katherine Gonzales	Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator	United Way of Denton County	katherine@unitedwaydenton.org
Dani Shaw	Coordinator of Human Services	City of Denton	danielle.shaw@cityofdenton.com
Tyhesia Scott	Executive Director	Giving Hope Inc.	tyhesia@hopeincdenton.com
Jordan McCarty	Program Coordinator	Denton County MHMR	jordanm@dentonmhmr.org
Kaitlin Barbati	Housing Case Manager	Monsignor King Outreach Center	odbmkoccasemgr@gmail.com
Ruby DeJesus	Program Supervisor	Salvation Army Denton	ruby.dejesus@uss.salvationarmy.org
Izell Bennet	Site Supervisor	Kyle's Place	izell@journeytodream.com
Michelle Conner	Executive Director	Grace Like Rain	mconner@gracelikerainministries.org
Myles Wood	Senior Program Coordinator	Our Daily Bread	pcourdailybread@gmail.com
Christy Daniel	Social Services	Salvation Army Lewisville	Christy.Daniel@uss.salvationarmy.org

Denton County began implementation of the CE process with homeless and housing agencies that received or were seeking to receive Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Continuum of Care (CoC) funding, SSVF.

Participating Agencies and Phases of Implementation

Coordinated Entry Implementation Phase 1 – Organization with existing HMIS access					
Organization	Participation Date	Emergency Solutions Grant Funding	SSVF	Continuum of Care Funding	Other Funding Sources
Salvation Army Denton	10/2016	X			X
Our Daily Bread	10/2016				X
Giving Hope Inc.	10/2016	X		X	X
Journey to Dream	10/2017				X
Monsignor King Outreach Center	03/2017				X
Denton County Friends of the Family	10/2016	X			X
Denton County MHMR	10/2016			X	
Catholic Charities of Fort Worth	04/2017		X		X

Coordinated Entry Implementation Phase 2 –Under represented organizations with needed HMIS access and training					
Organization	Participation Date	Emergency Solutions Grant Funding	SSVF	Continuum of Care Funding	Other
Salvation Army Lewisville	04/2018				X
Goodwill Job Resource Center	04/2018				X
Denton County Veteran Center	To be Determined				X
Grace Like Rain Ministries	To Be Determined				X
Interfaith Ministries	To be Determined				X
Sanger Crisis Center	To be determined				X
Shepherd's House	To be determined				X
Metro Relief	To be determined				X

Coordinated Entry Implementation Phase 3 – Introducing organizations that provide services to families at-risk of homelessness					
Organization	Participation Date	Emergency Solutions Grant Funding	SSVF	Continuum of Care Funding	Other
Christian Community Action	To be determined	X			X

Appendix B

COORDINATED ENTRY WORKAROUNDS

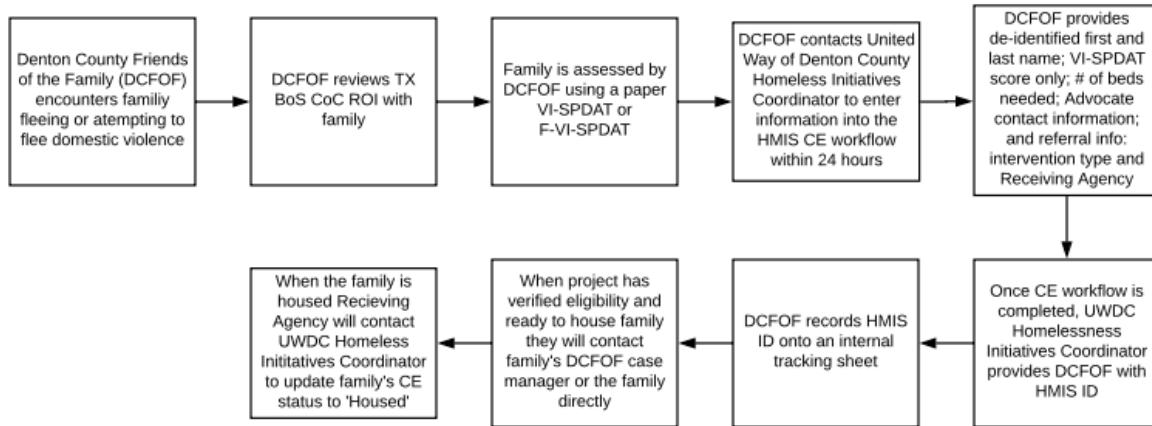
Domestic Violence Service Providers

Due to federal requirements of the Violence Against Women Act (VOWA) domestic service providers may not enter data into HMIS; Denton County Friends of the Family will utilize this established workaround process to operate as a Front Door for individuals and families who fall into Category four (4) of the established definition of homelessness.

To ensure that the Denton County Coordinated Entry Process captures the need of households fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence the following workaround will be utilized to protect household confidentiality:

1. Providers must review the TX BoS CoC ROI (See Appendix X, P X) with household, highlight the household's rights, which include not having to share their information in HMIS, and that services cannot be withheld if they opt not to share information
2. Household is assessed by Denton County Friends of the Family using a VI-SPDAT or F-VI-SPDAT
3. DCFOF contacts United Way of Denton County (UWDC) Homeless Initiatives Coordinator by phone or email to enter information into HMIS
 - There is an equal expectation for real-time data entry, however, should there be time or capacity issues the information must be entered within 24 business hours
4. DCFOF provides the following data elements for the head of household
 - First name: Last two digits of the year + hyphen + four (digit) numerical
 - 17-0001; 17-0002; 17-0003
 - Last name: Number assigned by the TX BoS CoC
 - 2002
 - This data element must be entered in the same way with the same spelling by every user
 - Example of first and last name: 17-001 2002
 - Enter VI-SPDAT or F-VI-SPDAT score only
 - Enter the number of beds needed
 - Provide contact information for the Household's case manager and/or survivor if they elect to share that information
 - Referrals: include intervention Type (TH, RRH, or PSH) and provider name
 - Record any unmet needs if household does not meet eligibility requirements or the resource does not exist in the community
5. UWDC Homeless Initiatives Coordinator must provide DCFOF with the ClientTrack ID number for the participating household.
 - DCFOF will record the ClientTrack ID number onto a CE HMIS tracking sheet (see Appendix X, P X)

Domestic Violence Service Provider Workaround



Non-Victim Service Providers

1. Providers must review the TX BoS CoC HMIS Release of Information (ROI) with the household highlighting the household's rights, which include not having to share their information in HMIS, and that services cannot be withheld should they opt to protect their information by not sharing
2. If the household opt to share their information, the standard CE assessment process can be completed
3. If the household opts not to share their information or wishes to remain anonymous follow the procedure outlined in 'Domestic Violence Service Providers'

Non-HMIS Veteran Service Provider Work-Around

To ensure that the Denton County Coordinated Entry Process capture the referral outcomes of households served by Catholic Charities of Fort Worth the following workaround will be utilized to account for all Veterans experiencing homeless or at-risk or homelessness that are successfully housed.

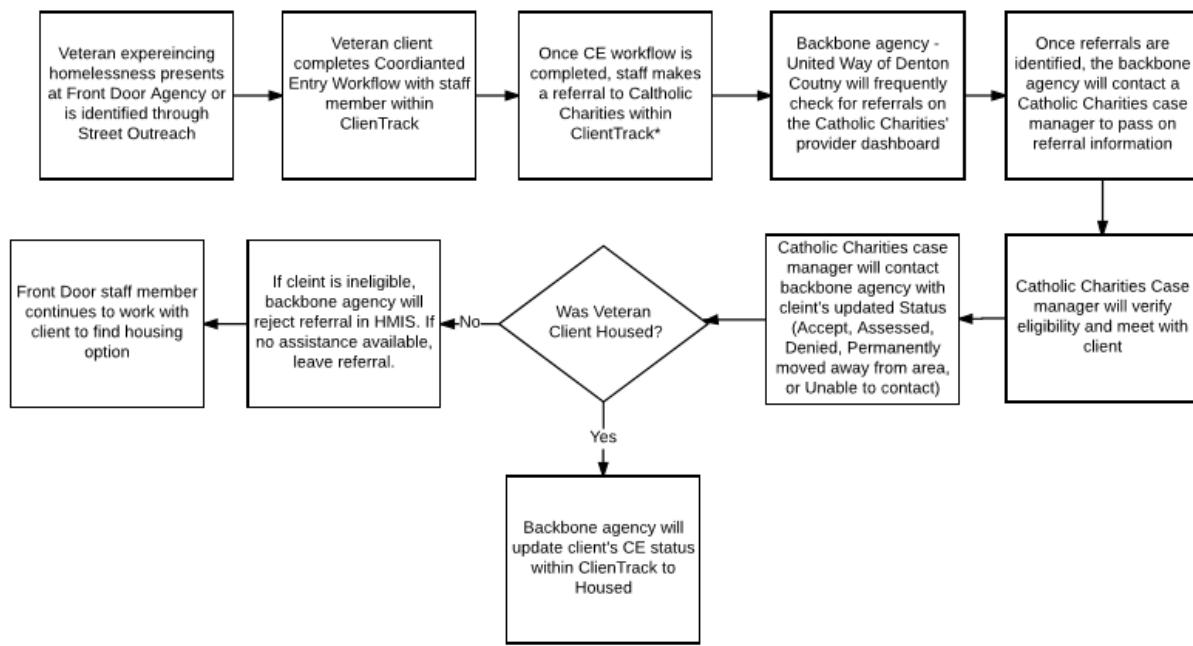
The Workaround is managed by United Way of Denton County (UWDC) Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator, and the Catholic Charities Case Manager assigned to serve Denton County.

1. Household with Veteran status literally homeless or at risk of homeless seeks assistance at Front Door Agency or is identified through street outreach
2. Veteran Family completes the CE process, and is referred to Catholic Charities
3. UWDC Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator will check HMIS on a daily basis for new referrals
4. When new referrals are made, UWDC Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator will contact Catholic Charities case manager with
 - Client Name and HMIS number
 - Contact information, if any

- Front Door location where family completed CE assessment and Assessor

- Catholic Charities determines if household is eligible to receive services
 - If not, case manager contacts Front Door location and UWDC Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator
 - Front Door staff attempts to divert or refer household to other resource
 - UWDC Homelessness Initiatives Coordinator updates household's referral outcome in HMIS
- Client receives housing assistance
 - UWDC Homeless Initiatives Coordinator updates household's CE Status to 'Housed'

Veteran Workaround



* In addition to appropriate housing referrals, households should be referred to an Emergency Shelter (if the household agrees) for safe, temporary shelter while more permanent housing options are being secured.

Are you sleeping in emergency shelter, in public areas, or in another place that is not permanent or safe? Visit a location below to complete a 10-15 minute assessment, called Coordinated Entry. Coordinated Entry helps quickly connect people to available resources and gathers information about the housing needs of people that are not served.

WHERE TO GO



Denton County MHMR
2519 Scripture St. Denton, TX 76201
Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
940-381-1741



Denton County Friends of the Family
If your are experiencing homelessness as a result of family violence, call the DCFOF 24-hour crisis line to speak to an advocate and get connected to services.
940-382-7273 or 800-572-4031



Giving HOPE Inc.
117 W. Sycamore St. Denton, TX 76201
Monday – Friday 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM
940-382-0609



Grace Like Rain Ministries
(Families with Children)
3300 Sundown Blvd. Denton, TX 76210
Mon, Tue, Thurs 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
940-535-5557



Monsignor King Outreach Center
300 S. Woodrow Ln. Denton TX 76205
Monday - Wednesday 6:30 PM – 10:30 PM
940-391-1919



Our Daily Bread at St. Andrew's Church
300 W. Oak St. Denton, TX 76201
Monday – Friday 10:30 AM – 1:30 PM
940-382-5604



Salvation Army Denton
1508 E. McKinney St. Denton, TX 76209
Mon-Fri 1pm to 4pm (social service hours)
Mon-Fri 5pm to 7am (shelter hours)
940-566-3800



Salvation Army Lewisville
206 W Main St, Lewisville, TX 75057
Monday- Thursday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Friday 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (lunch still served)
972-353-9400

* Some Coordinated Entry hours differ from regular hours of operation

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

- Agency staff will collect general information and complete a short survey with you to find the best housing option
- They will then refer you to a housing program, funding and vacancy permitted, and to appropriate supportive services
- If assistance is unavailable, staff will attempt to refer you to other resources

WHY YOU SHOULD PARTICIPATE

- It reduces the amount of time you spend searching for assistance.
- It makes it easier for you and your family to access available resources.
- This process helps the community understand what resources are needed to help you and other families in the future.

KEEP IN MIND - Coordinated Entry does not guarantee assistance and does not mean new resources are available. We are working diligently with many households to end their homelessness, but resources are limited. It is possible and likely that programs you are interested in will not have any current openings, and there is no way to tell when a program may be able to offer assistance. This is not a housing wait list or housing application. This is an initial assessment to identify the best housing option for you.

HOUSING CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

PEOPLE IN A HOUSING CRISIS

PEOPLE HOUSED

HOUSING NEED



TOTAL + # NEW/MONTH

TOTAL + # NEW/MONTH

FUTURE

UN/SHELTERED



Street Outreach (SO)



Emergency Shelter (ES)

AT-RISK



Supportive Housing (SH)



Supportive Services Only (SSO)

ASSESSMENT

COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM (CES)

Triage	Intake Assessment	Assessment (VI-SPDAT)
Documentation of Homelessness	Documentation of Disability	Documentation of Priority Status

HOUSING PRIORITY LIST (HPL)

Individuals and families experiencing homelessness are assessed, placed on a housing priority list by local agencies and referred to a housing/services intervention.



HOUSING REFERRAL

#

SERVICES REFERRAL

#

HOUSING/SERVICES INTERVENTION

High Vulnerability
Type 3
PSH/SH/RRH
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Supportive Housing (SH) Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)

with Supportive Services

\$\$\$ #

High & Low Vulnerability
Type 2, Type 1, Type S0
SH/RRH/OPH

Supportive Housing (SH)
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)
Other Permanent Housing (OPH)

Subsidized without Supportive Services

\$\$ #

Low, Very Low Vulnerability
Independent
HP/RRH/OPH

Homelessness Prevention (HP)
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)
Other Permanent Housing (OPH)

Diversion, Prevention & Private Housing

\$ #

GAP FORMULA: # Referred - # Housed - # HPL Drop-off = Housing by Type Need

RETURN TO HOMELESSNESS

DIVERTED TO OPH
*Other Permanent Housing