NorCal Continuum of Care™

HMIS/CEP Committee Meeting
July 21, 2025
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm
Housing Conference Room
Redding, CA 96001

7/21/2025 - 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Zoom link

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87517383739?pwd=bKecTbpcMs94C6bGcUarODoBNyRFaa.1

Teleconference locations:

Del Norte County Health and Human Services
455 K Street
Crescent City, CA 95531

Sierra County Behavioral Health
704 Mill Street
Loyalton, CA 96118

Teach I.N.C
112 E 2nd Street
Alturas, CA 96101

Lassen County Health and Social Services
1410 Chestnut Street
Susanville, CA 96130

Siskiyou County Behavioral Health
2060 Campus Dr.
Yreka, CA 96097

Plumas County
PCIRC
591 Main Street
Quincy, CA 95971

HMIS/CEP Committee Members

Maddelyn Bryan, Chair
County of Siskiyou

Kristen Quade, Vice Chair
County of Plumas

Carla McDonald,
County of Lassen

Daphne Cortese-Lambert,
County of Del Norte

Vacant,
County of Modoc

Robert Szopa,
County of Sierra

Sarah Prieto,
County of Shasta

NorCal Continuum of Care™

To Address the Board: Members of the public may address the Board on any agenda item. Pursuant to the Brown Act (Govt. Code section 54950, et seq.) Board action or discussion cannot be taken on non-agenda matters but the board may briefly respond to statements or questions. You may submit your public comment via email to norcalcoc@cityofredding.org that will be read into the record.

1. **Call to Order/Quorum Established/Introductions**

2. **Public Comments (limited to 3 mins. per comment)**
   Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Board on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Board. Speakers will be limited to three minutes.

3. **Discussion**
   I. **Street Outreach Policies and Procedures**
   Attachment A – Street Outreach Policy and Procedure Example Drafts
   II. **CA SPM's**
   III. **HMIS training needs**

4. **Reports**
   I. **HMIS Members**
   II. **UWNC**

5. **Adjournment**

If requested, the agenda shall be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof. You may contact the City of Redding Housing Division at (530)225-4048 for disability-related modifications or accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in the public meeting.

Next HMIS Meetings
August 18, 2025 1pm – 2pm
Redding City Hall, Housing Conference Room

BCHMIS Workflow: Street Outreach

Contents

Before You Begin: Basic Components of Street Outreach HMIS Records

A. Project Start Date

For Street Outreach projects, the project start date is the **first date of interaction with the client**.

- Street Outreach projects may record a project entry with limited information about the client
- But over time, the **data must be edited** for accuracy and completeness of client data as they engage the client and learn more detail

B. Date of Engagement (DoE)

The DoE marks the point in which rapport with the client has been established and the worker-client relationship strong enough that the client will complete the Entry assessment &/or the beginning of a case plan.

- This date may be on or after the project entry date and must be prior to project exit
- Data quality is gauged *after* a DoE is entered into a client record. Street Outreach projects should meet data quality requirement's in the CoC's Data Quality Plan

C. Current Living Situation (CLS) – (Previously 'Contacts')

A street outreach project **must record** a Current Living Situation (CLS) in HMIS **every time** a client is met in person, **including** when the project *Start Date* or *Date of Engagement* is recorded.

- All CLS, *after* the project start, will each be recorded within an interim assessment
- Defined as an interaction between a worker and a client designed to engage the client
    - This may occur in a street outreach setting or in a service setting such as an emergency shelter or drop-in center

D. Project Exit Date

The date that the client is no longer considered to be participating in the project, such as:

- Client has not had a recorded contact (Current Living Situation) in the past 90 days
- Client enters another project type
- Client enters housing
- Client is engaged with another outreach project
- Client is deceased

E. Annual Assessments

All clients with a project start date over 365 days are required to have an annual assessment completed within 30 calendar days of that project start date.

F. Recording Entry-Interim-Exit vs Recording Current Living Situation

Entry, Interim, and Exit assessments are all recorded within the Entry/Exit tab of the client HMIS record. These assessments capture specific details about the client's current situation at the time of:

- Project Start Date
- Date of Engagement
- Any time there is a change to the client's situation
- Project Exit Date

Clients *may choose to* not share all information needed at the time of project entry. Caseworkers are expected to use client engagement techniques to try to collect as much information as possible to build a client record at entry.

Information that is not collected, refused by the client, or the client does not know is required to be recorded. Over time, the client may share this missing information and must be updated in the HMIS client record.

Information obtained overtime, which was true at the time of entry, (such as name, date of birth, gender, etc.) will need to be added by using **Back Date Mode** for the date of project start and updating the missing information on the client profile &/or the project entry assessment.

G. Funder Specific Requirements

PATH Funded Projects

- Date of PATH Status Determination
    - The point at which the PATH-funded worker can determine if a person is eligible for the PATH program. Also referred to as "Enrollment"
- PATH Street Outreach vs PATH Supportive Services
    - PATH Street Outreach will exclusively work with clients living in a place not meant for human habitation (i.e., street, abandoned buildings, vehicles, public places)
    - PATH Supportive Services will exclusively work with clients living in a place meant for human habitation (i.e., shelter, doubled-up, or at-risk of homelessness)
- PATH *projects are required to enter PATH services*
- PATH *projects are required to enter PATH referrals*
- Clients appropriate for PATH services
    - To be PATH eligible, client MUST be experiencing homelessness AND have a serious mental illness
    - Clients living in a place not meant for human habitation
    - Clients living in a place meant for human habitation
- When to Exit PATH clients
    - Attain stable permanent housing
    - Transition into mainstream resources
    - Leaves project or passes away
    - Has not been contacted in 90 days

ESG Funded Projects (or Private/Local Funded)

- Clients appropriate for Street Outreach services
    - Clients who are *STREET HOMELESS* (living on the street, in vacant buildings, cars, parks)

- When to Exit Street Outreach clients
    - Move off the street to shelters, transitional housing, other temporary housing (such as “couch surfing”) or any permanent housing
    - Involved with another street outreach program
    - Leaves project or passes away
    - Has not been contacted in 90 days

HMIS Data Entry Workflow for Street Outreach Entry-Interim-Exit

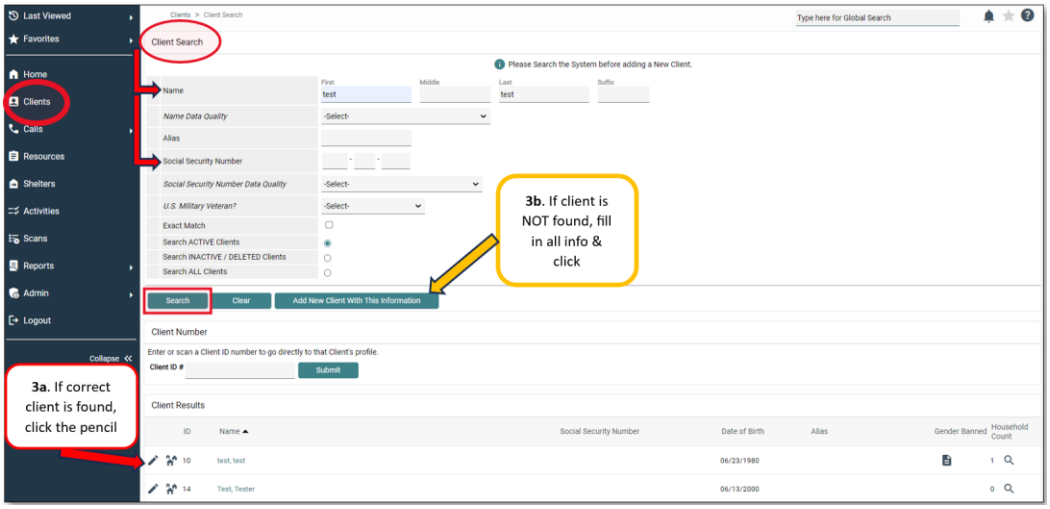
Client Entry

A. Home Dashboard

1. Log into HMIS
2. Click **Enter Data As** then click the plus ⊕ next to the project for which you are entering data
3. If needed - Set **Back Date Mode** for the date that the update was completed

B. Client Search

1. Click on **Clients**
2. Enter Head of Household's Name &/or partial SSN
3. Click **Search**
   a. If a match is found, confirm the details match the client's name, date of birth, and social security number. If it is the same person, click on the **pencil** to the left of the client's name
   b. If no matches are found, try at least two other ways to search for the client (partial name, alias, or full SSN). If still no matches are found, add the additional client information including full name, name data quality, SSN, SSN data quality, and veteran status, and click **Add New Client with This Information**



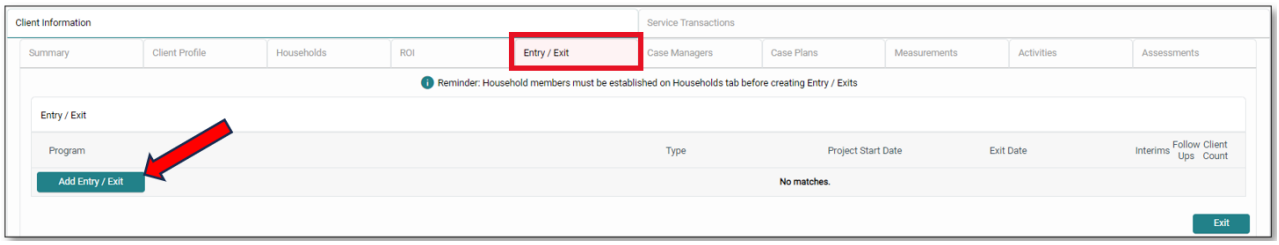
C. Households

NOTE! *If the client is presenting as a single client, skip this section*

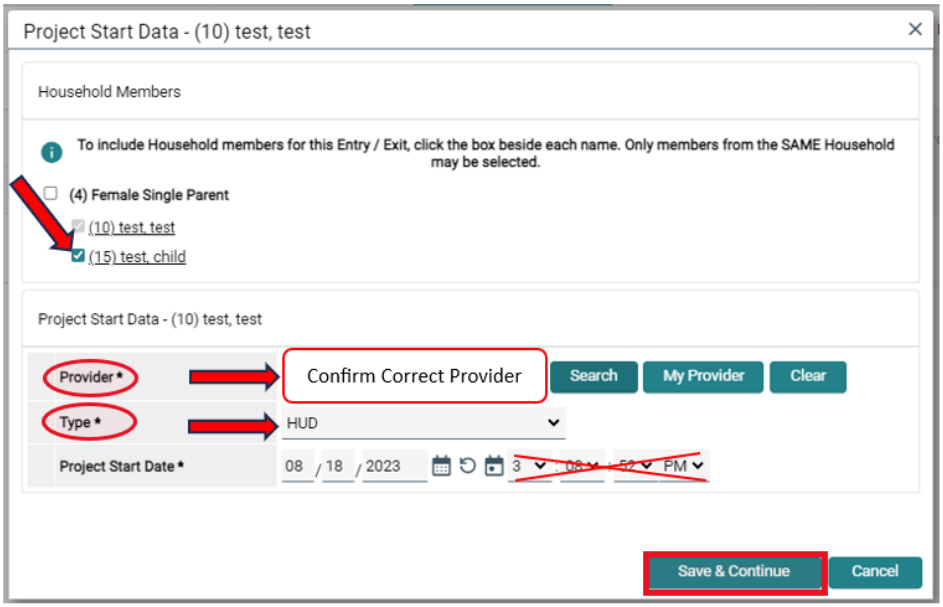
If client presents with a household, refer to the 'BCHMIS Workflow – Client Entry-Interim-Exit' for step-by-step instructions on searching, creating, and managing households in HMIS.

D. Entry Assessment

1. Click **Entry/Exit** tab
2. Click **Add Entry/Exit**



3. Confirm Project Start Data
   a. If there is more than one client entering, check the box next to each additional household member that is entering the project.
      - *Anyone not checked will be excluded from the project*
   b. Confirm the Provider listed is correct
      - The *default provider appearing will be whatever was selected under Enter Data As when first logging into HMIS. If the provider is not correct, click Cancel. Set the Enter Data As and re-search for the head of household*
   c. Select HUD as the Type (**Exception: If funded by PATH – select PATH as 'Type')
   d. Confirm the **Project Start Date**
      - Do NOT change the time fields
   e. Click **Save & Continue**



4. Complete the assessment
   a. If *the screen reads "No Entry Assessment had been specified for this Provider", the wrong project type was selected*
      - *Scroll to the top of the screen*

- *Select the correct **Type** from the drop menu*
- *Click **Update***

NOTE!! *Complete all Data Elements in the assessment that you know at entry.*

Street Outreach clients may not provide you with all the information at initial contact & you may need to edit the Project Start assessment to add information learned from the client as you build rapport.

At a minimum, you will need to complete:

- Name (or alias/code name if client will not give full name at first encounter. This can be updated to client's real name later once rapport is built)
- Date of Birth (or approx.)
- Relationship to HoH
- Client Location (should always be MD-505)
- Approximate Date Homeless Started
- Current Living Situation

5. Click **Save**
   - If applicable, repeat above steps to complete for additional household members
6. Click **Save & Exit**

Client Interim (Update/Annual Assessment)

NOTE!! *Current Living Situation assessments must be recorded with every contact made with a client.*

Each contact is recorded in the Current Living Situation with the date that it occurred in an Interim Review. (i.e., 5 contacts on different days = 5 separate Interim assessments with 5 separate CLS entries).

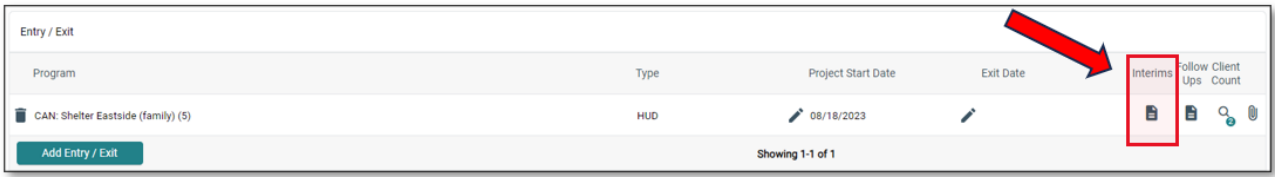
A. Home Dashboard & Client Search

* Similar to Beginning of the 'Client Entry' steps:

1. Log into HMIS
2. Select **Enter Data As** project
3. Find the correct client
4. If needed, Set **Back Date Mode** for the date that the update was completed (do NOT change time field!)

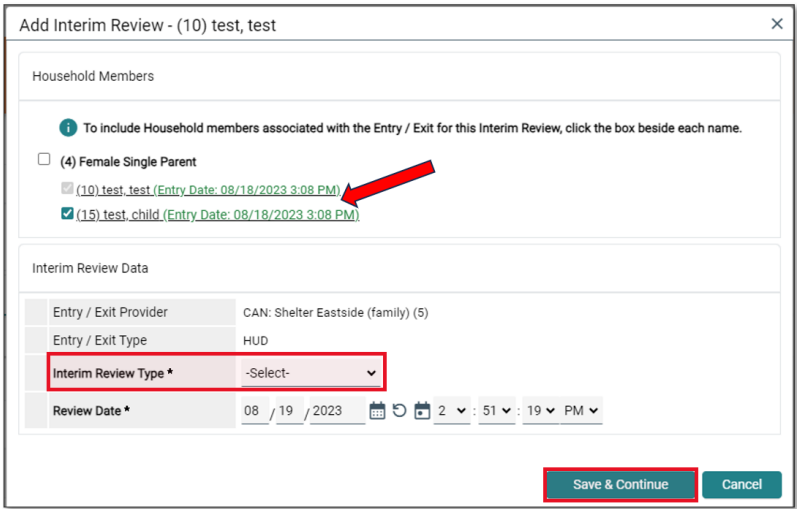
B. Entry/Exit Tab

1. Click **Entry/Exit** tab
2. Click **Interim** icon listed within your project's row



3. Click **Add Interim Review**

4. Complete Interim Review Data
    a. If there is more than one household member served in the project, check the box next to each additional household member that is participating in the project.
    b. Select the **Interim Review Type**
        1. **Update**: completed anytime information has changed since project entry
        2. **Annual Assessment**: required assessment for all clients remaining in a project after one year; Annual Assessments must be completed within 30 days before or after the Head of Household's project start anniversary date (example: if the HoH entered the project on 3/17/2022, the Annual Assessment would need to be completed between 2/15/2022 and 4/16/2023)
    c. Confirm the **Review Date**
    d. Click **Save & Continue**



5. Update assessment information
6. Click **Save & Exit**

Entering the Date of Engagement

NOTE!! *Date of Engagement is the day on which an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment or beginning of a case plan and must be recorded in HMIS.*

- This date may be on or after the Project Start Date and must be prior to the Project Exit Date

- If the client exits without becoming engaged, leave Date of Engagement blank
- A Current Living Situation must also be entered for that date

The Date of Engagement coincides with the requirement for HMIS data quality; therefore, all Data Elements should be entered into HMIS on or before the DoE.

A. Home Dashboard & Client Search

*Similar to Beginning of the 'Client Entry' steps:

1. Log into HMIS
2. Select **Enter Data As** project
3. Find the correct client
4. If needed, Set **Back Date Mode** for the date that the update was completed (do NOT change time field!)

B. Entry/Exit Tab

NOTE!! *If the Date of Engagement is the same date as the project entry, the DoE **should not** be entered in an Interim Review. Rather, it should be entered directly into the Entry assessment, along with the Current Living Situation with the same date.*

1. Click Entry/Exit tab
2. Click Interim icon listed within your project's row
3. Click Add Interim Review
4. Select the Interim Review Type. *Should be update if going in to add the DoE
5. Scroll down the Date of Engagement field, and enter the DoE, which should be the same date as the date of the interim review

6. Add a Current Living Situation (there is always a contact on the same date)

7. Click Save and Continue, and then Save and Exit
8. If the DoE was entered after the entry start date, be sure the original intake assessment is complete. All data elements must have responses by the Date of Engagement.
    a. Go back to the Project Start date for the entry assessment and enter and/or review all data elements.
    b. Data Quality is tracked on and after DoE

Client Exit

NOTE!! *Client Exit date should coincide with the date the client is no longer considered to be participating*

in the project. Reasons to exit a client include:

- Client has entered another project type or has otherwise found housing
- Client is engaged with another outreach program or project
- Client is deceased
- Client has been unable to be located &/or no Current Living Situation has been recorded for 90-days
- Project funding ends

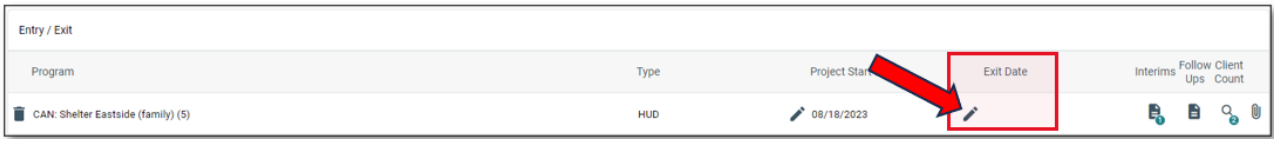
A. Home Dashboard & Client Search

*Similar to Beginning of the 'Client Entry' Steps:

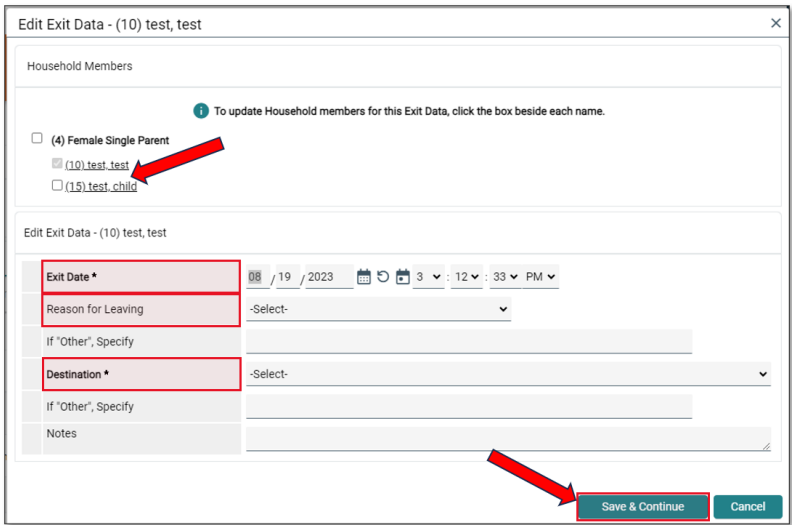
1. Log into HMIS
2. Select **Enter Data As** project
3. Find the correct client
4. Search for the client that is exiting the project (name search or HMIS ID search)
5. If needed - Set **Back Date Mode** for the date that the client is exiting the project (do NOT change time field!)

B. Entry/Exit

1. Click **Entry/Exit** tab
2. Click the pencil next to the Exit Date column within your project's row



3. Complete Exit Data
    a. If there is more than one client exiting, check the box next to each additional household member that is exiting the project
    b. Confirm the **Exit Date**
    c. Select **Reason for Leaving**
    d. Select **Destination**
    e. Click **Save & Continue**
4. Complete exit assessment information
5. Click **Save & Exit** once all assessments for all household members have been completed


Edit Exit Data - (10) test, test
Household Members
To update Household members for this Exit Data, click the box beside each name.
(4) Female Single Parent
(10) test, test
(15) test, child
Edit Exit Data - (10) test, test
Exit Date *
08 / 19 / 2023
3 : 12 : 33 PM
Reason for Leaving
-Select-
If "Other", Specify
Destination *
-Select-
If "Other", Specify
Notes
Save & Continue
Cancel

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INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a multifaceted challenge that demands compassion, coordination, and community engagement. Street Outreach can provide a crucial lifeline to individuals experiencing homelessness by

building trusting relationships, connecting people to resources, and advocating for both immediate needs and a household's long-term stability. Outreach efforts deploy a Housing-Focused approach that not only provides lifesaving, culturally responsive resources but also to support transitions from unsheltered homelessness directly into crisis housing or permanent housing if available.

PURPOSE OF THE NORCAL STREET OUTREACH POLICY

The Norcal Street Outreach Policy is designed to support outreach staff with training, resources and to clearly define operational processes across the Continuum of Care counties. The policy establishes consistent, trauma-informed, and evidence-based approaches to outreach programs as well as identifying regulatory data collection practices that respect one's personal privacy and consent.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STREET OUTREACH

- Housing First: Street Outreach is not just about engagement or service referrals — it's about connecting people directly (and assuring referrals are met) with no preconditions like sobriety or treatment participation required to begin the housing process
- Trauma-Informed Care: Recognize the prevalence of trauma among unhoused populations and ensure interactions are sensitive, supportive, and empowering.
- Person-Centered Approach: Outreach should be guided by the needs, strengths, and goals identified by the individuals themselves.
- Safety: Ensure the physical and emotional safety of Outreach staff and the people they serve.
- Harm Reduction: Reduce barriers to engagement by offering support without preconditions, acknowledging that progress may be non-linear.
- Cultural Competence: Services must honor the diverse nature of cultural backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences of all individuals.
- Collaborations: Partner with complementary service providers such as health systems, law enforcement, and community organizations, essential for comprehensive client support.
- Human Dignity: Every person deserves to be treated with respect, regardless of their housing status, background, or circumstances.

SCOPE OF OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Street Outreach for the NorCal Continuum of Care encompasses a variety of housing-focused service activities (italicized services are indicated in the State of CA HHAP 1-5 Crosswalk):

- *Evidence-based street engagement services*
- Build trusting relationships by providing ongoing case management and client advocacy
- Engage individuals living unsheltered, in encampments, or in places not meant for human habitation
- Conduct wellness checks to provide basic human necessities such as food, water, clothing, and hygiene kits or supplies, local access to showers or restrooms
- Provide necessary clothing and blankets, first aid supplies, trash bags for places to dump trash
- *Hygiene services for unsheltered individuals and people living in encampments*
- Connect homeless households with local medical supports, and establish primary care provider relationships
- *Assertive Community Treatment*

- *Intensive Case Management Services*
- Prepare individuals to become housed or enter interim housing solutions for further assistance as desired
- Develop housing plans dependent on the individual's current circumstances and desire for housing
- Assist households to update/obtain identification documents essential for obtaining and complying with leases or obtaining public benefits
- Assess or update information for the NorCal Coordinated Entry system
- *Housing Navigation Services*
- Connecting outreach clients with Miracle Messages for family reunification opportunities, as requested
- *Harm reduction services and coordination with street-based health care services*
- Facilitated connections to mental health care, substance use treatment, and employment services

Operational Procedures

Initial Engagement

Safety First: Outreach staff should work in pairs or teams and assess situational safety before each contact.
Introduce Yourself: Initial introductions should be done clearly and respectfully. Language like "Hi, my name is ___. I'm with [agency]. We're out checking in on folks and offering help for folks living out with housing or service needs."
Avoid Uniforms: However, outreach teams who wear clearly marked clothing helps clients quickly identify who they are and why they may be approaching them. Outreach workers are distinguished from law enforcement, security, or other unknown people, especially for persons who are distrustful of institutions. Logo shirts can establish a sense of legitimacy.
Nonjudgmental Language: Focus on individuals, not their circumstances. Avoid language that implies blame, failure, or dysfunction. Reflect empathy, dignity, and choice in tone and words. Work to foster dignity, autonomy, and engagement.
Client Consent: Always obtain consent before gathering any personal information, ensuring client consent during Street Outreach is both an ethical obligation and a practical necessity: Consent meets legal and ethical standards, respects a person's autonomy, avoids re-traumatization and builds trust between outreach staff and homeless households.

Building Trust

Consistent Engagement — Be reliable and predictable, build low-pressure contact routines. People often need to engage with workers multiple times before building trust to engage
Maintain Confidentiality— When obtaining consent or answering questions, explain how their information will be used to support them with service and medical referrals, interim housing, and overall case planning. Mention that outreach workers received privacy and security training annually and that information is not disclosed to law enforcement or deportation ice. Be clear there are limits to confidentiality indicated in the CoC Privacy Policy regarding issues of personal safety and

Respect Refusal: "It's okay if you don't want to speak today. We'll be back, or we come to this area every two weeks etc."
Small choices: Let clients guide engagements and interactions. Even letting people pick the time, location or x to talk can be empowering.
Don't press for details in early conversations — focus on personal rapport.

DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

Once trust between households and outreach workers is established, explain the purpose of data collection processes and assessment tools like HMIS Enrollments, Current Living Situations and Coordinated Entry assessments.

Gain Informed Consent from the Client according to the NorCal CoC approved Security/Privacy Policy and Release of Information form for HMIS data collection, compliance and CoC aggregate reporting. Notify Clients they may request and obtain their complete HMIS record(s).

Data Element	Instructions	HMIS Data Standards Reference
Release of Information	Signed Consent allowing service providers working with homeless persons to share personal and related service information with the CoC's Homeless Management Information System	NorCal CoC approved ROI form
Project Start Date	Start of client's period of participation with the Street Outreach Project	HMIS Element 3.10
Date of Engagement	Date client became 'engaged' in project services	HMIS Element 4.13
Current Living Situation	Number of contacts required to engage client and to document current living each time client is contacted	HMIS Element 4.12
Project Exit	End of client's participation with a project; must be the last day a contact was made or a service provided	HMIS Element 3.11
Housing Problem Solving	Once relationships are established, provide HPS or Diversion guidance	Custom HMIS
Coordinated Entry Assessment	CoC adopted assessment to determine the housing and service needs of households experiencing homelessness	NorCal CoC approved CES Assessment Tool

Street outreach workers should also make case notes of significant interactions with clients that describes their housing/shelter status in an agency's internal program. Ideally, case notes should incorporate the following
1) Description of client's geographic location at last engagement
2) Description of services provided
3) Referrals made to other services (if applicable)

Street Outreach data shall serve to inform the following reporting needs:

Review Type	Instructions	Use Case
Individual	Case Notes for ongoing progress, closing process to improve program services	Help Case Managers develop personalized plans that address the unique needs, challenges, and goals of clients
Program Level	CoC and local agency evaluation	Project-level improvement
System Level	Federal and State System Performance Measures; Federal Longitudinal Systems Analysis	System effectiveness and System of Care improvement

SERVICE COORDINATION

- Refer and connect to services (mental health, substance use, health care, benefits assistance), but always with client consent.
- Use warm handoffs (accompanying or directly introducing the client to the other provider).
- Work with Coordinated Entry staff, shelters, and permanent housing providers to streamline referrals.
- Multidisciplinary outreach
- Warm handoffs across counties

SYSTEM COORDINATION

NorCal CoC will host monthly Street Outreach meetings to do x. The goal will be to share updates on policy issues, community resources and program requirements, ensure consistent practices across Counties for client engagement, documentation referrals and safety issues, clarify overlapping services between various teams and review outreach reporting for program improvement.

First Responder connections to work together and de-escalate situations where force might otherwise be used, prevent unnecessary incarceration events or emergency medical visits by working on alternatives.

RESOURCE SHARING

Street Outreach Teams will share the following with all other teams:

- Apartment Listings
- Community Connections
- Landlord Listings
- Skill-Building Programs, Job Services
- Real-time Case Conferencing
  Referrals to targeted services like housing application assistance and public benefits
- Transportation Assistance

CASELOAD RATIOS AND NOTES

State or Federally funded outreach providers will maintain caseloads of 10-14 HOWEVER unsheltered individuals per outreach worker. Caseload sizes will vary depending on the complexity of the individuals they are serving, but teams will strive to serve as many individuals as possible in an authentic and meaningful way. Approximately 60% of a team's caseload will be persons actively

working on activities or goals that directly assist the person in progressing toward housing (Housing-Focused). Individuals who are on Coordinated Entry's priority list will be prioritized for housing preparedness and document readiness services. Approximately 40% of a team's caseload will be individuals whose cases are complex and require significant staff time to overcome barriers to permanent or interim housing.

COORDINATED ENTRY PARTICIPATION

CoC-funded outreach providers must act as a Coordinated Entry External Access Point (CEEAP), offering full access and assessment to the Coordinated Entry System (CES). Street Outreach teams shall to the greatest extent possible, enroll all individuals requesting or needing access to the CES into the Coordinated Entry System by doing x. If due to staffing shortages or full caseloads the SO team does not have the capacity to enroll an individual presenting for service, the SO team will screen the participant for CE enrollment and refer them to an external access point.

The definition of an External Access point is an Emergency Shelter or Street Outreach project offering Coordinated Entry assessments to ALL participants who present seeking or requiring CES assistance. Assessment interviews and data entry into the CES shall occur regardless of where the individual spends most of their time, enrollment status in any project, provider-client relationship, or population type. An access point will screen each program participant for enrollment in CE when engaging with a client, if the client is not enrolled, the access point will 8 offer assessment and enrollment. The outreach provider will make a case note to ensure the program participant is active in CE. The access point will also upload a release of information (ROI) to the client's CE dashboard in HMIS.

CONTINUING CASE MANAGEMENT AND OTHER SERVICES

(HCD ESG Street Outreach Policy v 5.27.23)

ESG Street Outreach may temporarily continue services for clients who have entered emergency shelter or housing and may retain Street Outreach eligibility if the following criteria are met:

- Client is already enrolled in ESG-SO project
- Client reasonably expects they will not remain in emergency shelter, housing, or an institution for an extended period AND the outreach project reasonably expects the client will end up sleeping outdoors, or in a place not suitable for human habitation upon exit from shelter, housing or an institution
- The outreach relationship is needed to maintain the participant in emergency shelter or housing
- Services being provided by ESG-SO are neither unnecessary or duplicative

DENIAL OF SERVICES

If an unsheltered individual has engaged in behavior that presents a credible threat to street outreach staff, their property, other clients, or general members of the public outreach workers may deny services. Service denials must be documented at the agency level and communicated to the individual as soon as it is safe to do so. Service denials may be communicated verbally and may not be permanent.

CRITICAL NEEDS AND CRISIS RESPONSE

Respond immediately if a client has **urgent health, safety, or behavioral health needs**.
Follow internal protocols for contacting emergency services or mobile crisis teams — and always **debrief with the client afterward** if possible. Carry basic supplies (water, food, hygiene kits, blankets) and offer to people as a means of engagement, not as a trade for participation.

DISENGAGEMENT OR TRANSFER PROTOCOL

After multiple attempts with no contact, **document efforts** and update the client's enrollment status in HMIS. Reassign clients to other team members if another worker might be more successful.
Warmly close relationships when a client is permanently housed, unless continued support is part of the model. [Language from focus group about county transfers here]

SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Staff should receive regular training on cultural humility, trauma-informed care, de-escalation, and anti-racism.
- Outreach workers do not carry weapons, and maintain clear boundaries such as no transporting clients without agency policy and no giving out personal contact information – agency or CoC info only.

Always document in the HMIS Case Notes any incident involving aggression, suspected abuse, or other safety concerns.

- Outreach must be conducted in teams of two or more whenever possible.
- Withdraw immediately from any situation that feels unsafe; safety overrides all other priorities.
- Maintain regular check-ins with supervisors or designated contacts.
- Carry communication devices and maintain situational awareness at all times.
- Respect "no-go" zones as determined by safety assessments or community alerts.
- Do not enter encampments, vehicles, or private spaces without explicit permission from who.

INTERACTIONS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

In some circumstances, street outreach staff may witness behavior or actions on the part of an unsheltered person that triggers a legal mandate to report the incident to law enforcement (e.g. human trafficking). Street outreach staff will do so promptly and thoroughly in these instances, in accordance with local policies on mandated reporting.

Except when required to do so through mandated reporting, street outreach staff shall never be the entity responsible for communicating or leading enforcement activities. Whenever possible, street outreach staff shall be available to assist unsheltered homeless individuals in the event law enforcement engages in activities that dislodge the individual(s) from where they are staying, when notified by law enforcement in advance of enforcement activities.

Efforts shall be made by street outreach staff, while balancing existing caseloads, to make referrals and help the individual connect to resources in the event of enforcement activities.

Street outreach staff are present to assist the homeless individual only, and are not engaged in any enforcement activities themselves. When there is planned closure of an encampment, or outreach becomes aware of high frequency of law enforcement activity with particular individual(s), street outreach shall provide advanced targeted outreach efforts, and provide information on their efforts when consents are in place to do so, without providing personal identifying information to law enforcement. In some cases, local law enforcement has embedded teams that are focused on trauma-informed response to homelessness or related special populations.

STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT

All outreach team members shall receive ongoing training in:

- Ethical boundaries and confidentiality standards
- Resource navigation and local service directories
- Trauma-informed care and crisis intervention
- Housing Problem Solving and Diversion
- De-escalation and conflict resolution
- First aid, naloxone use, and personal safety protocols
- Cultural humility and anti-racism

Supervision at the agency level should be provided to support staff well-being and prevent burnout.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Respect each individual's right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Ensure that participation in outreach services is always voluntary and never contingent on specific behaviors.
- Be aware of and responsive to the power dynamics inherent in outreach work.
- Challenge stereotypes and advocate against discrimination or criminalization of unhoused people.

EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Establish metrics for tracking engagement, service connections, housing placements, and client satisfaction.
- Solicit regular feedback from clients, partners, and staff to identify strengths and areas for growth.
- Review and update outreach protocols annually to reflect evolving best practices and local needs.

CONCLUSION

A thoughtful Homeless Street Outreach Policy is essential for creating pathways out of homelessness and building healthier, more inclusive communities. By centering dignity, partnership, and innovation, outreach teams play a vital role in addressing both the immediate and systemic needs of society's most vulnerable members. The ongoing commitment to learning, adaptation, and collaboration ensures that street outreach remains a source of hope, empowerment, and tangible change.

APPENDIX

Street Outreach Types (from Housing Focused Street Outreach Framework – National Alliance to End Homelessness)

Term
General Street Outreach
Clinical Street Outreach
Subpopulation-Focused Outreach
Local Community-Based Outreach
Direct Encampment to Housing Outreach
Placed-Based Outreach
Crisis Response Outreach
Non-Crisis Law Enforcement Homeless Outreach (HOT)

Key Terms Used

Term	Definition
Caseload Ratios	Caseload ratios are important for understanding the demands placed on staff and for ensuring adequate resources are available to meet client needs
Continuum of Care HUD	A community entity, organized and managed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to address homelessness through a coordinated system of housing and services
Coordinated Entry Assessment	The use of a consistent set of questions and tools to gather information about a person's housing history, service needs, and level of vulnerability to further prioritize households most in need of housing resources
Grassroots Outreach	Grassroots outreach prioritizes the involvement of ordinary citizens and community members in a movement or campaign.
Housing-Focused Problem Solving	Techniques used to assist clients creatively think about all options of safe housing that may be available to them, including tapping into social and/or family networks or gaining additional system resources such as financial assistance, mediation, transportation etc.
Housing-Focused Street Outreach	Housing-focused street outreach is a method of engaging with people experiencing homelessness by prioritizing their connection to stable, permanent housing. It differs from traditional outreach, focused on providing basic needs and connecting individuals with emergency shelters, by directly linking individuals with housing solutions.
Homeless Management Information System	HMIS, required data entry system by grantees being funded by CoC, ESG or selected State of CA grants
Miracle Messages	San Francisco based nonprofit organization focused on rebuilding social support systems for people experiencing homelessness. They achieve this primarily through family reunification services, a phone-based buddy system, and direct cash transfer programs.
Non-Traditional Partners	In the context of addressing homelessness, non-traditional service partners refer to organizations, agencies, or individuals not primarily focused on providing direct homeless services, but who still play a

Term	Definition
	valuable role in supporting people experiencing homelessness. Examples include law enforcement, libraries, health-care providers, insurance companies, communities businesses who contribute food, clothing or entrepreneurship training
Population-Specific Outreach	Health and social service providers actively connect with and provide support to specific groups within a community, aiming to improve their health and well-being, often targets populations experiencing health disparities or facing barriers to accessing care

Documentation Types

Street Outreach workers play a critical role in **helping people experiencing homelessness obtain personal identification**, which is often a **major barrier to accessing housing, benefits, healthcare, and employment**. Many individuals lose their documents while living unsheltered, or they were never issued some of them in the first place. Outreach workers will assist willing clients to acquire documents for housing opportunities and eligible public benefits.

Document Name	Where to obtain
Birth Certificate	Required to obtain State ID, Driver's License or Social Security Card, required for some healthcare applications
CalFresh Card	
DD-214	Veteran Discharge needed to access VA Services, VASH vouchers and veterans-only programs
Photo Identification (State Issued ID or Driver's License)	Required for housing applications, public benefits, employment banking, voter registration and medical care
Population-Specific Outreach	
Service Animal Support Documentation	
Service Coordination	
Social Security Card	Required for HUD funded housing programs, applications for job and public benefits (SSI, SSDI/Medicaid, SNAP etc
State of California Funding	
Verification of Disability (medical of mental health)	Required for verify disability for Perm Supportive Housing Programs
Tribal ID	May be used in place of state issued ID for some services
School/foster Care Records	For youth supports eligibility for some youth-specific housing or services

Communication Approaches

Resistance often drops when people see how the idea supports what they care about. Help them connect your proposal to their goals, identity, or mission. These helpful phrases may be used to increase service engagement:

"How can I support you today?"
"What's important to you right now?"
"Would it be okay if I asked you a few questions about your needs?"

"You deserve safe and stable housing."
"There are no conditions to this support — we'll work with you wherever you are."
"I'll keep showing up if that's okay — we're here when you're ready."
"You have the right to choose what works for you."

Judgmental Language	Non-Judgmental Language
"That's not how the system works."	"Let's walk through the process together — I know it can be confusing."
"What's wrong with you?"	"Is there anything you'd like support with today?"
"Why are you still out here?"	"Is there anything that's made it hard to connect to housing or shelter?"
"You don't seem serious about getting help."	"I understand that things take time — I'll keep checking in if that's okay."
"You have to follow the rules to get services."	"Here's what we can offer right now, and you're welcome to accept what works best for you."
"You missed your appointment again."	"We didn't see you at your appointment — would you like help rescheduling?"
"You need to get sober first."	"We can help you find housing that works for where you're at right now."
"You need to get sober first."	"We can help you find housing that works for where you're at right now."
"You're homeless."	"You're currently experiencing homelessness."
"You're non-compliant."	"It looks like this option didn't work out — let's see what we could do that might be a better fit."
"You're refusing services."	"Sounds like today isn't a good time — would it be okay if I check back in later?"

Sources:

1. Housing Focused Street Outreach Framework (National Alliance to End Homelessness)
2. Emergency Solutions Grant Street Outreach Policy (Housing and Community Development - State of California) v. 5.27.23