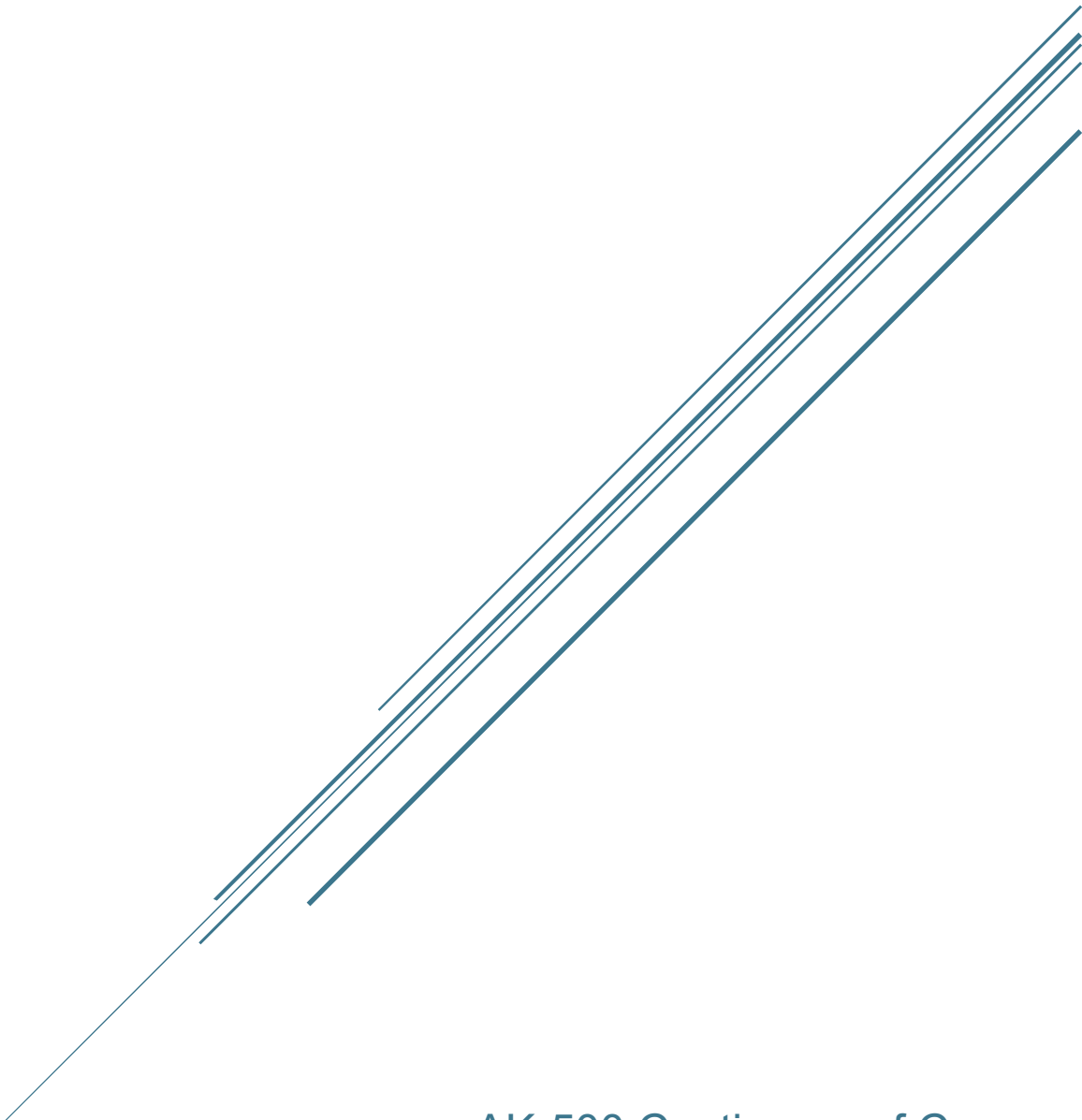


AK-500 CONTINUUM OF CARE

Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System
Community Written Standards



AK-500 Continuum of Care
Published Date: March 08, 2021

In accordance with Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations (24 CFR) Part 578, the Anchorage Continuum of Care (CoC) has developed the following written standards. This document contains the CoC written standards that guide and inform the services provided to individuals and households experiencing homelessness in the Anchorage Geographic Area.

The Anchorage Community Written Standards is a working document and will be reviewed annually at a minimum. Please visit www.aceh.org to ensure that this is the most recent version.

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Community Written Standards

The Anchorage Community Written Standards are intended to support the Anchorage Continuum of Care (CoC) with a guiding framework for Anchorage providers and funding partners. These written standards represent:

- Standards for community service delivery across the continuum;
- A guide for the implementation and operation of housing and services specifically targeted to address and solve homelessness in the Anchorage geographic area;
- A single document designed to comply with the federal Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program Interim Rule and the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Interim Rule and is subject to annual review and updates (See [Appendix C](#)). The intent of the Anchorage CoC is not to limit Written Standards to just CoC and ESG funded programs but to create community standards of care regardless of funding source.

This document standardizes the quality and type of services individuals and families at-risk of or experiencing homelessness may expect to receive from homeless services in the AK-500 Anchorage geographic area. All projects receiving CoC and ESG Program funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the Anchorage geographic area are required to abide by these written standards, in accordance with Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations (24 CFR) Part 578. Programs that do not receive CoC or ESG Program funding are strongly encouraged to adopt these standards and practices.

The Anchorage Community Written Standards provide an additional benefit to the community - to streamline and offer guidance to common best practices, racial equity, and local and federal requirements to include:

- The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System (HPRS), on behalf of the AK-500 Anchorage CoC, fulfills its responsibility to HUD and explicitly operationalizes local values and common philosophy of care; and
- Allows for local funders to utilize a common reference for key requirements and tools to support project monitoring and technical assistance; and
- Housing and service providers may refer to common expectations across the community with minimal variations between contracts for increased ease of reference and compliance; and
- Ensures program and project transparency in Anchorage; and
- Improve, expand, and implement effective, evidence-based guidelines for homeless services programs; and
- Individuals with lived homelessness experience have a more streamlined experience across programs and can expect similar approaches in services; and
- The Anchorage Community Written Standards will be accessible online for transparency and consumer right and responsibility knowledge.

NOTE: The Anchorage Community Written Standards are not intended to be in place of federal regulations authorized by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act (See [Appendix C](#)). The AK-500 Anchorage Community Written Standards are designed to clarify CoC level decisions and requirements regarding program administration. All HUD-funded providers must adhere to all applicable federal regulations in their entity. Additionally, all HUD-funded projects are expected to adhere to the standards found in this document.

B. Anchorage Community Priorities and Development

The HPRS annually completes the community Gap Analysis, which guides the development of the annual Anchorage Community Priorities. A document is published with the priorities of focus to be addressed for that year in Quarter 2 of the calendar year. The most recent version of this document can be found at www.aceh.org. This body of work falls under the Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan to Solve Homelessness in Anchorage (See [Appendix C](#)).

Through a ranking process, the Anchorage Community Priorities guide the community needs, values, and priorities. Each of the values guides the policies within these Anchorage Community Written Standards, centering the experience of individuals and households experiencing homelessness. It is the expectation of the HPRS and CoC that the Community Priorities are integrated in program operations and are intentionally a part of the operational design of services and interventions.

C. Development of Community Written Standards

The Anchorage Community Written Standards were developed by the HPRS Advisory Council appointed *Compliance Committee*, supported by the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) staff.

The Community Written Standards were developed through a community process that included:

- Review of national standards and best practices; and
- Review of existing grant/funder policies and procedures.

The document is written to encourage continued community engagement with housing and service providers, local funders, and individuals with lived houselessness experience. The document shall be reviewed annually with standards enhanced and revised with the evolving community needs and priorities.

D. Requirements

For the benefit of program participants, once adopted by the HPRS Advisory Council (acting on behalf of the AK-500 Anchorage CoC), the Community Written Standards will be applied to relevant programs through funding contract requirements. **(to be developed)**

Providers and agencies that wish to apply for funding applicable under these standards must demonstrate alignment to and use of the minimum standards outlined in subsequent (and applicable) agency, program, and program-model policies and procedures.

E. Using This Document

This document is divided into the following sections:

- **System-Level: CoC Standards & Requirements**
 - This section applies to CoC systems and requirements such as CoC Governance, Coordinated Entry System Policies, Homeless Management Information System Policies, and other system requirements from which the CoC operates.
- **Agency-Level: Policies & Procedures**
 - This section applies to all housing and service agencies. Agencies will utilize this section to address agency-wide policy and practice requirements.
- **Program-Level: Policies & Procedures**
 - This section applies to all housing and service provider programs. Agencies and programs will utilize this section to address program-specific policy and practice requirements (in addition to agency-level policies and procedures).
- **Program Models: Program Types**
 - This section applies to specific program types that applicable programs will utilize for program-model policy and practice requirements (in addition to agency and program-level policies and procedures).

F. Community Written Standards Revisions

This document will be considered a living document subject to change. Changes to this document will be made in response to changing regulations, events, conditions, and/or the will of the HPRS Advisory Council acting on behalf of the Anchorage AK-500 CoC geographic area. Changes after initial approval will be presented at an HPRS Advisory Council meeting for approval and adoption. Updated policies and procedures will be posted on the ACEH webpage at www.aceh.org.

II. System-Level: Continuum of Care Standards & Requirements

The information in this section provides an overview of the Anchorage system-level standards for federal policy and requirement compliance. The standards are required for Continuums of Care (CoC) nationwide and have been adapted from best practices to support Anchorage priorities.

A. Continuum of Care Governance (Oversight, Coordination, and Planning)

1. Overview

As detailed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) federal regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, a CoC must establish a board for its geographic area to act on behalf of the Continuum and must:

- Operate the CoC: Designate a CoC Lead Agency to serve as the Collaborative Applicant to operate the CoC; and
 - Establish and consistently follow written standards to provide CoC assistance; and
- Designate a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the CoC: Designate an Administrator of the HMIS; and
 - Establish performance targets appropriate for population and program types; and
- Plan for the CoC: Conduct year-round CoC planning of homeless and homeless prevention housing and services; and
 - Monitor recipient and sub-recipient project performance.

The CoC is responsible for coordinating and implementing a system to meet the needs of the population and subpopulations experiencing homelessness within a geographic area, which for the AK-500 CoC includes Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak, and Girdwood.

All projects that receive CoC or Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program funding from HUD in the Anchorage CoC are required to abide by these written standards. The CoC Program requirements are found in the federal regulations at 24 CFR Part 578 and ESG Program requirements are found at 24 CFR Part 576. These requirements state that the CoC must, in consultation with recipients of ESG Program funds within its geographic area, establish and follow written standards to provide CoC assistance.

2. Rationale

The Anchorage CoC (referred to as the Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System) is responsible for coordinating and implementing a system to address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and individuals at-risk of homelessness within the Anchorage geographic area.

An effective response to homelessness must be supported by an effective organization to ensure an efficient use of coordinated funding and transparency in actions. Decision making is clear and responsible members are held accountable to the collective plan and outcomes agreed upon by the community.

Projects that do not receive CoC or ESG funding are encouraged to adopt the AK-500 Anchorage Written Standards. These standards are established to:

- Ensure individuals experiencing homelessness in the Anchorage geographic area are given standardized information and support to access and maintain permanent housing; and
- Establish community-wide expectations on the operations, quality, and equity of the CoC and ESG funded projects; and

- Provide project transparency across the Anchorage geographic area; and
- Result in a prioritized and efficient use of the limited funds available.

3. Policy

Activities of the CoC are guided by the annual *Anchorage Community Priorities and Gap Analysis* and the *Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan to Solve Homelessness in Anchorage* and are implemented by the participating partners (See [Appendix C](#)).

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System Advisory Council Governance Charter (See [Appendix C](#)).

B. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Standards

1. Overview

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a nationwide data collection and management system tool designed to track services provided to individuals experiencing homelessness, help to identify gaps in services within the continuum, and allow for greater collaboration amongst service providers with the collected system “history” of an individual’s involvement in the system of care. To address the matter of homelessness, CoCs identify local needs and design a system of housing services to meet those needs. The Anchorage CoC participates in a statewide database with the Alaska Balance of State CoC. The database is referred to as the Alaska HMIS (AKHMIS). Integral to its success is the development of complete and accurate data collection and reporting regarding the nature of homelessness within its geographic area.

Participation in the HMIS is a federal requirement for CoC and ESG funded programs. The only program participation exception to the CoC and ESG funded program HMIS requirement is dedicated to Domestic Violence (DV) providers. DV providers are not required to enter client data into HMIS but are required to utilize a comparable database to track client information and share aggregate data with the Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System (HPRS). System performance on Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act indicators are used to ensure improved responses for individuals experiencing homelessness utilizing HMIS data (See [System Performance Measures](#)).

All CoC and ESG funded program participation and documentation requirements may be found in the AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures (See [Appendix C](#)). CoC and ESG funded programs use HMIS as a system planning and evaluation tool, to review data for performance and data quality issues as identified in the Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). All providers -- except for DV providers, shall consistently utilize the established HMIS to enter HUD-required Universal Data Elements (UDEs) and Program-Specific Data Elements (PSDEs) for individuals served and assisted under the CoC and ESG funded programs. Projects serving survivors of DV that cannot use the HMIS must enter data into a comparable database that complies with HUD’s standards.

2. Rationale

The Anchorage CoC actively encourages all non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in HMIS to ensure an accurate depiction of the homeless system at-large.

In addition to the federal requirements, full participation and timely and accurate data collection and reporting in HMIS offers additional benefits to include (but not limited to):

- CoC competitiveness for federal funding; and
- Anchorage By-Name List generated by HMIS; and
- Improved coordination of services for individuals participating in programs; and
- Streamlined documentation requirements for individuals participating in programs / seeking to access resources; and
- Organizations can evaluate program performance and explore potential unintended disparities in outcomes; and
- Evaluate system performance over time and ensure progress of system enhancements.

Following and adhering to the policies and procedures is critical to ensure the privacy of confidential information and to protect program participants' privacy and identity.

3. Policy

All federally funded programs and projects must comply with the AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures (See [Appendix C](#)).

The administration of the AK-HMIS is overseen by the following bodies:

- AK-500 (Anchorage) CoC
 - The Data Committee, a committee of the Anchorage HPRS Advisory Council analyzes and offers recommendations to the Advisory Council to bring forward to the AK-HMIS Advisory Board
- AK-501 (Alaska Balance of State) CoC
- AK-HMIS Advisory Board provides oversight to the implementation, operation, and maintenance of the HMIS, guiding the administration of the HMIS statewide to ensure that it is functional and meets the needs for all users for data collection and reporting, as well as ensuring compliance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HMIS standards

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578
- AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures
- AK-HMIS Advisory Board Governance Charter
- AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan

(See [Appendix C](#)).

C. Housing First Standards

1. Overview

As defined by HUD, Housing First is an approach to connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness quickly and successfully to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry. Programs in a Housing First homeless response system

empower individuals experiencing homelessness to overcome barriers to obtaining permanent housing. Housing First features include:

- Admission policies supporting low barriers to access; and
- Expanded access to new and existing affordable housing for individuals experiencing homelessness; and
- Rapid and streamlined entry into permanent housing; and
- Voluntary and engaging supportive services; and
- A focus on housing stability.

CoC and ESG funded programs should allow entry to program participants regardless of income, current or past substance use, criminal record, or history of domestic violence. Individual program requirements may require specifics based upon population and need that would be determined on the program level. All CoC and ESG funded programs must adopt the Housing First and Low Barriers approach.

While supportive services are voluntary, they should be offered continuously to encourage tenants to maintain housing stability. Housing First does not require households to spend time in a shelter or “move on” from a Transitional Housing program to receive permanent housing. To attain a Housing First system, housing providers in the system must reduce screening barriers and engage in processes that screen individuals into programs as opposed to screen people out.

2. Rationale

Housing First should be a primary consideration in all housing and service interventions, including Outreach, Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Housing. Barriers to accessing and maintaining housing and services must be minimized to ensure individuals and households needing the resources most can access and utilize them. Housing First is an alternative to approaches where individuals experiencing homelessness must demonstrate their readiness for permanent housing or otherwise participate in a linear set of time-limited housing and services prior to obtaining permanent housing. The Housing First approach maintains that everyone is “housing ready”; that individuals experiencing a variety of barriers can successfully find and maintain housing with the appropriate supports, and that individuals are able to better address their areas for improvement and goals when stably housed.

Housing First is based on the concept that, when possible, participant choice is essential in housing selection and supportive service participation, and exercising that choice is more likely to make an individual experiencing homelessness more successful in remaining housed and continuing to improve their life. Access to housing should be considered a basic human right.

Implementation of a system-level Housing First model is an objective of the Anchorage HPRS. Housing First models are advantageous in the HPRS for the following reasons:

- Low barrier access to resources helps ensure that the most vulnerable have access to necessary and relevant services; and
- Low barrier access to housing supports the Anchorage HPRS’ commitment to Fair Housing and contributes to a reduction of the barriers for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals and individuals living with disabilities who are disproportionately impacted by discriminatory screening practices; and
- The coordination of access to resources helps ensures that resources are fully utilized and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of targeting limited resources to the most vulnerable households; and
- Reduces barriers to maintain housing and ensures services are coordinated. Ensures individuals will be less likely to return to homelessness if a program is not a good fit for their needs.

3. Policy

<Anchorage HPRS Policy to be developed>

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in:

- Housing First: A Key CoC Component
- Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing Brief
- Housing First Checklist: Assessing Projects and Systems for a Housing First Orientation

(See [Appendix C](#)).

D. Racial Equity Standards

1. Overview

The Anchorage HPRS is committed to ensuring racial equity within the homeless response system and working with the community to do so. Addressing racial inequity within the effort to solve homelessness is a complex process.

2. Rationale

Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) experience homelessness at disproportionate rates in comparison to their numbers in the greater population. This is primarily a result of historical and systemic oppression. Addressing disparities within the HPRS and the results of discriminatory (both implicit and explicit) practices in other systems is essential in resolving homelessness across all populations.

3. Policy

In 2019, Anchorage established the annual Gap Analysis and Community Priorities for the HPRS process and publication. The analysis identifies the racial disparities that exist among Anchorage's unsheltered population and will continue to enhance data collection, procedures, best practices, and programs to address the disparities through various actions.

<Anchorage HPRS Policy to be developed>

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Homeless Prevention and Response System Gap Analysis and annual Community Priorities
- CoC Racial Equity Analysis Tool (HUD)
- The Alliance's Racial Equity Network Action Steps: Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Homelessness System

(See [Appendix C](#)).

E. System Performance Measures (SPMs)

1. Overview

As required by the HEARTH Act, every CoC is to establish targets and show annual progress in achieving the targets towards reducing homelessness. HUD has established system-level performance measures to help communities gauge progress in preventing and solving homelessness in addition to ensuring housing placements are stable within the community.

The CoC System Performance Measures (SPMs) must be annually reported to HUD by the CoC Collaborative Applicant through the collected HMIS data. The required reporting measures are:

- Measure 1: The length of time individuals and people in families remain homeless. The SPM results use records from shelter, transitional housing and safe haven stays recorded in each CoC's HMIS; and
- Measure 2: The extent to which individuals and families who leave homelessness experience additional spells of homelessness. Exits to permanent housing and returns to outreach, shelter, transitional housing, safe havens, and select permanent housing projects are recorded in HMIS; and
- Measure 3: Overall change in the number of homeless individuals and families, represented as counts of people in each year staying in emergency shelters, safe havens, and transitional housing projects according to HMIS; and
- Measure 4: Jobs and income growth for homeless individuals and families, represented as counts of people with increases in earned income and total income from project start to project exit (System Leavers); and
- Measure 5: Success at reducing the number of individuals and families who become homeless, represented as counts of people without a prior entry to the homeless system according to HMIS records; and
- Measure 6: Homeless Prevention and housing placement of persons defined by category 3 of HUD's homeless definition in CoC Program-funded projects; and
- Measure 7a: Successful placement from street outreach, represented as counts of people with positive exits recorded in HMIS; and
- Measure 7b1: Successful housing placement to a permanent housing destination from emergency shelter, transitional housing, safe haven, or rapid re-housing projects; and
- Measure 7b2: Successful housing placement to a permanent housing destination from permanent housing projects not including rapid re-housing (captured in 7b1) and including people who stay in permanent housing projects longer than 6 months.

2. Rationale

The purpose of the SPMs is to provide insight into how well the Anchorage HPRS is progressing in its efforts to prevent and solve homelessness. SPMs are designed to help the community improve services to individuals experiencing homelessness by providing accurate information on the extent and nature of homelessness in Anchorage and by accounting for the individuals who move out of homelessness. Continuous improvement in System Performance is a key indicator of progress in meeting the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and the success of the CoC.

The Anchorage HPRS should establish annual performance targets appropriate for population and program type, monitor recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action to improve performance.

3. Policy

<Anchorage HPRS Policy to be developed>

<Minimum Anchorage HPRS Performance Standards to be developed>

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- System Performance Measures Introductory Guide

(See [Appendix C](#)).

F. Coordinated Entry System Participation

1. Overview

Provisions in 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program require a CoC to establish and operate a Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System to provide an initial, comprehensive assessment of needs of individuals and families for appropriate housing services. Both HUD CoC funded and ESG funded projects must participate in the local Coordinated Entry System (CES) to minimize barriers to housing access and ensure timely placement through the communitywide referral system. The CES ensures that individuals experiencing homelessness are known by name and are provided with assistance based on their unique individual needs. The CES also strives to ensure that housing matches are the appropriate fit.

The CES prioritizes the most vulnerable for the existing limited services; streamlines the experience for both the individual seeking services and the providers; and provides data, allowing for informed decision making and analysis of the current services and system structure in addition to identifying additional community needs.

2. Rationale

The purpose of Coordinated Entry is to ensure that all individuals experiencing homelessness have fair and equal access to housing. Using standardized tools and practices, Coordinated Entry aims to incorporate the principles of a system-wide Housing First approach and prioritize individuals with the highest service needs. In Anchorage, the CES acts as the primary referral point to various participating housing programs. Households receive the same assessment, regardless of the entry Access Point to provide information on vulnerability and length of time experiencing homelessness. Once the assessment is complete, the household is placed on the list of households eligible to receive referrals into the participating housing programs. When there is an opening in a housing program, the CES provides the agency with a referral from the list of those assessed individuals, based off the program's eligibility criteria and the household's vulnerability score. The CES will always provide a referral to the most vulnerable household that also meets the eligibility criteria of the open program.

The CES process ensure that households do not need to go to multiple housing providers to place their names on multiple waitlists; a household may receive one assessment for eligibility for multiple programs with the program reaching out when there is an opening. Housing providers can commit resources and time on the referred applicants when there is a vacancy as opposed to reviewing multiple applications with limited availability.

3. Policy

Due to the inequity in the VI-SPADT as well as the limited adult resources through CE, for all populations we are using HUD-required Universal data elements that we already collect.

Prioritization will primarily be based on longest length of time homeless (as determined by HMIS entries) and disability status (prioritizing those with disabilities).

Age (prioritizing elders) and inability to access shelter will be used as tiebreakers if multiple clients have the same Length of Time homelessness and both experience a disability.

For individuals with longest length of time homeless in our community not reflected in HMIS OR individuals with high medical needs, request for elevation outside of normal prioritization process can be made at Case Conferencing Meetings and/or directly to CE Manager.

Coordinated Entry System projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

Projects should refer to the Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures for additional information.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578
- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures

(See [Appendix C](#)).

III. Agency-Level: Policies & Procedures

Section to be developed.

This section will be developed in the next revision cycle. At time of publication, the Anchorage Assembly is drafting and in development of Shelter Policy and Standards. Once approved, the Anchorage Assembly Shelter Policy and Standards shall be taken into consideration at time of Agency-Level: Policies & Procedures development.

IV. Program-Level: Policies & Procedures

The information in this section provides specific guidance for programs across the Anchorage housing continuum. The policies create consistency across the Anchorage Continuum of Care (CoC) agencies and protect guests and residents. The following guidelines apply to all programs within the CoC.

A. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Participation

1. Overview

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is the central, system-wide platform for collecting information about households who apply for and receive services from prevention, intervention, and housing programs serving at-risk homeless households. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires CoC and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program recipients and subrecipients to participate in the HMIS. A CoC addresses the issue of homelessness by identifying local needs and designing a system of housing and services to meet those needs. Essential to its success is the development of complete and accurate data regarding the extent and nature of homelessness within the Anchorage geographic area. All HMIS participating agencies should meet the minimum data quality standards and follow the AK-HMIS Policies & Procedures and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan.

2. Rationale

The purpose of the HMIS is to improve the delivery of services that support individuals experiencing homelessness to (1) achieve housing and (2) facilitate access to available client-specific services, while meeting the requirements set out by HUD and any additional requirements that may be set out by supplemental funding organizations. HUD requires all CoC and ESG funded programs to enter data into HMIS per the CoC HMIS guidelines.

While homeless service providers who are not funded through either the CoC or ESG programs do not have the same reporting requirements as providers funded by the CoC or ESG programs, the Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System (HPRS) actively encourages these providers to participate in HMIS as client-level data is critical in building a more effective system and strategic planning.

3. Policy

All Anchorage CoC and ESG Program funded projects shall actively participate in HMIS and follow all requirements outlined in the AK-HMIS Policies & Procedures and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan standards and protocols (See [Appendix C](#)). All other Anchorage homelessness service programs are strongly encouraged to participate to promote client access and system strategy.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- AK-HMIS Policies & Procedures
- AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan
- Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan to Solve Homelessness in Anchorage
- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

B. Participation in the Coordinated Entry System

1. Overview

Coordinated Entry is a centralized and streamlined system for assessing individuals experiencing homelessness by vulnerability needs and accessing appropriate housing and support services. The Anchorage Coordinated Entry System (CES) acts as the referral point to various housing programs. Individuals in need of services are referred to or contact a local CES Access Point (AP) to complete an assessment to provide information which is used to assess the household's vulnerability and length of time experiencing homelessness. The CES process works with households to gain an understanding of their strengths and needs, complete a standard community assessment, and connect them with housing and homeless assistance. Applying standardized tools and practices, the CES aims to incorporate the principles of a system-wide Housing First approach that prioritizes those with the highest service needs.

The Anchorage CoC will work with ESG funded providers to ensure that the CoC's CES process allows for coordinated screening, assessment, and referrals for ESG funded projects, consistent with the annual *Municipality of Anchorage Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan* for administering ESG assistance.

The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

2. Rationale

The Anchorage CES is designed to:

- Provide clarity, transparency, consistency, and accountability throughout the assessment and referral process for households experiencing homelessness, community partners and stakeholders, and homeless and housing service providers; and
- Prioritize households for limited housing resources based on need and vulnerability; and
- Streamline and standardize the assessment experience for both those seeking assistance and the service providers, allowing anyone who needs assistance for a housing crisis to know where to go to access assistance and to be assessed in a standard and consistent way; and
- Provide aggregate data that facilitates informed decisions regarding the structure of current services as well as the need for new, expanded, or enhanced services; and
- Facilitate exits from homelessness to stable housing in the most rapid manner possible.

3. Policy

CoC and ESG funded projects shall adopt and follow policies and procedures that conform to HUD's program rules and the *AK-500 Community Written Standards*. Anchorage programs shall work with the CES coordinating entity and follow the policies and procedures as outlined in the *Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures* document (See [Appendix C](#)). The CoC Lead shall ensure that any new project is set-up in the AK-HMIS and work with the CES coordinating entity to complete a detailed program description.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Municipality of Anchorage Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan
- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan to Solve Homelessness in Anchorage
- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

C. Client Choice

1. Overview

Homeless service and housing providers in the Anchorage CoC shall demonstrate that services are client-centered and shall use individualized service planning to coordinate housing-focused supportive services.

2. Rationale

Client choice is a fundamental component of an effective Housing First approach to ensure:

- Efforts are made to maximize client choice for housing selection and supportive service participation, to include but not limited to, frequency and intensity of services and whenever possible choice of housing geographic area; and
- Accommodating the client's choices improves the probability that a client will remain successfully and stably housed.

Adopting an empowerment model of services elevates the voices of individuals who may have not had the opportunity to use their voice or choice to control aspects of their lives (communities of color, individuals identifying as LGBTQ+, individuals living with disabilities, and survivors of domestic violence, for example).

3. Policy

Participants shall be given opportunities (as available) in decision-making for programs and services. Participant feedback on programs and services shall be solicited at least annually. Program staff shall fully inform participants of all available options.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

(See [Appendix C](#)).

D. Client Records / Case Notes

1. Overview

Client records and client case notes are to be maintained within the AK-HMIS and adhere to all confidentiality requirements and practices.

2. Rationale

To be developed.

3. Policy

To be developed.

4. Documentation

To be developed.

E. Confidentiality

1. Overview

Maintaining a strict confidentiality of protected identifying information of participants receiving assistance is a HUD requirement. All Anchorage programs should have agency-level policies to define how project participant records will remain confidential and physically secured as well as the process by which project participant information is released to third parties when necessary.

2. Rationale

Maintaining confidentiality and protecting the rights of participants is a critical responsibility of professionals working with individuals receiving services.

3. Policy

In addition to meeting the specific confidentiality and security requirement for HMIS data, CoC Programs must develop and implement program-level written procedures to ensure:

- Data collection and sharing methods are transparent so participant households are informed of how their information is maintained, stored, and used; and
- The address or location of any domestic violence project assisted with CoC funds will not be made public.

Programs are strongly encouraged to obtain legal counsel regarding the confidentiality of records.

Programs shall:

- Obtain informed consent to share personal identifying information with relevant parties for all program participants when referrals or information sharing is required; and
- Establish agency protocol for when staff are permitted or prohibited from sharing personal identifying information; and
- Establish protocols for storing or protecting paper records within the building; and
- Establish protocols for protecting electronic records containing protected identifying information (for example: logging off computers and policies for password protection and encryption of documents); and
- Comply with mandatory reporting laws and protect participants and the community.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- AK-HMIS Policies & Procedures
- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

(See [Appendix C](#)).

F. Education Services

1. Overview

For programs that serve households with children, programs must take the educational needs of children into account when families are placed in housing. The McKinney-Vento Act requires:

- Students experiencing homelessness who move have the right to remain in their school of origin if that is in the student's best interest; and
- If it is in the student's best interest to change schools, students experiencing homelessness must be immediately enrolled in a new school, even if they do not have the records required for enrollment; and
- Students experiencing homelessness must have access to all programs and services for which they are eligible, including, but not limited to, special education services, preschool, school nutrition programs, language assistance for English learners, career and technical education, online learning, and before and after-school care; and
- Unaccompanied youth must be afforded specific protections, including immediate enrollment in school without proof of guardianship.

2. Rationale

To fulfill Federal and State regulations while promoting the access of education services for children and youth regardless of their housing status.

3. Policy

When applicable, programs must take the educational needs of children into account when families are placed in housing and will, to the maximum extent practicable, place families with children as close as possible to their school of origin so as not to disrupt such children's education.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

(See [Appendix C](#)).

G. Equal Access Rule

1. Overview

CoC and ESG funded programs must implement and document procedures to ensure implementation of the Equal Access to Housing Final Rule. All program participants shall be informed of their right to access housing and services without discrimination, and of their right to initiate a grievance process if they believe they have been discriminated against.

2. Rationale

All services coordinated through the CoC and ESG funded programs must be available to all eligible individuals, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identify, marital status, height, or weight. The CoC and its partners will take all necessary steps to ensure that housing and services are administered in accordance with all applicable Federal and State civil rights laws.

3. Policy

Programs shall document and maintain records of compliance. Programs must have non-discrimination and equal opportunity written procedures to ensure equal access to shelter, housing, and services that:

- Ensures placement and accommodations are made in accordance with an individual's gender identify; and

- Ensures the agency uses appropriate, inclusive language in communications, publications, trainings, personnel handbooks, and other policy documents that affirms the agency's commitment to serving all eligible clients in adherence with the Equal Access Rule; and
- Includes an anti-harassment policy; and
- Has a formal grievance process that is prompt, transparent, and consistent in managing and resolving violations; and
- Includes confidentiality practices; and
- Allows for program participants to request a private space for intake and data collection; and
- Outlines safety practices.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578
- HUD's Equal Access to Housing Final Rule
- The Equal Access in Accordance with Gender Identity Final Rule
- Fair Housing Rights and Obligations

(See [Appendix C](#)).

H. Equity Analysis

1. Overview

To be developed.

2. Rationale

To be developed.

3. Policy

To be developed.

4. Documentation

To be developed.

I. Grievance Policy

1. Overview

Guests and clients of Anchorage programs will be provided with a fair and efficient process to present and resolve complaints and grievances. Each program shall have a grievance policy and shall implement their written standards for addressing grievances when applicable.

2. Rationale

Filing a grievance or complaint regarding a program, staff or service delivery should be accessible to all program participants. Programs have a responsibility to respond to these complaints in a fair and efficient process. Addressing grievances offers another way to improve upon program delivery and further gives voice to program participants.

3. Policy

Programs and program staff shall:

- Inform participants of their right to file grievances upon program entry; and
- Accept formal grievances in writing or provided orally by the participant; and

- Provide an opportunity for a participant to review decisions; and
- Not retaliate against the participant during or after the grievance.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

(See [Appendix C](#)).

J. Housing First

1. Overview

Housing First is an approach to rapidly connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to housing as quickly as possible without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements.

It is an approach that can be employed regardless of the homeless housing and services intervention. Program acceptance is provided without a “housing readiness” assessment, or other conditions. Programs in a housing first system empower individuals to overcome barriers to obtaining permanent housing. Support services are voluntary for the program participant but not for the service provider and can and should be used to persistently engage participants. A housing first system does not require that household spend time in a shelter or “move on” from a transitional housing program to attain housing. The Housing First practice offers low barrier access to resources to ensure the most vulnerable have access to needed and relevant services.

2. Rationale

Programs should adhere to the following Housing First principles:

- Homelessness is a housing crisis and can be addressed through the provision of safe and affordable housing; and
- All individuals experiencing homelessness, regardless of their housing history and duration of homelessness, can achieve housing stability in permanent housing; and
- All individuals are “housing ready” – conditions such as sobriety, compliance in treatment, or even a lack of criminal history are not necessary to succeed in housing; and
- Individuals can experience improvements in quality of life because of housing stability; and
- Individuals experiencing homelessness have the right to self-determination and should be treated with dignity and respect.

3. Policy

CoC and ESG funded programs providing shelter, housing and services to individuals experiencing homelessness shall employ a Housing First approach to their program model. Programs shall adhere to the core components of Housing First:

- Few to no programmatic prerequisites to permanent housing entry; and
- Low barrier admission policies; and
- Rapid and streamlined entry into housing; and
- Supportive services are voluntary, but can and should be used to engage tenants to maintain housing stability; and
- Tenants have full rights, responsibilities, and legal protections; and
- Practices and policies exist to prevent lease violations and evictions.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

(See [Appendix C](#)).

K. Requirements for Faith-Based Programs

1. Overview

As detailed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) federal regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, federal funds cannot be used to provide for or discriminate against participants based on religion or religious belief.

2. Rationale

This policy aligns with federal requirements and promotes the religious freedom of program participants.

3. Policy

Faith-based programs that receive federal funds must ensure that:

- Recipients and sub-recipients of program funds shall not, in providing program assistance, discriminate against a program participant or prospective program participant based on religion or religious belief; and
- Current program participants of a faith-based program shall not discriminate against current or prospective program beneficiaries based on religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice; and
- HUD program funds may not be used for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of structures to the extent that those structures are used for explicitly religious activities; and
- Any engagement in explicitly religious activities must be voluntary and be performed and offered outside of programs that are supported with federal financial assistance separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded by the CoC or ESG programs; and
- CoC and ESG funded programs do not support any explicitly religious activities, including activities that involve overt religious content, such as worship or religious instruction; and
- Participants are not discriminated against based on religion or religious belief.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD Emergency Solutions Grants Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 576
- HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations found at 24 CFR Part 578

(See [Appendix C](#)).

L. Screening and Intake Procedures

1. Overview

To be developed.

2. Rationale

To be developed.

3. Policy

To be developed.

4. Documentation

To be developed.

M. Termination of Assistance

1. Overview

To be developed.

2. Rationale

To be developed.

3. Policy

To be developed.

4. Documentation

To be developed.

V. Program Models

The Homeless Prevention and Response System (HPRS) employs a variety of housing models to accommodate the diverse needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. Continuum of Care (CoC) funded applicants and federal recipients are expected to:

- ✓ Adhere to the housing definitions set forth in this document; and
- ✓ Be clear about the population to be served; and
- ✓ Be clear about the housing model to be used; and
- ✓ Be clear about the way in which services will fit the needs of the program / project participants.

The Anchorage HPRS Advisory Council will continue to work with providers, individuals with lived homeless experience, members, funders, and policy partners to advocate for shared high-level policies across all organizations in Anchorage, regardless of funding source.

All programs must evaluate and document the individual's or family's program eligibility. As much as possible, the HPRS strongly advocates for providers to use Coordinated Entry as the source for referrals and to have the least restrictive program eligibility criteria possible in order to support a Housing First and Harm Reduction model. All programs must enter data into the Alaska Homeless Management Information System (AK-HMIS) as outlined in the AK-HMIS Strategic Plan and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). (Domestic Violence is exempt from AK-HMIS data entry, but must enter data into a comparable database, making the aggregate data available to the CoC for planning, monitoring, and ranking).

Federally funded programs must adhere to the following:

- ✓ All programs will have written policies and procedures regarding program operations; and
- ✓ All programs will operate in compliance with the 2012 Final Rule for Equal Access in HUD Programs Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity (See [Appendix C](#)); and
- ✓ All programs will enter data and utilize HMIS in compliance with HUD and the AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures and Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)); and
- ✓ All programs will participate in the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System (CES); and
- ✓ All programs will coordinate with other targeted homeless services and mainstream services available in the community; and
- ✓ All programs will maintain records and documentation as required through HUD regulations for both CoC and ESG, AK-HMIS requirements, and Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures (See [Appendix C](#)).

Note: Definitions are subject to change based upon federal and local updates.

A. Prevention

1. Overview

Prevention program funding may be used to provide housing relocation and stabilization services and short- and/or medium-term rental assistance necessary to prevent an individual or family from moving into emergency shelter. Prevention programs are effective when those most at risk of becoming homeless are the target population (i.e.: extremely vulnerable individuals about to lose funding). While prevention services may include a myriad of upstream services, the HPRS will focus local efforts on prevention based upon HUD's definition.

The Anchorage HPRS defines Prevention as interventions and resources used to keep individuals in current housing situations. *According to the Veteran's Administration (VA) and HUD, homelessness prevention involves two key components: (1) providing appropriate resources and support and (2) targeting individuals who, without this assistance, would become homeless.*

As described in the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Federal Plan, *Home Together*, (See [Appendix C](#)) prevention strategies fall into the following categories:

- Activities that reduce the prevalence of risk of housing crises within communities; and
- Activities that reduce the risk of homelessness while households are engaged with or are transitioning from systems; and
- Activities that target assistance to prevent housing crises that do occur from escalating further and resulting in homelessness.

2. Rationale

Prevention programs help individuals and families at high-risk of homelessness and facing imminent housing loss stay housed (in current or new housing). Prevention programs serve individuals who are on the verge of homelessness or are about to lose current housing. Effective prevention programs rely heavily on data to identify populations at heightened risk as well as knowledge of “precipitating events” that increase the likelihood of an imminent homeless episode to target resources.

Externalities increase the need for prevention programs. Natural disasters (i.e.: the 2018 Anchorage earthquake) and public health emergencies (i.e.: the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020) impact community needs, and the demand for services will increase. Prevention programs have long been noted to be more cost effective and a strong program to end multi-generational homelessness and the impacts of homelessness on school-aged children.

3. Policy Statement

Prevention projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

There are existing models that apply Prevention with Housing First; this policy applies to programs operating Prevention as a model. Housing First can be integrated into all homeless housing and service interventions.

i. Participation Eligibility

Participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 2 (Imminent Risk of Homelessness); and/or
- Category 3 (Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes); and/or
- Category 4 (Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation); and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

Prevention model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process. Prevention model programs will participate in the AK-HMIS. The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. Since Length of Time Homeless is not a factor for Homelessness Prevention, households in danger of losing housing within 14 days who also have minor children or are categorized as At-risk Youth will be prioritized. Escalation can be discussed during case conferencing for medical reasons or because a household member experiences a disabling condition.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Municipality of Anchorage Housing and Community Development Action Plan
- Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan *to Solve Homelessness in Anchorage*
- HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

B. Diversion

1. Overview

Diversion strategies and practices assist people to resolve their immediate housing crisis by accessing alternatives to entering emergency shelter or the experience of unsheltered living. Typically, this occurs at the point individuals or families request emergency services, such as entry into emergency shelter, or could take place in a day center through outreach *before* an individual experiences a night unsheltered. Diversion programs strategically prevent homelessness for people seeking shelter by assisting in immediate identification of alternate housing arrangements and connecting the individual(s) with services and financial assistance to help the return to permanent housing. Diversion programs serve individuals who have lost housing and are facing imminent entry into shelter or unsheltered homelessness. Diversion programs are a client-driven approach to help a household find safe alternative housing immediately to ensure the homeless experience is as brief as possible, to prevent unsheltered homelessness, and to avert stays at shelter.

The Anchorage HPRS defines Diversion as the intervention and resources used to keep individuals who have lost their housing from entering the homeless system (i.e.: shelters). *According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), diversion is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing. The main difference between diversion and other permanent housing-focused interventions centers on the point at which intervention occurs.*

2. Rationale

Diversion programs reduce the number of entries into the shelter system, thereby lowering the demand for shelter beds through permanent housing placements. Diversion programs assist individuals who have lost housing by helping them identify alternative places to stay. This intervention is designed to immediately address the needs of someone who has just lost their housing and become homeless.

Diversion program models provide a positive alternative to entering shelter or unsheltered homelessness, mitigation of additional trauma(s) and avoidance of additional negative outcomes. This approach is an effective intervention for the Homeless Prevention and Response System to stem inflow to shelter, reduce overall costs, and avoid emergency-related costs of unsheltered homelessness.

3. Policy Statement

Diversion projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

There are existing models that apply Diversion with Housing First; this policy applies to programs operating Diversion as a model.

i. Participation Eligibility

Participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 (Literally Homeless); and/or
- Category 2 (Imminent Risk of Homelessness); and/or
- Category 4 (Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation); and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

Diversion model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process. Diversion model programs will participate in the AK-HMIS. The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. Housing problem solving upon intake will help to identify those for whom diversion services could be effective. Since Length of Time Homeless is not a factor for Homelessness Diversion, households with minor children and At-risk Youth will be prioritized. Escalation can be discussed during case conferencing for medical reasons or because a household member experiences a disabling condition.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Municipality of Anchorage Housing and Community Development Action Plan
- Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan to Solve Homelessness in Anchorage
- HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

C. Unsheltered (Street) Outreach

1. Overview

Unsheltered (Street) Outreach services are coordinated, person-centered, and bring services directly to individuals experiencing homelessness who may not be connected with or seeking out available community services and/or resources. The Unsheltered (Street) Outreach efforts strive to connect individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing and necessary services to keep them safe from the outdoor elements and on the path of sustainable housing. Unsheltered (Street) Outreach provides essential services necessary to reach out to unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness; connect them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services; and provide urgent non-facility-based care to unsheltered homeless people who are unwilling or unable to access emergency shelter, housing, or an appropriate health facility.

The Anchorage HPRS defines Outreach as supportive services offered to individuals sleeping outside including unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness (it is possible to “divert” in this situation if the individual is connected directly to a housing solution not a part of the HPRS. But, if the individual is connected with housing interventions in the system, then it is Outreach).

2. Rationale

For individuals residing in places such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or other locations not meant for human habitation, Unsheltered (Street) Outreach model programs engage the individual or household who may not be historically engaged in or informed of available services or Emergency Shelter options. Unsheltered Individuals may have experienced chronic homelessness, may have behavioral or mental health needs, or may otherwise be distrustful of mainstream services. Outreach services are essential to provide all individuals experiencing homelessness opportunities to access and engage in necessary services and supports while also reducing emergency service-related costs.

3. Policy

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

While Unsheltered (Street) Outreach is not directed as an intervention for a specific HUD defined category of homelessness, eligible individuals are (not limited to):

- Individuals experiencing homelessness; and/or
- Individuals living unsheltered that are not currently participating, seeking out, or engaged with services; and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

Individuals experiencing homelessness, living unsheltered that are not currently participating or engaged with services. A low-barrier, Housing First approach with minimal screening requirements should be followed. Focus upon building trust and engagement with the unsheltered individual(s) experiencing homelessness will be the focus for initial contact by the staff. Unsheltered (Street) Outreach model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)).

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Anchorage Unsheltered Outreach Protocol
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

D. Emergency Shelter

1. Overview

Emergency Shelter is any facility, where the primary purpose is to provide a temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness for general (low barrier) or for specific populations of the homeless and which

does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements. Emergency Shelter facilities assess the need for, and address individuals' basic health, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs while providing information and referrals to supportive services and housing through the Coordinated Entry System if resources allow for the services.

Emergency Shelter model programs are indoor facilities and vary in the bed type provided (i.e.: beds, cots, bunks, or mats). Best practice Emergency Shelters are available to clients 24-hours a day, 7-days a week.

Occasionally, due to local context, the community may need to rapidly expand shelter services to temporary sites, warming stations, non-congregate locations etc. HPRS advocates that all temporary shelters also adhere to this criterion.

The Anchorage HPRS defines Emergency Shelter as an intervention type that provides the basic need of shelter for those experiencing literal homelessness. Ideally the intervention includes, beyond a roof, connection to resource / referral services to support individuals moving through the HPRS to resolution.

2. Rationale

Access to overnight, indoor sleeping accommodations with the purpose of providing temporary shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness is critical to the Homeless Prevention and Response System. This program model connects individuals to services and assessments through the Coordinated Entry System to increase the rate at which individuals or households return to permanent housing, which is an essential component to achieving the Anchorage CoC objective of making homelessness in Anchorage rare, brief, and one-time.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the ESG Program must adhere to the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

Participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 (Literally Homeless); and/or
- Category 4 (Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation); and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

Emergency Shelter model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

Emergency Shelter providers are strongly encouraged to adhere to spacing recommendations by infectious disease experts and as documented in the Infection Control in Homeless Shelters in the State of Alaska publication (See [Appendix C](#)). It is recommended that shelter providers review harm reduction and Housing First best practices and implement the practices as much as possible. All individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness should be provided access to emergency shelter, as needed, regardless of prioritization procedures in the CES.

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Emergency Solutions Grants Program

- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Infection Control in Homeless Shelters in the State of Alaska
- <Shelter Licensing Policy if developed at time of final deliverable>
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

E. Rapid Rehousing (RRH)

1. Overview

Rapid Rehousing (RRH) is designed to provide immediate, permanent housing for vulnerable individuals. It emphasizes housing search and relocations services and short- and medium-term rental assistance to move homeless persons and families (with or without a disability) into permanent housing as rapidly as possible. The program identifies housing for the individual(s) or family, provides move-in and rental assistance, and offers Case Management supports to obtain immediate housing with minimal financial assistance to resolve the individual's or family's immediate housing crisis.

Regular assessments are completed by the Case Manager to determine the continued eligibility and financial assistance need for rent. While the services are time-limited, the household does not have to leave the housing at the termination of services and may arrange to renew the lease.

Historically, RRH has been used to serve individuals with low to moderate acuity. Nationally, many communities are working to engage higher need individuals in RRH services. The Anchorage HPRS continues to urge providers to look at a Housing First approach to RRH and to look at reducing referral and access barriers.

2. Rationale

With a Housing First approach, RRH programs assist households in reducing the length of time they are homeless. RRH programs offer a flexible and tailored rental assistance and services option to meet the client where they are, making use of the resources available across the entire homeless response and prevention system through a more personal approach. Research has identified that RRH is one of the most effective types of housing in making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time from both a cost and housing stability perspective.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

HUD required community standards for determining the percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid re-housing assistance to be developed.

i. Participation Eligibility

For households experiencing homelessness where an individual of the household has a disability and participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 (Literally Homeless); and/or
- Category 4 (Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation); and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. *Participant Prioritization Requirements*

RRH model programs shall operate from a low barrier approach, requiring limited screening criteria. No additional screening or assessment should be placed on the applicant/referred client outside of what is asked of by the funder and HUD compliance. RRH programs will work to secure the required documentation only at time of intake from the applicant/referred client to minimize the burden placed upon the individual; however, landlords may establish their own criteria for screening which shall be adhered to. RRH model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

It is recommended that Rapid Rehousing providers review harm reduction and Housing First best practices and implement the practices as much as possible. Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. CES protocols prioritize referrals to RRH based on the following criteria:

- Longest length of time homeless (as determined by HMIS entries) and disability status (prioritizing those with disabilities)
- Age (prioritizing elders) and inability to access shelter will be used as tiebreakers if multiple clients have the same Length of Time homelessness and experience a disability
- For individuals with longest length of time homeless in our community not reflected in HMIS OR individuals with high medical needs, request for elevation outside of normal prioritization process can be made at Case Conferencing Meetings and/or directly to CE Manager

4. Documentation

Homeless status documentation is required.

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

F. Transitional Housing (TH)

1. Overview

Transitional Housing (TH) is a time-limited intervention designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support needed to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. TH may be used to cover the costs of up to 24 months of housing with accompanying supportive services. TH model program services meet the individual(s) or family where they are, with a client-centered approach that tailors the necessary supports of the individual or household to their unique needs. TH services connect the household to needed community resources, make referrals as needed, and support on-going housing stability. TH programs may be single-site or scattered-site locations.

2. Rationale

Through supportive services to achieve housing stability, the TH model program offers many benefits to both the community and individuals served. Individuals referred to TH programs oftentimes do not require long stays to successfully obtain housing stability.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

For households experiencing homelessness where an individual of the household has a disability and participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 – Literally Homeless; and/or
- Category 4 – Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation; and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

TH model programs shall utilize a low barrier approach, requiring limited screening criteria. No additional screening or assessment should be placed on the applicant/referred client outside of what is asked of by the funder and in compliance with HUD. TH programs will work to secure the required documentation only at time of intake from the applicant/referred client to minimize the burden placed upon the individual; however, landlords may establish their own criteria for screening which shall be adhered to. TH model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

It is recommended that Transitional Housing providers review harm reduction and Housing First best practices and implement the practices as much as possible. Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. CES protocols prioritize referrals to TH based on the following criteria:

- Longest length of time homeless (as determined by HMIS entries) and disability status (prioritizing those with disabilities)
- Age (prioritizing elders) and inability to access shelter will be used as tiebreakers if multiple clients have the same Length of Time homelessness and experience a disability
- For individuals with longest length of time homeless in our community not reflected in HMIS OR individuals with high medical needs, request for elevation outside of normal prioritization process can be made at Case Conferencing Meetings and/or directly to CE Manager

4. Documentation

Homeless status documentation is required.

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

G. Joint Transitional Housing – Rapid Rehousing (Joint TH-RRH)

1. Overview

Joint Transitional Housing – Rapid Rehousing (Joint TH-RRH) program is a project type that includes two existing program components in a single project to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Stays in this project are brief and without preconditions.

2. Rationale

Offering a safe place for individuals experiencing a housing crisis with a Housing First approach, Joint TH-RRH model programs offer financial assistance and wrap-around supportive services to swiftly move the individual(s) or family into permanent housing. This client-driven service model is low-barrier to entry and accommodates needs specific to the individual(s) or family. Through client-choice Case Management, the participant builds upon their strengths, needs, preferences and financial resources to obtain housing stability.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

For households experiencing homelessness where an individual of the household has a disability and participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 (Literally Homeless); and/or
- Category 4 (Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation); and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

Joint TH-RRH model programs shall operate from a low barrier approach, requiring limited screening criteria. No additional screening or assessment should be placed on the applicant/referred client outside of what is asked of by the funder and in compliance with HUD. Joint TH-RRH programs will work to secure the required documentation only at time of intake from the applicant/referred client to minimize the burden placed upon the individual; however, landlords may establish their own criteria for screening which shall be adhered to. Joint TH-RRH model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

It is recommended that Joint TH-RRH providers review harm reduction and Housing First best practices and implement the practices as much as possible. Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. CES protocols prioritize referrals to Joint TH-RRH based on the following criteria:

- Longest length of time homeless (as determined by HMIS entries) and disability status (prioritizing those with disabilities)
- Age (prioritizing elders) and inability to access shelter will be used as tiebreakers if multiple clients have the same Length of Time homelessness and experience a disability
- For individuals with longest length of time homeless in our community not reflected in HMIS OR individuals with high medical needs, request for elevation outside of normal prioritization process can be made at Case Conferencing Meetings and/or directly to CE Manager

4. Documentation

Homeless status documentation is required.

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD 24 CFR Part 576 Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

H. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

1. Overview

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides non time-based housing leasing or rental assistance for as long as the recipient is eligible, paired with supportive services to assist homeless individuals with a disability, or families with an adult or child member with a disability, achieve housing stability. There are no time constraints or limitations for households that are homeless upon entry, experiencing a condition or disability (i.e.: mental illness, substance abuse, chronic health issues) that may create multiple and serious ongoing barriers to housing stability. Eligible participants uphold and adhere to a rental agreement or lease with supportive services (in general these supports are offered on-site) available for physical and mental health, educational, employment, and general life skills. Participants are encouraged to participate in available services but it is not a program requirement to maintain housing. PSH programs may be single-site or scattered-site locations.

2. Rationale

Providing a Housing First approach, PSH model programs provide housing for vulnerable individual(s) and households requiring ongoing, long-term high-level access to supportive services to maintain housing stability. PSH model programs improve the overall health and housing stability for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness living with disabilities, while also reducing emergency service-related costs. PSH interventions are one of the most cost effective and efficacious interventions for the most high-need clients.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

For households experiencing homelessness where an individual of the household has a disability and participants who meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 (Literally Homeless); and/or
- Category 4 (Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation); and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

PSH model programs shall operate from a low barrier approach, requiring limited screening criteria. No additional screening or assessment should be placed on the applicant/referred client outside of what is asked of by the funder and in compliance with HUD. PSH programs will work to secure the required

documentation only at time of intake from the applicant/referred client to minimize the burden placed upon the individual. PSH model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

It is recommended that Permanent Supportive Housing providers review harm reduction and Housing First best practices and implement the practices as much as possible. Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. CES protocols prioritize referrals to PSH based on the following criteria:

- Chronically homeless status
- Longest length of time homeless (as determined by HMIS entries) and disability status (required for chronically homeless status)
- Age (prioritizing elders) and inability to access shelter will be used as tiebreakers if multiple clients have the same Length of Time homelessness and experience a disability
- For individuals with longest length of time homeless in our community not reflected in HMIS OR individuals with high medical needs, request for elevation outside of normal prioritization process can be made at Case Conferencing Meetings and/or directly to CE Manager

4. Documentation

Homeless status documentation is required to determine chronic status.

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program

(See [Appendix C](#)).

I. Other Permanent Housing (OPH)

1. Overview

Other Permanent Housing (OPH) is long-term housing that is not otherwise considered PSH or RRH and supportive services may be offered on or off-site and may be through community-based partnerships or programs. OPH model programs are for the individual(s) or family experiencing homelessness with a medium-to-high level need of services. To maintain housing stability, the tenant is the holder of the lease agreement with tailored services offered to the individual(s) or family. OPH programs may be single-site or scattered-site locations with services available on- or off-site.

2. Rationale

OPH provides a permanent housing option for the individual(s) or family whose primary barrier to housing stability is financial. Offering a Housing First alternative to PSH, this model functions in a similar manner to RRH with the exception that rental assistance is long-term.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

For households experiencing homelessness where participants meet the HUD definition of homelessness:

- Category 1 – Literally Homeless; and/or
- Category 4 – Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation; and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

OPH model programs shall utilize a low barrier approach, requiring limited screening criteria. No additional screening or assessment should be placed on the applicant/referred client outside of what is asked of by the funder and in compliance with HUD. OPH programs will work to secure the required documentation only at time of intake from the applicant/referred client to minimize the burden placed upon the individual. OPH model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)). The Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System actively encourages non-CoC and non-ESG funded providers to participate in the CES.

It is recommended that OPH providers review harm reduction and Housing First best practices and implement the practices as much as possible. Participants will only be referred to programs for which they are eligible. CES protocols prioritize referrals to OPH based on the following criteria:

- Longest length of time homeless (as determined by HMIS entries) and disability status (prioritizing those with disabilities)
- Age (prioritizing elders) and inability to access shelter will be used as tiebreakers if multiple clients have the same Length of Time homelessness and experience a disability
- For individuals with longest length of time homeless in our community not reflected in HMIS OR individuals with high medical needs, request for elevation outside of normal prioritization process can be made at Case Conferencing Meetings and/or directly to CE Manager

4. Documentation

Homeless status documentation is required.

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

J. Supportive Services Only (SSO)

1. Overview

Supportive Services Only (SSO) is a program component that allows service provider recipients and subrecipients to provide services to homeless individuals and families not residing in housing operated by the recipient. This program model component allows for SSO recipients and subrecipients to utilize funds to conduct outreach to sheltered and unsheltered individuals and families experiencing homelessness, connect clients to housing or other necessary services, and offer ongoing supports. SSO programs assist the individual(s) or family in obtaining housing and assess barriers, develop housing plans, and connect the individual or family household to the appropriate types of services with the goal of obtaining housing stability. SSO programs may be offered at a single-site or scattered-site building location to deliver services.

2. Rationale

The SSO program allows for tailored services and allows the service provider recipient or subrecipient to focus on services offered to the individual(s) or family experiencing homelessness without being required to provide housing or housing assistance. SSO program model allows the operations to be independent of the building and not tied to specific housing units.

3. Policy Statement

Projects and programs funded to perform assistance under the CoC Program must adhere to the CoC program Notice of Funding Available (NOFA), the HUD 24 CFR Part 578 CoC Program, the HUD 24 CFR Part 576 ESG Program, and all written standards detailed within this document.

i. Participation Eligibility

For households or individuals experiencing homelessness:

- Category 1 – Literally Homeless; and/or
- Category 2 – Imminent Risk of Homelessness; and/or
- Category 4 – Fleeing or Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation; and/or
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth (At-risk Youth).

(See [Appendix A](#)).

ii. Participant Prioritization Requirements

SSO model programs will follow the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System assessment process, AK-HMIS Policies and Procedures, and AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan (See [Appendix C](#)).

4. Documentation

Additional guidance is provided in the:

- Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- HUD 24 CFR Part 578 Continuum of Care Program
- Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless

(See [Appendix C](#)).

VI. Appendix A: HUD Homelessness Definition Categories

HUD CRITERIA FOR DEFINING HOMELESSNESS	Category 1	Literally Homeless	(1) Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning: (i) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; or (ii) Is living in a publicly 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 (iii) Is 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 2	Imminent Risk of Homelessness	(2) Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that: (i) Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance; (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing
	Category 3	Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes	(3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with Category 3 children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who: (i) Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes; (ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application; (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; and (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers
	Category 4	Fleeing / Attempting to Flee DV	(4) Any individual or family who: (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence; (ii) Has no other residence; and (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing

VII. Appendix B: Common Terms, Acronyms, and Definitions

Term	Definition
AK-500 Continuum of Care	The designated body serving the Municipality of Anchorage geographic area as mandated by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) government agency.
Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System (HPRS)	The body with jurisdiction and oversight of the AK-500 Anchorage Continuum of Care (CoC), serving the Municipality of Anchorage geographic area as mandated by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) government agency.
Chronically Homelessness	Individuals who have experienced homelessness for the past twelve (12) months, or for 12 months of the past three (3) years with three (3) breaks in homelessness, while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.
Continuum of Care (CoC)	The program promotes community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. The program provides funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness. The program promotes access to and effects utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families. The program optimizes self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
Coordinated Entry System (CES)	A process developed to ensure that all individuals experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs.
Emergency Shelter (ES)	Any facility, where the primary purpose is to provide a temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness for general (low barrier) or for populations of individuals experiencing homelessness and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	A local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Each Continuum of Care (CoC) is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution compliant with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards.
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	The United States government agency that supports community development and homeownership.
Housing First	An approach to connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness quickly and successfully to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements.
Transitional Housing (TH)	A time-limited intervention designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support needed to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing.
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	Provides non-time-based housing lease or rental assistance for as long as the recipient is eligible, paired with supportive services to

	assist homeless individuals with a disability, or families with an adult or child member with a disability, achieve housing stability.
Person-Centered	The treatment of individuals with dignity and respect by listening and working in partnership with individuals with lived experience of homelessness to support their personal perspectives, values, beliefs, preferences, and physical and mental health needs.
Rapid Rehousing (RRH)	Designed to provide immediate, permanent housing for vulnerable individuals, as defined by HUD. It emphasizes housing search and relocations services and short- and medium-term rental assistance to move homeless persons and families (with or without a disability) into permanent housing as rapidly as possible.
Project	Refers to a distinct unit of an organization, which may or may not be funded by HUD or federal partners, that provides services and/or housing and is identified by the HPRS as part of its services system.
Program	Refers to the federal funding source (i.e.: CoC, ESG, etc.).
Organization (or Agency)	Refers to the entity that is the recipient of the program funding for a project.
Unsheltered (Street) Outreach	Coordinated, person-centered, and brings services directly to individuals experiencing homelessness who may not be connected with or seeking out available community services and/or resources.
Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)	A survey administered both to individuals and families to determine risk and prioritization when providing assistance to individuals who are homeless and at-risk of experiencing homelessness.

VIII. Appendix C: References and Resources

Source	Hyperlink
AK-HMIS Advisory Board Governance Charter	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54ca7491e4b000c4d5583d9c/t/5f2c4b2bbaf6c10f2353e805/1596738349304/AKHMIS_Governance_Charter+2020.pdf
AK-HMIS Data Quality Plan	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54ca7491e4b000c4d5583d9c/t/5f2c49c83d72d25751b53455/1596737995736/AKHMIS+-+Data+Quality+Plan.pdf
AK-HMIS Policies & Procedures	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54ca7491e4b000c4d5583d9c/t/5c3920302b6a28a40cf8771d/1547247665113/AKHMIS+PPs.pdf
Anchorage Coordinated Entry Policies & Procedures	https://aceh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Anchorage-CE-PandP_Prevention-and-Diversion_V2.1-20200528-FINAL.pdf
Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System Advisory Council Governance Charter	https://aceh.org/aceh-governance-boards/
Anchorage Homeless Prevention and Response System Gap Analysis and Community Priorities	https://aceh.org/gap-analysis-community-priorities/
Anchorage Unsheltered Outreach Protocol	<Pending link>
Anchored Home Strategic Action Plan to Solve Homelessness	https://aceh.org/anchored-home/
Continuum of Care Program Interim Rule	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2017-title24-vol3/xml/CFR-2017-title24-vol3-part578.xml
Emergency Solutions Grants Program Interim Rule	https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2018-title24-vol3/xml/CFR-2018-title24-vol3-part576.xml#seqnum576.409
Equal Access to Housing Final Rule	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1991/equal-access-to-housing-final-rule/
Fair Housing Rights and Obligations	https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/fair_housing_rights_and_obligations
Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1717/s-896-hearth-act/
Housing First: A Key CoC Component	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1723/housing-first-a-key-CoCcomponent/
Housing First Checklist	https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Housing_First_Checklist_FINAL.pdf
Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing Brief	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3892/housing-first-in-permanent-supportive-housing-brief/
HUD CoC Racial Equity Analysis Tool	https://www.hudexchange.info/news/new-CoCracial-equity-analysis-tool/
HUD Criteria for Defining Homelessness	https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf
Infection Control in Homeless Shelters in the State of Alaska	http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/Homelessness-and-Health/Alaska%20Homeless%20Shelter%20Infection%20Control%20Recommendations_Nov%202018.pdf
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/HAAA_HEARTH.PDF
Municipality of Anchorage Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan	http://www.muni.org/departments/health/phil/csd/pages/default.aspx

System Performance Measures Introductory Guide	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3894/system-performance-measures-introductory-guide/
The Alliance’s Racial Equity Network Action Steps: Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Homelessness System	https://endhomelessness.org/resource/the-alliances-racial-equity-network-action-steps/
USICH Home, Together: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness	https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Home-Together-Federal-Strategic-Plan-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness.pdf

IX. Document Control Information

A. Document Information

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B. Document Edit History

Version	Date	Additions / Modifications	Prepared / Revised By
V.01	TBD	Drafted AK-500 Community Written Standards	HPRS Compliance Committee
V1.0	TBD	Published AK-500 Community Written Standards	HPRS Compliance Committee

C. Document Review / Approval History

Version	Date	Approving Body	Comments
V.01	TBD	HPRS Compliance Committee	Initial Draft for HPRS Advisory Council
V1.0	TBD	HPRS Advisory Council	Approved and published AK-500 Community Written Standards

X. Future Review, Updates and Amendments

The AK-500 Anchorage Community Written Standards are not only intended to be specific and detailed for housing and service resources available in the geographic area, but also relevant in the HPRS work. To ensure the relevancy of these standards in alignment with HUD requirements, the HPRS individuals and households experiencing homelessness, and both local and national priorities, the HPRS will at minimum review and update the Community Written Standards.

- Changes and Updates: AK-500 Anchorage Community Written Standards will be reviewed annually. Changes and updates will be proposed to the Anchorage HPRS Advisory Council for approval and adoption; and
- When reviewing these standards in the future, considerations may include (but are not limited to):
 - Provider feedback on existing Community Written Standards;
 - The effectiveness of housing and services for existing project participants;
 - AK-500 System Performance Measure success;
 - Changes in the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness within the HPRS; and
 - Changes in the housing and service resources available within the geographic area.

Proposed Areas to be Addressed: 2022 Review and Updates	
Topic	Additional Context
Agency-Level: Policies & Procedures	At time of publication, the Anchorage Assembly is working to draft an Anchorage Shelter Policy. HPRS to review and align the Shelter Policy with the Anchorage Community Written Standards.
Alignment, analysis and collaboration with the Anchorage Community Priorities and Gap Analysis document and Anchored Home Plan.	
All “ <i>To Be Developed</i> ” sections herein	