# CoC Eligibility Documentation: Categories 1, 2, and 4



### **Agenda**

- Welcome & Introductions
- II. Defining "Homeless" & Documenting Eligibility
- III. Review & Practice
- IV. Tips for Documentation & Recordkeeping



### **CoC Program & NOFA**

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

Funds permanent & transitional housing (PSH, RRH, TH, TH-RRH)



#### Resources

CoC Eligibility Documentation Forms

CoC Program Interim Rule

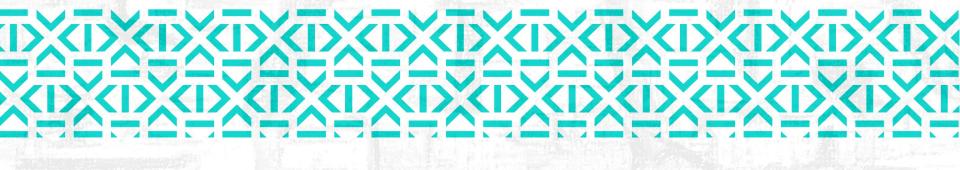
**HUD Exchange website** 

CoC Toolkit

Homebase! SantaClaraCoC@homebaseccc.org



# Defining "Homeless" & Documenting Eligibility



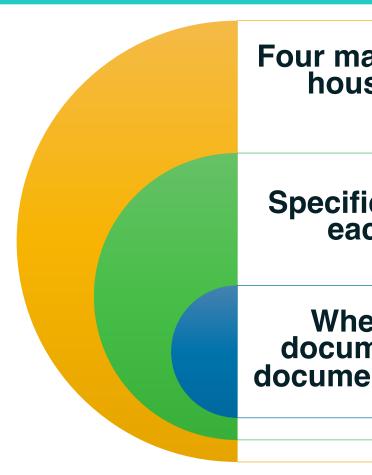
### Where Eligibility Rules Come From

HUD defined "homeless" in the January 2012 Homeless Definition Final Rule

#### Eligibility under this definition depends on:

- Project type
- Annual funding competition rules ("the NOFA")
- The most recent grant agreement

### **Key Concepts**



Four main categories under which households are considered "homeless"

Specific documentation rules for each of these categories

When available, third-party documentation is the preferred documentation of homeless status

## Documentation Forms on CoC Website

#### **Program Management**

- · Addendum for CoC Lease Requirements
- Environmental Review for CEST Activities
- Environmental Review for Exempt/CENST (Categorically Excluded Not Subject To) Activities
- HUD Model DV Certification Form
- HUD Model Notice of Occupancy Rights Form
- Rent Reasonableness Checklist and Certification
- Rent Reasonableness Checklist and Certification User Guide
- · RRH to PSH Transfer Request Form

#### **Eligibility Verification**

- Homelessness Documentation Checklist
- · Chronic Homelessness Documentation Checklist
- · Form A Homelessness Certification
- Form B Observation of Living Conditions
- · Form C Certification Based on Provider Judgement
- Form D Verification of Disability
- Form E Homelessness Self-Declaration
- Form F Certification Based on Intake Conversation

#### PR-VI-SPDAT

- PR-VI-SPDAT for Single Adults
- PR-VI-SPDAT for Families with Children

#### SPDAT

- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT)
- Family Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (F-SPDAT)
- Youth Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (Y-SPDAT)

#### VI-SPDAT

- VI-SPDAT for Single Adults
- · VI-SPDAT for Families with Children
- VI-SPDAT for Transition Age Youth
- VI-SPDAT for Justice Discharges



## Why Is Understanding Eligibility Important?

## Easier to prevent errors than to correct them

- Backfilling documentation is a pain
- Worse, it can result in clients being exited from the project

HUD monitoring— your grant will be monitored eventually it's not an if, it's a when. If you have compliance gaps you haven't filled:

- Monitoring findings can impact future funding applications
- Can result in repaying grant funds

### **HUD's Order of Priority**

1. Third-party documentation

2. Intake worker observations

3. Certifications from the homeless individual



### **Homeless Categories**

#### **Category 1**

Literally homeless individual/family

#### **Category 2**

 Individual/family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence with no subsequent residence, resources or support networks

#### **Category 3**

 Unaccompanied youth or family who meets the homeless definition under other federal statutes

#### **Category 4**

Individual/family fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence



### **Documenting Eligibility**

1) Know which eligibility criteria apply to your project

2) Understand those specific eligibility requirements

3) Document eligibility to meet HUD's standards

## How to determine eligibility for a specific project:

- CoC NOFA under which the project was first funded; and
- CoC NOFA that funded the particular grant year; <u>and</u>
- Grant agreement, including commitments made in project application

## How to determine eligibility for a specific project:

Your agency or supervisor may know

If there's any doubt, Homebase can help

#### **Based on recent NOFA rules...**

PSH *might* serve:

At least one family member has a disability AND

Category 1
AND/OR

Chronically Homeless AND/OR

**DedicatedPLUS** 

RRH *might* serve

Category 1
AND/OR

Category 2 AND/OR

Category 4
AND/OR

Expanded Population Based on NOFA

TH *might* serve

Category 1
AND/OR

Category 2 AND/OR

Category 4



## Category 1

## "Literally" homeless individual/family



### **Category 1: "Literally" Homeless**

<u>Definition</u>: Household lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, i.e.:

Primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not meant for human habitation **OR** 

Residing in a shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (e.g., emergency shelters, transitional housing, and hotels/motels paid for by charitable organizations or by government programs) **OR** 

Exiting an institution after 90 days or fewer **and** immediately before entering that institution either resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation

### **HUD's Order of Priority**

1. Third-party documentation

2. Intake worker observations

3. Certifications from the homeless individual



### **Category 1: Literally Homeless**

A Note on Timing

Third-party evidence for Category 1 can be 14 days old counting back from intake.

E.g., a referral from ES dated June 7 would be an acceptable form of third-party documentation to verify homeless status through a program entry date of June 21.



### **Category 1: "Literally" Homeless**

#### **Subcategory: Place Not Meant for Human Habitation**

<u>NOTE</u> : Written third-party documentation is always preferred to certify homelessness.				
Applicable	In File	CATEGORY		
~		✓ Required Documentation in File		
		CATEGORY 1		
☐ YES		PLACE NOT MEANT FOR HUMAN HABITATION, e.g., car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, camping ground (OK for CH-PSH, PSH, RRH, TH, SH, SSO)*  Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):  HMIS record of homeless street outreach contacts Signed letter on letterhead from a homeless street outreach provider Homelessness Certification (Form A) from a homeless street outreach provider  OR Staff Second-Party (both of the following): Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) AND Staff Supplement to the Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) describing attempts to secure third party verification  OR Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) AND Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification		

Source: https://www.sccgov.org/sites/osh/continuumofcare/cocforms/pages/home.aspx



### **Category 1: "Literally" Homeless**

Subcategory: Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, Hotel/Motel\*

Applicable	In File	CATEGORY			
~	~	Required Documentation in File			
		CATEGORY 1			
☐ YES		EMERGENCY SHELTER, SAFE HAVEN, HOTEL/MOTEL PAID BY CHARITABLE  ORGANIZATION OR GOVERNMENT PROGRAM FOR LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS (OK  for CH-PSH, PSH, RRH, TH, SH, SSO)*  Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):  HMIS record of stay in emergency shelter, safe haven, or hotel/motel paid for by charitable organization or government program  Signed letter on letterhead from emergency shelter or safe haven provider or organization paying for hotel/motel stay  Homelessness Certification (Form A) from emergency shelter or safe haven provider or organization paying for hotel/motel stay  OR  Written Second-Party (both of the following):  Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) AND  Staff Supplement to the Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) describing attempts to secure third party verification  OR  Written First-Party (both of the following):  Client Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) AND  Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification			



Required Documentation in File  HOSPITAL OR OTHER INSTITUTION if client's stay was 90 days or fewer gng client was in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation prior to admission (OK for CH-PSH, PSH, some RRH, TH, SH, SSO)*  Documentation of institutional stay    Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):    Discharge paperwork with admission and discharge dates    Written (or oral, but recorded in writing) referral from social worker, case manager, or other official from institution with admission and discharge dates  OR    Written First-Party (both of the following):    Client Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) AND    Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification  AND  Documentation of client's homeless status immediately prior to institutional stay    Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):    HMIS record of shelter stay or homeless street outreach contacts    Signed letter on letterhead from emergency shelter or homeless street outreach provider    Homelessness Certification (Form A) from emergency shelter or homeless street outreach provider  OR    Written Second-Party (both of the following):    Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) AND    Staff Supplement to the Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) describing attempts to secure third party verification  OR    Written First-Party (both of the following):	1	Applicable	In File	CATEGORY	
emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation prior to admission (OK for CH-PSH, PSH, some RRH, TH, SH, SSO)*  Documentation of institutional stay    Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):   Discharge paperwork with admission and discharge dates   Written (or oral, but recorded in writing) referral from social worker, case manager, or other official from institution with admission and discharge dates  OR   Written First-Party (both of the following):   Client Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) AND   Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification  AND  Documentation of client's homeless status immediately prior to institutional stay   Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):   HMIS record of shelter stay or homeless street outreach contacts   Signed letter on letterhead from emergency shelter or homeless street outreach provider   Homelessness Certification (Form A) from emergency shelter or homeless street outreach provider  OR   Written Second-Party (both of the following):   Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) AND   Staff Supplement to the Certification Based on Intake Conversation (Form F) describing attempts to secure third party verification	l	•	~	Required Documentation in File	
Written First-Party (both of the following):				emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation prior to admission (OK for CH-PSH, PSH, some RRH, TH, SH, SSO)*  Documentation of institutional stay  Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):  Discharge paperwork with admission and discharge dates  Written (or oral, but recorded in writing) referral from social worker, case manager, or other official from institution with admission and discharge dates	_
Client Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) AND  Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification				Written First-Party (both of the following):	

Source: https://www.sccgov.org/sites/osh/continuumofcare/cocforms/pages/home.aspx



#### **Category 1: "Literally" Homeless**

**Subcategory: Exiting Transitional Housing (+)** 

Applicable	In File	CATEGORY  Required Documentation in File		
☐ YES ☐ NO		TRANSITIONAL HOUSING if graduating from or timing out of TH <u>and either</u> in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation prior to admission <u>or</u> fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence including dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and other dangerous/life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member that make them afraid to return to primary nighttime residence (OK for PSH, some RRH, TH, SH, SSO)*  Written Third-Party (one or more of the following):  HMIS records of transitional housing stay and entry from shelter or place not meant for human habitation Signed letter on letterhead from transitional housing provider certifying residency and homeless living situation prior to admission Homelessness Certification (Form A) signed by transitional housing provider  OR Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) <u>AND</u> Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification		



#### **Category 1: "Literally" Homeless**

**Subcategory: Exiting Transitional Housing (-)** 

Applicable	In File	CATEGORY  Required Documentation in File		
☐ YES		TRANSITIONAL HOUSING if graduating from or timing out of TH and neither in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation prior to admission nor fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence including dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and other dangerous/life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member that make them afraid to return to primary nighttime residence (OK for some RRH, TH, SSO)*  Written Third-Party (one of the following) dated within 14 days prior to program entry:  HMIS records of transitional housing stay and homeless living situation prior to admission signed letter on letterhead from transitional housing provider certifying residency and homeless living situation prior to admission  Homelessness Certification (Form A) signed by transitional housing provider  OR  Written First-Party (both of the following):  Client Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) AND  Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure third-party verification		



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Homelessness Certification (Form A)				
Client(s) Name(s):				
Household without dependent children Household with dependent children Number in the household:				
This form is to certify that the above-named individual or household is currently homeless based on the check mark, other indicated information, and signature indicating their current living situation. By signing this form, you are certifying this information to be true. Check only one box and complete only that section.				
iving Situation: Place not meant for human habitation				
The person(s) named above was/were living in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus station, airport, or camp ground on the date(s) below.  Description of living situation (please provide the location and detailed description of living conditions):				
Homeless Street Outreach/Referral Program Name:				
Date(s) of Contact:				
Authorized Agency Representative Name:				
Authorized Agency Representative Signature: Date:				



#### **Disclaimer**

 Updated forms reflecting clarified guidance for second party documentation coming soon.

#### Form F

#### [INSERT AGENCY NAME]

#### SECOND-PARTY CERTIFICATION OF HOMELESSNESS BY AGENCY'S INTAKE WORKER IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY BASED ONLY ON INTAKE CONVERSATION (Form F)

Intake Date: Click here to enter a date.

**Note:** This form does not constitute third-party documentation and should be used only if third-party documentation is not available.

Instructions: If third-party documentation is not available, an intake worker whose only encounter with the Applicant is at the current point in which they are seeking assistance may certify homelessness even if the intake worker has not physically observed the Applicant's place of residence. This certification could include months which the Applicant could not remember but where the intake worker believes, based on their professional judgment, that it is reasonable to assume that the Applicant had been residing in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven. Please provide the details requested.

#### INFORMATION REQUESTED

(To be completed by the intake worker)

Month and Year When Applicant Experienced Homelessness:	Location Where Applicant Was Living:	Description of Intake Conversation with Applicant and Reason You Believe They Were Living in a Homeless Situation:
Click here to enter text.	☐ Place not meant for human habitation ☐ Emergency Shelter ☐ Safe Haven	Click here to enter text.



## Form F (back)

Staff Supplement to Certification Based on Intake Conversation
I understand that third-party verification is the preferred method of certifying homelessness for an individual or household who is applying for assistance. I understand my declaration at intake is only permitted when I have attempted to but cannot obtain third party verification.
Documentation of attempt(s) made for third-party verification:
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Staff Signature:Date:



Form E	Client Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E)  Instructions: If third-party documentation is not available, individuals or households may self-certify their current homeless status.  Please initial the line below next to your current living situation and provide the details requested.
	Applicant Name:
	My current living situation is:
	Place not meant for human habitation (e.g. such as cars, parks, sidewalks)  Location and Dates:
	Emergency shelter Emergency Shelter Name, Location and Dates of Residency
	Transitional Housing
	Transitional Housing Program Name, Location and Dates of Residency

Source: <a href="https://www.sccgov.org/sites/osh/continuumofcare/cocforms/pages/home.aspx">https://www.sccgov.org/sites/osh/continuumofcare/cocforms/pages/home.aspx</a>

AND

Previous Homeless Living Situation (Name, Location) and Dates:



#### Form E

(back)

#### Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness

I understand that third-party verification is the preferred method of certifying homelessness for an individual or household who is applying for assistance. I understand self-declaration is only permitted when I have attempted to but cannot obtain third party verification.

Documentation of attempts made for third-party verification:

Date of Contact	Individual/Organization Contacted	Method of Contact	Outcome of Contact
	7		
	9	10	14
Staff Signature:			Date:



### **Homeless Categories**

#### **Category 1**

Literally homeless individual/family

#### Category 2

 Individual/family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence with no subsequent residence, resources or support networks



#### Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness

<u>Definition</u>: An individual/family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

Residence will be lost within 14 days of date of application for homeless assistance **AND** 

No subsequent residence has been identified **AND** 

The individual/family lacks the resources and support networks (i.e., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks) needed to obtain other permanent housing



#### **Documentation Requirements**

- Each of the 3 parts of the definition must be documented
- In other words: files for Category 2 (Imminent Risk) clients must have documentation of <u>ALL</u> of the following:
  - A. Residence will be lost within 14 days of application **AND**
  - B. No subsequent residence has been identified **AND**
  - C. Individual/family lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing

## **Documentation**— Part A: Residence Lost Within 14 Days

	CATEGORY 2				
☐ YES		IMMINENTLY LOSING PRIMARY NIGHTTIME RESIDENCE, i.e., primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days, <u>and</u> no subsequent residence has been identified, <u>and</u> the household lacks the resources and support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing (OK for some RRH, TH, SSO)*  At least one of the following:  Court order resulting from an eviction notice or equivalent, or formal eviction notice For clients in hotels/motels <u>not</u> falling under Category 1, evidence that household lacks the financial resources necessary to stay for more than 14 days Oral statement by individual or head of household that the owner or renter of the residence will not allow them to stay for more than 14 days <u>and</u> documentation by staff of the statement client made to staff <u>and</u> Written verification from the owner or renter of the residence verifying client's statement <u>or</u> Staff Supplement to Self-Declaration of Homelessness (Form E) describing attempts to secure verification from the owner or renter of the residence			
	2	_ corresponding electric set rectal action of florificessitess (Form e)			

Eligibility Verification: Homelessness Documentation Checklist



#### Documentation—

Part B: No Subsequent Residence

Part B	Documentation Requirement
No subsequent residence has been identified	Certification by the individual or head of household that no subsequent residence has been identified



#### Documentation—

Part C: Lacks Resources or Support Network

Part C	Documentation Requirement
Individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing	Certification or other written documentation that the household lacks the resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing



#### **Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness**

Eligibility: The following project types can serve individuals at imminent risk of homelessness:

**Transitional Housing** 

Rapid Rehousing

Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing Component



#### **Homeless Categories 3-4**

#### **Category 3**

 Unaccompanied youth or family who meets the homeless definition under other federal statutes

#### **Category 4**

 Individual/family fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence



## Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

#### **Definition:** Any individual or family who:

Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence; **AND** 

Has no other residence; **AND** 

Lacks the resources and support networks (i.e., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks) to obtain other permanent housing.

"Domestic violence" includes dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual/family member that make them afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence



## Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

## Eligibility: The following project types can serve clients fleeing domestic violence:

Permanent Supportive Housing, if disabled (but must meet chronically homeless definition, if required)

Rapid Rehousing

Transitional Housing

Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing Component



# Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence Documentation Requirements

If you are a Victim Service Provider...

□ Self Certification of Homelessness (Form E)

# Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence Documentation Requirements

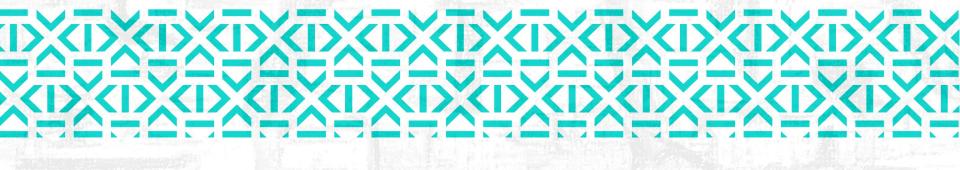
If you are not a Victim Service Provider, and safety wouldn't be jeopardized, oral statement should be documented by...

- Written observation by intake worker verifying the condition client is fleeing <u>OR</u>
- Written referral from an organization from whom the individual or head of household has sought assistance.

The safety of the client is of utmost priority, the client has the final say on what is safe and what isn't.



# Tips for Documentation & Recordkeeping



### **Details & Organization Are Key**

Organized, user-friendly case files, so that any reviewer can navigate them quickly.

Include as much detail as possible with each piece of evidence you include in the individual's case file.

Tell a complete story.

Watch out for details that undercut your evidence! Document your efforts to resolve conflicting details.



## What if Documentation is Not Compliant?

While circumstances may vary, programs should take immediate action to address issues:

Discuss how to handle the issue with the SCC Office of Supportive Housing;

Develop a plan to bring the program into compliance;

Remedy documentation for as many active clients as possible; **AND** 

Communicate with your Field Office about the issue and steps you are taking to address and prevent reoccurrence.



### What if a Current Client is Ineligible

Take immediate action, with steps that may include, in addition to those on the previous slide:

Work with the household and CoC to come up with an alternate plan to transition out of the program; **AND** 

Ensure documentation is as accurate and complete as possible.



### Thank you!

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