

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data Quality Plan

Kansas City Metro-Jackson, Wyandotte and Johnson Counties (MO-604, KS-505)

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Website information on Jackson/Wyandotte/Johnson County HMIS:

<http://www.KCmetroHMIS.org>

The HMIS team provides ongoing assistance to all participating agencies. An agency can request additional training or onsite visits from the HMIS staff at any time:

CaseWorthy Training Website:

https://app.caseworthy.com/KCHMIS_test.caseworthy

CaseWorthy Production Website:

https://app.caseworthy.com/kchmis_prod.caseworthy

HMIS help desk:

Support@KCmetroHMIS.org

For all issues related to HMIS & CaseWorthy submit a ticket to:

Support@KCmetroHMIS.org

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INTRODUCTION

This document describes the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data quality plan for the system serving the two Continuum of Care organizations serving Jackson, Wyandotte and Johnson Counties. The document includes data quality plan and protocols for ongoing data quality monitoring that meets requirements set forth by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It is developed by Mid-America Regional Council (HMIS Lead Agency), in coordination with the HMIS participating agencies and community service providers. This HMIS Data Quality Plan is to be updated annually, considering the latest HMIS data standards and locally developed performance plans.

What is a Data Quality Plan?

A data quality plan is a community-level document that facilitates the ability of each CoC to achieve statistically valid and reliable data. A data quality plan sets expectations for the CoC, the HMIS Lead Agency, and the end users to capture valid and reliable data on persons accessing the homeless assistance system throughout the community.

Developed by the HMIS Lead Agency and formally adopted by the CoC, the plan:

- Identifies the responsibilities of all parties within the CoC with respect to data quality;
- Establishes specific data quality benchmarks for timeliness, completeness, accuracy, and consistency;
- Describes the procedures for implementing the plan and monitoring progress toward meeting data quality benchmarks; and
- Establishes a timeframe for monitoring data quality on a regular basis.

HMIS Data Standards

In 2010 the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) affirmed HMIS as the official method of measuring outcomes in its *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. Since then many of the federal agencies that provide McKinney-Vento Act and other sources of funding for services to specific homeless populations have joined together and are working with HUD to coordinate the effort.

HMIS is now used by the federal partners and their respective programs in an effort to end homelessness, which include:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The HMIS Data Standards (published in the 2014 in the HMIS Data Dictionary and HMIS Data Manual) provide communities with baseline data collection requirements developed by each of these federal partners.

Universal Data Elements

HMIS Universal Data Elements are elements required to be collected by all projects using the software as an HMIS. Projects funded by any one or more of the federal partners must collect the Universal Data Elements, as do projects that are not funded by any federal partner (e.g. missions) but are entering data as part of the Continuum of Care's HMIS implementation.

Universal data elements enable the HMIS the ability to record unique, unduplicated client records, establish participation in a project within a date range, and identify clients who meet time criteria for chronic homelessness.

The required Universal Data Elements include the following:

- 3.1 Name
- 3.2 Social Security Number
- 3.3 Date of Birth
- 3.4 Race
- 3.5 Ethnicity
- 3.6 Gender
- 3.7 Veteran Status
- 3.8 Disabling Condition
- 3.10 Project Start Date
- 3.11 Project Exit Date
- 3.12 Destination
- 3.15 Relationship to Head of Household
- 3.16 Client Location
- 3.20 Housing Move-in Date
- 3.917 Living Situation

In the 2017 HMIS Data Standards update, Data Element 4.17 Residential Move-In Date was significantly modified and became universal data element 3.20 Housing Move-In Date.

Program Specific Data Elements

Program Specific Data Elements differ from the Universal Data Elements in that no one project must collect every single element in this section. Which data elements are required is dictated by the reporting requirements set forth by each Federal partner for each of their programs. A Partner may require all of the fields or response categories in a data element or may specify which of the fields or response categories are required for their report.

The required Program Specific Data Elements include the following:

- 4.2 Income and Sources
- 4.3 Non-Cash Benefits
- 4.4 Health Insurance
- 4.5 Physical Disability
- 4.6 Developmental Disability
- 4.7 Chronic Health Condition
- 4.8 HIV/AIDS
- 4.9 Mental Health Problem
- 4.10 Substance Abuse
- 4.11 Domestic Violence
- 4.12 Contact
- 4.13 Date of Engagement
- 4.14 Bed-Night Date
- 4.18 Housing Assessment Disposition

In the 2017 HMIS Data Standards, Data Element 4.1 Housing Status was retired from use and 4.17 Residential Move-In Date was significantly modified and became universal data element 3.20 Housing Move-In Date

Component 1: TIMELINESS

Entering data in a timely manner can reduce human error that occurs when too much time has elapsed between the data collection, or service transaction, and the data entry. The individual doing the data entry may be relying on handwritten notes or their own recall of a case management session, a service transaction, or a program exit date; therefore, the sooner the data is entered, the better chance the data will be correct. Timely data entry also ensures that the data is accessible when it is needed, either proactively (e.g. monitoring purposes, increasing awareness, meeting funded requirements), or reactively (e.g. responding to requests for information, responding to inaccurate information).

Deadlines

All data should be entered into HMIS in a timely manner. Toward that end, the following data entry benchmarks have been established by the HMIS Lead Agency and supported by the two CoCs.

- Emergency Shelters: Universal Data Elements and Housing Check-In/Check-Out are entered within 2 workdays (24 work hours after the check-in/check-out time)
- Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing Programs: Universal Data Elements, Program-Specific Data Elements, and Housing Check-In/Check-Out are entered within 3 workdays
- Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention Programs: Universal and Program-Specific Data Elements are entered within 3 workdays (24 work hours after the enrollment/eligibility established)
- Outreach Programs: Limited data elements entered within 3 workdays of the first outreach encounter. Upon engagement for services, all remaining Universal Data Elements entered within 3 workdays
- Supportive Services Only Programs: Universal Data Elements are entered within 3 workdays

Component 2: COMPLETENESS

Partially complete or missing data (e.g., missing digit(s) in a SSN, missing the year of birth, missing information on disability or veteran status) can negatively affect the ability to provide comprehensive care to clients. Missing data could mean the client does not receive needed services – services that could help them become permanently housed and end their episode of homelessness.

The HMIS Lead Agency and CoCs goal is to collect 100% of all data elements. However, the Lead Agency and CoCs recognize that this may not be possible in all cases. Therefore, the Lead Agency and CoCs have established an acceptable range of null/missing and unknown/don't know/refused responses of between 2 and 5 percent, depending on the data element and the type of program entering data.

Complete HMIS data is necessary to fully understand the demographic characteristics and service use of persons in the system. Complete data facilitates confident reporting and analysis on the nature and extent of homelessness, such as:

- Unduplicated counts of clients served at the local level;
- Patterns of use of people entering and exiting the homeless assistance system; and
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of homeless systems. In effect, complete data tells the full “story” of homelessness to the agencies, the two Continuum of Care organizations, and the general public.

Universal Data Elements

The HMIS Lead Agency and CoC goal is to collect 100% of all data elements. However, the HMIS Lead Agency and CoCs recognize that this may not be possible in all cases. Therefore, the HMIS Lead Agency and CoCs have established an acceptable range of missing/null, don’t know, refused, and data not collected responses, depending on the data element and the type of program entering data. (Refer to Appendix A)

Target

All data in the HMIS should be collected and entered in a common and consistent manner across all programs. Data collection and entry should be conducted in accordance with the most current HUD HMIS Data Standards. See Appendix A

Component 2.1: All Clients Served

HUD expects that all clients receiving housing and/or services through the homeless assistance system will have their service delivery documented in HMIS. If a program only enters data on a few of its clients, the program’s efficacy cannot accurately be determined. Incomplete data may erroneously reflect low bed utilization rates (for housing programs), and may inaccurately reflect client’s progress in meeting programmatic goals (i.e. employment, transitioning to permanent housing).

Target

All programs using the HMIS should enter data for one hundred percent (100%) of clients served.

Component 2.2: Bed Utilization

One of the primary features of the HMIS is its ability to record the number of client stays or bed nights at a homeless residential facility. A program’s bed utilization rate is the number of beds occupied as a

percentage of the entire bed inventory. When a client is enrolled into a residential program (emergency, transitional, or permanent), s/he is assigned to a bed or unit. The client remains in that bed or unit until s/he is transferred to another bed or unit, or is exited from the program. When the client is exited from the program, s/he is also exited from the bed or unit in the HMIS.

New projects may require time to reach the projected occupancy numbers and may not meet the utilization rate requirement during the first operating year.

Target

A program’s bed utilization rate is an excellent barometer of data quality. A low utilization rate could reflect low occupancy, but it could also indicate that data is not being entered in the HMIS for every client served. A high utilization rate could reflect that the program is over capacity, but it could also indicate that clients have not been properly discharged from the program in the HMIS.

Housing Program Type	Target Utilization Rate (%)	Acceptable Utilization Rate (%)
Emergency Shelter	75%	65%
Transitional Housing	90%	65%
Permanent Housing	90%	65%

Component 3: ACCURACY

Accurate collection and entry of data into the HMIS ensures that the data is the best possible representation of reality as it relates to homeless persons and the programs that provide homeless housing and services. Data in the HMIS should accurately reflect client data recorded in the client’s file, along with information known about the client and the housing and/or services received by the client.

Target

All data entered into the HMIS should be a reflection of information provided by the client and as documented in the client’s file. Changes or updates in client information should be reflected in the HMIS as they occur. To ensure the most up-to-date and complete data, data entry errors should be corrected monthly, or more frequently as required.

Component 3.1: CONSISTENCY

Consistency of data directly affects the accuracy of data. Consistency ensures that data is understood, collected, and entered in the same manner across all programs in the HMIS. Basic enrollment, annual assessment, and exit workflows/forms, designed to capture client data pursuant to HUD's HMIS Data Standards, provide for common and consistent data collection and are available to all programs. To that end, all intake and data entry staff will complete an initial training before accessing the production HMIS system.

Target

All data in the HMIS should be collected and entered in a common and consistent manner across all programs. Data collection and entry should be conducted in accordance with the most current HUD HMIS Data Standards.

All intake and data entry workers will complete an initial training before accessing the live HMIS system. All HMIS users must recertify their knowledge of consistency practices on an annual basis. The HMIS Lead Agency will administer the annual training sessions.

CaseWorthy provides a consistent way for data to be collected across all programs. As MARC works with each agency to set up the agency and its programs in the HMIS system, information may be added to enable agencies to meet their additional needs, provided the base data fields do not change.

A document that outlines the basic data elements collected at intake, their response categories, rationale, and definitions will be made available in paper and via the HMIS website as a quick reference to ensure consistent data collection.

New agencies that join the HMIS System are required to review this document as part of the HMIS Agency Agreement execution process.

Component 4: MONITORING

The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the agreed-upon data quality targets are met to the greatest extent possible, and that data quality issues are quickly identified and resolved. As the HMIS Lead Agency, MARC will offer training and technical support to help all agencies use the HMIS system effectively. The HMIS Lead Agency and CoCs recognize that the data produced from the HMIS is critical to meet the reporting and compliance requirements of HUD, the individual agencies, and the two CoCs.

Target

The HMIS Lead Agency and CoCs recognize that the data produced from the HMIS is critical to meet the reporting and compliance requirements of individual agencies and the two CoCs. As such, all agencies participating in the HMIS are expected to meet the data quality benchmarks described in this document. New agencies are required to review and be trained as part of the activation process.

To achieve this, the HMIS data will be monitored on a monthly basis to quickly identify and resolve issues that affect the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of the data. All monitoring will be done in accordance with the data quality monitoring plan, with full support of the two CoCs.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Data Timeliness:** The HMIS support staff will measure timeliness by running reports in CaseWorthy. Programs of different types will be reviewed separately. If an agency is having challenges in entering the client data in a timely manner, the HMIS Lead Agency staff will reach out and offer assistance to help the agency improve their data timeliness before the next month's report.
- **Data Completeness:** The HMIS support staff will measure completeness by running APRs, Universal Data Quality, or custom reports, and compare any missing rates to the data completeness benchmarks. The HMIS Lead Agency will work with all agencies having problems with data completeness in order to see improvement by the next month's report.
- **Data Accuracy:** The HMIS support staff will review source documentation during an annual site visit. The agency staff is responsible to make this documentation available upon request. Outreach programs may be exempt from the data accuracy review.

Monitoring Frequency

- Monthly Review: Data Timeliness and Data Completeness
- Annual Review – site visits: Data Accuracy
- Other: Data quality monitoring may be performed outside of the regularly scheduled reviews, if requested by program funders or other interested parties (the agency itself, HMIS Lead Agency, CoCs, HUD, or other Federal and local government agencies)

Compliance

- Data Timeliness: The average timeliness rate in any given month should be within the allowed timeframe.

- **Data Completeness:** There should be no missing (null) data for required data elements. Responses that fall under unknown (don't know or refused) should not exceed the allowed percentages in any given month. Housing providers should stay within the allowed utilization rates.
- **Data Accuracy:** The percentage of client files with inaccurate HMIS data should not exceed 10%. (For example, if the sampling includes 10 client files, then 9 out of 10 of these files should have the entire set of corresponding data entered correctly in HMIS.)

Component 5: INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT

Timely HMIS data entry ensures that the data is accessible when it is needed, whether for monitoring purposes, meeting funding requirements, responding to requests for information, or for other purposes. Complete HMIS data is necessary to fully understand the demographic characteristics and service use of persons accessing the homeless housing and services in the community. Complete data facilitates confident reporting and analysis on the nature and extent of homelessness. Complete HMIS data helps the individual agencies and the two CoCs meet various funding compliance requirements, and ensures that persons in the homeless assistance system receive the services needed to secure and maintain permanent housing.

Accurate collection and entry of data into the HMIS ensures that the data is the best possible representation of reality as it relates to homeless persons and the programs that provide homeless housing and services. Consistency of data directly affects the accuracy of data. Consistency ensures that data is understood, collected and entered in the same manner across all programs in the HMIS.

All HMIS participating agency administrators must ensure that these minimum data entry standards are fulfilled for every program utilizing the HMIS.

Target

To ensure that HMIS participating agencies meet the minimum data entry standards set forth herein, a copy of this Data Quality Plan will be posted to the HMIS Lead's website. Sample intake, annual update and discharge forms will also be posted to the HMIS Lead's website with a description of how the collection of this information is maintained in CaseWorthy. Participating agencies will provide data quality reports to the HMIS Lead Agency in accordance with the monitoring schedule described in the "Monitoring" section to facilitate compliance with the minimum data entry standards.

Agencies that meet the data quality benchmarks will be periodically recognized by the HMIS Lead Agency, and the two CoCs will also be asked to recognize their achievement. HMIS participating agencies that do not meet the minimum data entry standards set forth in this plan will be contacted and offered assistance in addressing specific deficiencies. HMIS participating agencies will be asked by the HMIS Lead Agency to correct any identified data quality issues within 30 days. Training will be offered to agencies that are noncompliant with the minimum data entry standards. HMIS participating agencies that continue to fail in

meeting minimum data entry standards will risk access to the HMIS system until such time as agencies demonstrate that they are taking steps to comply with minimum data entry standards can be reached.

APPENDIX

Appendix	Document Title
Appendix A	Target – Universal Data Elements

Target – Universal Data Elements

All Universal Data Elements must be obtained from each adult and unaccompanied youth who applies for services through the homeless assistance system. Most Universal Data Elements are also required for children age 17 years and under.

Universal Data Element	Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid ReHousing, and Services Only			Emergency Shelter/Day Shelter			Street Outreach		
	Target	Acceptable NULL/Missing	Acceptable "Client don't know", "Client Refused"	Target	Acceptable NULL/Missing	Acceptable "Client don't know", "Client Refused"	Target	Acceptable NULL/Missing	Acceptable "Client don't know", "Client Refused"
Name	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	75%	0%	10%
Social Security Number	100%	0%	5%	100%	0%	5%	75%	0%	50%
Date of Birth	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	2%	75%	0%	30%
Race	100%	0%	5%	100%	0%	5%	75%	0%	30%
Ethnicity	100%	0%	5%	100%	0%	5%	75%	0%	30%
Gender	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	75%	0%	5%
Veteran Status	100%	0%	5%	100%	0%	5%	75%	0%	30%
Disabling Condition	100%	0%	5%	100%	0%	5%	75%	0%	30%
Residence Prior to Project Entry	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Project Start Date	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Project Exit Date	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Destination	100%	0%	2%	75%	0%	30%	75%	0%	NA
Relationship to Head of Household	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Client Location	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Housing Move-in Date	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Living Situation	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%

