

NWCoC Coordinated Entry Training

NWCoC Coordinated Entry

System Overview

January, 2023



Introduction to Coordinated Entry

- ▶ HUD requires each CoC to establish and operate a “centralized or coordinated assessment system,” based on evidence that such systems increase the efficiency of local crisis response systems and improve fairness and ease of access to resources, including mainstream system resources. Participating projects use the coordinated entry process established and operated by the CoC to manage coordinated intake and assessment, standardize the prioritization process, and facilitate referrals to available housing and resources.
- ▶ Coordinated entry processes are intended to help communities prioritize assistance to ensure that persons who are most in need of assistance receive it in a timely manner. When appropriate data are collected, CE processes can also provide information to CoCs and other stakeholders about service needs and gaps, which helps communities to strategically allocate their current resources and identify the need for additional resources.

BEFORE COORDINATED ENTRY IMPLEMENTATION	AFTER COORDINATED ENTRY IMPLEMENTATION
<p data-bbox="1490 568 1834 632"><i>Should we accept this person into our project?</i></p> <ul data-bbox="1396 654 1923 982" style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-centric • Different forms and assessment for each organization or small subgroup of projects • Project-specific decision-making • Ad hoc referral process between projects • Uneven knowledge about available housing and service interventions in the CoC's geographic area 	<p data-bbox="2000 568 2440 668"><i>What housing and service assistance strategy among all available is best for this household?</i></p> <ul data-bbox="1949 689 2484 1003" style="list-style-type: none"> • Person-centric • Standard forms and assessment used by every project for every participant • Community agreement on how to triage based on the household's needs • Coordinated referral process across the CoC's geographic area based on written standards for administering CoC assistance

Guiding Principles of the CES

- ▶ These guiding principles are set by the NWCoC CES Policy Manual.
- 1. Promote client-centered practices - Every person should be treated with dignity, offered at least minimal assistance, have easy access to the system, and participate in their own housing plan. Participants will not be mandated to leave family and other support networks to access housing. Incorporate client choice in housing offer.
- 2. Prioritize most vulnerable - Limited resources should be direct first to persons and families who are most vulnerable*. Less vulnerable persons and families will be assisted as resources allow. *Vulnerability will be defined locally.
- 3. Eliminate barriers to housing placement - Identify system practices and individual project eligibility criteria which may contribute to excluding clients from services and work to eliminate those barriers.
- 4. Transparency - Deliberate, make decisions and communicate directives openly and clearly.
- 5. Focus on evaluation and adapting to meet the current needs of providers and consumers - Continually strive for effectiveness and efficiency and agree to make changes when those objectives are not achieved.
- 6. Accountability - Accountable to clients to provide the best service possible and to funders to make the best use of resources.
- 7. Promote collaborative and inclusive planning and decision-making practices.
- 8. Diversity - respect cultural, regional, programmatic, philosophical differences.
- 9. Honor Tribal Sovereignty.

CES Values

- ▶ These system values are set by the NWCoC CES Policy Manual.
- 1. Rapid access to housing (Housing First model) aimed at helping homeless households quickly exit homelessness and stabilize in permanent housing.
- 2. Tailored services to provide the right services at the right level and the right time to meet households' needs.
- 3. Economic opportunities including engagement with Job Service, Migrant Employment and Training (MET), Veterans Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Centers; and supported employment services that help households advance toward self-sufficiency.
- 4. Maximizing use of mainstream resources to assure clients have access to comprehensive services and that service costs are shared.
- 5. Data and evaluation are used to inform system planning and decision-making.
- 6. Chronic Homeless persons are prioritized for PSH.
- 7. Clients are informed of their rights, responsibilities and provided with choices when possible.
- 8. Data is collected and shared only through informed consent and with data quality in mind.

Introduction to NWCoC CES

- ▶ Northwest Coordinated Entry System (CES) is not a program, but a way of providing service. Utilizing progressive engagement, CES provides multiple points for access and assessment, while maintaining standardized processes and tools to improve linkage to mainstream and homeless services.
- ▶ CES will help our CoC better identify, document and evaluate system needs, as well as prioritize limited resources, assuring those who are most in need of services are prioritized for services.
- ▶ The CES in the NWCoC serves at the Homelessness Response System to accomplish the goals of the NWCoC to end homelessness.

Key Terms and Definitions

- ▶ A full list of Key Terms and Definitions can be found in Section 2. A of the NWCoC CES Procedure Manual. A few key terms that come up in coordinated entry and eligibility are
 - ▶ 1. Chronically Homeless HUD’s definition: *Chronically homeless* means: (1) A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in Section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, who:
 - ▶ i. Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a Safe Haven, or an emergency shelter; AND
 - ▶ ii. Has been homeless continuously for at least 12 months or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in (i) above.
 - ▶ MN Homelessness
 - ▶ The State of Minnesota defines as homeless “any individual, unaccompanied youth or family that is without a permanent place to live that is fit for human habitation.” Doubling-up is considered homeless if that arrangement has persisted less than 1 year.
 - ▶ Progressive Engagement
 - ▶ Progressive Engagement is the practice of helping households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, with minimal financial and support resources. More supports are applied to those households who struggle to stabilize.

NWCoC Geographic Coverage Area

- ▶ The Northwest Continuum of Care covers an expansive geographic area including three (3) Native Nations and twelve (12) counties. The Native Nations include the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe, and the White Earth Nation. The counties include Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.



Marketing and Outreach

- ▶ Each project participating in CES is required to post or otherwise make publicly available a notice (provided by the CoC) that describes coordinated entry. This notice should be posted in the agency waiting areas, as well as any areas where participants may congregate or receive services (e.g., drop-in center).
- ▶ All staff at each agency are required to know which personnel within their agency can discuss and explain CES to a participant who seeks more information.
- ▶ This notice can be found on the [NWCoC Coordinated Entry Website](#).



Safety Planning and Risk Assessment

- ▶ The Coordinated Entry System will include access to local domestic violence shelters to ensure that all persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence or sexual assault have immediate access to crisis response services. This will include the number to the MN Day One Crisis Line. All persons will have access to this hotline regardless of which access point they initially contact for services and assistance through the NWCoC coordinated entry.
- ▶ The NWCoC assessment conducted at all NWCoC access points includes questions to screen for risk or potential harm perpetrated on participating as a result of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or dating violence. In the event defined risk is deemed to be present, the participant shall be referred or linked to available specialized services and housing assistance, using a trauma-informed approach designed to address the particular service needs of survivors of abuse, neglect, and violence.

Lack of Appropriate Housing or Services

- ▶ In many areas of the CoC, the CoC has insufficient resources to meet the level of need for a particular type of housing or supportive service; in some cases, no resource or housing opening may be available. The Coordinated Entry process will still focus on and prioritize the people with the highest needs, for whatever resources may be available until new resources can be developed. Coordinated entry can play a critical role in helping to document these gaps in the crisis response system and justify increased funding to meet the need.
- ▶ People in a housing crisis who are not likely to be rapidly housed by a project should not be put on a priority list leaving them with the expectation that this will end their homelessness. Case managers at shelters and in the community need to work with people on alternative housing plans, including applying for affordable housing in the community, increasing income from employment and benefits, and exploring other housing opportunities available through the person's personal support network.
- ▶ Alternatively, if a person is prioritized for PSH but only RRH resources are available, coordinated entry should have that person access RRH as a bridge or temporary placement, without it negatively affecting their PSH eligibility.

Coordinated Entry System Overview

- ▶ The Coordinated Entry System is encompassing of all partners who are part of providing services to people in communities experiencing a housing crisis. Coordinated Entry is the homelessness response system.
- ▶ An important note regarding coordinated entry is that housing is not guaranteed for clients who are added to the Priority List. The fact is there is both a limited supply of homeless-dedicated housing and a great need for that limited resource. This, unfortunately means that many people will never receive a housing referral through CES.
- ▶ The system is designed to provide the most intensive resources available to the people who are most vulnerable and at-risk in the region. Using a progressive engagement approach to serving people as rapidly as possible with the minimal amount of resources to solve the housing crisis creates more opportunity for people to access the system. Whenever possible a client should be referred to mainstream resources to solve their housing crisis.



Key Roles of the CES

Priority List Manager	Staff position responsible for supporting or managing day-to-day functions of CES, which may include any combination of the following: maintaining a prioritization list, assisting with matching participants to available housing resources, communicating referrals, facilitating case conferencing meetings, assisting with grievance and appeal processes, monitoring CE activity, and preparing CE monitoring and evaluation reports. The PLM also works to provide technical training to agencies utilizing the CES.
Assessor	Coordinated Entry Assessors should think of the assessment interview as a time when they should encourage clients to consider all available housing options, rather than presenting CES as the mechanism through which all clients should attempt to access housing resources. NWCoC Coordinated Entry System Assessors are located at access points across the NWCoC region. The assessor has arguably the most important job in the entire system. It is recognized that most assessors also serve as housing case managers, it is extremely important to distinguish the roles from one another to have an effective system.
Housing Provider	The Housing Provider will be working with clients referred by the NWCoC Priority List Manager. Typically, the Housing Provider will assign a case manager or other client support staff in this role. The Housing Provider will work with clients to find housing, and while looking for housing find any available resource that may support them. The Housing Provider is responsible for implementing a client centered approach. This includes informing clients of all available housing options and helping them determine what type of program may be best to support them. The Housing Provider is responsible for notifying the Priority List Manager (PLM) of any openings. This is done through an online form. You will need to e-mail the PLM to get access to this form if you do not have it.
Housing Navigator	The Housing Navigator will work through Coordinated Entry to identify and assist clients in rapidly securing housing, accessing desired services, and supporting stabilization once housed. The Navigator will utilize the CES Prioritization lists to identify persons who need formal navigation services the most.

A full list of Roles associated with the NWCoC CES can be found in the NWCoC Procedure Manual.



Stages of the CES

- ▶ The Coordinated Entry System is broken down into four phases in accordance with HUD.

Access

Access points are the places-either virtual or physical-where an individual or family in need of assistance accesses the coordinated entry process.

Assessment

The standardized assessment process, including assessment information, factors, and documentation of the criteria used for uniform decision-making across access points and staff.

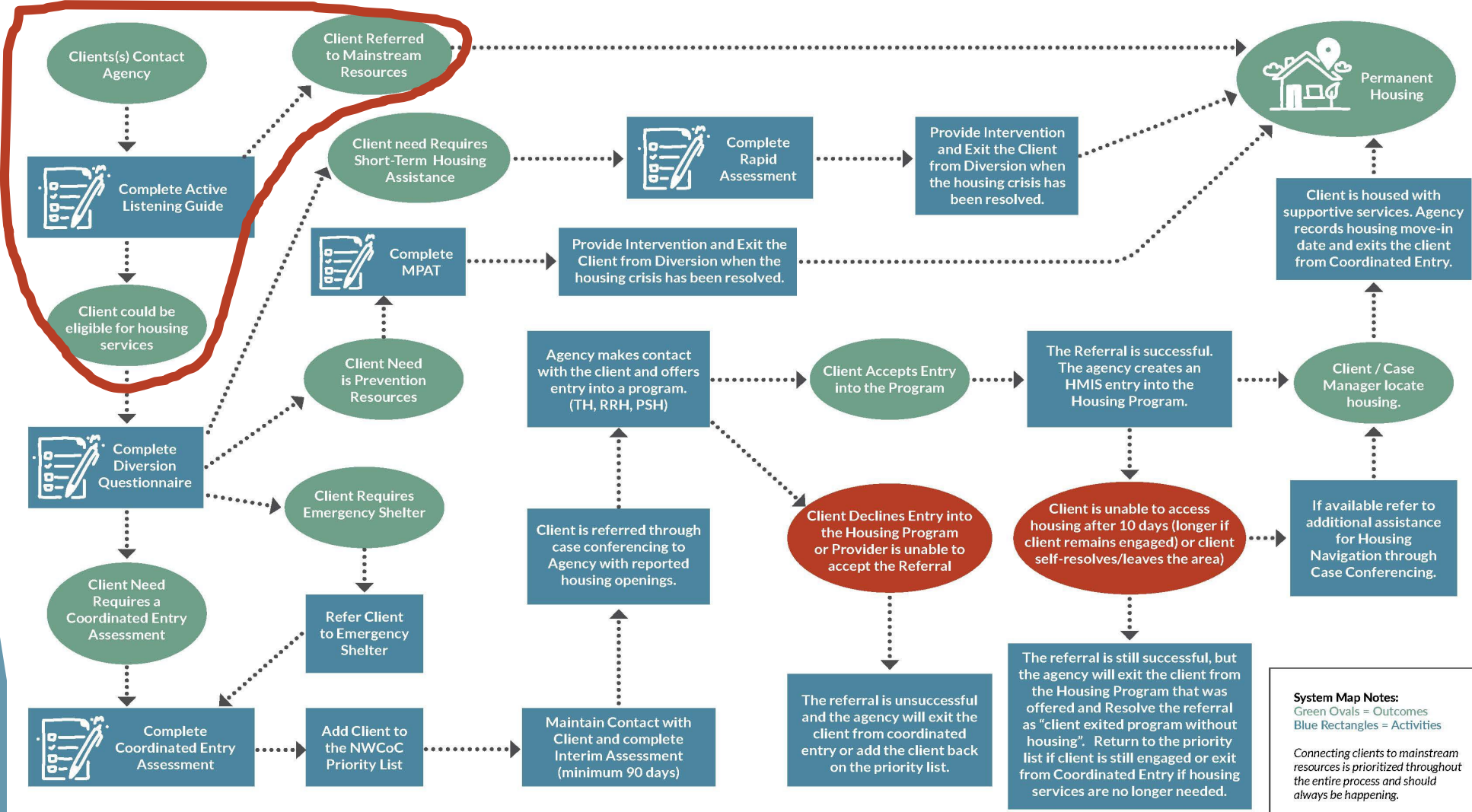
Prioritization

The factors and assessment information with which prioritization decisions will be made for all homeless assistance.

Placement (referral)

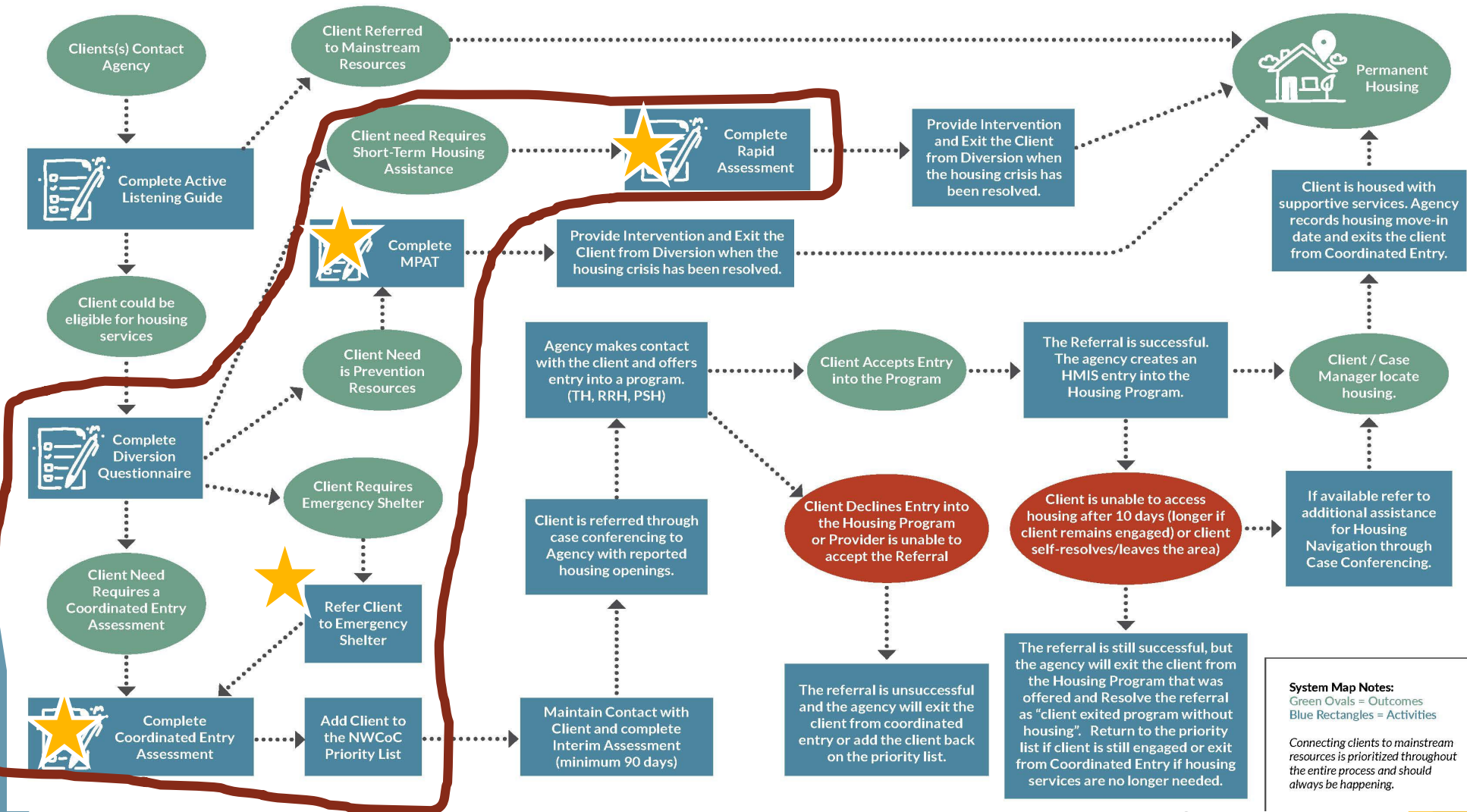
Persons are referred to available CoC housing resources and services in accordance with the CoC's documented prioritization guidelines.

Northwest Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System Map



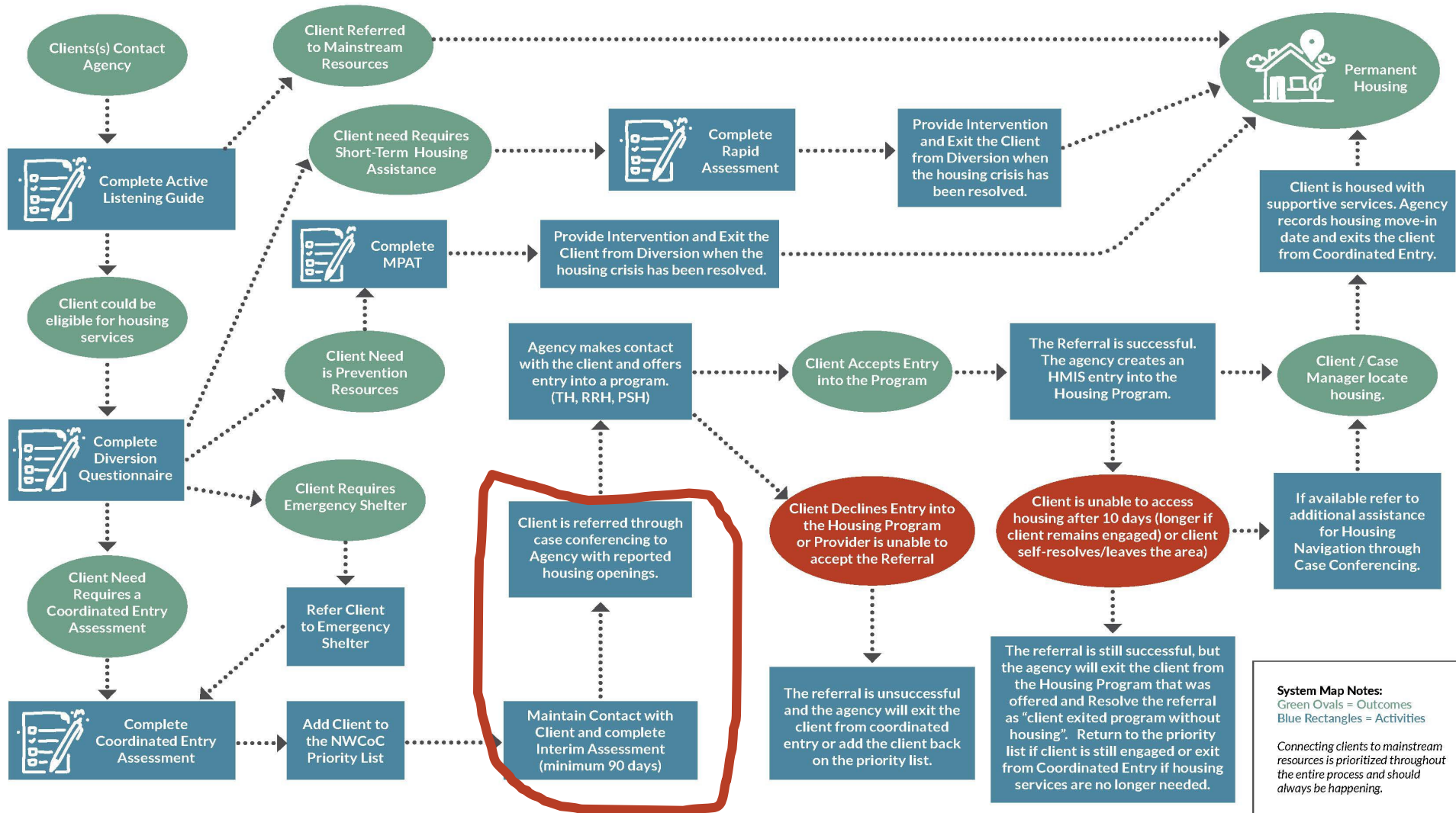
Assessment

Northwest Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System Map



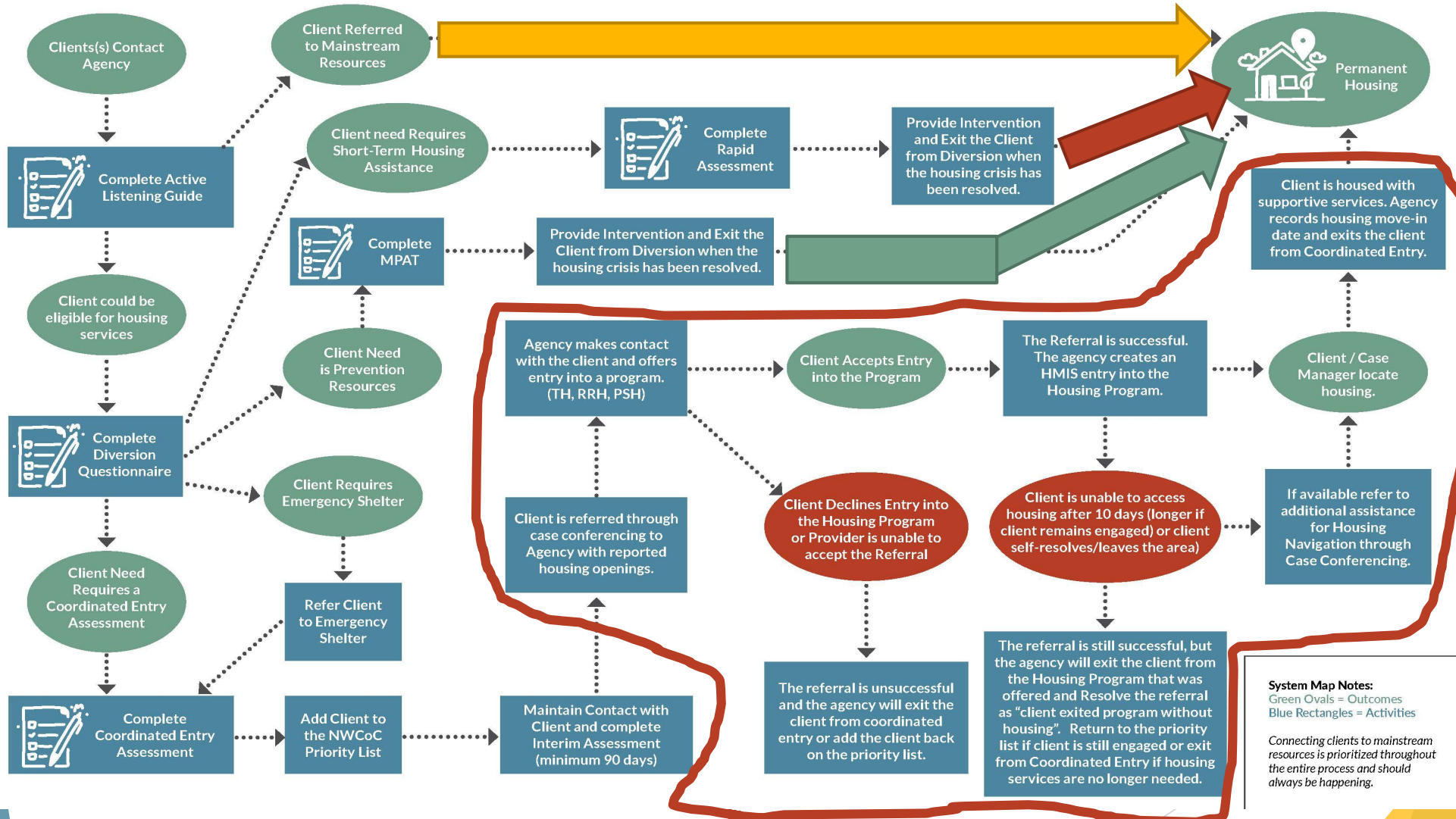
Prioritization

Northwest Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System Map



Referral (Placement)

Northwest Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System Map



Four Pathways to Placement into Permanent Housing.

1. Access Mainstream Resources

2. Rapid Resolution

3. Prevention

4. Prioritization List

System Map Notes:
 Green Ovals = Outcomes
 Blue Rectangles = Activities
 Connecting clients to mainstream resources is prioritized throughout the entire process and should always be happening.

Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ What best describes Coordinated Entry
 - ▶ A waiting list for housing resources across northwest Minnesota.
 - ▶ A homeless response system that diverts people from needing housing resources with mainstream and prevention resources whenever possible. Prioritizes limited supportive housing resources for the most vulnerable.
 - ▶ A process some bureaucrat dreamed up we have to follow.
 - ▶ The VI-SPDAT assessment.

Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ What best describes the flow of the Coordinated Entry System?
 - ▶ Prioritization, Access, Assessment, Placement
 - ▶ Access, Assessment, Prioritization, Placement
 - ▶ Placement, Assessment, Prioritization, Access
 - ▶ Assessment, Prioritization, Placement, Access

Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ This person's role is to meet with a client to help them determine the best intervention to solve the housing crisis, and maintain contact with the client until the crisis is resolved.
 1. Priority List Manager
 2. Case Manager
 3. Housing Navigator
 4. **Assessor**

Review / Quiz Questions

- What is considered a referral to a mainstream resource or another program in the NWCoC Homeless Response System?
 1. Giving someone a brochure.
 2. Giving someone a phone number.
 3. **Calling an agency or service provider and assisting the client access that resource.**
 4. Giving someone a website link.

Thank You

- ▶ If you have questions regarding this training please reach out to the NWCoC Priority List Manager.