

# NWCoC Coordinated Entry Training

NWCoC Coordinated Entry  
Access and Assessment  
January, 2023





# Access

- ▶ Homeless assistance providers that are designated access site across the Continuum of Care (CoC) will provide access to crisis response services for persons experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of literal homelessness.
- ▶ In the NWCoC a “no wrong door” approach has been adopted in which an individual or family can present at any homeless housing and service provider in the geographic area and completes the same assessment process so referral can be consistently made across the CoC.
- ▶ Access is the start of the process. The CoC has access points to Coordinated Entry across the entire geographic region. Access is available through walk-in traffic, or by phone.
- ▶ Access is all about taking the time to listen to the client and understand the clients immediate needs. The Active Listening Guide can be a helpful resource for you to listen to a client and jot down note on potential mainstream resource referrals.



# Access Sites

- ▶ A list of current access sites is available on the [NWCoC Coordinated Entry Website](#)

## Coordinated Entry Access Sites for Homeless Assistance

### BI-CAP (Bemidji)

218-751-4631  
800-332-7161  
Beltrami County

### Care and Share (Crookston)

218-281-2644  
Polk County and Surrounding Area

### Evergreen Youth & Family Services (Bemidji)

218-751-8223  
YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS ONLY

### Housing Matters (Bemidji)

218-444-9038  
Beltrami

### MAHUBE-OTWA (Park Rapids & Mahnomen)

218-935-5022  
Hubbard and Mahnomen Counties  
YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS

### Inter-County Community Council (Oklee)

888-778-4008, Ext. 6  
Red Lake, Pennington, East Polk, and Clearwater Counties  
YOUTH/ YOUNG ADULTS

### Northwest Community Action (Badger)

218-528-3258  
800-568-5329  
Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Roseau and Marshall Counties  
YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS

### Northwest Indian Community Development Center (Bemidji)

218-759-2022  
Beltrami County  
YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS

### Alluma (Crookston)

218-281-3940  
Kittson, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Polk, or Red Lake County

### Tri-Valley Opportunity Council (Crookston & East Grand Forks)

800-201-3475  
Norman, West Polk, and West Marshall Counties  
YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS

### Village of Hope (Bemidji)

218-751-0722  
Note: Shelter residents ONLY

### Violence Intervention Project (Thief River Falls)

218-681-5557  
800-660-6667  
Note: Domestic Violence ONLY

Indicates services available specifically for homeless youth (ages 16-24)



Additional information on available services can be found at <https://mypaths.org/resources/>.



# Access Responsibilities

- ▶ 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., dining hall). All staff at each agency are required to know which personnel within their agency can discuss and explain CE to a participant who seeks more information. This notice can be found on the [NWCoC Coordinated Entry Website](#).
- ▶ The use of virtual meetings, or phone assessments can reduce barriers to access. All CoC access sites have the ability to use translation services. If a need arises to provide access to a client that cannot be met for translation services, or visual or audible impairment the assessor should contact the Priority List Manager and CoC Coordinator for assistance.
- ▶ Street outreach staff in the NWCoC will be trained on coordinated entry and the assessment process to offer access to coordinated entry. Street outreach staff can provide direct access to coordinated entry, or direct persons experiencing homelessness to the nearest access point and assist with connecting to coordinated entry.
- ▶ All members of the NWCoC are responsible for understanding the access locations to ensure clients can easily access an assessor and the homelessness response system.



# Assessment

- ▶ The NWCoC follows a Progressive Engagement, person-centered approach to ending someone's homelessness. The assessment stage uses information from the client to understand the housing crisis and tailor assistance to each individual or households needs in assessing what works best for them, with their strengths, and in their specific situation.
- ▶ All persons served by CES will be assessed using the **NWCoC Housing Assessment**. The **NWCoC Housing Assessment** documents a set of participant conditions, strengths, needs, and level of vulnerability, allowing the access point and/or assessment staff to identify the appropriate intervention and next steps to resolve the housing crisis and achieve housing stability.



# Assessment Phases

- ▶ The NWCoC has adopted a phased approach to the **NWCoC Housing Assessment** to appropriately identify the correct intervention through a Progressive Engagement approach.
- ▶ The assessment process follows Housing First as an evidenced based best practice to provide housing resources without creating barriers to access housing.
- ▶ Each Phase of the Assessment includes a NWCoC Form to collect the required information. Please see [NWCoC Website](#) for a copy of the assessment forms.



# Access and Active Listening

ASSESSMENT STAGES	DETAILS		WHEN TO COMPLETE	FORM	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Active Listening	Designed to assist assessors in understanding what services the client may be looking for and what kind of referrals can be made to mainstream resources. Assessor determines the CoC homeless response system is the appropriate system to address the client's needs. If the client is likely in need of prevention or supportive housing the assessor will move on to the Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment.		(Immediately) First point of contact - after person has identified housing crisis or requested homeless services. Can be completed over the phone or in-person.	Active Listening Guide	Assessor



# Diversion and Rapid Resolution

ASSESSMENT STAGES	DETAILS	WHEN TO COMPLETE	FORM	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Diversion and Rapid Resolution	<p>Designed to reduce the number of persons entering the homeless response by diverting to mainstream resources or prevention services. This questionnaire will determine if the person should be referred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency Shelter or Crisis Housing</li><li>• Mainstream Resources</li><li>• Prevention Services</li><li>• Rapid Resolution</li><li>• Coordinated Entry Assessment</li></ul> <p>The Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment will assist in determining if a prevention screening or Coordinated Entry Assessment is required.</p>	<p>Performed once the assessor determines the client is a likely candidate for prevention or supportive housing resources.</p> <p>Can be completed over the phone or in-person.</p> <p>Within 7 days of initial contact.</p>	<p>Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment in (HMIS) or Alternative Assessment</p> <p>NWCoC CES Receipt and ROI</p>	Assessor





# Prevention

ASSESSMENT STAGES	DETAILS	WHEN TO COMPLETE	FORM	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Prevention	Aimed at keeping persons who are at risk of homelessness housed.	ONLY after Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment has determined Prevention Services would be appropriate. Can be completed over the phone or in-person.	MPAT (HMIS)	Assessor



# Coordinated Entry Assessment

ASSESSMENT STAGES	DETAILS	WHEN TO COMPLETE	FORM	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Coordinated Entry Assessment	<p>Assessment for linkage to the following, but not limited to supportive housing resources (Transitional Housing (TH), Rapid-Rehousing (RRH), Housing Support, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Long-term Homeless (LTH) Vouchers). Linkage to resources is based on NWCoC prioritization criteria, client-choice, and peer to peer discussion through case conferencing meetings.</p> <p>NOTE: Being placed on the housing priority list does not guarantee a housing placement. Agencies should do everything possible to resolve the housing crisis without needing supportive housing services (housing with case management).</p>	<p>Only after Diversion and RR Assessment has determined supportive housing resources will be necessary. All clients who complete Step 3b are anticipated to be added to the NWCoC Prioritization list. Can be completed over the phone or in-person.</p>	<p>Coordinated Entry Assessment (HMIS) ) or Alternative Assessment</p> <p>NWCoC Prioritization List (HMIS)</p> <p>NWCoC CES Receipt and ROI</p>	<p>Assessor</p> <p>Once a client is placed on the list it is the assessor's job to maintain contact with that client.</p>



# Interim Assessment

ASSESSMENT STAGES	DETAILS	WHEN TO COMPLETE	FORM	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Interim Assessment	The goal of the interim assessment is to ensure a client's situation is kept up to date until the client is housed. Or if the client has self-resolved the client should be removed from the NWCoC Priority List to avoid unsuccessful referrals.	Must be completed a minimum of every 90 days, assessors are encouraged to update every 30 days to ensure accurate referrals.	Coordinated Entry Assessment (HMIS) ) or Alternative Assessment  NWCoC Prioritization List (HMIS)	Assessor



# Program Referral Criteria

- ▶ The Program Referral Criteria from the NWCoC [ESG and CoC Administration Policies](#) can be found on Page 13.
- ▶ The NWCoC does not “bucket” people into certain program types (i.e. TH or PSH). Clients are prioritized in accordance with the NWCoC Coordinated Entry System Procedure Manual using Case Conferencing and other determining factors.
- ▶ The NWCoC referral process does not have separate criteria for household type. A household may be referred to one or more Program Components.
- ▶ The Program Referral criteria will determine the pathway through the Coordinated Entry Process for Emergency Shelter, Prevention, Diversion and Rapid Resolution, as well as Supportive Housing. The criteria is included on the CES Forms.



# Program Referral Criteria

Emergency Shelter	Current Housing Situation	Literally Homeless or Fleeting DV
<b>Mainstream Resources</b>	Current Housing Situation	Client can remain in own housing and the housing is safe. (no threat of DV, or immediate harm to client wellbeing)
	How long can client remain in current housing?	Greater than 14 days
<b>Prevention Resources</b>	Current housing situation	Client is the leaseholder of an existing unit.
	How long can client remain in current housing?	Greater than 14 days. It may be appropriate to still refer someone to prevention resources if they may be evicted sooner to alleviate the loss of housing. It may also be most appropriate to complete steps to refer to more intensive housing support if it is unlikely the issue can be resolved.



# Program Referral Criteria

<b>Diversion / Rapid Resolution Resources</b>	<b>Current Housing Situation</b>	<b>Client is homeless (MN or HUD) or fleeing DV</b>
	How long can client remain in current housing?	Less than 14 days (no indication they are welcome to safely stay at residence as long as possible i.e. with friends or family)
	Estimated length of assistance.	Less than 3 months.
<b>Supportive Housing Services (PH, RRH, TH) Referred through Coordinated Entry Priority List</b>	<b>Current Housing Situation</b>	<b>Client is homeless (MN or HUD) or fleeing DV</b>
	How long can client remain in current housing?	Less than 14 days (no indication they are welcome to safely stay at residence as long as possible i.e. with friends or family)
	Estimated length of assistance.	Greater than 3 months



# Release of Information

- ▶ A participant's request for housing crisis response assistance initiated through phone or email communication will be considered notification of intent and inferred to be client consent to collect, use, and disclose that PII collected via phone or email. CES participating agencies shall obtain written client consent from the participant when the person comes in and additional data are collected during an in-person assessment.
- ▶ As part of the assessment process, participants will be provided with a copy of the NWCoC Release of Information form, which identifies what data will be collected, what data will be shared, which agencies data will be shared with, and what the purpose of the data share is. Participants have the option to decline sharing data; doing so does not make them ineligible for CES. A copy of the NWCoC Release of Information can be found on the [NWCoC Coordinated Entry](#) website under forms.
- ▶ An individual being assessed through coordinated entry has the right to refuse the entry of their data into the HMIS system. When this happens use the NWCoC Alternative Assessment process.



# Alternative Assessment

- ▶ The NWCoC has developed an Alternative Assessment system for Victim Services providers, youth under age 18 who do not have parental consent, and persons unwilling to **share** data in HMIS. This Alternative Assessment is also used for individuals who refuse entry into the HMIS.
- ▶ If an individual refuses entry into the HMIS system it does not impact the individual's ability to receive services.
- ▶ For creating an entry/exit client record in the HMIS, follow the instructions provided by the HMIS or your HMIS Alternative Database provider for entering clients records without personally identifiable information. Additional information regarding data sharing and the HMIS ROI can be found on the [MN HMIS website](#).
- ▶ Assessors can access the Alternative Assessment through e-mailing the NWCoC Priority List Manager.





# CoC Transfers and Assessments Outside of the CoC

- ▶ In the event that an assessor determines a household is interested in moving to geographic area outside of the NWCoC the assessor may stop the assessment.
- ▶ At this time the assessor will refer the household to a known organization in the CoC they wish to live in.
- ▶ If you do not know of an organization you may e-mail the Priority List Manager who can work with the other CoC to determine the pathway to access that CoC coordinated entry.
- ▶ If you receive a request from someone out of the region for an assessment, you do not need to complete one. As an assessor you determine the client has a desire to move to the area, and you have the resources to support this client, complete the assessment. It is unlikely that someone currently living outside of the CoC would be prioritized for services.



# Instructions for Entering Data in HMIS

- ▶ Detailed instructions for completing the assessment process, including instructions for entering data into HMIS can be found in Appendix C Diversion and Coordinated Entry Data Instructions of this document.
- ▶ All of the forms for the NWCoC Assessment are stored on the [NWCoC Coordinated Entry](#) website under forms. Each form includes detailed instructions that guide the assessor through the document based on answers from the client.
- ▶ If a client does not want to consent to their record being shared statewide in HMIS, you will still create and enter data in the client's record in the system with identifiable information, including their name and SSN. The MN HMIS ROI is only asking clients to consent to having their HMIS data *shared statewide*. Imagine it as a record in a filing cabinet in your office that will then only be visible to HMIS users at your agency. In this case the client's record will simply need to be manually "closed" to the statewide data sharing visibility group in HMIS. When a client's record is closed their information will only be accessible to users at your project and agency.
  - ▶ Additional information regarding data sharing and the HMIS ROI can be found on the MN HMIS website. <https://hmismn.helpscoutdocs.com/category/1781-data-sharing-hmis-roi>



# Adding Households to the Priority List

- ▶ Providers use the HMIS system or the Alternative List to add clients to the Priority List.
- ▶ Households are added to the Alternative List through using the Alternative Assessment which is for Victim Services providers, youth under age 18 who do not have parental consent, and persons unwilling to **share** data in HMIS, but wish to still access housing through coordinated entry.
- ▶ Appendix C Diversion and Coordinated Entry Data Instructions of this document includes detailed instruction for completing the NWCoC Coordinated Entry Assessment and placing a household on the priority list.



# Maintaining the Priority List

- ▶ Agencies and/or assessors that make entries to the priority list need to run a CES Assessor Agency Check report a minimum of once every two weeks. Instructions for accessing this report in HMIS and using the report can be found in Appendix G CES Assessor Agency Check Report Instructions of this document.
- ▶ Assessors are encouraged to complete Interim Assessments and provide updated assessor notes every 30 days. It is mandatory for assessors to complete Interim Assessments and provide updates assessor notes with 90 days of the date the assessor placed the client on the list. If your agency experiences the loss of an employee, your agency must designate another staff to maintain the previous staff member referrals.
- ▶ Clients that have been on the list for more than 90 days without an Interim Assessment and updated assessor notes will be removed from the priority list by the Priority List Manager. The Priority List Manager may contact the original assessor to inquire about client updates, but is not required to.
- ▶ Clients who are exited from the list may be returned to the list as soon as a new assessment is completed by an assessing agency. As the priority list is not a waiting list, a client's exit from the list will have no impact on the client's referral to services.

# Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ What best describes the Step 1: Active Listening Guide?
  1. A chance to listen and learn about a housing crisis, brainstorm solutions, and determine if the person may need prevention or supportive housing to resolve the crisis.
  2. Another form I have to fill out.
  3. The form to determine if someone should be on the Priority List.

# Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ What is the purpose of Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment?
  1. Learn about demographic information.
  2. Collect information about the clients situation to pair with the most appropriate resources and divert clients from entering the homeless response system (coordinated entry system).
  3. Send clients to other locations for help.

# Review / Quiz Questions

## ▶ When would I complete the Coordinated Entry Assessment?

1. First thing when I am contacted by a person seeking services.
2. Once the Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment has determined the person is homeless and will become homeless without supportive housing services. (housing with case management)
3. After the person has been housed.

# Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ How often do I need to update a clients information once they are placed on the Priority List?
  1. **Whenever someone's information changes, or at a minimum every 90 days. Assessors are encouraged to updated every 30 days to ensure accurate referrals.**
  2. Whenever the client comes back to the office for services.
  3. Once a year.



# Review / Quiz Questions

- ▶ When do I complete the Diversion and Rapid Resolution Assessment?
  - ▶ After I offer housing services to the client.
  - ▶ Once I have determined that the client is likely in need of prevention or supportive housing services
  - ▶ When the client has housing, but asked for help with transportation and medical insurance

# Thank You

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