



Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness

Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County Continuum of Care - MI 506

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Agency Access Policy

Purpose and Goal:

- The Homeless Management Information System is an information technology system that collects client level data and data on the provision of housing and supportive services for persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The purpose of this document is to establish a policy and outline the procedure for agencies to participate in the HMIS to ensure compliance with federal mandates for data collection and reporting, and alignment with values and service delivery standards within the homelessness response system.
 - o HMIS participation is a statutory requirement for recipients and subrecipients of the Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Programs. HMIS participation is also required for homeless assistance providers funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and encouraged for other programs that serve persons experiencing homelessness.
- The goal is for broader coordination across the homeless response system so that the impact on clients is positive and reflects a trauma informed approach to data collection, such as reduction in story sharing, expedient service delivery, and explicit consent.
- All data entered into HMIS will impact the Continuum of Care's Annual Renewal Demand for funding and the System Performance Measures required federal reporting.
- Agencies who participate in the HMIS must:
 - o Serve households who meet the HUD definitions of homelessness (Categories 1, 2, and 4)
 - o Provide permanent housing resources to persons experiencing homelessness using service delivery models as defined by HUD (ie Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing)
 - o Utilize the Coordinated Entry System for referrals to permanent housing resources.
 - o Become a member of the Continuum of Care to be in alignment with the Strategic Plan and participate in committees and/or workgroups.
 - o Subscribe to the CoC's Fair Housing and Anti-Discrimination Policy.

Workflow:

- Agencies that wish to use HMIS to contribute to the homelessness response system's data collection and reporting must complete an online application to describe goals and intended outcomes for the program. CoC Staff will bring a recommendation to the Executive Committee to add new agencies into the HMIS. Executive Committee will have final approval for adding new agencies upon consideration of input from staff.
- CoC staff will notify the Steering Committee of agencies requesting to be added, and the outcome. Agencies wishing to appeal the Executive Committee's decision have 5 business days to submit a written appeal to the Steering Committee.
- After approval, agencies will be required to submit the following documents:
 - o Signed Participation Agreement between MCAH and Agency
 - o Agency Board Approved Confidentiality Policy
 - o Agency Grievance Policy including process for external review
 - o Privacy Notice for Clients
 - o Executed Agency specific MSHMIS Client Release of Information
 - o Certificates of Completion from required trainings for all HMIS System Users (found on the HMIS Learning Center)
 - o Fully executed User Agreement for all HMIS System Users
 - o Any necessary Coordinated Service Agreements between agencies, including the QSOBAA if applicable
- Agencies can initiate this process at any time. The process can take 10-30 business days depending on the agency's ability to execute the required documents.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **System Administrator:** Operate the HMIS system, maintain participating agency documentation, set up and monitor providers and project level data and outcomes, train new users and provide opportunities for ongoing learning and engagement, manage the QSOBAA.
- **Agency:** Data entry, monitor project level data quality, participate in CoC Committees and workgroups, abide by MSHMIS policies for HMIS use.
- **Data Quality Workgroup:** Participation is recommended for agencies participating in the HMIS. Convene to discuss system level data quality, prepare for federal reports, engage in ongoing learning opportunities, abide by the policies laid out in the QSOBAA and HMIS Sharing Agreement.