

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

Policy No.: 578.7a-OR506CoC Approved By: HSSN (the CoC)
Effective Date: December 13, 2013 Revision Date: August 18, 2017
Prepared By: Washington County Department of Housing Services
503-846-4760 <http://www.co.washington.or.us/Housing/EndHomelessness>

- Policy Authority:** This policy is adopted under the authority of the local Continuum of Care (CoC) in Washington County, commonly referred to as the Housing and Supportive Services Network (HSSN).
- Purpose:** Grant recipients and subrecipients under the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and the Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) Program must use the coordinated and centralized assessment system (CCAS) established by the HSSN, in accordance with requirements established by HUD, to ensure the screening, assessment and referral of program participants is consistent with the written standards established.
- Standard:** The HSSN, in consultation with the CoC Program and ESG Program recipients and subrecipients, is responsible for determining how to allocate the CoC and ESG funds; for developing the performance standards and evaluating the outcomes of the local CCAS system and projects assisted by the CoC and ESG Program funds; and coordination and integration, to the maximum extent practicable, with other mainstream resources and programs targeted to homeless people in the area covered by the Continuum of Care to provide a strategic, community-wide system that will prevent and end homelessness for that area.
- Scope:** HSSN, recipients and subrecipients of CoC and ESG Program funds, the CoC Collaborative Applicant, and the HMIS Lead.
- Authority For Code:** Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) for the CoC Program 24 CFR Part 578.3, Part 578.7, Part 578.23(c), Part 578.93(c), the ESG Program Part 576.400 and Part 576.407, the Homeless Definitions 24 CFR Part 91.5, Part 582.5 and Part 583.5, and Equal Access in Accordance With an Individual’s Gender Identity in Community Planning and Development Programs 24 CFR Part 5.105 and 5.106.

Responsibilities:

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 **Assessment Specialist** is defined to mean any job description that performs assessment duties, as outlined by this policy. The Assessment Specialist may include housing

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon

“Community Connect”

Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

specialist, outreach worker, and case management positions with Homeless Provider Agencies identified in this policy.

- 1.2 **Collaborative Applicant** is defined to mean an instrumentality of state or local government, local government, nonprofit, state, or public housing authority that has been designated by the Continuum of Care to collect the required Continuum governance planning activities, data and information from all projects within the geographic area of the Continuum to prepare and apply for a grant.
- 1.3 ***Community Connect*** is the name given to the coordinated and centralized assessment system for the Continuum of Care jurisdiction in Washington County, Oregon.
- 1.4 **Equal Access Rule** 24 CFR Part 5 ensures access for individuals in accordance with their gender identity in programs and shelter. This rule builds upon HUD’s 2012 rule entitled Equal Access to Housing in HUD Programs Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity.
- 1.5 **Homeless Provider Agency (HPA)** is defined as CoC Program and ESG Program recipients and subrecipients, and other homeless prevention and assistance programs that provide housing and/or services.
- 1.6 **McKinney-Vento Act Local Education Agency (LEA)** is defined as a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.
- 1.7 **Mobile Assessment** is defined to mean an agency that performs screening and assessment of at imminent risk or homeless individuals using the written standards and tools adopted in this policy. Washington County has identified two mobile assessment agencies that target specific populations:
 - a) Boys And Girls Aid “Safe Place Youth Shelter” – runaway and homeless youth.
 - b) Luke-Dorf, Inc. “PATH Outreach” – literally homeless adult individuals experiencing a severe mental health crisis; e.g. hospitalized, referred by the Mental Health Crisis Team, etc.
- 1.8 **Recipient** is defined to mean an applicant that signs a grant agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as defined in Section 424 of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- 1.9 **Subrecipient** is defined to mean a private nonprofit organization, State or local government, or instrumentality of a State or local government that receives a subgrant

Formatted: Font: Italic

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

from the recipient to operate a project. The definition of “subrecipient” is consistent with the definition of “project sponsor” found in Section 401 of the McKinney-Vento Act.

1.10 Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone. <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>.

1.11 Fleeing domestic abuse or violence is defined as any individual or family who: (i) Is fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual’s or family’s primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; (ii) Has no other residence; and (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing (24CFR 578.3).

Formatted: Indent: Hanging: 0.31"

Formatted: Font: Bold

2. COMMUNITY CONNECT OVERVIEW

A coordinated ~~and centralized~~ assessment system, hereafter called *Community Connect*, is a system designed to provide people at imminent risk of homelessness (within 14 days) or experiencing homelessness with a centralized access point ~~and a~~ coordinated intake, assessment and process for referral to housing and services. *Community Connect* operating standards are established in this policy, to include evaluation of the *Community Connect* performance by the HSSN. The same assessment is performed at all access points and utilizes a standardized decision-making process.

Community Connect will:

2.1 Cover the geographic area of Washington County, Oregon.

2.2 Be easy to access by individuals and families, including people fleeing domestic violence, by calling (503) 640-3263, a phone number managed by ~~through~~ Community Action Organization, a nonprofit agency selected by the HSSN to operate as the communitywide access point to the coordinated and centralized assessment system.

2.3 Provides as a component of outreach, m ~~Mobile Assessment is an alternate~~ screening and assessment ~~point~~ that will operate in compliance with the written standards identified in this policy to ensure equity for people receiving screening, assessment and referral to community resources whether people enter the centralized assessment system through *Community Connect* or one of the two authorized mobile screening and assessment agencies.

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- a) Luke-Dorf, Inc. – Upon completion of the screening and assessment, the Specialist will contact the *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist to review the assessment score and determine housing referral/placement.
- b) Boys ~~&~~And Girls Aid – Upon completion of the screening and assessment, the agency will make the appropriate housing referral/placement for the unaccompanied homeless youth, to include programs for family reunification, shelter, Transitional Living Program, or referral to *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist if the individual is 18 years or older.

2.4 Use comprehensive and standard assessment tools with written standards to evaluate the eligibility of individuals and families for assistance, and make appropriate housing placement referrals.

2.5 Be well advertised to the public.

2.6 Be data driven using HMIS, and as available, other data sources to compliment planning and evaluation activities of the HSSN.

2.7 *Community Connect is the only referral source for CoC Program and ESG funded projects and activities, and will include other local, state and federal housing programs in coordination with mainstream resources serving homeless populations. At a minimum will include CoC Program and ESG funded projects and activities, and coordinate with mainstream resources and other programs serving homeless.*

2.8 Provide placement and accommodation of individuals in a manner that supports the individual’s gender identity, to include Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT).

2.9 Be culturally sensitive and provide bi-lingual services, to the extent possible.

[2.10 The screening and assessment process is defined in Section 6 and Section 7 of this policy.](#)

Formatted: Indent: Hanging: 0.31"

3. ALIGNMENT WITH HOUSING AND SERVICES

Community Connect will align with prevention and homeless assistance programs targeted to serve the homeless, to include:

3.1 All CoC Program projects funded under 24 CFR Part 578.23(c)(9).

3.2 All Emergency Solution Grant projects and activities funded under 24 CFR Part 576.400(a).

3.3 Coordination, and to the extent possible system alignment, with other targeted homeless services:

- a) HUD-VASH or Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing

“Community Connect”

Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- b) Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Grants under title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act;
- c) Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals (Section 506 of the Public Health Services Act);
- d) Healthcare for the Homeless (42 CFR Part 51c)
- e) Programs for Runaway and Homeless Youth (Runaway and Homeless Youth Act);
- f) Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (Part C of title V of the Public Health Service Act)
- g) Services in Supportive Housing Grants (Section 520A of the Public Health Service Act);
- h) Emergency Food and Shelter Program (title III of the McKinney-Vento Act);
- i) Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, DV, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (Section 40299 of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act);
- j) Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (section 5a1 of the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act);
- k) Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program (38 U.S.C. 2043)
- l) Veteran Affairs Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (38 CFR Part 61);
- m) Health Care for Homeless Veterans program (38 U.S.C. 2031);
- n) Homeless Veterans Dental program (38 U.S.C. 2062);
- o) SSVF or Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (38 DFR Part 62); and
- p) Veteran Justice Outreach Initiative (38 U.S.C. 2031).

3.4 Coordination and integration with other program resources:

- a) Public housing programs (Section 9)
- b) Housing programs receiving tenant-based or project-based assistance (Section 8);
- c) Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811);
- d) HOME Investment Partnerships Program;
- e) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families;
- f) Health Center programs;
- g) State Children’s Health Insurance program;
- h) Head Start;
- i) Mental Health and Substance Abuse Block Grants;
- j) Serviced funded under the Workforce Investment Act; and
- k) McKinney-Vento School District Liaisons in Washington County.

4. HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS)

4.1 The Continuum’s HMIS will operate as a semi-open system and comply with data privacy and security standards (24 CFR 580.35) to support the screening, assessment and referral activities of the system.

- a) Compliance with the HSSN Governance Charter adopted by the HSSN; and
- b) HMIS Data Sharing Addendum to the Agency Participation Agreement (see Appendix 10.1).

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- 4.2 To protect the privacy of the homeless participant, the homeless provider agency (HPA) may apply confidentiality filters to the client record in the HMIS system upon intake and enrollment into the HPA’s program.
- 4.3 Community Action Organization is the lead agency to develop and maintain the screening and assessment tools, as approved by the HSSN and in consultation with the HMIS Lead Agency. Community Action Organization will ensure fidelity to the system standards through:
- a) Training provided to positions performing Screening and Assessment (e.g. homeless outreach workers and site-based Assessment Specialist) on use of policy and procedures as outlined in Section 10; and
 - b) Training provided to HMIS Users who will perform Screening and Assessment in HMIS.
- 4.4 Washington County Department of Housing Services is the HMIS Lead Agency, and will ensure fidelity to the system standards through:
- a) Technical assistance provided to Community Action Organization, as necessary;
 - b) Implementation and monitoring of HMIS CoC Participation Agreements;
 - c) Prepare and provide daily housing inventory availability report to *Community Connect* and housing providers aligned with *Community Connect*;
 - d) Implementation of reporting in support of the system performance measurements, and training to Community Action and the CoC Collaborative Applicant on use of the HMIS reporting tools; and
 - e) Monitoring of HMIS data quality.

Formatted: Font: Italic

Formatted: Font: Italic

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

5. OUTREACH AND MARKETING PROCESS

Community Connect is a publicly marketed system that aligns with the communitywide outreach activities targeted to serve unaccompanied youth, adults and families with children experiencing homelessness and those at imminent risk of homelessness.

5.1 Outreach activities and marketing aligned with the system include:

- a) [A wallet-sized outreach information card printed in English and Spanish directing access to *Community Connect* via telephone at \(503\) 640-3263 or text telephone TTY via 711.](#)
- b) Family Shelter Network Intake Line administered by Community Action.
- cb) ESG-funded (Emergency Solution Grant) outreach staff and outreach activities administered by Luke-Dorf, Inc., HomePlate Youth Services, Just Compassion of East Washington County, and Open Door Counseling Center.
- de) McKinney-Vento Local Education Agencies.
- ed) HSSN listserv (the CoC email distribution that includes community stakeholders to include homeless/formerly homeless consumers, private citizens, and providers of housing, supportive services, mainstream resources, faith-based meal sites, health, education, and employment programs).
- fe) Washington County website
<http://www.co.washington.or.us/Housing/EndHomelessness/index.cfm> or <https://www.co.washington.or.us/Housing/EndHomelessness/community-connect.cfm> which includes information and referral instructions in Arabic, Bengali, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, English, Filipino, French, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Hmong, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Malay, Marathi, Myanmar (Burmese), Persian, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Telugi, Thai, Urdu and Vietnamese languages.



- gf) 211info, a statewide resource and information referral agency.
- hg) Severe Weather Shelters/Warming Centers.
- ih) Public safety officials; e.g. law enforcement, fire/EMS.

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

j) Most pages on the County website can be read by a screen reader and allow visually impaired users to zoom in and out of a page, and to increase and decrease font sizes displayed.

5.2 A flowchart visualizes the flow of homeless individuals through the outreach, screening, assessment, and referral/housing placement process. (Appendix 10.2)

6. SCREENING PROCESS

The screening process will determine at imminent risk of homelessness or homeless status of the individual or families seeking assistance, also referred to as a “household”. Households will be required to meet the federal homeless definition defined in 24 CFR Part 91.5 to be eligible for McKinney-Vento homeless programs aligned with the *Community Connect*. Eligibility of homelessness for people with developmental disability will be in compliance with 24 CFR Part 582.5 and Part 583.5. Households meeting the State definition (doubled-up or shared-housing) are eligible for non-HUD funded program resources, as available.

To access the *Community Connect* system:

6.1 Call: 503-640-3263 ~~Call: (503) 640-3263~~

- a) Phone access available 24 hours daily staffed by Community Action Organization.
- b) ~~Phone access available 24 hours daily, staffed by Community Action Organization.~~
- b) ~~Community Action Organization~~ Site-based and mobile-based access points to *Community Connect* will complete a screening-over the phone to determine homeless eligibility using the written standards identified in the Screening Tool (see Appendix 10.3).
- c) Households actively fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking will receive information on domestic violence resources to include:
 1. **Domestic Violence Crisis Line: 503-469-8620 or 1-866-469-8600 toll free**
 2. Call To Safety ~~Portland Women’s~~ **Crisis Line: 503-235-5333 or 1-888-235-5333**
 3. **Family Justice Center of Washington County: (503) 430-8300**
- d) Individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, who are seeking shelter or services will also receive information on non-victim specific providers.
- e) Households identifying as HIV/AIDS positive will receive information for the central intake at **Cascade AIDS Project: 503-278-3834.**
- f) Veteran individuals and families will receive information for veteran services with:

Washington County Disability, Aging and Veteran Services
Phone contact: **503-846-3060**
Veteran Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC)
308 SW 1st Avenue, Portland, OR 97204.
Phone contact: **503-808-1256 or 1-800-949-1004, Ext. 51256.**

6.2 Determination – Eligible for Homeless Assistance

Formatted: Underline

Formatted: Font: Not Bold, Underline

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", First line: 0"

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- a) A household that meets the homeless definition will receive information and referral to emergency assistance resources, to include prevention, diversion and emergency shelter serving youth or families, to the extent these resources are available; and
- b) Households not going into shelter will be scheduled to meet with a *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist. The meeting will be scheduled within 5 business days from the initial screening defined in this section, with the household receiving information on the date, time and location of the Assessment Specialist meeting.
- c) Veterans meeting the HUD homeless definition will be offered an assessment with *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist for eligibility for veteran and other assistance, as well as contact referral to DAVS and CRRC.
- d) Data collected during the screening interview is entered into HMIS, and will be used for assessment purposes and system performance evaluation.

6.3 Determination - Not Eligible for Homeless Assistance

- a) A household that does not meet the homeless definition will receive information and referral to available community resources, to include 211info, mainstream resources serving people in poverty, and systems of care as defined in the Building Sustainable Partnerships for Housing matrix (see Appendix 10.4).
- b) Data collected during the screening interview is entered into HMIS, and will be used for tracking demographics on populations contacting the *Community Connect*.

7. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A meeting with the Assessment Specialist and the household will determine the needs of people seeking homeless assistance, and effectively match each household with the most appropriate resources available to address that household’s particular needs.

Participants are freely allowed to decide what information they provide during the assessment process, to refuse to answer assessment questions and to refuse housing and service options without retribution or limiting their access to other forms of assistance. Community Connect does not maintain a prioritization list and provides individuals an opportunity for re-assessment in the future. Participants will never be turned away from services even if they reject referral options previously provided.

7.1 Sheltered Households – Assessment Process

Households in one of five (5) emergency shelters in Washington County, to include three family shelters: Community Action, Family Promise and Good Neighbor Center, Monika’s House for victims fleeing domestic violence, and Safe Place Youth Shelter will be assessed by shelter staff, to include:

- a) Shelter staff will complete assessment of housing and service needs using the HMIS Assessment Tool (see Appendix 10.5);
- b) With the exception of Monika’s House, the shelter staff will enter household data in HMIS, and upload supporting documentation for Verification of Homelessness and identification (include all that are applicable):

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", Hanging: 0.75", Tab stops: 0.75", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", Hanging: 0.75", Tab stops: 0.75", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: Underline

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

1. Homeless Verification and Self-Declaration of Housing form (see Appendix 10.6)
 2. Resource Eligibility and Housing Options form (see Appendix 10.7)
 3. Staff Affidavit form (see Appendix 10.8)
 4. Photocopy of Identification; e.g. Driver License, Social
- c) The Assessment Specialist at Monika’s House will maintain data in the HMIS comparable database for victim of domestic violence data. The Assessment specialist will compile hardcopies of the following documents that will be made available upon referral/housing placement with the *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist:
1. Homeless Verification and Self-Declaration of Housing form (see Appendix 10.6)
 2. Resource Eligibility and Housing Options form (see Appendix 10.7)
 3. Staff Affidavit form (see Appendix 10.8)
 4. Photocopy of Identification; e.g. Driver License, Social
 5. Informed Consent Form
- d) The Assessment Specialists from the five (5) shelter facilities will schedule a meeting with *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist to complete the Scoring Criteria in preparation for the referral/housing placement process outlined in Section 7.3.

7.2 Non-sheltered Households – Assessment Process

- a) The household will meet with the *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist for assessment of need, or a mobile assessment performed by trained outreach workers using the same screening and assessment criteria.
- b) With the homeless household, the Assessment Specialist will complete the housing and service needs using the HMIS Assessment Tool (Appendix 10.5) or the Mobile Assessment Specialist duties performed by PATH and other trained outreach workers using the paper Assessment Tool that is later entered into HMIS (Appendix 10.5.a).
- c) In HMIS, upload homeless eligibility documentation:
 1. Homeless Verification and Self-Declaration of Housing form (see Appendix 10.6)
 2. Resource Eligibility and Housing Options form (see Appendix 10.7)
 3. Staff Affidavit for Reasonable Accommodation; if applicable (see Appendix 10.8)
 4. Photocopy of Identification; e.g. Driver License, Social Security Card, etc.

7.3 The Assessment Tools and Scoring Process For All Households

The Assessment Specialist will determine the appropriate housing and service program using the HMIS Assessment Tool to identify the household needs and strengths.

- a) Six categories of the Assessment Tool align with a Assessment Scoring Guide that applies points based on low, medium and high housing barriers and household service needs, and prioritizes which eligible households will receive transitional, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing assistance (see Appendix 10.9).
- b) The HMIS Assessment tool will apply points in each category of the assessment based on the client response, up to a total of 138 points.
 - 1) Monthly Income and Benefits – 10 points
 - 2) Housing History – 12 points
 - 3) Employment – 12 points
 - 4) Financial Status/Debts – 10 points

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- 5) Criminal History – 36 points
- 6) Health – 40 points

7.4 Privacy Protection.

The assessment process does not require disclosure of specific disabilities or diagnosis. Specific diagnosis or disability information may only be obtained for purposes of determining program eligibility to make appropriate referrals.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", First line: 0"

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5", First line: 0",
Tab stops: Not at 0.25"

8. REFERRAL AND HOUSING PLACEMENT PROCESS

The Assessment and Scoring process determines the household referral by Program Type to the appropriate housing project. Referrals are made to open beds and/or programs with capacity to serve in low and moderate housing needs. For homeless households scoring 75 points or higher, the household is referred to housing programs that have open beds and projects that maintain a wait list. When no housing resources are available, the household is advised of other community resources to address basic needs.

Appendix 10.9 includes a matrix used by determination of housing referral based on the assessment score that aligns with the most appropriate program types and referral to housing projects.

Appendix 10.9.a is a report published daily from HMIS that includes all program types and housing projects aligned with *Community Connect*, and serves as a supporting document to Appendix 10.9. This report mirrors the continuous Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) and provides real-time data on programs with empty beds or capacity to serve additional homeless households.

Formatted: Font: Italic

8.1 Prioritizing Populations for Permanent Housing Placement

The local continuum prioritizes housing and resources in alignment with *A Road Home: 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Washington County* and *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan*. The local priority will be delivered in the following order through new resources and turn-over of housing units not dedicated and/or not prioritized for occupancy.

- a) **First Priority – Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Long Periods of Episodic Homelessness and Severe Service Needs.** The CoC prioritized new and turn-over non-chronic designated units for persons experiencing chronic homelessness and other vulnerable homeless populations in permanent supportive housing and will comply with recordkeeping requirements for documenting chronic homeless status, in alignment with HUD CPD-16-11¹ (supersedes CPD-14-012). Eligible persons who have experienced fewer than 4 occasions where they have been living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in

¹ HUD CPD-16-11 Notice For Prioritizing Chronic Homeless and Other Vulnerable Populations (Adopted by HSSN on 8/3/2016) <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5108/notice-cpd-16-11-prioritizing-persons-experiencing-chronic-homelessness-and-other-vulnerable-homeless-persons-in-psh/>

“Community Connect”

Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

shelter but where the cumulative time homeless is at least 12 months and has been identified as having severe service needs.

- b) **Second Priority – Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Severe Service Needs and Length of Time (LOT) Homeless.** The CoC will prioritize eligible persons residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in shelter and has been identified as having severe service needs. The CoC will prioritize people with the longest length of homelessness.
- c) **Third Priority – Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Haven, or Emergency Shelter without Severe Service Needs and Length of Time (LOT) Homeless.** The CoC will prioritize eligible persons residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in shelter where the person has not been identified as having severe service needs. The CoC will prioritize people with the longest length of homelessness, but there is not a minimum length of time required.
- d) **Fourth Priority – Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing.** The CoC will prioritize eligible persons residing in transitional housing, where prior to residing in the transitional housing had lived in a place not meant for human habitation, shelter or safe haven. This priority includes persons fleeing domestic violence or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, or stalking and prior to residing in that transitional housing they did not live in a place not meant for human habitation, shelter or safe haven.
- e) **Prioritized Single Wait List.** The CoC has a single wait list for permanent supportive housing “tenant-based” programs serving individual and families managed by Washington County Department of Housing Services, with wait lists for permanent supportive housing in “facility-based” programs managed by the project sponsor agency in alignment with this policy and the CoC system operations.

8.2 Determining Housing Placement

- a) The Assessment Specialist will enter the household Assessment Score, Housing Status and Household Type into the Program Eligibility Tool (see Appendix 10.10). The Program Eligibility Tool will identify the appropriate Project and Homeless Provider Agency (HPA) that align with the household need and eligibility.
- b) Using the HPA Project(s) identified in the Program Eligibility Tool, the Assessment Specialist will view available bed/unit data for the specific project(s) in HMIS. The bed/unit availability data as maintained in HMIS by each Project agency, and published daily by the HMIS Lead Agency.
- c) For bed/unit data not maintained in HMIS, the Assessment Specialist will contact the HPA for available bed/unit information.
- d) The Assessment Specialist will advise the homeless household of the available program options.
- e) The Assessment Specialist will contact the HPA via phone to advise a referral is in process, and confirm the availability of the bed/unit in HMIS. A confirmation email

Formatted: Tab stops: Not at 0.5"

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

will be sent referencing the unique client I.D. number in HMIS where the results of the screening, assessment and the uploaded Verification of Homelessness and I.D. documentation is stored.

- f) The household will be responsible for scheduling an intake briefing with the HPA once the referral has been made by *Community Connect*.
- g) The Assessment Specialist will complete entry/exit data in HMIS, and ensure all documentation is scanned and uploaded in HMIS within 24 hours of the Assessment.

8.3 Intake and Disposition of Referral/Housing Placement

- a) HPA will schedule an Intake Briefing with the household referred by *Community Connect*.
- b) HPA will meet with the household and have access to the screening, assessment and related documentation uploaded into HMIS, to include the Verification Of Homelessness and Personal Identification.
- c) HPA enrolls the new program participant into the program; OR
- d) HPA determines the household is not eligible for the program as a result of an inappropriate referral.

1. HPA will contact the Assessment Specialist who made the initial referral and follow-up with an email documenting the reasons for not accepting the household referral; e.g. sending a non-chronic homeless individual to a program that can only serve persons who meet the federal definition of chronically homeless.
2. The household is referred back to the *Community Connect* Assessment Specialist.

8.4 Rapid Rehousing Rent Subsidy Determination

Rapid Rehousing (RRH) is a community-based permanent housing model funded by the CoC Program and the ESG Program. The following outlines the standards adopted for the ESG-RRH program in consultation with the HSSN (see Appendix 10.11), and the standards for the CoC-RRH program.

Rapid Rehousing Assistance (Maximum)	CoC Program CoC-RRH 24 CFR 578.37(a)(1)(ii)	ESG Program ESG-RRH 24 CFR 576.104
U.S. HUD Homeless Definition Populations ²	Category 1, and 4 • Literally Homeless • Fleeing Domestic Violence	Category 1 and 4 • Literally Homeless • Fleeing Domestic Violence
Income Eligibility	Must have income at or below 30% AMI, <u>and</u> Lack resources and support network.	Must have income at or below 30% AMI, <u>and</u> Lack resources and support network.
Housing Standard	Units must meet HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS)	Units must pass HUD Habitability Standards
Percentage (%) of rent to	The greater of:	The greater of:

² Refer to eligible populations defined in the HUD NOFA. Addition resource, HUD Guidance released 3/12/2013 regarding Imminent Risk for CoC-RRH <https://www.onecpd.info/resource/2889/rapid-rehousing-esg-vs-coc/>

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

be paid by program participant, with utility allowance	30% of the adjusted gross income, <u>OR</u> 10 percent of the monthly income	30% of the adjusted gross income, <u>OR</u> 10 percent of the monthly income
Fair Market Rent Standard	Rent reasonableness	Up to the FMR for a unit
Rent Reasonableness Standard	Units in a structure must comply with HUD Rent Reasonableness Standard	Units must comply with HUD Rent Reasonableness Standard
Move-in Standards	Security deposit not to exceed two (2) months rent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent in Arrears • Security deposit
Number (#) of months	0 to 24 Months	0 to 9 months; Extensions may be granted, but not to exceed 24 months
Number (#) of times participant can enroll in RRH	Two (2) episodes of homelessness in five years, but total amount of assistance cannot exceed 24 months	No limit, but total amount of assistance cannot exceed 24 months
Supportive Service Limitation	No longer than 6 months after rent assistance stops	No limit, but total amount of assistance cannot exceed 24 months
Re-evaluate participant self-sufficiency	At least annually,	At least every 3 months
Participant and Case Manager meet to review progress	At least monthly	At least monthly

9. FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL ACCESS

9.1 Affirmative Outreach

All individuals and their families, including transgender individuals and other individuals who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth, will receive equal access to program, benefits, services and accommodations in accordance with their gender identity without being subjected to intrusive questioning or being asked to provide documentation, in accordance with the HUD final rule entitled “Equal Access in Accordance with an Individual’s Gender Identity in Community Planning and Development Programs.”

Housing and service providers aligned with *Community Connect* will implement affirmative outreach written procedures in compliance with 24 CFR Part 578.93(c) to include marketing information, information provided to participants, and access to grievance process that informs persons with regard to rights and anti-discrimination based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, familial status, or disability, and how to obtain access to facilities and services. Shelters and temporary facilities will not separate family members with the exception of facilities that require shared sleeping quarters or bathing facilities and that do not qualify as a dwelling under the Fair Housing Act may operate single-sex shelters unless doing so would violate some other Federal, State or local law. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities must be available in order to ensure disabled participants have an equal opportunity to utilize housing, including shelters, and receive essential services.

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

Greater levels of accessibility may be required for some shelters in compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act. Shelter and housing providers shall document and maintain records of compliance with this requirement.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25", First line: 0",
Tab stops: 0.25", Left + Not at 0.63"

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

9.2 Nondiscrimination

Housing and service providers will comply with all state and federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination, including the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Title III of the American with Disabilities Act. Providers may not take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, familial status, disability, marital status, source of income, sexual orientation, including gender identity, honorably discharged veterans/military status, and survivors of domestic violence:

- Refuse to rent housing or provide services.
- Make housing or services unavailable.
- Deny a dwelling or service.
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for rental of a dwelling or obtaining services.
- Provide different housing services or facilities or different services.
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection or rental or services are not available.
- Deny anyone access to a facility or service.
- Screen out individuals with too little or no income, active or a history of substance abuse, domestic violence history, resistance to receiving services, the type or extent of a disability-related services or supports that are needed, history of evictions or poor credit, lease violations/history of not being a leaseholder, or criminal record.
- Create or maintain priority lists.
- Turn participants away from services even if they rejected referral options previously provided.

Community Connect’s referral process is informed by Federal, State, and local Fair Housing laws and regulations and ensures participants are not “steered” toward any particular housing facility or neighborhood because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or the presence of children.

9.3 Cultural and Linguistic Competence

All staff administering screening and assessments must use culturally and linguistically competent practices, including the following:

- Community Connect incorporates cultural and linguistic competency into the required annual training protocols for participating projects and staff members.
- Screenings and assessments use questions for all persons that reduce cultural or linguistic barriers to housing and services for special populations.
- Access points will take reasonable steps to offer materials and participant instructions in multiple languages to meet the needs of minority, ethnic, and groups with Limited English Proficiency. Community Connect materials will be offered in English and Spanish, and translation services will include the use of bilingual staff and/or other provider resources.

Formatted: Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: 0.63", Left + Not at 0.75"

Formatted: Font: 11.5 pt

Formatted: Font: 11.5 pt

Formatted: Font: 11.5 pt

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", First line: 0", Tab stops: 0.63", Left + Not at 0.75"

Formatted: Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: 1", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: 1", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: List Paragraph, Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: -2.88", Left + 0.5", Left + 1", Left + 2.81", Left + 4.63", Left + Not at 0.75"

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- Appropriate auxiliary aids and services necessary to ensure effective communication are available for individuals with disabilities. This may include the ability to enlarge text and TTY services. Access points are handicap accessible for those with physical disabilities, such as persons with wheelchairs.

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

9.4 Domestic Violence

- a) All persons accessing *Community Connect* are asked, via the initial screening, if they are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence. If a person or persons are identified as fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, the provider, including non-victim service providers, must provide immediate referral to, and assistance accessing emergency services. The person or persons has the right to decline any and all referrals to, or assistance with access to, emergency services. Declining referrals or assistance with access will not negatively impact the person’s access to *Community Connect*.
- b) Physical assessment areas are made safe and confidential to allow for individuals to identify sensitive information or safety issues in a private and secure setting.

Formatted: Outline numbered + Level: 2 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ... + Start at: 4 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"

Formatted: Normal, Indent: Left: 0.5", Numbered + Level: 1 + Numbering Style: a, b, c, ... + Start at: 1 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: 0.75", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: Font: Bold

9.5 Grievance Policy

At the time of assessment with mobile outreach workers or site-based Assessment Specialist, persons will be advised of their right to file a non-discrimination complaint with the HSSN Workgroup.

- If less than 15 days to the next HSSN Workgroup meeting, the complaint will be added to the next regular business meeting agenda for review and act upon the complaint.
- If more than 15 days to the next HSSN Workgroup meeting, the Chair will call a special meeting to review and act upon the complaint.
- At the time of assessment with mobile outreach workers or site-based Assessment Specialist, persons will be advised of their right to file a non-discrimination complaint with the HSSN Workgroup.

Formatted: Not Highlight

Formatted: Outline numbered + Level: 2 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ... + Start at: 4 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25", Hanging: 0.25", No bullets or numbering, Tab stops: 0.63", Left

Formatted: Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: 1", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: Tab stops: 1", Left + Not at 1.25"

Formatted: Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.75" + Indent at: 1", Tab stops: Not at -2.88" + 0.63" + 0.75" + 1.25" + 2.81" + 4.63"

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

If less than 15 days to the next HSSN Workgroup meeting, the complaint will be added to the next regular business meeting agenda for review and act upon the complaint.

If more than 15 days to the next HSSN Workgroup meeting, the Chair will call a special meeting to review and act upon the complaint.

10. SCREENER AND ASSESSOR TRAINING

Mobile Assessment Specialists (outreach workers) and site-based Assessment Specialists performing *Community Connect* screening and assessment are required to complete training to ensure fidelity to the centralized assessment policies and procedures and uniform decision-making and referrals.

- 10.1 New Hire Training and Orientation: Prior to performing activities that include screening and assessment, mobile and site-based Assessment Specialists will be required to read and acknowledge understanding of all *Community Connect* policies.

“Community Connect” Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

Training will be provided on the policy and process to perform screening and assessment, with additional training completed as follows:

- a) Overview of the housing programs and resources aligned with *Community Connect*.
- b) Training in how to perform an assessment using client-centered approach.
- c) Confidentiality/privacy training that includes safety for persons fleeing domestic violence and how to determine program eligibility for appropriate referrals for persons with disabilities.
- d) Training on nondiscrimination and how to perform an assessment using a client-centered approach that is culturally and linguistically sensitive.
- e) Safety planning and training.
- f) ServicePoint HMIS training.
- g) Training on how to conduct a trauma-informed assessment. Enroll and complete within 6 months of hire Trauma Informed Care course.
- h) Enroll and complete within 6 months of hire the Rent Well course, as this training provides the Assessment Specialist with information that is beneficial to serving people who are at risk of homelessness or have housing barriers.

Formatted: Indent: Hanging: 0.63", Tab stops: 0", Left

10.2 Annual Training: In the month of May, conduct annual training for Assessment Specialists. This will include:

- a) Overview of the most recent CoC Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) submitted to HUD, with emphasis on new/future housing resources.
- b) Review of the assessment and referral process to ensure fidelity to the *Community Connect* policies and procedures.
- c) Confidentiality/privacy training that includes safety for persons fleeing domestic violence and how to determine program eligibility for appropriate referrals for persons with disabilities.
- d) Mental Health First Aid training.
- e) Safety planning and training.

11. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS AND SYSTEM EVALUATION

The HSSN will provide oversight to the *Community Connect* process to provide transparency for people working in the system and ensure consistency with how people access resources communitywide.

11.1 The HSSN will measure project and system performance outcomes based on seven criteria:

- a) Reduction in the Average Length of Time Persons remain Homeless
- b) Reduction in Recidivism
- c) Reduction in First-time Homelessness
- d) Reduction in Unsheltered Homelessness
- e) Increase in Earned Income
- f) Increase in Mainstream Benefits

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

- g) Increase in Placement to Permanent Housing from Outreach, and Placement in or Retention of Permanent Housing
- 11.2 Measurement period will be on a federal fiscal year, to align with Annual Homeless Assessment Report submitted to HUD.
- 11.3 Semi-annually, the HSSN will review the outcomes of the system performance measurement.
- 11.4 Target goals for system performance will be measured annually beginning October 1 to September 30, with CoC goals:
 - a) Average length of homelessness ≤ 30 days, or a reduction by at least 10 percent from the preceding federal fiscal year.
 - b) Less than 5 percent recidivism within two year period, or homeless again within two years decreased by at least 20 percent from the preceding year.
 - c) HMIS bed coverage rate is greater than 80 percent.
 - d) Outreach plan is comprehensive in identifying and referring homeless individuals and families to *Community Connect*.

11.5 An annual report will be provide to HSSN membership with results of consultations with participating project and project participants. The purpose of (at least) annual consultations will be to evaluate the intake, assessment, and referral processes associated with coordinated entry. Solicitation methods to address the quality and effectiveness of the entire coordinated entry experience for both participating projects and households may include surveys, focus groups and interviews. All data obtained through surveys will be in anonymous paper form or conducted through Survey Monkey and will be stored by the CoC lead agency. Documents will be retained for no longer than one year after which time they will be destroyed through a secured process.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25", Hanging: 0.38", Tab stops: Not at 0.88"

Formatted: Font: Not Italic

OR-506CoC Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County, Oregon
“Community Connect”
Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System

12.0 APPENDICES

Note: Appendix documents will retain their 10.x designation as CoC members have integrated into their daily language referring to these documents by their Appendix number; e.g. 10.10 is commonly known as the form that defines program eligibility and referral contact information.

- 10.1 HMIS Data Sharing Addendum to the Agency Participation Agreement
- 10.2 *Community Connect* Screening and Intake Flow Chart
- 10.3 Screening Tool
- 10.4 Building Sustainable Partnerships for Housing Matrix
- 10.5 Assessment Tool (ServicePoint HMIS)
- 10.5.a Assessment Tool (Paper Form used by Outreach Staff)
- 10.6 Homeless Verification and Self-Declaration of Housing form
- 10.7 Resource Eligibility and Housing Options form
- 10.8 Staff Affidavit Form
- 10.9 Assessment Scoring Guide
- 10.9.a HMIS Occupied Beds Summary
- 10.10 Program Eligibility Tool
- 10.11a Department of Veterans Affairs, Request For & Authorization To Release Health Information
- 10.11b A Road Home, ROI Client Consent to Share
- 10.12 Emergency Solution Grant Operating Manual

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", First line: 0",
Tab stops: 0.25", Left

Formatted: Font: Italic

Formatted: Tab stops: 1", Left + Not at
0.88"