Coordinated Entry

RV CoC NAVIGATOR PROCEDURES

September 2025

River Valleys
Continuum of Care

Terms and Definitions

Board and Lodge	Board and Lodge is a type of housing for individuals that provides a room or place to stay. Some Board and Lodge facilities are considered Lodging Establishments with Special Services. Each Board and Lodge facility can look very different. Board and Lodge facilities vary in size, with five or more people living together. Some Board and Lodge facilities look like houses, while others are like apartment buildings, depending on the number of people living there. Bedrooms may be individual or shared, depending on the facility. Other spaces, such as living rooms, dining rooms, or cafeterias, are shared. *If someone that is being assessed is in a Board and Lodge you will select, "Residential project or halfway house with no homeless criteria" as the location.
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.
Case Conferencing	Local process for CE staff to coordinate and discuss ongoing work with persons experiencing homelessness in the community, including the prioritization or active list. The goal of case conferencing is to provide holistic, coordinated, and integrated services across providers, and to reduce duplication. **Domestic Violence Navigators will not participate in Case Conferencing, beyond listening, unless the case conference is with the Domestic Violence Service Provider only.**
Continuum of Care (CoC)	Group responsible for the implementation of the requirements of HUD's CoC Program interim rule. The CoC is composed of representatives of organizations, including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons.
Continuum of Care (CoC) Program	HUD funding source to (1) promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; (2) provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; (3) promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and (4) optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Coordinated Entry (CE)	Coordinated Entry in the River Valleys CoC Region is a collaborative initiative designed to create a more effective and efficient homeless response system. A coordinated entry system is defined as a coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals, which covers the entire geographic area. It must be easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, well-advertised, and include a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.
Coordinated Entry (CE) Assessment	The River Valleys CE Assessment includes the Greater MN Step 1: Coordinated Entry Diversion/Triage, Greater MN Step 2: Eligibility Supplement.
Coordinated Entry Referral Specialist	This position manages the Priority List and provides high-level HMIS technical support.
Disability/Disabling Condition (HUD)	HUD defines a disability as: an impairment of long continued and indefinite duration and substantially impedes the ability to live independently. A "disabling condition" is diagnosable: • substance abuse disorder • serious mental illness • developmental disability • PTSD • cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or • chronic physical illness or disability, including co-occurrence of two or more of the above conditions.
Domestic Violence Host Agency (DV Host agency)	Shelter and organization supporting victims and survivors of relationship abuse and sexual violence, including sexual trafficking.
Emergency Shelter	Short-term emergency housing available to persons experiencing homelessness.
Category 1- Literally Homeless	Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meant for human habitation; **or** 1. Has a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; **or** 2. Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, and local government programs); **or** 3. Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution. *Note:* An individual or family only needs to meet one of the three subcategories to qualify as Homeless Category 1: Literally Homeless.
Category 2- Imminent Risk of Homelessness	An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that: 1. Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance. 2. No subsequent residence has been identified, *and* 3. The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks

	needed to obtain other permanent housing. *Note:* Include individuals and families who are within 14 days of losing their housing, including housing they own, rent, are sharing with others, or are living in without paying rent.
Category 3- Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes	HUD has not authorized any CoC to serve the homeless under Category 3
Category 4- Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence *all three thresholds must be met to qualify for service under DV	Any individual or family who: 1. Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence; 2. Has no other residence; and 3. Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. *Note:* "Domestic Violence" includes dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or family member that either takes place in, or him or her afraid to return to, their primary nighttime residence (including human trafficking).
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	Local information technology system used by a CoC to collect participant-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and to persons at risk of homelessness. Each CoC is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards. Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) is the State System Administrator for HMIS. ICA provides technical assistance and training support for providers using HMIS in MN.
Host Homes (emergency and non-crisis)	A Host Home is a private residence where the unrelated caregiver provides persons with housing, meals, assistance, and supervision.
Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)	The housing choice voucher program (Section 8) is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs).
Housing Problem Solving (HPS)	An approach that is client-centered, housing-focused, and exploratory conversation that should happen with everyone regardless of perceived needs and barriers. The goal of HPS is to explore creative, flexible, safe, and cost-effective solutions to quickly resolve the housing crisis — even if just temporarily — with limited or no financial support.
Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)	HRAs are public entities empowered to undertake certain types of housing and redevelopment projects. Projects may include such activities as planning, acquisition, clearance, rehabilitation, and construction for the provision of safe housing for persons of low and moderate income.
High Priority Homeless (HPH)	Households (individuals, families with children or youth) prioritized for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) through the Coordinated Entry (CE) system.
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
HUD Exchange	HUD Website that provides detailed information regarding definitions, processes, and program information. Anyone can create a HUD Exchange account. Review and familiarity of the HUD Binders is encouraged.
HUD Glossary of Terms	For further definitions of HUD Terms.

MN Long Term Homelessness (LTH)	People including individuals, unaccompanied youth, or families with children who lack a permanent place to live continuously for a year or more or at least four times in the past three years. Time spent in an institutional care or correctional facility shall be excluded when determining the length of time, a household has been homeless except in the case where an individual was in a facility for fewer than 90 days and was homeless at entry to the facility. **Doubled Up/Couch Hopping**: Doubled up or couch hopping is considered an episode of homelessness if a household is doubled up with another household (and duration is less than one year) and couch hops as a temporary way to avoid living on the streets or in an emergency shelter. **Transitional Housing (TH):** Time spent in transitional housing is a neutral event. It is not considered time housed or time homeless when determining LTH eligibility. **Institutions:** Time spent in an institutional care (treatment, hospital, foster care, etc.) or correctional facility (jail or prison) is a neutral event. It is not considered time housed or time homeless except in the case where an individual was in a facility for fewer than 90 days and was homeless at entry to the facility. That time can be considered time homeless. Evaluate the housing history prior to and after TH or an institutional stay to determine if it meets the state's LTH definition. **NOTE:** Minnesota's definition does not require that the person have a disabling condition
NON- HMIS List	A separate priority list not connected or accessible via HMIS. The non-HMIS list is appropriate for clients fleeing domestic violence and minor youth often fall into this category.
Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)–funded program to provide outreach and services to people with serious mental illness (SMI) who are homeless, in shelter or on the street, or at imminent risk of homelessness.
Public housing authority (PHA)	Local entity that administers public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) (aka Section 8 vouchers).
Permanent supportive housing (PSH)	Permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with supportive services to assist homeless people with a disability or families with an adult or child member with a disability achieve housing stability.
Person Centered Care	Services based on the foundations below: **Personal autonomy**- Empowering individuals by showcasing their strengths and capabilities to actively contribute to crafting solutions. **Personal choice**- The client's objectives are acknowledged and reinforced, with full support provided. **Collaboration**- Involving the client in decisions and choices throughout the entirety of their homelessness service journey. **Safety**- Seeking to comprehend and respect the client's concept of safety, while delicately posing questions that avoid re-traumatization. **Trustworthiness**- Communicating transparent expectations and boundaries to the client, and subsequently, adhering to and meeting those expectations.
Rapid re-housing (RRH)	Program emphasizing housing search and relocation services and short- and medium-term rental assistance to move homeless people and families (with or without a disability) as rapidly as possible into permanent housing.

Release of Information (ROI)	Written documentation signed by a participant to release his/her personal information to authorized partners.
Safe Haven (HUD)	Safe Havens serve as refuge for people who are homeless and have a serious mental illness. A safe haven is a form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who are on the street and have been unable or unwilling to participate in supportive services. **We do not have any Safe Havens in our CoC.**
Serious and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI)	A condition with a diagnosis of mental illness that meets at least one of the following: • The member had two or more episodes of inpatient care for mental illness within the past 24 months • The member had continuous psychiatric hospitalization or residential treatment exceeding six months' duration within the past 12 months • The member has been treated by a crisis team two or more times within the past 24 months • The member has a diagnosis of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression or borderline personality disorder; evidences a significant impairment in functioning; and has a written opinion from a mental health professional stating he or she is likely to have future episodes requiring inpatient or residential treatment unless community support program services are provided •The member has, in the last three years, been committed by a court as a mentally ill person under Minnesota statutes, or the adult's commitment as a mentally ill person has been stayed or continued • The member was eligible under one of the above criteria, but the specified time period has expired • The member was eligible as a child with severe emotional disturbance, and the member has a written opinion from a mental health professional, in the last three years, stating that he or she is reasonably likely to have future episodes requiring inpatient or residential treatment of a frequency described in the above criteria, unless ongoing case management or community support services are provided
Severe Mental Illness (SMI)	Defined as a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder resulting in serious functional impairment, which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. The burden of mental illnesses is particularly concentrated among those who experience disability due to SMI.
Transitional Housing (TH)	Program providing homeless individuals and families with interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. Transitional housing funds may be used to cover the costs of up to 24 months of housing with accompanying supportive services. Program participants must have a lease (or sublease) or occupancy agreement in place when residing in transitional housing.
Trauma (SAMHSA)	Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

Trauma Informed Care (TIC)	Trauma-informed care acknowledges the potential presence of trauma symptoms and recognizes the impact trauma may have on an individual's life, shaping an approach that is sensitive and responsive. Assessments can be more trauma- informed by allowing the Participant to take breaks, creating a comfortable and welcoming environment, and skipping questions that cause discomfort and coming back to them or allowing the Participant to refuse them all together.
VASH	HUD- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA provides these services for participating Veterans at VA medical centers (VAMCs) and community-based outreach clinics.
Victim Service Provider (VSP)	Government-based program or a nonprofit program offering safety planning, counseling, support, or advocacy related to domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, or stalking.

Purpose & Goals of RVCoC Navigator Services

River Valleys CoC recognizes that not all people experience homelessness in the same manner and many face obstacles seeking and finding housing. Housing providers are not mandated to hold units vacant for individuals meeting high-priority criteria for housing referrals within the Continuum of Care (CoC) seeking accommodation. Navigators diligently strive to engage with individuals.

Coordinated Entry (CE) Navigator positions and services within the CoC are funded to help people to move more quickly into housing and end their current episode of homelessness. By assisting people experiencing homelessness as well as providers and partners, Navigators ensure CoC compliance with the HEARTH Act and improve CE outcomes to end homelessness. Navigators have a special focus on assisting households least likely to access housing without help.

Current target populations for Navigation are:

- People fleeing domestic violence and are residing in a Domestic Violence shelter.
- People in designated rural counties that are without available shelters.

RVCoC Navigator Tasks (Scope of Service)

Primary tasks of an RVCoC Navigator

1. Receiving referrals for navigation services from Domestic Violence service provider partners and rural communities via the Rural Referral Form.
2. Initiating contact and engaging with the referred person/household sent from Domestic Violence Shelter providers or rural referrals sent from organizations in rural counties.
3. Utilize motivational interviewing/trauma informed conversations with clients.
4. Updating CE assessments.
5. Report and document closed and/or resolved cases to be removed from the priority list.
6. Offering navigation services
    a. Obtain consent to assist person/household with navigation.
    b. Describe navigation services to households or clients while clarifying a Navigator's scope of service.
7. Providing navigation
    a. Help identify mainstream resources the people/household(s) may be eligible.
    b. Connect person(s)/household(s) to possible resources.
    c. Assist with resource applications if other help is not available.
    d. Help people/household(s) to collect eligibility documentation for potential housing opportunities.
    e. Help people/household(s) identify and describe sources of income.
    f. Help people/household(s) secure IDs or other documents.
    g. Connect people/household(s) to housing providers when housing providers have requested referrals from the Coordinated Entry Referral Specialist.
8. Supporting warm handoffs and exits from navigation.
    a. Provide a handoff and introductions between person/household and housing provider.
    b. Assure the person/household can reach out with any questions.
    c. Leave lines of communication open
    d. However, case management cannot be provided.

Relationship of Navigators to other players

1. Domestic Violence partners and Rural Referral partners (Access) remain active in their communities, engaging with potential clients and providing information on how they (community partners) can offer support.
2. RVCoC Navigators *(Assessment and Navigation)* work at DV shelter locations, rural partner locations and provide Housing Problem Solving and CE assessments to individuals either over the phone or in person.
3. Host agencies *(Access/Assessment)* are locations that have agreed to allow CE Navigators to work from their location to better serve clients in person.
4. CE Housing Providers *(Housing Referral)* are locations that provide housing. The provider will contact the CE Referral Specialist when opportunities become available. The Housing Provider will contact the navigator if their client is pulled for housing.
5. Primary Case Managers or Advocates (Move In) work directly with clients to provide advocacy beyond the scope of navigators. These titles or roles may vary by organization. Navigators may collaborate with case managers to share updates and strengthen partnerships in support of clients' needs. Information sharing is permitted only with the client's consent and a signed Release of Information (ROI).

Clients' Coordinated Entry Process

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