



# Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures

County of Riverside Continuum of Care

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ADOPTED DECEMBER 13, 2017

## Riverside County CoC Coordinated Entry System (CES)

### ARTICLE I. OVERVIEW

The Riverside County Continuum of Care (CoC) Oversight Committee has developed the following **Riverside County Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures** (CES PP) in conjunction with the **Riverside County Continuum of Care Written Standards** (required under Continuum of Care Program interim rule - 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) and (9); 24 CFR 578.23(c)(9) and (11); and Emergency Solutions Grant Program interim rule – 24 CFR 576.400(d)) to operate a Coordinated Entry System (CES) that serves to increase the efficiency of the local crisis response system and improve the fairness and ease of access to resources.

The **Riverside County Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures** outlines the process and policies for full implementation of the CES, as required of Continuums of Care under 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) that are directly providing homeless housing and services, and operating Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Supportive Services Only (SSO) projects.

### SECTION 1.01 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a part of the Riverside County Continuum of Care's cohesive and integrated housing crisis response system. The CES is designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and referral for resources. In compliance with 24 CFR 578.3 and 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8), the CES will include the following:

- Coverage of the entire geographic area of Riverside County;
- Easy access by individuals and families seeking housing or services;
- Broad advertisement;
- A comprehensive and standardized assessment tool;
- An initial, comprehensive assessment of needs of individuals and families for housing and services; and
- A specific policy to guide the operation of the coordinated assessment system to address the needs of the individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers.

To further the goals of ending homelessness in Riverside County, the CES PP is also guided by:

- [USICH/HUD's Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#)
- [HUD's Coordinated Entry Policy Brief](#) that outlines key principles for an effective coordinated entry system
- [HUD's Notice CPD 17-01 - Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System](#)
- [HUD 2012 HMIS Data Standards Data Manual](#)
- [HUD Notices CPD-16-11 and CPD-14-012 on the Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and other Vulnerable Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing and Record Keeping Requirements for Documenting Chronic Homeless Status](#)

### SECTION 1.02 MISSION AND PURPOSE

The Riverside County CES (HomeConnect) serves the Riverside County Continuum of Care's goal to end homelessness and endeavors to streamline the process of prioritizing and connecting

persons experiencing housing instability with appropriate housing interventions in a manner that respects client choice in housing and client self-determination. The CES process is intended to help communities identify and prioritize persons for access to housing and services based on severity of need and vulnerability. The process also provides information to CoCs about service needs and gaps to help communities strategically allocate resources. By gathering information through a standardized assessment process, coordinated entry provides a CoC with data that it can use for system and project planning and resource allocation.

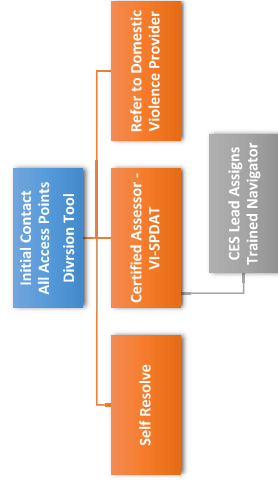
The CES is designed to:

- Ensure clarity, transparency, consistency and accountability for persons experiencing housing crisis, referral sources, and homeless service providers throughout the assessment and referral process;
- Ensure that clients gain fair and equal access as efficiently and effectively as possible, in a standardized and consistent way, to the type of intervention most appropriate to their immediate and long-term housing needs;
- Ensure that people who are experiencing a housing crisis the longest and/or are the most vulnerable have priority access to scarce permanent housing resources;
- Facilitate exits from a housing crisis to stable housing in the most rapid manner possible given available resources;
- Adhere to federal regulations and guidelines;
- Ensure full coverage of Riverside County CoC's geographic area; and
- Provide real-time knowledge about program housing inventories and capacity.

### SECTION 1.03 CORE ELEMENTS

Coordinated entry works by establishing a common process to assess the situation of all households who request help through the housing crisis response system. Core elements of the system are:

- Access – The engagement point for persons experiencing a housing crisis
- Assessment – Standardized process to gather information on people's needs, preferences and the barriers they face to regaining housing stability
- Prioritization – Established policies and procedures to ensure persons with greatest need and vulnerability receive supports they need to resolve housing crisis
- Referral – Linkage to appropriate and available housing and supportive services



**ARTICLE II. ACCESS**

The CES Oversight Committee has adopted a hybrid “No wrong door”/assessment hotline model of access to the CES. The CES provides the same assessment approach, including standardized decision-making at all access points.

The CES Lead Agency will market access to the Riverside CES by making presentations at public gatherings of housing and service providers and community events. The CES 800 number is printed on products (e.g. bracelets, lanyards, bags) and distributed to the public at public places such as libraries, hospitals, websites, public housing authorities, and social media. If necessary, the CES Lead Agency provides callers to the CES 800 number access to an interpreter service. CES Lead Agency has bi-lingual staff who are fluent in English and Spanish.

Riverside CES complies with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Federal civil rights laws, including:

- Fair Housing Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act

The Riverside County Continuum of Care non-discriminatory policy, regarding the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) final rule regarding equal access to Community Planning and Development (CPD) funded programs regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status, will ensure that individuals are aware of their rights to equal access to CPD funded programs.

Persons presenting for emergency assistance at an access point at times when the CES intake and assessment process is not operating will be referred to the CES 800 number.

Any person presenting for assistance at any access point that is identified as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking will not be denied access to the crisis response system. The operator of the CES 800 number transfers the call from any person who identifies as fleeing domestic violence to supervisory clinical staff, who will provide immediate intervention and referral to law enforcement and/or domestic violence shelters in the CoC. Outreach workers refer persons to law enforcement outreach team who support and protect.

The CES Lead Agency will include safety planning and trauma-informed care into its annual training for staff who provide initial access and assessment. To ensure privacy, the CES Lead Agency maintains completed assessment forms in secure cabinet with limited access by staff.

The three main types of access are through places, people and telephone.

First, access points include the physical locations of agencies providing housing and services such as Access Centers, emergency shelters, food banks, mental health services, homeless services and social service agencies. These locations offer access, limited assessment, referrals, and the standard services of each provider. Each location is independently operated and staffed. The hours of operation vary and depend on each provider.

Every CoC-funded program will participate in CES and will serve as a physical access point. See Appendix A for a listing and map of locations.

The CES Lead Agency will train staff at CES physical access points and CES outreach workers/navigators in the administration of the screening and assessment tools and describe the process for administering and completing the surveys. See Appendix E for tools.

Second, access is through contact with outreach workers and law enforcement personnel. Riverside CoC CES Lead agency will identify local street engagement teams and coordinate outreach efforts and access points. The CES Lead Agency will maintain a directory of outreach workers/navigators. The directory will include the following information: name, email address, phone, organization, service area, sub-populations. See Appendix B for a current directory. The CES Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant will coordinate the development and maintenance of mapping system for more effective street outreach and engagement as well as system identification of service provision needs in key county geographic areas.

Street outreach workers will enter contacts into HMIS. This entry will begin the process of entering homeless persons engaged by Street Outreach workers into the Coordinated Entry System.

Third, HomeConnect CES operates an 800 # hotline, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. This virtual access point provides an initial assessment screening. The process is:

1. CES Lead operator receives call and provides triage using a form or a checklist. See Appendix E for checklist.
2. Operator will refer to the outreach directory and refer by service area and assistance needed.
3. Outreach accepts or declines referral within 48 hours (declined referrals prompt the operator to call a different outreach team).

When no one is available to answer the call, callers are prompted to dial 9-1-1 in an emergency or to leave a voice message for all other instances.

#### **Homeless Prevention/ Diversion**

Homeless prevention assistance will be targeted to households who are at risk of losing their present housing and becoming homeless. While there are many people who are housed and have a great need for rental assistance, not everyone will become homeless without assistance. A risk assessment will be used to assess the household's level of crisis and prioritize those who are at greatest risk of becoming homeless. See Appendix E for tools.

Clients who present at any access point are triaged with a screening tool for shelter diversion or entry into the coordinated entry system. If it is determined that shelter diversion is not possible, the access point staff will refer the client to emergency shelter or CES Lead Agency for referral to an outreach worker/ navigator. The Collaborative Applicant and CES Lead Agency will coordinate the development and maintenance of a directory of resources for homeless prevention. See Appendix C for directory.

#### **ARTICLE III. ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is the process of gathering information about a person presenting to the crisis response system. Assessment includes documenting information about the barriers the person faces to being rapidly housed and any characteristics that might make him or her more vulnerable while homeless.

In addition to identifying a person's overall needs and preferences, the assessment also must appropriately triage the person by asking about immediate needs (e.g., "Are you safe where you are right now?" "Do you need medical services?"), accurately evaluating his or her vulnerability and barriers to housing, and providing information to support accurate referrals.

A coordinated outreach and engagement effort ensures that all CES Participating Agencies are using a universal approach to CES assessment.

**Assessment Process**  
Riverside CES incorporates a client-centered approach to the assessment process, including the following:

- Assessments are based in part on participant's strengths, goals, risks and protective factors.
- Tools and assessment processes are easily understood by participants.
- Assessments are sensitive to participants' lived experiences.
- Participants are offered choice in decisions about location and type of housing.
- Participants are able to easily understand to which program they are being referred, what the program expects of them, what they can expect of the program and evidence of the program's rate of success

#### **Assessment Tool**

This assessment approach includes the use of an assessment tool. A common assessment tool is a standard set of questions used by outreach and engagement workers to quickly assess people based on

need and eligibility. The tool is used to understand the needs of a person experiencing homelessness, identify prioritization by vulnerability and to refer to the most appropriate housing or service intervention based on that need. The assessment applies a standardized scoring system to assist our community in determining the most appropriate level of intervention for an individual or family.

The Riverside County CoC has selected the VI-SPDAT, Version 2.0 (Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Assessment Tool) as the CES common assessment tool. Both the Individual and Family forms are used, as appropriate.

#### **Navigation**

Navigation is defined as intensive supports, case management and engagement in development of a housing plan. Persons who require this additional support that access the CES through contact and assessment by street engagement staff will be navigated by the individual or program completing the initial assessment. If the assessed individual is not assigned a navigation team prior to placement on the CES Priority list, the CES Lead Agency will assign a navigator to assist with elimination of barriers to housing and work closely with the individual to develop a housing plan.

The CES Lead Agency will email the organization contacts in the Navigator Directory to solicit staff for assignment as navigators. The CES Lead Agency will assign navigators based on any prior involvement with the CES participant. If no organization offers for the assignment, the CES Lead Agency will look to their staff for assignment. If the CES Lead Agency staff are unable to accept the assignment, the CES Lead Agency will make an assignment from the list of organizations that are funded to conduct street outreach and case management prior to entering permanent housing.

If the participant remains on the Priority list for a period longer than 10 business days, the CES Navigation Council will conduct a Navigation Council Review of the case to identify and discuss solutions to any barriers to housing for the individual.

The individuals or families with the highest priority are assigned a Housing Navigator from the community to assist them in preparing to be referred to an available housing resource. This Housing Navigator provides support throughout the process, which may include accompanying them to all housing-related appointments and other necessary social service or benefit acquisition appointments, until such time that they are permanently housed.

The Housing Navigator serves as the primary point of contact for an individual or family after they have been assessed, and provides assistance in obtaining the program eligibility documents needed for that individual or family to enter housing. Program eligibility documents may include chronically homeless verification and disability documentation. Common documents needed are an ID, Birth Certificate, Social Security Card and DD214 (for Veterans). As Riverside County CoC has identified itself as a Housing First model, selection for housing identification does not wait until all the documents are acquired.

Additional duties of a Housing Navigator might include: securing bridge or emergency housing, applying for financial or medical benefits and assisting in the housing search if a client is issued a housing voucher rather than referred to a site-based unit.

#### **Training**

The CES Lead Agency will train staff at CES access points in the administration of the screening and assessment tools and describe the process for administering and completing the surveys. These trainings, held at least annually, will provide assessors clear guidance on CoC-approved policies and procedures. The training curricula will include a review of CES policies and procedures, requirements for

use of assessment information to determine prioritization, and criteria for uniform decision-making and referrals.

The CES Lead Agency will maintain a roster of persons who have completed the assessment training and certify persons as CES assessors. CES assessors will be encouraged to attend and participate in group sessions to share best practices and to learn from each other. These sessions could occur at the weekly Navigation Review Council meetings or at other scheduled times. The CES Lead Agency will incorporate the use of web-based technology for these training sessions.

During the engagement and assessment process, assessors will inform participants that they may file a nondiscrimination complaint by calling the CES 800 number or emailing CES Lead Agency at [homeconnect@rcmhd.org](mailto:homeconnect@rcmhd.org). Assessors will also inform participants that they have full autonomy (1) to decide what information they provide during the assessment process, (2) to refuse to answer assessment questions, and (3) to refuse housing and service options without any limitation on access to other forms of assistance.

Participants cannot be required to disclose any specific disability or diagnosis unless that disclosure is required for determining program eligibility to make appropriate referrals. Any participant data collected during the engagement and assessment process will be protected according to applicable privacy protection rules and regulations.

Assessors will submit the completed VI-SPDAT electronically to the HMIS system or if pre-arranged, via a paper copy to the CES Lead Agency or approved certified assessor.

#### **ARTICLE IV. PRIORITIZATION FOR HOUSING**

Prioritization is based on and aligns with the **HUD Prioritization Notice CPD-16-11** and **Riverside CoC Written Standards** for permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter and street outreach criteria.

#### **Prioritizing Chronically Homeless**

PSH is not a one-size-fits-all approach and should only be offered to those households that truly need that level of support. Thus, in order to use our limited resources in the most effective means possible, the Riverside County CoC is committed to prioritizing those most in need through an established order of priority. Within that order of priority, all CoC-PSH funded programs are required to ensure compliance with the “chronically homeless” definition and to fill vacant beds with chronically homeless individuals (CPD-16-011 (7/25/16)).

The Riverside County CoC has developed an order of priority to establish a uniform process for prioritizing placement into PSH through the CES. The overarching intent of this order of priority is to ensure that chronically homeless persons with the longest lengths of time homeless and the most severe service needs are prioritized for housing.

If there are no chronically homeless persons within the CoC, then prioritization will be:

- 1) **First Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Long Periods of Episodic Homelessness and Severe Service Needs

- 2) **Second Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Severe Service Needs.

- 3) **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.

- 4) **Fourth Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing.

#### **Prioritizing Rapid Rehousing**

The Riverside County CoC will prioritize the following subpopulations:

- 1) families with children
- 2) domestic violence survivors
- 3) single adults
- 4) veterans that can exit homelessness with little or no assistance, those who experience chronic homelessness and who need permanent supportive housing, and households who are seeking a therapeutic residential environment, including those recovering from addiction.

#### **Prioritizing Transitional Housing**

The Riverside County CoC prioritizes TH as follows (2015 HUD CoC NOFA):

- 1) Domestic violence survivors and youth ages 18 – 24 will be prioritized for transitional housing if they are not assessed as chronically homeless.
- 2) All chronically homeless individuals and families will not be served through transitional housing unless other housing is not available (Coordinated Entry Brief, pg. 5). Such households will be served by permanent supportive housing through a Housing First approach.

#### **Emergency Shelter**

Access and entry to emergency shelter will not be subject to prioritization based on severity of service need or vulnerability, allowing for an immediate crisis response. Essential services provided by emergency shelters will be targeted to individuals/families that cannot be diverted from the crisis response system, are literally homeless, can be safely accommodated in the shelter, and are not in need of emergency medical or psychiatric services or are a danger to self or others.

The CES Lead Agency will determine initial prioritization by length of time homeless and score on the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool).

The certified Assessor completes the VI-SPDAT and Prioritization Request Form with the client, following the completion of a pre-screening tool. The pre-screening tool identifies diversion from the crisis response system or the need for assessment and prioritization. The Prioritization Request Form may include the following factors:

- Death-related illness
- High use of public resources (e.g. law enforcement, emergency department, psychiatric facilities)
- Significant health challenges or functional impairments, including mental health symptoms
- Vulnerability to illness or death
- Vulnerability to victimization and human trafficking

- Youth at risk, especially children 0-3 living on the street
- Advanced age of 75+ years

**Process for Prioritization Review at Navigation Review Council**

- 1) Navigator/Advocate emails Prioritization Request Form to CES Lead Agency
- 2) Navigator/Advocate presents identified need to Council through the Prioritization Request Form
- 3) Navigator/Advocate leads discussion at the weekly Navigation Review Council meeting
- 4) Demonstration of need based on:
  - a. Narrative on the form
  - b. If medical or mental health component,
    - i. Initial professional assessment documentation
    - ii. Secondary verification in addition to the presenting Navigator/Advocate
- 5) Navigation Review Council discussion
- 6) Navigation Review Council recommendation

Any special exceptions to the approved prioritization standards should be presented to the weekly Navigation Review Council for discussion and review. Appeals of the process and Navigation Review Council decisions should be presented to the CES Oversight Committee.

**By Name List**

Riverside County CoC CES has established a CoC-wide list of all known homeless persons who are seeking or may need CoC housing and services to resolve their housing crisis. This list generated during the prioritization process is referred to as a By Name or Active List. The CES Lead Agency maintains the By Name List.

- This Active list is a client “by-name” list of various demographics and groups of individuals that are currently homeless. See Appendix F for sample of client record fields.
- The Active list is generated as an output from the CES data base system
- The data tracking system will track a client’s return to homelessness (recidivism), and the reasons for those ongoing events.
- Filtered “by-name” lists include veterans, individuals, families, disability and vulnerability levels.

**ARTICLE V. REFERRAL**

The Housing Linkage phase is a process by which housing provider programs and other available resources are connected with individuals/families experiencing homelessness that have been prioritized for specific housing interventions through the CES process. CES Lead Agency will maintain an Internet-based database of housing linkages, tracking the date of referral and referral outcome. CES Lead Agency processes referrals on a daily basis.

Housing providers participating in the HomeConnect CES system commit to filling vacancies with referrals from the centralized housing resource list. All CoC-funded, ESG-funded, and Riverside County-funded housing and service providers are required to participate in CES as a condition of their funding and will only accept referrals from CES to fill vacancies. Each participating program must execute a CES Participating Agency Agreement.

All CES Participating Agencies will comply with the equal access and nondiscrimination provisions of Federal civil rights laws and Fair Housing laws.

A CES Participating Agency may decline a referral for good cause, such as safety concerns for staff or participants. The CES Lead Agency will track the number of housing referral refusals and report on a quarterly basis to the CES Oversight Committee.

Each participant may refuse or deny any Home Connection referral as a part of their choice for housing options. He/she will remain on the Priority List with the notation of the specific concerns and preferences. The outreach worker or navigator will counsel the participant after any refusal. After the second refusal, the participant is marked as a Long Engagement on the Priority List. Continued outreach will be documented in the Home Connect system. The CES Lead Agency will maintain the individual/family on the Active list until the individual is willing to accept a housing opportunity.

Housing providers provide eligibility criteria for their housing units or vouchers in conjunction with signing the CES Participating Agency Agreement. See Appendix G. Upon housing unit availability, each housing provider completes the Housing Vacancy form and submits the information to the CES point of contact via email. The CES Lead Agency maintains a Housing Vacancy List by date and time of receipt of email from housing provider. Based on housing program eligibility criteria, CES Lead Agency matches the household with the highest priority to the housing provider within one day of receipt of notification of unit availability. Once a referral is made, if the housing provider is unable to locate the participant within three business days, the housing provider may return the referral.

Housing vacancies are provided to the CES Lead Agency by calling 1-800-498-8847 or emailing to the HomeConnect address, [homeconnect@rcmhd.org](mailto:homeconnect@rcmhd.org).

Housing providers may re-locate housed households or eligible individuals within households that have been referred through CES within the geography of the Riverside Continuum of Care without re-submitting that household to the CES for subsequent prioritization and housing referral.

**Appeals**

Anyone who wishes to appeal the referral process may do so by submitting a verbal or written request to the Home Connect phone number, email, or any member of the Review Council or the COC to request an appeal for reconsideration of the Home Connection process.

The information provided must include the concern, specific reason the Home Connection was not in alliance with the Home Connection prioritization process and the desired resolution.

The CES Lead Agency will present the appeal at the next scheduled meeting of the Navigation Review Council for discussion. The CES Lead Agency will present the Navigation Review Council’s recommendation at the next CES Oversight Committee for review and action.

**ARTICLE VI. DATA MANAGEMENT**

The HomeConnect system is maintained with HIMS quality security standards. All documents and Active lists are maintained with HIPAA level security. Active Lists are available for review during the Navigation Review Council (Council) meetings through a screen projection. Active lists are not to be printed or exchanged outside of the Navigation Review Council meetings. Each member of the Navigation Review Council has signed a confidentiality notice and it is reviewed in each Council meeting to ensure the highest level of confidentiality.

As the CES transitions to the Riverside County HMIS, all data collection and data sharing will comply with CoC-approved HMIS policies and standards. HUD requires that all CoC Programs, especially those that house homeless individuals and are identified on the HMIS Housing Inventory Count (HIC), collect universal data and program specific information on all clients served by CoC Programs regardless of whether the program participates in the HMIS.

Victim service providers and legal service providers are exempted from entering data directly into a CoC's HMIS because of privacy and confidentiality considerations. Victim service providers are prohibited by law to directly enter or provide client-level data to an HMIS, and legal service providers may choose not to enter client-level data into an HMIS. While they may be exempt from direct client-level data entry into HMIS, CoC recipients that are victim service providers or legal service providers still must keep required data in a comparable database.

Prior to intake and assessment, participants will be informed of reasons for the collection and sharing of personal data. Written participant consent to share personal data will be obtained. See Appendix H for Release of Information form. Participants may request to have all their information restricted. This request will not affect their status on the Active list if they wish to remain active and receive any HomeConnect referral for which they could be eligible.

All vulnerability assessments are treated with secure confidentiality. Participants are not required to disclose disability or diagnosis.

Individuals are allowed to submit a complaint either verbally or in writing to the CES Lead Agency regarding their concerns around a disability discrimination situation. Each complaint submitted will be reviewed by the CES Lead Agency. Any necessary actions and additional trainings will be handled on a case by case review status.

The CES Lead Agency reviews each day the data quality in the system to determine the need for re-training of assessors on issues around data entry, reliability, and entry timeliness.

**ARTICLE VII. EVALUATION**

The CES Oversight Committee will ensure that evaluation processes are guided by the Riverside County Continuum of Care Membership, its stakeholders, and the homeless individuals and families it serves by conducting a survey of the CES system's functionality at least once annually. The evaluation process will include feedback from focus groups and individual interviews.

This annual evaluation of the intake, assessment, and referral process will consult with program participants as well as participating projects. The evaluation results will be included in the informed process for documenting CES system gaps and updating CES policies and procedures.

The CES Oversight Committee shall designate an agent to prepare and administer the evaluation, decide on the evaluation criteria, evaluation tool, and how the evaluation results will be reported to the CoC Board of Governance.

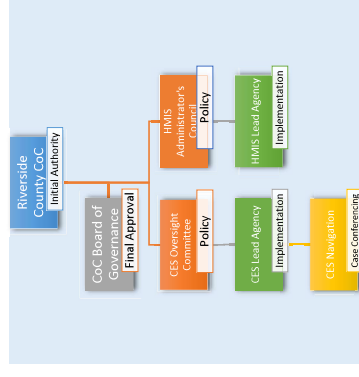
As part of its evaluation responsibility, the CES Oversight Committee will request certain data and reports from the CES Lead Agency. Examples of these reports may include the following:

- Number of calls per day to CES 800 number
- Number of referrals to navigators/ self-resolve/ emergency shelter/DV shelter
- Number of referrals by navigator

- Average case load by navigator
- Average housing vacancy count by project type and by housing provider
- Average number of days on Active list before referred/ before housed
- Number of homeless on Active list
- Issues Log

**ARTICLE VIII. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

The governance of the Riverside CoC Coordinated Entry System shall be comprised of four main entities – the CoC Membership, the Board of Governance (BOG), HMIS Administrators' Council, and the CES Oversight Committee. The CoC Collaborative Applicant serves as a funder, grant administrator and HMIS Lead Agency.



**CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)**

The County of Riverside CoC is the planning body that coordinates the community's policies, strategies and activities toward ending homelessness.

**KEY DUTIES**

Duties of the CoC are stated in section 5.04 of the County of Riverside Continuum of Care Board of Governance Charter. Regularly scheduled meetings are announced in compliance with the Brown Act.

**CoC Board of Governance (BOG)**

The Board of Governance is comprised of elected members who advocate for and provide information and/or recommendations to the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, local government and other elected officials that will monitor the overall effectiveness of the CoC planning processes and activities.

**KEY DUTIES**

Duties of the BOG are stated in section 6.06 of the County of Riverside Continuum of Care Board of Governance Charter. Regularly scheduled meetings are announced in compliance with the Brown Act.

#### **CES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

The CES Oversight Committee is comprised of key stakeholder agencies, CoC and ESG funded agencies and law enforcement agencies. It is responsible for oversight to ensure that the CES is managed, well-coordinated, collaborative, open and transparent, continually improving, and serves the needs of the Continuum of Care membership. The CES Oversight Committee serves as the policy making body for the County of Riverside Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System and makes recommendations to the Board of Governance for review and approval.

#### **CES OFFICERS**

The CES Officers should be comprised of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary.

#### **CES CHAIRPERSON**

The CES Chairperson shall be elected by the CES Oversight Committee and shall serve for a term of two years. The Chairperson shall have the following responsibilities:

- Conduct all CES Oversight Committee meetings;
- Ensure the actions of the CES Oversight Committee are consistent with CoC Board of Governance Charter;
- Review and protect the mission of the CoC and the CES Oversight Committee;
- Speak or assign someone to speak on behalf of the CES Oversight Committee, as requested;
- Sets the CES Oversight Committee meeting schedule and agenda with assistance from the Collaborative Applicant and CES Lead Agency;

#### **CES VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

The CES Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the CES Oversight Committee and shall serve for a term of two years. The Vice-Chairperson shall act when the Chairperson is unavailable to act.

#### **SECRETARY**

The Collaborative Applicant shall serve as the Secretary and will be responsible for ensuring the records and minutes of the Committee meetings are properly recorded, reviewed, and distributed in a timely manner. The Secretary will ensure maintenance of records of meeting attendance and performs other duties as may be delegated.

#### **VOTING**

Each member of the CES Oversight Committee is a voting member and may vote on any actionable item that is presented to the CES Oversight Committee for a vote. Each member shall designate a delegate and an alternate delegate who would be present to cast the member's vote.

Any member who has a financial interest in any outcome of any voting must declare a conflict of interest and not cast a vote, in accordance with 578.95 of the CoC Program Interim Rule for Conflict of Interest.

#### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The CES Oversight Committee has the following key responsibilities:

- Create and update CES policies and procedures within the Continuum of Care Governance framework that comply with all applicable federal and state laws, and local CoC Written Standards;
- Create and update CES prioritization policies and procedures on behalf of the CoC with input from all community stakeholders that are consistent with CoC Written Standards, and are applied consistently throughout the CoC geographic area for all populations to ensure full coverage;
- Ensure that ESG projects serve clients in accordance with written standards established under 24 CFR 576.400(e);
- Ensure that a policy is created to address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers;
- Ensure that an affirmative marketing and outreach plan is created and updated in accordance with 24 CFR 578.93(c) and 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) for CoC Funded projects and 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b) for ESG funded projects;
- Evaluate CES project performance and outcomes at least once yearly, and prior to submitting the CES project renewal application with the CoC annual Consolidated Application;
- Review and recommend:
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CES Lead Agency and the CoC;
  - CES Project Budget; and
  - CES Marketing Plan;
- In partnership with the **Standards and Evaluation Committee** and **HMIS Administrators Council**, the CES Oversight Committee reviews and recommends a CES Participating Agency Agreement;
- In partnership with the **Standards and Evaluation Committee**, the CES Oversight Committee reviews and recommends:
  - Guidance to the CoC Board of Governance for the monitoring tool that will be utilized to review CES grant compliance.

#### **HMIS ADMINISTRATORS COUNCIL**

The HMIS Administrators' Council is comprised of HMIS Agency Administrators and HMIS lead staff to provide oversight, guidance and data quality assurance within the chosen HMIS system, on behalf of the County of Riverside CoC.

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) refers to a client-level data base system for tracking the use of homeless programs and producing an unduplicated count of the people using homeless programs.

#### **ROLE**

The HMIS Administrators Council will collaborate with the CES Oversight Committee to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state laws regarding protection of client privacy and confidentiality regulations, user conduct, security and ongoing functionality and stability of services used to support the CES in the HMIS system.

HMIS Administrators Council and CES Oversight Committee agree they will establish mutually satisfactory methods for the exchange of such information as may be necessary in order that each party may perform its duties and functions; and appropriate procedures to ensure all



information is safeguarded from improper disclosure in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations.

HMIS Administrators Council and CES Oversight Committee also agree they will establish mutually satisfactory methods for problem resolution.

#### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO CES

In collaboration with the CES Oversight Committee:

- Determine and recommend data use guidelines for the CES system
- Determine and recommend data use guidelines for participating agencies
- Review and recommend an HMIS Workflow that considers:
  - Client consent and Release of Information to share data;
  - Confidentiality Agreement for partnering agencies and staff;
  - Use of HMIS, according to funder requirements and in compliance with HUD HMIS guidelines;
  - HIPAA compliant referral process;
  - Safety for victims of domestic violence; and
  - Local data sharing protocols and client privacy protocols adopted for the CoC.
- Ensure collaboration with the CES Oversight Committee so that the required data elements are collected per [2017 HMIS Data Standards Data Manual](#)

#### CO C COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT AND HMIS LEAD AGENCY

##### ROLE

The Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) is the HUD grantee responsible for administering the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program grants, the State Emergency Solutions Grant (State ESG), the CoC Planning Grant, and the CES Project Grant. DPSS also serves as the HMIS Lead Agency for the CoC.

##### KEY DUTIES

The Collaborative Applicant is the eligible applicant designated by the Continuum of Care (CoC) to:

- Complete and submit the CoC Registration;
- Submit the CoC Consolidated Application (which includes the CoC Application and CoC Priority Listing);
- Apply for CoC Planning funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition;
- Apply for HMIS Lead Agency funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition;
- Apply for CES Project funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition; and
- Serve as the HMIS Lead Agency with duties and responsibilities outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CoC.

#### CES LEAD AGENCY

##### ROLE

The CoC will designate a lead agency to serve as the CES administrator.

#### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The CES Lead Agency is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the CES, including but not limited to:

- Reinforces common purpose, guidelines, and shared process to assist all populations;
- Designing and executing ongoing quality control activities to ensure clarity, transparency, and consistency to remain accountable to the homeless clients served, the Riverside County Continuum of Care and its stakeholders, the CoC's Collaborative Applicant and Grant Recipient, referral sources, and homeless service providers throughout the coordinated entry process. This includes:
  - Report generating, as specified by the CES Oversight Committee
  - Communicating to user agencies and outreach coordinators
  - Deactivating/Reactivating client records
  - Responding to requests for client deletions
  - Responding to system data inquiries in a timely manner
- Create and regularly update a CES training curriculum for initial and ongoing training of Partner staff to ensure uniform application of screening, assessment and referral protocols. Creating a training delivery schedule that ensures training at least annually to all stakeholder agencies;
- Create, and submit for review and approval to the CES Oversight Committee, a CES marketing plan that conforms to 24 CFR 578.93(c) and 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) for CoC Funded projects and 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b) for ESG funded projects;
- Create and submit for review and approval to the CES Oversight Committee, a proposed CES Budget plan that conforms with CoC Interim Rule 578 and 578.3 for Supportive Services Only (SSO) grants;
- Widely distribute marketing materials regarding homeless services available through the CES and how to access those services;
- Ensure that pertinent information is entered into HMIS for monitoring and tracking the process of referrals including vacancy reporting and completion of assessments;
- Convene local collaboration and partnership meetings in the CES Navigators Council to review and resolve rejection decisions by receiving programs and refusals by clients to engage in a housing plan in compliance with receiving program guidelines;
- Manage an eligibility determination appeals process in compliance with the protocols described in the Riverside Continuum of Care Written Standards;
- Manage the manual processes as necessary to enable participation in the CES by providers not participating in HMIS;
- Provide reasonable accommodation assessments for individuals with a mobility impairment;
- Participate in periodically evaluating efforts to ensure that the CES is functioning as intended and serves the purposes of the Riverside County Continuum of Care, its stakeholders and the homeless clients it serves;
- Participate in the evaluation and adjustment processes informed by the Riverside County CES Oversight Council; and
- Ensure that all requirements (programmatic and fiscal) for CoC sub-recipient grant funds received to underwrite any part of expenses associated with the continued development and implementation of the CES are met.

#### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH THE COC

In accordance with CoC Interim Rule 578.7, Responsibilities of the Continuum of Care, the role and responsibilities of the CES Lead Agency should be incorporated in a written Memorandum of Understanding between the CES Lead Agency and the CoC. The CES Oversight Committee is

tasked with reviewing and updating the MOU not less than once annually to ensure compliance with all federal and state regulations governing the CoC and ESG Programs.

#### **CES PROJECT APPLICATION FOR THE CoC CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION**

To ensure that all programmatic and fiscal requirements are met for the continued development and implementation of the CES, the CES Oversight Committee shall review and recommend for inclusion the CoC project renewal application before it can be submitted with the CoC Consolidated Application. The CES Oversight Committee will work with the Collaborative Applicant to ensure that the CES renewal application meets the guidelines for the annual CoC Notice of Funding Availability and the local review panel process for renewing project applications.

#### **CES PROJECT BUDGET**

To ensure that all fiscal requirements for CoC sub-recipient grant funds received to underwrite any part of expenses associated with the continued development and implementation of the CES are met, the CES Oversight Committee will review the CES project budget included with the renewal project application not less than once annually, and prior to the inclusion of the renewal application with the CoC Collaborative Application in response to an open NOFA. CES Oversight Committee will also review and approve budget amendments on behalf of the CoC prior to expenditure authorization.

#### **CES MARKETING PLAN**

To ensure that all federal and state regulations housing laws are met, and to ensure that the CoC is affirmatively and proactively marketing HUD-assisted housing and supportive services that are inclusive of non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws, the CES Oversight Committee will review and approve the CES marketing plan that conforms to 24 CFR 578.93(c) and 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) for CoC Funded projects and 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b) for ESG funded projects.

#### **CES NAVIGATION REVIEW COUNCIL**

The CES Navigation Review Council is an integral part of the CES. The CES Council is responsible for:

- case conferencing;
- providing support in implementing the Continuum of Care's Coordinated Entry System; and
- following the prioritization process established by the Continuum of Care for its membership, stakeholders and homeless clients served within the CoC's geographic area.

The Navigation Review Council serves as a vehicle to open dialogue for different types of housing resources available to meet a broader range of needs and supporting outreach workers, navigators and social workers with more comprehensive solutions beyond the scarce resources available through the CES.

#### **ARTICLE IX APPENDICES AND FORMS**

- Appendix A: CES Access Sites
- Appendix B: Outreach Worker/ Navigator Directory
- Appendix C: Homeless Prevention Resource Directory
- Appendix D: Housing Providers Listing with Program Eligibility
- Appendix E: Screening and Assessment Tools
- Appendix F: By Name List
- Appendix G: CES Participating Agency Agreement
- Appendix H: Forms
  - Homeless Verification Form
  - Disability Documentation Form
  - Release of Information
  - VI-SPDAT (family)
  - VI-SPDAT (individual)
  - Navigation Review Council Membership Request
  - Prioritization Review Recommendation
  - Housing Vacancy
  - Home Connection
  - Status Update

Appendix F  
BY NAME LIST

Client Record Field Names

- Name
- VI-SPDAT Score
- Tags/Actions
- Chronically Homeless
- Date Added to Priority List
- Social Security Number
- Phone
- Email
- Date of Birth
- Length of time homeless
- Sleeping Location
- Navigator Contact Information
- Current Status
- Notes

APPENDIX H  
FORMS

**CES NAVIGATION REVIEW COUNCIL  
Membership Request**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have been designated as a potential participant in the CES Navigation Review Council, representing \_\_\_\_\_ (Organization). This Organization is a member of the Riverside County Continuum of Care (CoC).

I understand and agree to abide by the guidelines set forth in the Riverside County CoC CES program guide.

I agree to maintain strict confidentiality of information obtained through participation in CES Navigation Review Council. Information obtained will be used only for legitimate client services and administration of the above named organization. Any breach of confidentiality will result in the immediate termination of my membership and participation with the CES Navigation Review Council.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed and approved by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer Signature \_\_\_\_\_

CES Navigation Review Council  
Membership Request  
Approved 5/31/2015



**Prioritization Review Recommendation**

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_ Case Worker/Navigator name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

VI-SPDAT Score: \_\_\_\_\_ VI-SPDAT date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client currently resides: \_\_\_\_\_

- I am recommending this individual's housing need be prioritized. Demonstration of need is based upon severe impairment related to:
  - Medical Deterioration
  - Significant Mental Health Symptoms
  - Youth at Risk
  - Human Trafficking Risk
  - Abuse/Trauma
  - Underage family members
  - Disability Risk
  - Veteran Status
  - Chronic Homeless Status
  - Length of Homelessness
  - FSH (grant ending)
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- If Medical or Mental health – related need:
  - Is the initial professional assessment available? Yes No
  - Has the need been documented? Yes No
  - Secondary verification available beyond case worker/navigator? Yes No

Explanation/Justification:

Navigation Review Council Discussion
Navigation Review Council Recommendation
Navigation Review Council Action

CES Navigation Review Council  
Prioritization Review Recommendation



**Housing Vacancy**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Contact email \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

PSH \_\_\_\_\_ RRH \_\_\_\_\_ CH \_\_\_\_\_ Disability \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of units available \_\_\_\_\_ Bedrooms \_\_\_\_\_  
Area / Location Criteria: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Vacancy:  
Shared \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Family \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Specific criteria: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Confidentiality Acknowledgement**  
Some of the information provided through CES HomeConnect is protected client personal identifying information, as well as other sensitive information, which is for official and authorized use only. Any information obtained is confidential and is not to be utilized outside of the scope of housing and placement services, and shall not be disclosed to any unauthorized individual. CES HomeConnect agency participants agree to maintain strict confidentiality of information obtained through participation in CES HomeConnect. Information obtained shall be used for legitimate client housing and placement services and administration only.  
Form update 11/20/2017



**Home Connection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dear \_\_\_\_\_ Housing Provider agency name \_\_\_\_\_:

We are very pleased to award your program with a Home Connection for the \_\_\_\_\_ household to your program vacancy!

Prospective Tenant Information:  
Client Name \_\_\_\_\_  
DOB \_\_\_\_\_ CES ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Navigator \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_  
Nav Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:  
Housing Provider - Please complete and return:  
 Client has been successfully housed  
 Lease /move in date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Client was declined by agency due to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Client has declined housing offer  
 The following tenant accommodations were offered but declined:  
 Reason given for decline of housing offer:  
 Upon decline, the client was given the following linkage to other housing: \_\_\_\_\_

**Confidentiality Acknowledgement**  
Some of the information provided through CES HomeConnect is protected client personal identifying information, as well as other sensitive information, which is for official and authorized use only. Any information obtained is confidential and is not to be utilized outside of the scope of housing and placement services, and shall not be disclosed to any unauthorized individual. CES HomeConnect agency participants agree to maintain strict confidentiality of information obtained through participation in CES HomeConnect. Information obtained shall be used for legitimate client housing and placement services and administration only.

CES Navigation Review Council

Status update – Housed

Please change the status of this client to **Housed**

Client \_\_\_\_\_ UID# \_\_\_\_\_

Navigator/Case Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Move in Date \_\_\_\_\_ Lease Date \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Permanent Housing:

- Rental by Client, No Subsidy
- Rental by Client, Ongoing Subsidy
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Living with Family, Permanent
- Living with Friends, Permanent

Is this Permanent Supportive Housing?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

Previous Residence type:

- Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher
- Place not meant for habitation (e.g. a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train station/airport or anywhere outside)
- Transitional housing for homeless persons (including homeless youth)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Notes