HOPWA Program HMIS Manual

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Release & Update Information

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Introduction

The *HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS) HMIS Program Manual* is intended to support data collection and reporting efforts of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agencies and HOPWA program grantees. This manual provides information on HMIS program setup and data collection guidance specific to the HOPWA Program.

The guidance provided in this document aligns with requirements around using HMIS as stated by the HOPWA office and refers to the data elements required for HOPWA in an HMIS as established in the 2014 HMIS Data Standards. This document is not intended to replace the HMIS Data Dictionary or the Data Manual, but to complement them and relate HOPWA-specific requirements. This document is not a replacement for any specific program guidance, requirements, regulations, notices, and training materials on the HOPWA Program. This manual only addresses the use of HMIS for HOPWA.

For additional assistance please refer to the following:

- Guidance about the HOPWA program and its requirements can be found on-line at the HOPWA Program page.

- To ask a question about any HOPWA Program HMIS requirement go to the Ask A Question section of the HUD Exchange. Please be sure to select "HOPWA Program" for your question under "My Question is Related To." HUD and HOPWA program staff are working together to answer questions that come in on the AAQ related to HOPWA and HMIS.

- Information on HMIS is located in the HMIS Section on the HUD Exchange.

HMIS Project Setup Steps

It is important to be sure that communities understand the difference between a **program** and a **project** because they have distinct meanings in this context.   A program is the source of funding that the organization is receiving to run its project (e.g., HOPWA Program funding for ABC Permanent Housing project).   For data collection purposes, HUD and its federal partners refer to categories of funding within a program as **components**.

1. Identify Projects for Inclusion in HMIS

Identify all the projects within the HMIS implementation that receive HOPWA funding. HOPWA provides funding to grantees in two different ways:

- **Formula Program** (90% of national funds) awards are provided to certain states and cities that constitute the most populous unit of general local government in the Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Area (EMSA). The formula grantees receive formula allocations based on their State or metropolitan population and proportionate number of cases of persons with AIDS, and then allocate the funding to project sponsors across the EMSA or State. Formula Program providers report program accomplishments through the HOPWA section of the major city in the EMSA or State's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

- **Competitive Program** (10% of national funds) awards are provided based on a national competition to areas that are not eligible for formula funding and to projects demonstrating innovative models that address special issues or sub-populations. Competitive Program providers report program accomplishments through the HOPWA Annual Performance Report (HOPWA APR) In the event a single project receives funding from multiple HOPWA grants (e.g. 2 separate competitive grants or 1 competitive grant and 1 formula grant), separate projects should be created so that tracking expenditures and accomplishments by funding source can easily be conducted.

2. Identify Funding Components for each Project

Identify the **component** for each project funded through the HOPWA Program *per the project's grant agreement*. The HOPWA Program includes eight eligible components:

- The **Hotel/Motel (H/M)** component of HOPWA funds are designed to provide motel and hotel vouchers for up to 30 days if no appropriate shelter beds are available and subsequent rental housing has been identified but is not immediately available for move-in by the program participants. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, hotel and motel vouchers are categorized under "Transitional/Short Term Housing Subsidy Assistance".

- The **Housing Information (HI)** component of HOPWA provides counseling, information, and referral services to assist in locating, acquiring, financing and maintaining housing. This component is consistent with the category used for HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR.

- The **Permanent Housing (PH)** component of HOPWA supports facility-based housing (operating or leasing) and Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). Both methods of permanent housing assistance, enable clients to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, facility-based permanent housing and TBRA are delineated as separate HOPWA housing subsidy assistance types.

- The **Permanent Housing Placement (PHP)** component of HOPWA helps to establish a new permanent residence where continued occupancy is expected. This program covers costs associated with housing referrals, tenant counseling, application fees and credit checks, first month's rent and security deposit, and one-time utility connection fees and processing costs. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, PHP is considered a housing subsidy assistance category under the HOPWA program.

- The **Short Term Housing (STH)** component of HOPWA supports temporary shelters (facility based housing – leasing) to allow for opportunity to develop an individualized housing and service plan to guide the client's linkage to permanent housing. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, STH is combined with transitional housing as a single housing subsidy assistance category.

- The **Short Term Rent, Mortgage Utility Assistance (STRMU)** component of HOPWA is time-limited housing financial assistance designed to prevent homelessness and increase housing stability of the tenant or mortgagor of a dwelling. Grantees may provide assistance for a period of up to 21 weeks in any 52 week period. The amount of assistance varies per client depending on funds available, need, and program guidelines. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, STRMU is listed as a separate housing subsidy assistance category.

- The **Transitional Housing (TH)** component of HOPWA supports facility-based housing (operating or leasing) providing up to 24 months of housing as individuals and families move to permanent housing. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, TH is combined with short term housing as a single housing subsidy assistance category.

- The **Supportive Services** component of HOPWA supplements housing with services that help clients manage their HIV/AIDS condition. For the HOPWA annual performance reporting through the HOPWA CAPER and APR, supportive services are categorized separately from the housing subsidy assistance types.

3. Set Up Projects in HMIS

For projects new to HMIS, the System Administrator will need to follow whatever normal setup procedures are required for the particular HMIS. All projects with existing HMIS records should be checked for accuracy and consistency with the 2014 HMIS Data Standards and this guidance. This will include the following Project Descriptor Data Elements:

- **Organizational Identifiers (2.1)** – The name of the agency/organization receiving HOPWA funding and providing the direct services to clients must be entered or identified with the HOPWA specific project. An identification number will be generated by the HMIS. There should be a single record in HMIS for each agency/organization, regardless of how many projects they operate. For most formula-funded projects, this is the HOPWA project sponsor organization, unless the grantee themselves provides direct service with HOPWA funds. Depending on the local program design under the HOPWA competitive program, this could be the grantee or the project sponsor.

- **Project Identifiers (2.2)** – The name of the project receiving HOPWA funding must be entered or identified with the HOPWA specific project. HMIS administrators should note that often the name of the project on the grant agreement is not the same as the name the project is called by the organization and/or the common name in the community and often not the same name as is used on the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC). System administrators should maintain mapping information to correlate grant names, HIC names, and common names with the project identifiers either within the HMIS itself or separately.

- **Continuum of Care (CoC) Code (2.3)** – Each CoC is associated with a geographic area and has a code assigned by HUD. HOPWA-funded projects may be funded to operate in a single CoC or they may be funded to operate in a wider geographic area that covers multiple CoCs. Projects funded to operate in multiple CoCs should be associated with all of the CoC codes for which they will be entering client-level data into the HMIS. For example if a STRMU project is expected to provide financial assistance to everyone in the EMSA then all of the CoC codes which cover the EMSA must be selected. However, if the STRMU project only provides services to people in City X, and City X has a single CoC code, then select the code that applies to City X's CoC only. If a project is funded to operate in multiple CoCs and is participating in the HMIS implementations of each separate CoC with a separate project created in each, only the CoC Code relevant to the HMIS implementation need be entered.

- **Project Type (2.4)** – *Continuum Project* should be answered 'Yes' for all projects funded under programs listed below. Appropriate project types will be critical to the CoC's ability to produce System Wide Performance measures. HOPWA project types must be set up as follows:

HOPWA Program Component	HMIS Project Type
Permanent Housing (PH)	PH – Permanent Supportive Housing
Transitional Housing (TH)	Transitional Housing
Short Term Housing (STH)	Emergency Shelter
Hotel/Motel (H/M)	Emergency Shelter
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	PH – Permanent Supportive Housing
Housing Information (HI)	Services Only
Permanent Housing Placement (PHP)	Services Only
Short Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU)	Homelessness Prevention

No single project within an HMIS may have two project types. Recipients of grant awards consisting of multiple components which fund activities that fall under separate project types must have separate projects set up in HMIS for each project type. For example, if TBRA and STRMU are both provided by the same HOPWA-funded entity, there must be two different projects in HMIS: one for PH – Permanent Supportive Housing (TBRA) and one for Homelessness Prevention (STRMU).

HMIS Project Type	HOPWA Program Component	IDIS Activities
Facility-Based (Site based or Scattered site)		
PH – Permanent Supportive Housing	Permanent Housing (PH)	**Activity Category:** Facility-Based Housing Subsidy Assistance **Housing Type Drop Down:** Permanent housing
Transitional Housing	Transitional Housing (TH)	**Activity Category:** Facility-Based Housing Subsidy Assistance **Housing Type Drop Down:** Short term shelter or Transitional supportive housing facility/units
Emergency Shelter	Short Term Housing (STH)	**Activity Category:** Facility-Based Housing Subsidy Assistance **Housing Type Drop Down:** Short term shelter or Transitional supportive housing facility/units
Emergency Shelter	Hotel/Motel (H/M)	**Activity Category:** Facility-Based Housing Subsidy Assistance **Housing Type Drop Down:** Short term shelter or Transitional supportive housing facility/units
Not Facility-Based		
PH – Permanent Supportive Housing	Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	**Activity Category:** TBRA **Housing Type Drop Down:** N/A
Services Only	Housing Information (HI)	**Activity Category:** Housing Information Services
Services Only	Permanent Housing Placement (PHP)	**Activity Category:** Permanent Housing Placement (PHP)
Homelessness Prevention	Short Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU)	**Activity Category:** Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance (STRMU)

- **Method for Tracking Emergency Shelter Utilization (2.5)** – In the HOPWA Program, this data element is only relevant for projects funded under the Hotel/Motel and Short Term Housing Emergency Shelters components; these projects must utilize the Entry/Exit method -which enables HMIS records to run from the entry into the hotel or short term housing situation until the client exits.

- **Federal Partner Funding Sources (2.6)** – projects funded in whole or in part by HOPWA are to be identified based on the HOPWA component type. Select the appropriate HOPWA component for each project:

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Hotel/Motel Vouchers**

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Housing Information**

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Permanent Housing (facility based or TBRA)**

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Permanent Housing Placement**

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance,**

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Short-Term Supportive Facility**

- o **HUD:HOPWA – Transitional Housing (facility based or TBRA)**

- o **HUD-HOPWA—Supportive Services**

Enter a grant identifier for each HOPWA grant the project receives along with the grant start and end dates.

Bed and Unit Inventory Information (2.7) – projects which provide lodging (Hotel/Motel, Transitional Housing, and all forms of Permanent Housing – facility based or TBRA) must complete the bed and unit inventory information. This information, in general, matches the information provided by the CoC for the HIC. The bed and unit information is based on the number and type of beds in the HOPWA project. For projects operating in multiple CoCs but entering data into a single HMIS, each site information record must be associated with a single CoC.

- **Site Information (2.8)** – Where HMIS is used to generate the HIC, site information should be entered consistent with HIC guidance and the policies of the HMIS implementation. For projects operating in multiple CoCs but entering data into a single HMIS, each site information record must be associated with a single CoC.

- **Target Population (2.9)** – Where HMIS is used to generate the HIC, target population should be selected if the project is designed to serve that population and at least three-fourths (75 percent) of the clients served by the project fit the target group descriptor.

Data Collection Requirements

Formula and Competitive Programs may enter data into HMIS. However, at the time of publication of this Manual neither were required by HOPWA to participate in HMIS. All HOPWA projects using HMIS are required to collect all of the Universal Data Elements and a select number of Program-Specific Data Elements, which are shown below for each program component:

HMIS Program Specific Data Element	H/M	HI	PH	PHP	STH	STRMU	TH
4.1 Housing Status	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.2 Income and Sources	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.3 Non-Cash Benefits	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.4 Health Insurance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.5 Physical Disability	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.6 Developmental Disability	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.7 Chronic Health Condition	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.8 HIV/AIDS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.9 Mental Health Problem	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.10 Substance Abuse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.11 Domestic Violence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.14 C Services Provided – HOPWA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.15 A Financial Assistance – HOPWA				X		X	
4.19 Housing Assessment at Exit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.39 Medical Assistance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Information on the rationale, collection point, subjects, and instructions for each element can be found in the HMIS Data Standards Manual.

Notes on elements specific to HOPWA

Residence Prior to Project Entry (3.9) and Destination (3.12) include responses that show that a client is transferred from another HOPWA-funded program.

Health Insurance (4.4) includes HOPWA-specific fields collecting the reason a client may not have a particular type of health insurance or medical assistance.

Medical Assistance (4.39) is designed to collect information on assistance provided to clients with HIV/AIDS.

Special Data Collection Instructions

There are several special data collection issues that apply to HOPWA-funded projects of which both System Administrators and HMIS users should be aware.

Hotel / Motel

- Hotel/Motel projects should be set up in an HMIS the same as an Emergency Shelter utilizing the entry/exit method.

Permanent Housing

- Element 4.14 C Services provided includes the response "Food/meals/nutritional services". A service record for each instance of a residential meal provided is not required or intended. This response is only intended to capture information about food/meals being provided outside of the "operating costs" of the housing program. (Any preparation of food off-site is considered a supportive service.)   Do not use this response for a daily meal program prepared on-site in a housing project. Provision of food from non-housing projects would be considered "Supportive Services."

Permanent Housing Placement

- Use data element Financial Assistance – HOPWA (4.15 A) to record costs associated with moving a person into permanent housing including security deposits, utility deposits, and fees for credit checks.

Short Term Rent, Mortgage, Utility Assistance

- Use data element Financial Assistance – HOPWA (4.15 A) to record Rental assistance, Utility payments, and Mortgage assistance. STRMU does not cover security deposits or utility deposits which PHP does cover and depending on HMIS software may appear as an option.

Transitional Housing

Element 4.14 C Services provided includes the response "Food/meals/nutritional services". A service record for each instance of a residential meal provided is not required or intended. The intention of the food response is to capture when food is provided through non-housing projects, not daily meals in a housing project. Provision of food from non-housing projects would be considered "Supportive Services." Information on the rationale, collection point, subjects, and instructions for each element can be found in the HMIS Data Standards Manual.

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Supportive Services

- Element 4.14 C Services provided includes the response "Food/meals/nutritional services". A service record for each instance of a residential meal provided is not required or intended. The intention of the food response is to capture when food is provided through non-housing projects, not daily meals in a housing project. Provision of food from non-housing projects would be considered "Supportive Services."