![Sonoma County Department of Health Services logo]

Sonoma County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Committee
Agenda for January 3, 2024
12:00pm-1:30pm Pacific Time

Zoom link:

https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/92281657937?pwd=SW42V2tOcHdlY0o5OStQNFk3WUY4UT09

	Agenda Item	Packet Item	Presenter	Time
1.	Welcome, Roll Call and Introductions		Committee Chair	12:00pm
2.	Approval of agenda and minutes	1,2	Committee Chair	12:05pm
3.	Assessment and Prioritization redesign update	3	Lead agency staff	12:10pm
4.	Changes to Coordinated Entry policies and procedures (Action Item)	4	HomeFirst staff	12: 15pm
5.	Coordinated Entry Performance Evaluation	5	HomeFirst staff	12:20pm
6.	Change to prioritization score for the Monte Vino housing project	6	HomeFirst staff	1:20pm
7.	Public Comment on non-agenized items		Public	1:25pm

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public Comment may be made via email or during the live zoom meeting. To submit an emailed public comment to the CE committee email Thai.Hilton@sonoma-county.org. Please provide your name, the agenda number(s) on which you wish to speak, and your comment. These comments will be emailed to all Board members. Public comment during the meeting can be made live by joining the Zoom meeting using the above provided information. Available time for comments is determined by the Board Chair based on agenda scheduling demands and total number of speakers.

<p style="text-align:center">Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee (CEA)</p>

<p style="text-align:center">November 1, 2023, 12:00pm. – 1:30pm.</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Meeting Recording:</p>

<p style="text-align:center">https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/xgpyt3FE8sLUE8RW5JU1lJG1lAd4z6PMQPWAqVDbU7C9rzMin1-MSAQDnXwgwq65.Gm1rJQ1ZtOJpf8Ug?startTime=1698865378000</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Passcode: +m!Y4YTP</p>

1. **Welcome, Roll Call and Introductions:** Graham Thomas proxy for Committee Chair Matthew Verscheure called Meeting to order; Thai Hilton, Coordinated Entry Coordinator, went over Zoom rules around public comment and Brown Act guidelines.

   Roll Call:

   Present: Lauren Taylor, Robin Phoenix, Margaret Sluyk, Ben Leroi, Graham Thomas proxy for Committee Chair Matthew Verscheure, Justin Milligan, Thomas Phillips, Sasha Coen arrived at 12:13pm, Sara Hunt arrived at 12:12pm, Heather Jackson

   Absent: Mary Haynes, Susan Pierce, Kathleen Pozzi, Mildred Williams, Wendell Coleman

2. **Approval of Minutes and agenda:** Approval of meeting minutes from 10/4/2023 and agenda for 11/1/2023

Motion: Tomas Phillips moves to approves meeting minutes from 10/4/2023 and 11/1/2023 meting agenda; Robin Phoenix seconds.

Public comment: None at this time.

Vote:

Objections or abstentions: None

Motion Passes

3. **Coordinated Entry Self-Assessment:** Thai Hilton provided update and overview on work/review that been done for the Coordinated Entry Self-Assessment. In total there are 7 sections in the CE Self-Assessment; sections 1 and 2 have already been completed. This agenda item will cover continued work on Section 3-Assessment and Section 4- Prioritization. Screen was shared with each question/statement on self-evaluation made visible to committee; each item was open for discussion and feedback.

   Public comment: None at this time

4. Public Comment on non-agendized items: None at this time

Meeting adjourned at 1:05pm

Sonoma County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee
Executive Summary

Item: 3. Assessment and prioritization redesign working group

Date: January 3, 2024

Staff Contact: Thai Hilton thai.hilton@sonoma-county.org

Agenda Item Overview

The assessment and prioritization redesign working group has met 5 times. The group has established group norms and values and is attempting to develop a definition of vulnerability. The group recently discussed identifying vulnerability factors that can be used to create a new assessment.

The work is broken out into 2 phases, prioritization, and assessment. The work group is about halfway through the prioritization phase of the work. The work plan originally called for 11 meetings however the group is 2 meetings behind the work schedule so more meetings will be needed. Lead agency staff will continue to provide updates on the process.

Recommendation

None. Information only

Sonoma County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee
Executive Summary

Item: 4 Updates to Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures

Date: January 3, 2024

Staff Contact: Hunter Scott Hscott@homefirstscc.org Thai Hilton thai.hilton@sonoma-county.org

<u>Agenda Item Overview</u>

HomeFirst will regularly provide updates to the Coordinated Entry policies and procedures. Attached is a description of the changes and the rationale for the change.

<u>Recommendation</u>

Approve the updates to the CE policies and procedures.

Change: A clarification that specific diagnoses and victim status are prohibited from being shared in CES HMIS data entry or live in the CES Case Conference.

Reasoning: This policy comes from VAWA regulations protecting the confidentiality of victims as well as CES regulations which prohibit using specific diagnoses to make prioritization decisions. As the number of people who attend Case Conference and have access to the CES programs has increased, the Operator believes these measures are protective of participants while still allowing the needed information to be shared to continue CE processes. This policy has already been in place in practice for several years, and this change merely adds it to the written CES Policies and Procedures.

Policy language below. Additions are highlighted.

Privacy Protections

The CoC ensures adequate privacy protections of all participant information per the HMIS Data and Technical Standards (CoC Interim Rule – 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8). All providers participating in Coordinated Entry must undergo training provided by the HMIS Technician II and CES Operator before gaining access to the CES By-Name-Lists. Participant consent is obtained in a uniform written release of information and is stored in a secure location. If the participant agrees to data sharing on their release of information, that release of information shall be uploaded into the CES dashboard on HMIS. Participants are informed of all cooperating agencies who may have access to their information for purposes of referral through the CE process. All users of HMIS in cooperating agencies in CE are trained by the HMIS Administrator and CES Operator on data collection, management, and reporting.

The CoC prohibits denying services to participants if they refuse their data to be shared <u>unless</u> Federal statute requires collection, use, storage, and reporting of a participant's personally identifiable information as a condition of program participation. The CoC only shares participant information and documents when the participant has provided written consent through the CES Release of Information.

<u>New language:</u> Staff shall not share specific diagnoses nor domestic violence victim status of participants when entering data into the CES programs in HMIS or participating in CES Case Conference. CES Cooperating Agencies share information on a need-to-know basis to protect confidentiality and safety of participants (in accordance with the Violence Against Women Act), and Coordinated Entry Systems are prohibited from making prioritization decisions based on a particular disability or diagnosis (HUD Notice CPD-17-01).

CEA Committee CES Policies and Procedures Proposed Additions/Changes 2.24

1) Change: The addition of a policy emphasizing the importance of housing providers acting within 30 days on referrals. Also adds a procedure in which referrals without activity for more than 30 days will be retracted, and projects with multiple instances of timeliness issues will be required to meet with the CES Operator before additional referrals can be made.

   a. Reasoning: The CES Operator has observed many instances of housing referrals sitting in limbo for multiple months across all project types and multiple providers due to staffing capacity, budget issues, and project delays. As of 12/28, there were 99 referrals in the system pending that had been made before 12/1, and the median age for those referrals was 104 days. At one point this year there were as many as 235 referrals pending, and some participants have waited as long as 9 months to have any action taken on their referral. This issue results in participants being delayed in moving into housing when often they could be eligible for other more timely referrals. Participants who have a current pending referral are not referred anywhere else in the meantime. This policy and procedure change will encourage housing providers to better assess their own capacity before requesting referrals and to communicate more frequently with referred participants and the CES Operator when unforeseen delays occur. It will also allow participants who are prioritized and eligible for other housing opportunities to receive those opportunities when there is a delay with an initial referral.

2) Change: An addition to the Rejection of Referrals procedure that housing providers should communicate with the CES Operator by noon the day before a CES Case Conference if they wish to add a referral to the agenda.

   a. Reasoning: This procedure was already in place by necessity from the Operator, and this language merely adds it officially to the standards.

3) Change: An addition to the Rejection of Referrals procedure that requires a one week window between when a referral is requested to be rejected due to inability to contact the participant and when the referral is discussed for final rejection at CES Case Conference, which may be waived at the discretion of the Operator.

   a. Reasoning: The CES Operator has observed housing providers requesting a referral be added to the agenda for rejection at Case Conference at the last minute, when either the Operator's Outreach team is in contact with the participant or the Operator knows a community provider is in contact. "Problem solving" these cases which can be solved often by one email wastes time in Case Conference that can be more efficiently utilized to benefit all the people who attend.

All changes/additions come from page 41 of the CES Policies and Procedures, changes/additions are underlined and italicized below:

Timely Referral Actions

Participants referred to housing through the Coordinated Entry System shall benefit from timely action on the part of housing providers to allow them to move into the housing they have been referred to. When evaluating whether to request new referrals, housing providers shall consider their ability to take action on the referral within 30 days, including the following factors: staff and budget capacity, contractual obligations, and for site-based projects, the timeliness of the unit and subsidy becoming available. Action is defined as accepting the referral or documenting attempts to contact the referred participant. In general, housing providers should only request new referrals when they are confident they have capacity to accept the referral within 30 days. An exception is for large (ex. more than 10 units) new projects that need significant "ramp up" time to ensure all units can be moved into on the day of opening. For all projects, the housing provider shall document all contact or attempts to contact the participant to update them of timeline changes in the case notes of the participant's HMIS CES dashboard.

Procedure:

    a. *After 30 days passing without the housing provider entering case notes documenting attempts to accept a referred participant or accepting the referral, and where the participant would be prioritized and eligible for more referrals with the probability of more timely movement into housing that meets their preferences, the CES Operator shall retract the initial referral.*

    b. *Any project with two or more instances of referral retraction (defined as referrals occurring in the same week) for the above reason within a one-year period shall not receive additional referrals until the housing provider and CES Operator meet and collaboratively identify the cause of the issue and actions to ensure referrals are acted upon in a timely manner in the future.*

        i. *The CES Operator shall notify the Lead Agency of all instances of referral retraction due timeliness issues on the part of housing providers.*

Rejection of Referrals

Only four standardized options are available for rejecting a referral from Coordinated Entry: the participant does not meet eligibility requirements, the project is not currently accepting applications, the participant has disappeared or is not able to be located, or the participant refused the housing offer. Providers may not reject a referral without a consensus approval of all parties present at CES Case Conference. Housing providers may request to reject a referral at any CES Case Conference subsequent to the referral being made.

Procedure:

1) The Housing Provider shall record all attempts to contact participant when following up on a referral. Records of attempted contacts, contacts made and their disposition shall be recorded in the "Case Notes" of each participants' HMIS dashboard and electronic file.

2) *Housing providers shall request to reject referrals by noon the day before CES Case Conference, to allow the request to be added to the agenda.*

   a) *For referrals that providers wish to reject for the standard reason of "Unknown/Disappeared", there shall be a one week waiting period between request to reject the referral and presenting the referral rejection to CES Case Conference (step 3 below) to allow the CES Operator time to deploy CE Outreach and coordinate among providers known to be in contact with the referred participant. This one week waiting period may be waived at the discretion of the CES Operator.*

3) All referral rejection requests shall be presented at CES Case Conference including the reasons for rejection and attempts to accept the referral. Housing providers may request additional support or community expertise in moving forward with the referral. The rejection request will be voted on by all parties present at CES Case Conference.

   a. After voting approval, the Housing Provider will reject the referral in HMIS and include a note of the reason why.

4) If a provider wishes to appeal a rejection decision made at CES Case Conference, they may present the case at the Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee Shelter and Appeals Subcommittee.

- Over the last year, 176 more participants have entered Coordinated Entry than have exited.
- Participants identified as Hispanic/Latina/e/o remained at the same rate of representation: 22%, much lower than the 29% measured in the 2023 PIT.
- The average number of Days from Assessment to Permanent Housing decreased from 332 last quarter to 299 days.
- Participants who identified as American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous experience a lower referral acceptance rate when compared to the average acceptance rate.
- Black, African American, or African Individuals experience an extreme disparity when it comes to access to PSH
- When compared to the last CE Performance Evaluation, there was a 10 and 8 percentage point decrease inactive Family and TAY participants in Coordinated Entry.

<u>Recommendation</u>

None. Information only

Sonoma County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee
Executive Summary

Item: 5. Coordinated Entry performance evaluation

Date: January 3, 2024

Staff Contact: Hunter Scott Hscott@homefirsatscc.org

Agenda Item Overview

Each quarter, HomeFirst conducts a performance evaluation survey. HomeFirst will be sharing the 2023-2024 quarter 1 evaluation. A summary and highlights of the report is below. HomeFirst will share more details and welcome questions in the meeting.

Summary

2024 HMIS Data Standards – Changes in Demographic Reporting

- The previously separate Race and Ethnicity demographic fields were combined into one field, with the ability to have multiple selections.
- This demographic merge increased the number of participants who selected multiple options in one field, increasing participants categorized as Mixed Race. (Everyone who had previously selected any Race and identified as Hispanic/Latina/e/o would now have both or more selections.)
- In order to maintain a similar report structure of the previous Coordinated Entry Evaluations, participant's Ethnicity demographic was generated from the Race and Ethnicity response.

Report Structure

- The Performance Evaluation report uses Enrollment, Referral and Exit data from 10/1/2022 through 9/30/2023, denoted FY2023 Q2 through FY2024 Q1.
- The Coordinated Entry Participant list, comprised Individuals, Families, and Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), was generated on 10/19/2023, after a correction was implemented to changes made to conform to the 2024 HMIS Data Standards.

Highlights

- The number of Coordinated Entry participants active in Coordinated Entry (CE) continues to increase across all Sonoma County sub-regions. Compared to 2023 Point-In-Time (PIT) data, 87% of people counted in North County are represented in Coordinated Entry.
- Total referral acceptance rate increased from 36% to 41%

**Sonoma County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee
Executive Summary**

Item: 6. Changes to prioritization score for Monte Vino housing project.

Date: January 3, 2024

Staff Contact: Thai Hilton thai.hilton@sonoma-county.org

Agenda Item Overview

The scoring range for PSH and RRH projects are set by the local PSH/RRH standards. Any housing project that isn't PSH or RRH (generally PBV projects) get to set their scoring range for referrals. This is determined in coordination with CE to ensure that CE is referring people to projects that have the appropriate level of supportive services. Supportive services vary depending on the projects. If a scoring range ends up not being appropriate, the housing provider can request a change. Coordinated Entry policies state that the CEA committee will be informed of these changes. The Monte Vino housing project has requested a change to their scoring range. HomeFirst will explain the change.

Recommendation

None. Information only