

Interim Coordinated Entry Emergency Protocols

8/19/21 – Addendum to the Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures

Purpose: In response to the public health and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary changes to the Coordinated Entry (CE) policies and procedures are needed to ensure that the Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care’s (MCHSCoC) CE process is flexible and responsive to new information. The goal of this policy is to:

- Address and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 for the most vulnerable amongst people experiencing homelessness
- Provide guidance for who to prioritize for those resources accessible through the MCHSCoC CE system
- Authorize the CEDP Committee to make and implement adjustments and decisions relating to the CE process

Approval: This temporary policy and procedure was informed by collaborative planning through the MCHSCoC’s Coordinated Entry/Discharge Planning (CEDP) Committee, with input from homeless service providers, Mendocino County, HUD Technical Assistance. CEDP Committee meetings are public and public comment was welcomed on the policy.

- First Addendum approved by the CEDP Committee on Thursday, May 14, 2020.
- First Addendum approved by the MCHSCoC Governing Board on Monday, May 18, 2020
- 8/19/21 Addendum update approved by the CEDP Committee on Thursday, August 19, 2021

Timeframe: This policy and procedure is a temporary replacement of the prioritization and screening procedure detailed in the current CE Policy Manual. It will be in effect for at least 60 days after the social distancing element of the Mendocino County Public Health order is lifted OR until further action is taken by the CEDP Committee and/or MCHSCoC Governing Board.

Policy/Procedure:

1. To respond quickly to the changing needs and information available about the current situation, the MCHSCoC Governing Board has authorized the CEDP Committee to adjust the CE policies and procedures and implement these changes. All changes must be reviewed and approved through the collaborative planning process in the CEDP Committee. The CEDP Committee must provide the MCHSCoC Governing Board with an update at least monthly, summarizing the changes that have been approved and implemented.
2. **Screening and Prioritizing Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness**
 - a. CE Screening will gather information on an individual/household’s homelessness situation, high risk factors of complications due to COVID-19 based on Centers for Disease Control (CDC) criteria, VI-SPDAT, data to establish community prioritization factors, and universal HMIS data. The same screening tool will be used for individuals and households with multiple members. Screeners working with multi-member households will utilize the CE Screening: Household Addendum form to gather the additional information needed on each household member.
 - b. Individuals and households will be enrolled in CE on the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) if they meet the definition criteria for Literally Homeless.
 - c. The CE resources will be prioritized to individuals and households based on three factors:
 - i. Highest screening score. The screening score is determined by the following prioritization factors:
 1. The Vulnerability Index Decision Prioritization Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) has many questions relating to homelessness situation, vulnerability, health, substance use, risk, and resources. This tool will be used to give a foundation score for the individual/household.
 2. Additional points will be added for individuals/households who meet the following Mendocino County priority factors:
 - a. Individual or household member older than 55
 - b. Family with children under the age of 18
 - c. Transition age youth (TAY) head of household
 - d. Veteran
 - e. History of domestic violence impacting housing situation

- f. History of eviction impacting housing situation

- 3. NOTE: In the case of a screening score tie, length of time homeless will indicate who to prioritize.
- ii. Participating CE housing resource appropriate for the individual's/household's homelessness situation. This looks like the following:
 - 1. Prioritize for PSH: Individual/household meets criteria for Chronically Homeless (length of time & number of times homeless + disabled)
 - 2. Prioritize for RRH: Individual/household meets criteria for Literally Homeless, but not Chronically Homeless
 - a. Individual/household who meets criteria for PSH but is not interested in long-term rental assistance or does not need long term assistance (has income to support rent independently, may just need quick one-time financial support), may be referred to RRH programs.
 - 3. CE criteria for transitional housing projects will be based on those individual project eligibility requirements. The CEDP Committee will explore utilizing CE to push referrals for transitional housing programs.
 - 4. EHV will utilize the special CE criteria and process identified for that project.
- iii. Participating CE housing project eligibility criteria specific to each project (for example, Willow Terrace is a PSH project that houses people who were homeless AND have serious mental illness)