



EASTERN SIERRA CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC) MEETING

December 11, 2023, 1:00-2:30 PM

Inyo County Health and Human Services

Zoom: **Join on your computer** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83070482119>

Meeting ID: **830 7048 2119** Passcode: **547199** Call in: +1-669-444-9171

AGENDA

Public Notice: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Inyo County HHS (760) 873-3305. Notification 24 hours prior to the meeting will enable Agency staff to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

1.0 Call Meeting to Order and Introductions

2.0 Public Comment: This time is set aside to receive public comment on matters not calendared on the agenda.

3.0 Membership Updates (Action Item): Review and consider approval of CoC Board application for Eryn Dobyns, Alpine County HHS Deputy Director- Social Services.

4.0 Approval of Minutes (Action Item): Review and consider approval of draft minutes from November 13, 2023

5.0 HHAP (Informational Item): Receive an update on the transfer of HHAP 1 and 2 funds from IMACA to Inyo County to be administered on behalf of the ESCoC. Receive general updates on HHAP rounds 3 and 4.

6.0 2024 HIC/PIT Count Preparation:

1. **2024 HIC/PIT Ad Hoc committee (Informational Item)** set to meet later this week.
2. **PIT Count kits (Informational Item):** Inyo contacted Bomba socks and was able to receive an inventory for Inyo. Each County will need to request an inventory individually.

7.0 HMIS/CES Workgroup update (Action Item): Review and consider approval of the Coordinated Entry System Policy and Procedures. Comments received from Eastern Sierra Community Housing are to be considered in the discussion.

8.0 Roundtable

9.0 Future Agenda Items

1. Governance Charter Workgroup
 2. HMIS/CES Update
 3. HHIP Implementation
 4. Program overview from Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority and MOU
-



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5. Accounting of Collaborative Applicant planning grants (2019-present)
 6. Accounting of HHAP funds expended (Rounds 1-4)
 7. Update on ESCoC Board Vacancies – pending updated Governance Charter

10.0 Next meeting – January 8, 2024 1:00-2:30

11.0 Adjournment

**Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care (CoC)
Board of Directors
Candidate Application**

The information on this form is confidential and will be reviewed only by the Board of Directors.

Name: Erin Dobyns

Physical Address: 75 Diamond Valley Rd, Markleeville, CA 96120

Mailing Address: same
(if different than above)

Phone: (530) 694-2235 (530) 694-2725 (530) 721-6673
Home Work Mobile

Fax: (530) 694-2252 Email: edobyns@alpinecountyca.gov

Employer/Occupation: Alpine County / HHS Deputy Director - Social Services

Affiliations: CWDA (including Self-Sufficiency, Childrens and designee as needed to
20 Small Counties and Directors)

Organizations: First 5 Alpine Commissioner; Alpine CAPC Board Member

Memberships: CAPAPGPC (as Deputy Public Guardian)

Area(s) of knowledge, expertise and/or influence you would bring to the CoC Board as a member:

I will bring knowledge and experience from nearly 10 years of serving the Alpine
County population in Public Health, Education, and Social Services.

Reason(s) for interest in Eastern Sierra CoC Board membership:

I am eager to contribute the Alpine perspective and represent on behalf of our unique
area and population, as we work to address housing issues and opportunities
at a regional level.

Stakeholder Group that you would represent (please check one box only):

☒ Government Representatives
☐ Consumers and Advocates

☐ Nonprofit Assistance Providers
☐ Community Stakeholders

Signature 

Date 11/30/23



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1.0 Call Meeting to Order and Introductions

Members: Anna Scott, Amanda Greenberg, Jennifer Kreitz, Kris Kuntz, Patricia Robertson

Absent: None

Other: Amy Wyatt, Morningstar Willis-Wagoner, Monica Kyle, Isaiah Rich, Melissa Best-Baker, Danielle Murray, Rebecca Samaha, Francie Avitia, Kara, Olya Egorov, Tyrone Grandstrand, Sara Alden, Scott Thurmond

2.0 Public Comment: This time is set aside to receive public comment on matters not calendared on the agenda.

No Public Comment

3.0 Membership Updates (Informational): Receive information on Nichole Williamson's resignation from the Governing Board.

Ms. Scott confirmed with Ms. Williamson that she has officially resigned from the governing board. Ms. Williamson indicated interest in replacing her with someone from Alpine County. Ms. Kreitz asked how many vacancies are available. Ms. Scott believes there are 10 or more spots total but is unsure of the exact number at the moment.

4.0 Approval of Minutes (Action Item): Review and consider approval of draft minutes from September 11, 2023

Ms. Kreitz requests her name be fixed to be spelled "Kreitz" and not "Krietz."

Ms. Kreitz made motion to approve and was seconded by Ms. Greenberg

Ayes: Ms. Scott, Ms. Greenberg, Ms. Kreitz, and Mr. Kuntz

Nayes: -0-

Absent: Ms. Robertson

5.0 FFY 2023 CoC Program Competition (Informational Item): Receive an update on the 2023 CoC Program Competition grant application.



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Ms. Scott provided an update of the HUD Program Competition grant application. This year's program competition was for \$50,000, a significant increase from last year. The program competition application was submitted on 9/28/23. Ms. Wyatt says there is no update as of yet. One agency, Eastern Sierra Community Housing (ESCH), was recommended for funding. Awards will be announced around March 2024. Ms. Scott recognizes significant support from Ms. Wyatt and Mr. Rich-Wimmer of Thurmond Consulting, and thanked those who sat on the ranking and ratings subcommittee.

6.0 ESG Application Submission (Action Item): Request Board ratify approval and submission of 2023 ESG Balance of State Recommendation Package.

Eastern Sierra Community Housing applied for the non-competitive ESG balance of state funding for rapid rehousing. Due to timelines and because there was no CoC meeting last month, Ms. Wyatt signed off on a letter of support. Ms. Wyatt states that the application was due on 10/15 and was for the Noncompetitive Rapid Rehousing portion. Funding is guaranteed. This grant program is very competitive, and it was recommended that ESCH only go for the noncompetitive allocation. Ms. Scott asked for ratification of the letter of support that was submitted on behalf of the ESCoC in October, 2024.

Ms. Kreitz made motion to approve and was seconded by Ms. Greenberg

Ayes: Ms. Scott, Ms. Greenberg, Ms. Kreitz, and Mr. Kuntz

Nayes: -0-

Absent: None

Recuse: Ms. Robertson

Mr. Kuntz asked if the program is for all three counties (Inyo, Mono, Alpine) and how many households it would serve. Ms. Wyatt says it will serve the entire region and approximately 12 households.

7.0 HHAP 1 and 2 Update (Informational Item): Receive an update on the transfer of HHAP 1 and 2 funds from IMACA to Inyo County to be administered on behalf of the ESCoC.

IMACA has sold the Navigation Center building on South St. in Bishop that was originally purchased using HHAP funds and Inyo is seeking direction from CalICH to see if the HHAP 1 and HHAP 2 agreements need to be modified to account for the proceeds from sale. Ms. Kreitz states that \$416,320 are the proceeds of the sale price. Ms. Scott says the purchase amount was less than that. Ms. Kreitz asks if Clark Street was purchased with HHAP funds. Ms. Scott says not with this funding stream. Ms. Scott states that IMACA recently completed a full audit and found that there are additional HHAP expenses to claim prior to transferring the balance of HHAP 1 and HHAP 2 to Inyo. Ms. Scott indicated that Inyo is also seeking clarification from CalICH on next steps to transfer the balance of HHAP 1 and 2 funds.



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Mr. Rich-Wimmer says Thurmond consulting will be preparing the HHAP 1-4 reports by 12/15/23 and will need data from Inyo. Will be touching base with Ms. Scott shortly.

Ms. Kreitz clarified that the ESCoC has approved allocation of funds for HHAP 1 and 2, but the allocations did not include the proceeds for the sale of the Navigation Center. Ms. Scott states that Inyo County recently met with IMACA and now needs to meet with Cal ICH to see how agreements need to be modified. She can make a request that any offset will come out of proceeds from sale of property, so we don't have to revisit what we already allocated. Inyo is hoping to have more information when we meet in December. Ms. Best-Baker says we also need to know for HHAP 1 and 2 what the final expenses were and how much was spent on youth. Ms. Scott indicates that out of an abundance of caution we assumed none of it is spent on youth. Inyo will confirm that.

8.0 MOU with Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority for Emergency Housing Vouchers (Action Item): Review and consider approval of MOU.

The memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority formalizes the ability to access Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) and sets forth requirements for each of the agencies associated with the EHVs. Ms. Best-Baker states Wild Iris made some changes to the MOU, and Inyo County Counsel reviewed and had no issues with it. We have not had a contact at Stanislaus to begin the process of using vouchers regionally, however the MOU will be the way to start the process. Part of the agreement is asking landlords to take the vouchers instead of traditional payment.

Ms. Kreitz noticed that the contract runs through October 2024, and wants to know more about using funds within the 90–180-day period (see MOU: Goals I-II). She asked if ESCoC will get a certain number released over time that need to be used. The MOU also says EHVs will continue to be available until all vouchers are used. Ms. Scott will follow up for clarification.

Ms. Greenberg states that April Powell has been one gateway for applying for housing vouchers. Ms. Egorov says she has a connection with someone at Stanislaus and has had some success with submitting the applications for vouchers. There is an application online accessible to the public; she helped a client submit one but never heard back.

Ms. Scott states more information is needed before we fully approve the MOU. Ms. Best-Baker will ask Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority if they will attend the next CoC and present material on how they see the process working. She will also clarify what April Powell's role currently is. The MOU still must go to Wild Iris after ESCoC approval.

Mr. Kuntz states that EHVs are designed so that CoC's identify who the target population is. Mr. Thurmond states they have a good amount of experience with Placer setting this up and states that depending on how the MOU is framed there may be some funding



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available for agencies that work with individuals being placed in the units to provide case management support. In Placer County, it was a flat amount per placement. Initially, in Placer, there was a weekly check-in meeting between the regional housing authority and all primary case managers to discuss individuals they were working with directly. The challenge that Mr. Thurmond noted in Placer was that it takes much longer to place people into units because of availability for housing.

Mr. Kuntz states each voucher has a chunk of dollars to help fund navigation. Anthem Blue Cross has been talking with some CoCs about leveraging some of the service dollars through CalAIM, as most recipients of EHV's are going to be Medi-Cal-eligible. The MOU outlines the requirement to provide supportive services and the MCPs can assist with linkage to Community Supports providers.

Ms. Greenberg asks if it is typical for members of housing authorities to attend CoC meetings. Mr. Thurmond says he has seen this on an as-needed basis. Mr. Kuntz says it depends on the community and the relationships. Ms. Greenberg says she would love to see more participation from Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority, and this is one way to start the engagement process. Ms. Scott. will make a request for participation.

Ms. Kreitz says some of our affordable housing projects should be low hanging fruit as landlords to accept the EHV's. Mr. Thurmond says they may be able to get the full FMR which is higher than what they are charging. Ms. Egorov indicated that Blizzard Property Management may have a few landlords who are willing to take EHV's.

9.0 Summer 2023 Alpine County PIT Count results (informational Item): Receive information on the fair-weather PIT count conducted by Alpine County. Discussion regarding the potential use of this data.

Ms. Egorov provided an overview of the Alpine Point in Time (PIT) count that was conducted 10/11/23. Overall, they were able to speak to a total of 2 households to do the actual survey. Otherwise, they collected 9 households on the observation forms. If the household was not present but encampment was present, they were able to complete an observation form. Ms. Egorov thanked the CoC for the backpacks with gloves, beanies, and hand warmers that were handed out to survey participants.

Ms. Scott says HUD does not recognize off cycle counts but that the ESCoC could possibly use data in talks with the State.

Mr. Thurmond says, by statute, the HHAP program recognizes data from the January point in time count, but there may be room to have dialogue with Cal ICH to see if there would be an exception, given the extreme terrain and winter weather in Alpine County.



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Ms. Wyatt says the off-cycle count could be used in conjunction with the winter count- the State is bound by statute that they must use the PIT count. The ESCoC could propose using the winter versus summer count to show a drastic difference.

Ms. Egorov attended a rural housing summit where a representative from Cal ICH indicated that there was a conversation around using two PIT counts.

10.0 2024 HIC/PIT Count Preparation:

1. **Establish a 2024 HIC/PIT Ad Hoc committee (Action Item)** to set date for PIT count and organize activities in Inyo, Mono and Alpine.

Ms. Scott indicated that the 2024 PIT Count happens in January and the ESCoC needs to create a committee to plan activities and set a date. The count must happen the last 10 days of January.

- Ms. Greenberg, Ms. Egorov, Ms. Best- Baker, Ms. Wyatt and Ms. Ocampo will join the committee.
- Ms. Best Baker will send out something in the next week or so to organize.

2. **PIT Count kits (Action Item):** Review and consider approval for [Kit example](#) and [body wipes](#). Any other suggestions for supplies? HHIP funding is available to support the purchase of these items.

- Backpacks were done at the last-minute last year, there is funding available for counties to do something like that again this year.
- Ms. Egorov says before she organized Alpine's PIT count, she spoke with Tahoe Homeless Coalition who reached out to Bombas for a donation of socks. So, we can reach out and see if we can partner.
- Gift cards that were distributed last year were donated by a Mono County church.
- Inyo County has a software subscription for the PIT count- and will need to purchase next year's subscription.

Ms. Robertson made motion to approve the purchase of PIT County Kits and was seconded by Ms. Greenberg

Ayes: Ms. Scott, Ms. Greenberg, Ms. Kreitz, Mr. Kuntz, and Ms. Robertson

Nays: -0-

Absent: None



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- 11.0 HMIS/CES Workgroup update (Informational Item):** Review and recommend changes for CES Policy and Procedures by 11/30/23 to [Melissa Best-Baker](#) so a final draft can be considered for approval at the December, 2023 ESCoC meeting.

Ms. Best Baker provided an update: First meetings were spent talking about HIMS versus Coordinated Entry System (CES). The workgroup got the CES policy and procedure (P&P) redrafted and added some good visuals. Ms. Best-Baker asked everyone to review the draft and return comments so that the new P&P can be approved at the December meeting. The group will be working on HIMS P&Ps next. At a future meeting, we will talk about subcommittees that come out of the P&P's.

Ms. Greenberg asked how the referral overview ended up. Mono Behavioral Health has a transitional house in Mammoth and wants to put the project into HMIS so that it can be included in the HIC/PIT Count; however we do not have to use the CES for that project. There are some requirements for the Sawyer, for example, which has requirements around mental illness. We would use CES but she thinks that the language in the P&P is more strict than it needs to be to include more projects.

Ms. Egorov says that specific projects that serve different sub-populations can have their own requirements and wouldn't need to abide by what's currently described in the P&P. There should be a section clarifying that the Transitional Housing unit or the Sawyer Project will be serving specific sub populations, therefore MCBH should be consulted. For Innsbruck Lodge, the project-specific P&Ps will be reviewed by ESCoC. Each project should have its own separate P&Ps and eligibility requirements.

Ms. Greenberg asks; Say we get someone high on the priority list and you see there is a vacancy in the Wild Iris project. What is the next step? The individual housing program/provider P&Ps would come into play. Ms. Egorov says if she identifies someone, she will contact Wild Iris directly. Depends on ROI process too. Innsbruck Lodge will be a new project type under HMIS and when we place people into HMIS we will have to follow HMIS procedures.

Ms. Wyatt notes that if you have a link to the ESCoC website- you can list all agencies, that way there are no amendments to CES policy- make edits on the website with most current information.

- 12.0 Funding news:** Bridgeport Indian Colony received an award for Tribal Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (Tribal HHAP) grant program for \$509,293.76. They will have to complete the contract and have until June 30, 2027 to spend the monies.
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Bishop Paiute Tribe is one of the 17 eligible tribal entities for HDAP funding for \$100,000. This includes a 1:1 match requirement.

Ms. Best-Baker states that the Bishop Paiute Tribe has had HDAP before- difference in that there is a 1:1 match requirement. Tribal entities are getting housing money and it will be important to reach out to them. We have added a new data field so that when individuals are entered into CES, we can identify which Tribe they are registered with. No Tribal agencies are using CES at this time.

Ms. Robertson says ESCH staff have been actively participating in some training courses specifically related to Tribal housing and have had some conversations around housing projects. ESCH is not an active partner, but they have some language/skills to share with Tribes when they are ready to access HMIS.

Ms. Scott would like to gather a list of contact information for local Tribal agencies. Ms. Alden will send a list of tribal contacts for Bishop Tribe.

13.0 Roundtable

Ms. Robertson provided an update on Access Apartments, stating the project has a final \$1.4 M gap in funding. Eastern Sierra Community Housing will be presenting at Mammoth Lakes Town Council on Wednesday evening and encourages anyone who supports the project to provide public comment in favor of funding the full gap. At this time, Town staff recommend funding only \$600,000 of the gap. Ms. Robertson mentioned that \$25,000 donations/contributions have been made by several private donors and agencies. CoC decided to draft a letter of support for the project to submit to Town Council.

Ms. Scott asked Ms. Greenberg for further information about The Sawyer. This project is the first phase of "The Parcel," which is an affordable housing development in the center of Mammoth Lakes. The Sawyer will contain 81 units of housing for individuals who make 60% of the area median income or below and 13 of the units will be reserved for individuals with mental illness.

14.0 Future Agenda Items

1. Governance Charter Workgroup
2. HMIS/CES Update
3. HHIP Implementation
4. Program overview from Stanislaus Regional Housing Authority
5. Accounting of Collaborative Applicant planning grants (2019-present)
6. Accounting of HHAP funds expended (Rounds 1-4)
7. Update on ESCoC Board Vacancies – pending updated Governance Charter



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15.0 Next meeting – December 11, 2023 1:00-2:30

16.0 Adjournment



**EASTERN SIERRA
CONTINUUM OF CARE**

Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care

Policies and Procedures

Coordinated Entry System

Updated November 2023

Table of Contents

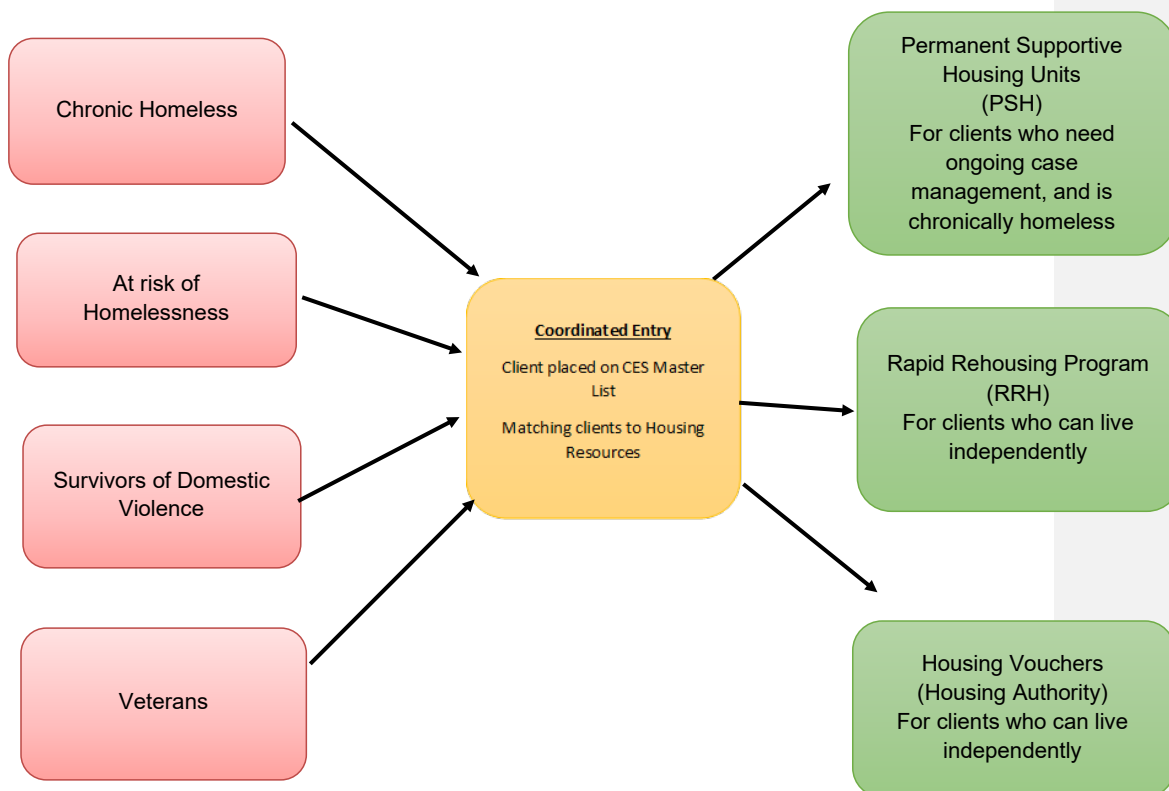
Introduction	3
	3
Geographic Coverage	3
Public Awareness	4
HMIS and CES Management	4
Accessibility	5
Emergency Services	6
Domestic Violence	6
Non-Discrimination	6
Persons with Disabilities	6
CES Intake Process	7
VI-SPDAT Survey Overview	8
Housing First Approach	8
The VI-SPDAT Survey Tool	8
CES Coordinator and End User Training	9
VI-SPDAT Survey Administration	9
Eligibility Determination	10
Prioritization in Eligibility Determination	10
Housing Connection List	11
Referral Overview	11
Referral Process	11
Data Management	13
HMIS	13
Privacy Protections	13
Secure Document Management	13
Limited Access	13
Secure Storage	13
Retention and Destruction	14
Other Standards and Requirements	14
Evaluation	14
Performance Metrics	14

Appendix A – Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs), Access Points, and Specialized Access Points	15
Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs)	15
Access Points	15
Specialized Access Points	15
Appendix B – Action Plan	16
Appendix C – Agency Structure	17
Appendix D – <i>At a Glance – Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for Definition of Homeless</i>	18
Appendix E – Innsbruck Lodge Policies and Procedures	19

Introduction

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care established a Coordinated Entry System (CES) under the Homeless Information Management System (HMIS) to ensure that Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services are prioritized based on vulnerability to increase access amongst those who need it most.

The diagram below illustrates the many pathways to housing stability for those experiencing homelessness. **{Needs to be updated by HMIS/CES Committee}**.



Geographic Coverage

The service area of the Coordinated Entry System covers the entire geographic area of Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties. Individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness can

Commented [PR1]: In rural California. I think that's important since COCs are a federal designation.

present for services at any Housing and Service Providers that directly serves the population experiencing homelessness in these counties. For a list of active CHOs and Access Points, please see Appendix A.

Commented [PR2]: Not sure this was defined yet?

Note: Not all Housing and Service Providers serve as an Access Point for CES, but providers may direct households to an Access Point.

Public Awareness

The Coordinated Entry System Intake process, Housing Projects/Programs, and mainstream services are affirmatively marketed to and available to persons regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, sexual orientation, and disability with focus on those who are least likely to apply in the absence of targeted outreach to specific subpopulations.

Resources and marketing materials will be placed at each Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO) that serves populations experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, or that serve specific sub-populations, including but not limited to the severely mentally ill, those with chronic substance abuse issues, veterans, victims of domestic violence, unaccompanied and/or parenting youth (under 18 and 18-24), and those who are experiencing chronically homelessness. The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) strives to reduce or eliminate obstacles for individuals experiencing communication, physical, policy, programmatic, transportation, social, and attitudinal barriers. To reduce or eliminate such barriers, resources will be posted online, translation will be available upon request, and free or low-cost transportation options will be identified. Materials may also be posted at police departments, parks, schools, and religious institutions to maximize potential reach.

Commented [PR3]: Is there a definitions section?

Commented [PR4]: To the best of the CHOs ability utilizing the resources available?

Resources and marketing materials may include:

- Posters that list the location and phone number of Access Points.
- Flyers with information on Access Points and the Coordinated Entry System Intake process.
- Business cards with the location and phone number of Access Points.

HMIS and CES Management

The HMIS Lead Agency manages HMIS and CES Intake processes. The HMIS Administrator is responsible for ensuring that each Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO) and their CES Coordinator:

- Identifies and trains a CES Coordinator at each respective CHO.
- Monitors performance of CES, including CES Coordinators and End Users' compliance with Policies and Procedures.

- Reviews referrals between CHOs and Housing Providers to ensure that the Housing Connection List is kept current.
- Raises awareness of CES through the creation, circulation, and update of resources and marketing materials.
- Monitors and updates the **CES Master List**.

Commented [PR5]: Definition?

Each Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO) will assign a **CES Coordinator** who:

Commented [PR6]: Is there a section which defines these employee roles?

- Reviews recent referrals to **Housing Projects/Programs** and mainstream services on a **weekly basis**.
- Moves households on the **Housing Connection List** to inactive after 90 days of no activity after End Users have attempted to make contact.
- Monitors performance of CES, including End Users' compliance with these Policies and Procedures.
- Raises awareness of CES through the creation, circulation, and update of resources and marketing materials.

Commented [PR7]: I even feel like a definition for these would be helpful

Commented [PR8]: Is that required? Seems frequent.

Commented [PR9]: Definition?

Accessibility

All people in different populations and subpopulations in Alpine, Inyo and Mono Counties, including but **not?** limited to **the** severely mentally ill, **those with** chronic substance abuse, veterans, victims of domestic violence, unaccompanied and/or parenting youth (under 18 and 18-24), and those who are experiencing **chronically** homelessness must have fair and equal access to the Coordinated Entry System and associated Housing Projects/Programs.

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) have adopted a "No Wrong Door" approach to the CES Intake process. All households experiencing or at-risk of homelessness will be entered into CES and will be offered appropriate referrals to Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services. **The same assessment approach and standardized decision-making process is offered at all CHOs and Access Points. Access Points are available to those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, regardless of permanent residency.** For a list of active CHOs and Access Points, please see Appendix A.

Commented [PR10]: I love this for our region!

Commented [PR11]: Do we need to discuss how we can improve benefits transfers, etc.?

Specialized Access Points are accessible for individuals or families who are fleeing domestic violence and/or are victims/survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. For a list of active Specialized Access Points, please see Appendix A.

All CHOs and Access Points have completed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care reflecting their understanding of these CES Policies and Procedures and their commitment to fulfilling the roles and responsibilities associated with serving as an Access Point.

Emergency Services

Emergency Services, including all domestic violence service providers and emergency service hotlines, drop-in domestic violence service programs, safe houses and/or shelters for those experiencing domestic violence, and other short-term crisis residential programs must operate with as few barriers to entry as possible. Households in the service area must be able to access Emergency Services independent of the operating hours of Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs). There will be no pre-screening required under such circumstances to enter Emergency Services and related programs. It is recommended that the household is screened by the end of the next business day.

Domestic Violence

Households will not be denied services at any Access Point or access to CES on the basis that the family or individual is fleeing domestic violence and/or are victims/survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. These households, even if seeking shelter or services from non-domestic violence service providers, must have safe and confidential access to the CES Intake process, domestic violence service providers, and Emergency Services such as hotlines and shelters. A referral to a domestic violence service provider will be pursued at the household's discretion.

Non-Discrimination

Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) that are recipients of Federal and State funds must comply with the Civil Rights Act and Fair Housing Act, and their related-State statutes. Steering households toward particular housing facilities or neighborhoods based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, sexual orientation, and disability is strictly prohibited and subject to lawsuit. All individuals and families entered in the Coordinated Entry System must be informed of the ability to file a discrimination complaint through any CHO. For more information on this item, please visit [HMIS Policies and Procedures](#).

Commented [PR12]: This is a separate document?

Persons with Disabilities

Access Points will be accessible to households with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs. The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) strives to reduce or eliminate obstacles for individuals experiencing communication, physical, policy, programmatic, transportation, social, and attitudinal barriers. To reduce or eliminate such barriers, resources will be posted online, translation will be available upon request ([as possible?](#)), and free or low-cost transportation options will be identified.

CES Intake Overview

The first step of the CES Intake process involves determining an individual or family's housing status. [This helps helping](#) the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care ensure that only those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness are entered into the database. The Department of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that households must fall under one of the following four categories to be entered into CES:

- Category 1 – Homeless.
- Category 2 – At imminent risk of losing housing.
- Category 3 – Homeless under other federal statutes.
- Category 4 – Fleeing domestic violence.

For additional information on definitions, please view Appendix D.

If an individual or family falls under one of the four categories, the End User should pursue the CES Intake process. If prevention or other mainstream services can address the housing needs of the individual or family, a referral to these services must be offered during this step. In cases of fleeing domestic violence or sexual abuse, an individual or family can choose to be immediately referred to a domestic violence service provider; the CES Intake process should continue at the provider's facility.

The first step must occur when an individual or family makes contact in-person with an Access Point/Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO). Phone and video appointments will also be made available upon request. In an emergency or after-hours situation, the individual or family should be contacted as soon as possible by the End User.

Note: The CES Coordinator may pursue the role and responsibilities designated to the End User and is equipped to do so under special circumstances.

Commented [PR13]: This is confusing at first read. I'm sure we'll get more accustomed to it, but is there a visual representation of this? What are the special circumstances?

CES Intake Process

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care uses a virtual standardized questionnaire created by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) during the CES Intake designed to:

Commented [PR14]: Are we going to name the tool?

- Screen for housing needs.
- Establish family unit (if unaccompanied).
- Identify barriers to housing.
- Collect the necessary client information for entry, including address history, income, and medical insurance.

Based on the information gathered during the interview, the End User may offer referrals to prevention or mainstream services at the household's discretion. Individuals or families who voluntarily seek entry into CES are allowed to decide what information is given to the End User at their own discretion. Households may refuse to answer questions and decline Housing Projects/Programs or mainstream services without retribution and will not be restricted from other forms of assistance based on the information provided (or not provided) during the CES Intake process.

Note: Certain Housing Projects/Programs may require the collection of specific information to determine eligibility.

VI-SPDAT Survey Overview

If the CES Intake indicates that an individual or family may be a potential candidate for a Housing Project/Program placement, the Housing Assessment tool, also known as a VI-SPDAT Survey, must be conducted within three (3) days upon entry into CES. The VI-SPDAT Survey is a prioritization tool created by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and approved by the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care. End Users will use their discretion to determine whether a VI-SPDAT Survey should be pursued and will use the most current instrument available in HMIS to conduct the VI-SPDAT Survey. In the unlikely event that a permanent housing unit is vacant, households deemed as potential candidates for that housing placement should be assessed immediately. End Users will consult the CES Coordinator at the respective Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO) if uncertain with how to proceed.

Note: The VI-SPDAT Survey will be reviewed, adapted, or updated annually as needed or required by HUD by the HMIS Lead Agency, HMIS Administrator, and the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.

Housing First Approach

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care adopts and commits to Housing First principles in its approach to homelessness prevention. All counties, agencies, organizations, and individuals involved in the CES Intake and VI-SPDAT Survey process will ensure that households are asked about their preferences regarding location and type of housing; level and type of services; and other project characteristics where they may be referred. These preferences will be considered by the CES Coordinator and End User when offering referrals to prevention or mainstream services, and when offering enrollment to available Housing Projects/Programs. The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) strives to reduce or eliminate obstacles for individuals experiencing communication, physical, policy, programmatic, transportation, social, and attitudinal barriers. To reduce or eliminate such barriers, resources will be posted online, translation will be available upon request ([as available?](#)), and free or low-cost transportation options will be identified.

The VI-SPDAT Survey Tool

After completion of the CES Intake, End Users from the different Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) will use the VI-SPDAT Survey that is approved by the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care. End User(s) who administer the VI-SPDAT Survey are required to have successfully completed HMIS and CES Training offered by the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.

Commented [PR15]: Is this the same tool named above?

Commented [PR16]: Is this required?

Commented [PR17]: Can we move this comment above to the previous section which deals with SPDAT?

CES Coordinators and/or End Users who administer the VI-SPDAT Survey are prohibited from denying households entry in the CES based the following perceived barriers, including but not limited to: too little or no income; history of active or past substance use disorder (SUD); history of domestic violence or sexual abuse; the type or extent of disability-related services or supports that are needed; history of evictions, poor credit, lease violations, and/or the absence of previous leases/landlord referrals; and/or history or record of criminal activity.

CES Coordinator and End User Training

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care conducts HMIS and CES Training for CES Coordinators and End Users on an as needed basis. The purpose of the training is to ensure that Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs), CES Coordinators, and End Users clearly understand and can fully comply with HMIS Policies and Procedures and subsequent CES Policies and Procedures. The training includes:

1. Review of HMIS and CES Policies and Procedures, including any variations for specific populations or subpopulations.
2. Instruction on how to perform a CES Intake and conduct the VI-SPDAT Survey when applicable.
3. Establish criteria for uniform referral and decision-making process across the service area of the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.
4. Use [of](#) recommended language and best practices based in Trauma-Informed Care (TIC).
5. Client confidentiality and best practices for in-person or virtual visits/appointments.

Note: HMIS and CES Training will be reviewed, adapted, or updated annually as needed or required by HUD by the HMIS Lead Agency, HMIS Administrator, and the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care. Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) will receive updated protocols and materials at least once per year.

VI-SPDAT Survey Administration

As noted above, the VI-SPDAT Survey must be pursued within three (3) days of entry into CES. While three types of assessments exist for Individuals, Families, and Youth, each Housing Needs Assessment collects:

- History of Housing and Homelessness
- Vulnerability and Risk of Harm
- Socialization, Daily Functioning, and Wellness

The End User will select the proper assessment type (Individual, Family, or Youth) and conduct the VI-SPDAT Survey. Upon completion, the household will receive an Assessment Result/Score based on individual responses to questions in the VI-SPDAT Survey. The score is

Commented [PR18]: Yay! I can't wait to get this rolling 😊

Commented [PR19]: Can we put all the SPDAT stuff together?

generated automatically and is used to determine placement on a Housing Connection List that spans across the entire Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care. Scores will not exceed 15. A household's VI-SPDAT Survey must be updated annually to reflect a score that best represents a household's circumstances. If an individual or family experiences a life-altering event in which housing or other circumstances have changed before a year has passed, the End User will conduct a second VI-SPDAY Survey. The circumstance should be noted in the household's profile(s).

All individuals and families entered into CES must be informed of the ability to file a discrimination complaint through any Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO). For more information, please visit HMIS Policies and Procedures.

Commented [PR20]: This was already mentioned.

Eligibility Determination

Information collected during the CES Intake and VI-SPDAT Survey may be used to determine eligibility for certain Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services in the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and respective counties. Certain Housing Projects/Programs may serve a protected class, such as disability, that may restrict enrollment for the general public. Housing Projects/Programs designated for a protected class, like disability, are permitted by Federal and State statutes that detail such requirements. For example, the Housing Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP) under the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) may require an active Social Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), or Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) application.

Prioritization in Eligibility Determination

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care uses the approved VI-SPDAT Survey in HMIS to place households on the Housing Connection List and prioritize referrals to mainstream services. The following factors based on vulnerability and risk of harm are used to determine connection to Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services:

- Risk of harm, as evidenced by recent encounters with healthcare and crisis services; law enforcement and the criminal justice system; and legal issues and/or risk of exploitation.
- Issues with socialization and daily functioning, such as money management, meaningful daily activity, self-care, and social relationships.
- Wellness, as reflected by status of physical health and mental health, history of substance uses disorder (SUD), prescribed medication and use, tri-morbidity, domestic violence or sexual abuse, and/or other trauma.

The Assessment Result/Score produced by the VI-SPDAT Survey also considers length of homelessness and a household's entry to CES which consequently factors into the individual or family's placement on the Housing Connection List.

Data collected during the CES Intake and VI-SPDAT Survey must not be used to prioritize households by protected class defined by Federal and State of California statutes, including race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, sexual orientation, and disability.

Housing Connection List

The Housing Connection List is maintained in real-time in HMIS. It is crucial that households are added to the Housing Connection List as soon as their VI-SPDAT Survey is completed, and that households are removed from the Housing Connection List when the household is permanently housed or have been exited from the Coordinated Entry System.

The Housing Connection List is monitored on a monthly basis by the HMIS Lead Agency and HMIS Administrator to ensure proper housing placement and referral activity amongst the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs). Client information disclosed in the Housing Connection List is covered by the privacy and security protections prescribed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for HMIS practices in the HMIS Data and Technical Standards. For more information, please visit HMIS Policies and Procedures.

Households who become inactive for longer than 90 days will be removed from the Housing Connection List by closing the VI-SPDAT Survey project in CES. End Users must attempt to make contact before the household is removed. Inactivity may be characterized by those who are no longer utilizing services through HMIS or the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care; those who have identified other permanent housing opportunities, including moving out of the service area; and those who have indicated they are no longer interested in Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services. When a household's VI-SPDAT Survey project is closed by the End User, the cause should be noted in the household's profile in Coordinated Entry System.

Clients may re-enter the Housing Connection List in which a new Housing Needs Assessment or VI-SPDAT Survey will be conducted by the End User. A household may be added at any time to the Housing Connection List upon completion of the VI-SPDAT Survey; in no circumstances will a household be declined access or re-entry to CES due to past inactivity.

Referral Overview

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care practices a person-centered approach to its Referral Process. Households will always have the right to decline a referral to a Housing Project/Program or mainstream services if they feel that it does not meet their needs.

Referral Process

Housing Project/Program participants must be selected through the Housing Connection List. When a vacancy occurs, the household presenting the highest score will be selected as a

Commented [PR21]: This seems really short? Perhaps we consider making this longer?

Commented [PR22]: Is there a standard MOU for referrals, or ROI for the entire system/COC?

Commented [PR23R22]: Providing that as an attachment would be good

Commented [PR24]: It would be nice to have a visual of how these systems are interrelated -- HMIS/CES/SPDAT/Connections List, etc.

Housing Project/Program participant. Unless the Housing Project/Program serves a protected class or a household declines the referral (as noted by the End Users), there will be no exceptions to this rule.

Additionally, perceived barriers to housing or mainstream services will not be used to reduce or eliminate a household's housing opportunities. Barriers may include too little or no income; history of active or past substance uses disorder (SUD); history of domestic violence or sexual abuse; the type or extent of disability-related services or supports that are needed; history of evictions, poor credit, lease violations, and/or the absence of previous leases/landlord referrals; and/or history or record of criminal activity.

Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) and/or Housing Providers who serve the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care shall:

- Accept referrals using CES.
- Consider and prioritize the household's housing preferences.
- Use the Assessment Result/Score as the only means to fill vacancies in Housing Projects/Programs in the service area unless a Housing Project/Program serves a protected class.
- Locate clients in ten (10) business days when a referral is made to a project/program in collaboration with the CHOs.
- Verify client eligibility with documentation collected by CHOs.
- Document if/when a client declines a referral to a Housing Project/Program in HMIS and notify the respective CHO that serves the client most directly.
- Notify the CHO if a referred client is not eligible for a Housing Project/Program.

CHOs and Housing Providers have the right to delay referrals if a household:

- Displays aggressive behavior toward staff.
- Gives verbal threats to staff.
- Vandalizes property.
- Making sexual advances to staff.

CHOs and Housing Providers use practices based in Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) to interact with households. Annual HMIS and CES Training will provide best practices and guidance for those interacting with directly with households, including the CES Coordinators, End Users, and Housing Providers.

Note: Housing Projects/Programs and Housing Providers may have Policies and Procedures independent of CES Policies and Procedures. Please contact the respective counties to inquire about Policies and Procedures for specific Housing Projects/Programs.

Data Management

HMIS

Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs), with the exception of domestic violence service providers, are required to use HMIS to collect and report data on persons served in CES. CHOs that access HMIS must participate and abide by CES Policies and Procedures. Domestic violence service providers may use a comparable database (as defined in HUD's HMIS Data and Technical Standards) and may choose not to link its database to HMIS of the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care. For more information, please visit [HMIS Policies and Procedures](#).

Privacy Protections

To protect the personal privacy of participants, CES Coordinators and Ends Users should collect only enough household information to make referrals to available Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services. Disclosure of specific disabilities or diagnosis will not be required unless needed to determine specific project/program eligibility.

Personal information will not be shared between Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) who participate in the CES Intake and Housing Needs Assessment Process unless the participant has provided written consent to information sharing. The consent must be properly documented by a Consent to Release of Information. Services will not be denied to participants who refuse to allow their data to be shared unless Federal or State statutes require the collection, use, storage, and reporting of a household's personally identifiable information as a requirement of program participation.

Secure Document Management

Physical documents that contain personal information (printed assessments, Housing Connection Lists, referral forms, etc.) must follow the best practices outlined below. This includes all documents created during the CES Intake and VI-SPDAT Survey process.

Limited Access

Access to these documents will be granted only to CES Coordinators and/or End Users who need the information contained in these documents to adequately pursue referrals.

Secure Storage

These documents, when not in use, must be securely stored and protected either in locked cabinets or a locked room.

Retention and Destruction

These documents must be destroyed (shredded or burned) when they are no longer needed or when the document retention period adopted by the organization that holds the documents expires, whichever is longer.

Other Standards and Requirements

Where a conflict arises between a CES privacy protection and statutes, or licensing requirement or professional standard, the most stringent of the two applies.

Evaluation

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care and its Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs) continuously work to evaluate and enhance the CES Intake and Housing Needs Assessment process to adapt it to changing community needs. A formal evaluation of the performance metrics will be pursued annually.

Commented [PR25]: Is this required? Too frequent?

Performance metrics and related information is compiled in a formal evaluation report that is delivered to the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care, which may approve changes to CES Policies and Procedures, and processes based on the report's recommendation.

Commented [PR26]: Perhaps a 3-year strategic plan?

Performance Metrics

Reports on key CES success metrics will be published and made available on a quarterly basis to the Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs). Metrics will include:

- The number of individuals and families on the Housing Connection List for the respective counties and Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.
- The average length of time on Housing Connection List for the respective counties and Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.
- The number of individuals and families placed in housing for the respective counties and Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.
- The average and median assessment scores for the respective counties and Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.
- The number of households removed due to inactivity for the respective counties and Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.

Appendix A – Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs), Access Points, and Specialized Access Points

(Updated November 2023)

Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHOs)

Inyo County Department of Health and Human Services

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Mono County Department of Social Services

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Eastern Sierra Community Housing (formerly Mammoth Lakes Housing)

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Access Points

Inyo County Department of Health and Human Services

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Mono County Department of Social Services

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Eastern Sierra Community Housing (formerly Mammoth Lakes Housing)

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

MasterCare

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Specialized Access Points

Wild Iris Family Counseling & Crisis Center

{Contact name, email, phone number and general phone number}

Appendix B – Action Plan

(Updated November 2023)

Commented [PR27]: Are these timelines required?
They seem labor intensive

The Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care continuously seeks to develop and adapt the Coordinated Entry System Intake process during its first year of operation. Suggest action items include:

Weekly

- The CES Coordinator and End Users at each Contributing HMIS Organization (CHO) will review Housing Project/Program referrals.

Monthly

- The CES Coordinator will review Housing Project/Program referrals between counties and follow-up if needed.
- The CES Coordinator will review the list of active households and inactive any households who are no longer utilizing services through HMIS or the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care; those who have identified other permanent housing opportunities, including moving out of the service area; and those who have indicated they are no longer interested in Housing Projects/Programs and mainstream services.

Quarterly

- The CES Coordinator will review Quarterly Performance Metrics and System Performance Measure.
- The CES Coordinator will report to Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care Performance Measures.
- The CES Coordinator will work with the HMIS Administrator to clean the CES Master List.
- The HMIS Administrator will share marketing materials with Contributing HMIS Organizations and Access Points as well as other community spaces.

Annually

- The HMIS Administrator will review and adapt HMIS and CES Training materials.
- The HMIS Administrator will offer HMIS and CES Training to CES Coordinators and End Users.
- The HMIS Administrator will review the CES Policies and Procedures and propose necessary changes to the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.
- The HMIS Administrator will review and adapt marketing materials.
- The HMIS Administrator will review and adapt assessment parameters based on local needs and priorities.
- The HMIS Administrator will review the VI-SPDAT Survey tool and propose necessary changes to the Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care.

Appendix C – Agency Structure

(Updated November 2023)

(Sent as an attachment)

Appendix D – *At a Glance – Criteria and Recordkeeping
Requirements for Definition of Homeless*

(Sent as an attachment)

Appendix E – Innsbruck Lodge Policies and Procedures (TBD)