

# TX-500 San Antonio and Bexar County Continuum of Care Policies and Procedures

HOMELINK POLICY

CLOSE TO HOME

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## 1. Purpose and Background

Coordinated Entry (CE), coordinated assessment, or coordinated intake is a streamlined process aimed at facilitating access to resources, assessing needs, and connecting clients with the most suitable resources to resolve housing-related crises swiftly. This process endeavors to establish a unified, community-driven system that is transparent, easy to navigate, and prioritizes assistance for the most vulnerable households. Locally, the CE system is referred to as Homelink. Homelink is often used synonymously with the Coordinated Community Homelessness Response System.

In 2016, in compliance with the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, as well as requirements outlined in 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) and HUD Notice



CPD-17-01, the South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless, doing business as Close to Home San Antonio, recognized by HUD as the San Antonio/Bexar County Continuum of Care or TX-500, established the Coordinated Entry (CE) process.

Per HUD, CE systems must include:

- Cover the entire geographic area claimed by the CoC;
- Be easily accessed by households seeking housing or services;
- Be well-advertised;
- Include a comprehensive, standardized assessment process and tools;
- Provide an initial, comprehensive assessment of individuals and families for housing and services;
- Include a specific policy to guide the operation of the centralized or coordinated assessment system to address the needs of households who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers.
- Full coverage for CoCs joining processes together and Balance of State CoCs;
- Use of Standardized Access Points and Assessment Approaches;
- Use of Standardized Prioritization in the Referral Process;
- Lowering Barriers by maintaining Coordinated Entry written standards that prohibit the coordinated entry process from screening people out of the coordinated entry process due to perceived barriers related to housing or services;
- Marketing;
- Street Outreach efforts funded under ESG or the CoC program must be linked to the coordinated entry process;
- Emergency services to operate with as few barriers to entry as possible;
- Homelessness prevention services funded with ESG;
- Referrals to participating projects to be uniform; and,
- Safety planning.



CoC, ESG, and other specified grant recipients operating within San Antonio/Bexar County CoC work collaboratively to ensure the Homelink coordination between all CoC and ESG projects are consistent with the CoC, ESG, and Local Written Standards for administering ESG assistance established under 24 CFR 576.400(e) including the following:

- ESG funding is allocated through state, city, and county entities and is coordinated into Homelink and the Homelessness Response System as identified in this document.
- To certify Homelink participation in ESG and CoC-funded projects (including those partially funded by these sources), 100% of project enrollments must have been referred through Homelink.

## **2. Governance, Planning, and the Homeless Response System Advisory Committee**

Two central bodies from the CoC Governance directly impact Homelink Policies, Procedures, and Direction.

### **2.1 Homeless Strategic Plan Advisory Board (HSPAB)**

The CoC Board's Homeless Strategic Plan Advisory Board is a collaborative effort consisting of key vision-holders, including the Continuum of Care (CoC)/Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funder, representatives from the city and county governments homelessness divisions, and the Texas Coalition of Homeless Community Advocates (TCHCA) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and other funding. This advisory board is vital in ensuring that funding is strategically allocated to support the goals and objectives of Homelink and the Homeless Response System and that there is a consensus in evaluating system and project performance. The primary functions of the advisory board include:

- The advisory board aligns funding priorities with Homelink's strategic goals and objectives and the broader Homeless Response System, ensuring that resources are directed towards initiatives that address the most pressing needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- Coordinating funding efforts across multiple sources, including the CoC, YHDP, city, county, and TCHCA, the advisory board optimizes resource allocation to support the implementation of the Homeless Strategic Plan. This includes identifying funding gaps, leveraging resources, and maximizing the impact of available funding streams.
- Overseeing the implementation of funded initiatives and monitoring their performance to ensure accountability and effectiveness.



## 2.2 Homeless Response System Advisory Committee (HRSAC)

The CoC Board's Homeless Response System Advisory Committee (HRSAC) oversees all recommendations, policies, procedures, and standards for Homelink and the Homeless Response System, from Access to Permanent Housing. This committee comprises diverse members representing various stakeholders, including the Bexar County District Attorney's Office's Conviction Integrity Unit, the Veteran Affairs (VA), Housing Authority of Bexar County (HABC), individuals with lived experience, Northeast Independent School District (NEISD), Haven for Hope, Homelessness Prevention (HP), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) providers, Domestic Violence (DV), and Youth and Young Adult (YYA) providers, among others.

The HRSAC operates through several subcommittees, each focused on specific areas to ensure comprehensive oversight and support:

1. **Outreach & Access Subcommittee:** Responsible for addressing outreach strategies and ensuring equitable access to services for individuals experiencing homelessness.
2. **Providers Subcommittee:** This includes housing and prevention providers, and it focuses on improving service delivery and coordination among service providers.
3. **Information Systems Support Subcommittee:** This subcommittee focuses on supporting the technology and data systems used within the Homeless Response System to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
4. **Youth Homelessness Subcommittee:** Dedicated to addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.

Additional or Ad-Hoc subcommittees are established as needed to address specific barriers, challenges, or system gaps that fall outside the scope of the established subcommittees. This flexible structure allows the HRSAC to adapt and respond effectively to evolving needs within the homeless response system.

Please see the [CTH Nonprofit and CoC Governance Charter](#) for additional information on CoC governance.

## 3. Homelessness Definition

Homeless – According to HUD ([24 CFR 578.3](#)), homeless is defined as an individual who belongs to one of the following categories (see also Appendix A):



*Category 1:* An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground; or
- An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low- income individuals); or
- An individual exiting an institution where they resided for 90 days or less and who lived in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

*Category 2:* An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

- (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance, including “couch-surfing” YYA;
- (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and
- (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks.

*Category 3:* Unaccompanied youth and families with children and youth who are defined as homeless under other federal statutes who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition or

*Category 4:* Any individual or family who:

- (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual’s or family’s primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; and
- (ii) Has no other residence; and



- (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

Chronic Homelessness – per 24 CFR 578.3, is either of the following two conditions:

1. A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who:
  - (i) Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
  - (ii) Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition continuously for at least 12 months or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least seven consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (1)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute a break in homelessness, but instead such stays are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility;
2. An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility; or
3. A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

#### 4. Target Population

The policy regarding the targeted population for Homelink referrals varies between project types, but it typically includes a broad range of individuals experiencing housing instability or homelessness.

##### 1. Youth Homelessness (YHDP):

- Youth and young adults (ages 24 and younger) experiencing homelessness or housing instability, including those who are couch-surfing or temporarily staying with friends or family (and are at imminent risk of homelessness).



## 2. Homelessness Prevention:

- Individuals and families at risk of homelessness due to factors such as eviction, loss of income, or other housing crises. HP is only available for households at imminent risk of homelessness (anticipate experiencing homelessness within 14 days) and have no identified other support.

## 3. Diversion and Problem-Solving

- Individuals and families experiencing Category 1, Literal Homelessness, but who may not necessarily need to enter the homeless service system or may be able to Exit Rapidly.

## 4. Rapid Re-Housing (RRH):

- Individuals and families experiencing homelessness can be quickly re-housed with short-term rental assistance and supportive services. RRH is only available for clients experiencing Category 1 Literal Homelessness or Category 4.

## 5. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):

- Chronically homeless individuals and families with disabling conditions who require long-term housing assistance and supportive services to maintain housing stability.

## 6. Domestic Violence (DV):

- Individuals and families fleeing domestic violence or intimate partner violence require safe and stable housing options. This includes survivors of domestic violence who are at risk of homelessness or are currently homeless due to fleeing an abusive situation. Clients fleeing DV are eligible for Diversion, Prevention, RRH, PSH (if meeting chronicity), and vouchers.

## 5. Homelink Partnerships & Coordinated Resources

Please see Appendix B

## 6. Training Framework and Skilled Assessors

### 6.1 HRSAC Training Framework

In March 2023, the Homeless Response System Advisory Committee (HRSAC) approved the Homeless Response System Training Framework and Quality Assurance Proposal, enabling the



establishment of an Ad Hoc Training Committee and initiating a comprehensive evaluation of training needs.

This HRSAC Training Framework is designed to address skilled assessor development, grantee management, governance orientation, and community awareness by accomplishing the following goals per the identified audience.

<b>Learning Goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</b>	
<b>Individual-Level</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>
<b>Increase in Staff Confidence</b>	Fewer HMIS trouble tickets Increased morale of staff.
<b>Improved individual performance</b>	Improved HMIS data quality and completeness
<b>Increased Trust between Staff and Participants</b>	Increased engagement with LEAB and YAB
<b>Improved Experience for People Seeking Assistance</b>	Fewer refusals of services by participants Focus Groups with people with lived experience reflect improvements in experience
<b>Improved Individual Outcomes (people more likely to receive the individualized services they need)</b>	Increase in successful Homelink referrals Increase in housing stability

<b>Agency-Level</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>
<b>Increase in Agency Confidence and Organizational Capacity</b>	More organizations applying for federal, state, and local funding opportunities
<b>Improved Reporting and Grants Management</b>	Successful drawing of funds and timely and accurate reporting
<b>Less Duplication of Effort and Confusion</b>	Increased formal partnerships among organizations (able to lean on each other's strengths) Fewer questions and concerns about Homelink

<b>System-Level</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>
<b>Consistent information on services</b>	Increase in successful Homelink referrals
<b>Increased accountability to people with lived expertise (LEAB and YAB)</b>	Increased engagement with LEAB and YAB
<b>Improved System Performance</b>	Increase in Housing Placements Decrease in Returns to Homelessness Reduction in First-Time Homeless Reduction in Length of Time Homeless



<b>Increased Collaboration and Alignment of Community Partners</b>	Increase in partners participating in Homelink and HMIS Increased engagement with SARAH on social media and events
<b>Increased Trust in the System</b>	
<b>Better and increased housing options</b>	Increase in federal and state funding allocated to the region. Increase in formal partnerships with Landlords and Property Owners/Managers

**The Training Framework is intended to support:**

- A clear and transparent plan for capacity-building tools accessible to all direct service providers and system partners,
- A logical timeline and ‘roadmap’ for meeting the learning needs of each type of community partner,
- An array of learning modes and mechanisms for continuous education and information sharing, and
- Increased accountability through early identification of goals and a plan to measure success over time.

For additional information about the framework or information about the courses, please [click here](#).

**6.2 Skilled Assessors**

A Homelink Skilled Assessor is a certified homeless response worker who conducts crisis, needs, and/or housing assessments as a regular aspect of their role within the homelessness response system. This certification is obtained through compliance with the Skilled Assessor and role-specific pathway of the HRSAC Learning Framework and the individual's demonstrated commitment to upholding established standards and protocols in service of the clients. Skilled assessors include a variety of roles such as access point staff, SO workers, Housing and Homelessness Prevention Providers, Youth Young Adult (YYA) Providers, Domestic Violence Service Providers, and Veteran Service Providers.

Below are the comprehensive guidelines for the training, certification, and ongoing education of Skilled Assessors within the Homelessness Response System. Skilled assessors are vital in providing quality services to individuals experiencing homelessness while adhering to the Homelink Policy, CoC, ESG, and Local Community Standards.



### **Training and Certification Requirements**

1. Skilled assessors must complete the Homeless Response System Orientation within 90 days of hire, followed by a role-specific training pathway within 6 months.
2. Supervisors assess staff readiness for certification as skilled assessors and submit recommendations based on performance and competence.
3. Upon recommendation, staff sign the Skilled Assessor Agreement, committing to uphold all relevant standards, policies, and procedures.
4. Certified skilled assessors are authorized to provide services within the homelessness response system.

### **Continuing Education:**

1. Skilled assessors must abide by an annual training schedule to maintain certification.
2. CTH will share annual and Continuing Education Training opportunities and the schedule will be available in the LMS.

### **Tracking and Monitoring**

1. All training activities will be tracked in the Community Learning Management System (LMS) and monitored by CTH.
2. The LMS will be accessible to all Homelink agencies for resources, including job aids, training libraries, community standards, registration for training sessions, webinars, and monitoring to ensure staff, team, organization, and system compliance.

Implementation: This policy will be immediately implemented upon approval (anticipated August 2024). All staff within the homelessness response system must adhere to the training, certification, and continuing education requirements outlined in this policy. Supervisors oversee their staff's compliance and ensure ongoing education and development. Compliance with this policy will be regularly monitored and enforced by CTH to maintain the quality and effectiveness of services provided within the Homelessness Response System.

## **7. Grievances**

Client concerns and grievances should be resolved promptly and fairly. Agencies must inform clients of the following grievance filing process. Clients will be free from agency interference,



coercion, or reprisal should they choose to file a complaint. [Click here](#) for additional information about Grievances and the Grievance Appeal procedures.

## 8. Components of Homelink

### 8.1 Access

Homelink enables equal and equitable access to all Homelink-related resources.

#### *No Wrong Door: Accessing Homelink Housing Resources*

The community utilizes a "No Wrong Door" Hybrid model to ensure optimal access to the Homelink system. This model stipulates clients receiving services through or enrolled in any Street Outreach (SO), Emergency Shelter (ES), Safe Haven (SH), or Homelink Hub (such as the COSA Homeless Connections Hotline, American GI Forum's Veteran Services, etc.) are assessed and guided (via the workflow) to the Homelink Resource that best suits their housing needs. Enrollments in these "Front Door" services address immediate needs, including safety concerns, and simultaneously add the client to the Homelink Resource Eligibility List (REL) and/or facilitate direct access to Homelink resources.

#### *Street Outreach*

In San Antonio and Bexar County, several different types of outreach services target clients experiencing unsheltered homelessness and/or living in a place not meant for habitation. Street Outreach (SO) teams are trained professionals who directly engage with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. These teams may include clinicians and case managers.

Street Outreach workers engage in client-centered, trauma-informed conversations to build rapport and trust. SO workers collaborate with individuals to assess and understand the client's circumstances, needs, and goals. This assessment helps determine the appropriate level of support and services required. Based on the assessment, SO workers connect individuals with relevant services and resources. Referrals and/or resources may be provided to meet immediate needs like safety, emergency shelters, food, and hygiene. Enrollment in SO projects enables access to resources that may meet the client's longer-term housing goals. They also provide ongoing support and follow-up to ensure individuals receive assistance.

For additional information, please see [CoC, ESG, and Local Written Standards: Street Outreach Addendum](#).



### ***Inactivity Policy***

Clients who meet the following criteria are considered inactive if any of the following are accurate and they have open enrollment in a Homelink qualifying project:

- No recorded Homeless Services in HMIS for the past 30 days.
- No recorded Supportive Services Only (SSO) in HMIS for the past 30 days; and
- No recorded Current Living Situation (CLS) in HMIS for the past 30 days

A Current Living Situation (CLS) may also be entered for clients who have not had activity within the past 30 days but whom the designated case manager has a reasonable certainty that the client will have eligible activity within the next 30 days. This type of CLS may be used more than once but not consecutively (e.g., all clients must have eligible activity within 60 days before the exception CLS can be used).

If there is no documented activity in HMIS, inactive clients are removed from the Priority Pool the week following the 30th day. There will be a 30-day grace period after the date of the inactivity before the client is auto-exited from the Resource Eligibility List (REL).

### ***Centralized Shelter Coordination***

Recognizing the challenges faced by Street Outreach teams in connecting unsheltered clients to emergency shelters, the Centralized Shelter Coordination (CSC) program has been established as part of San Antonio's Homeless Response System (Homelink). This initiative appoints a dedicated community staff member at Haven for Hope to serve as a central point of contact for outreach staff from collaborative agencies in facilitating access to shelter beds at participating shelters, including Haven for Hope and SAMMinistries. [Click here](#) for Procedures.

### **Objective**

The primary objective of the Centralized Shelter Coordination program is to reduce the number of clients living in places not meant for habitation by efficiently connecting them with emergency shelters where their individual needs will be assessed to assist with obtaining permanent housing.

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

To assess and evaluate the impact of the CSC program, the following key performance indicators will be monitored, analyzed, and reported:

#### ***Comparison of Client Movement***



To gauge the program's effectiveness in facilitating access to shelter, compare the number of clients transitioning from places not meant for habitation to Emergency Shelters in 2024 with those in 2023.

#### *Impact of Bed Expansion*

Evaluate the impact of the significant increase in unsheltered beds on resource availability and utilization, including SAMM Low Barrier expansion and Haven's Unsheltered Placement Program (UPP) for men and Direct Referral Program (DRP) for women.

#### *First-Time Homelessness Identification*

The number of clients identifying as "first-time" experiencing homelessness who transition from places not meant for habitation to Emergency Shelters to understand the program's reach and effectiveness in serving diverse populations.

#### *Length of Stay (LOS)*

Measure the length of stay in Emergency Shelters after CSC placement to assess the program's ability to facilitate timely transitions to more permanent housing solutions.

#### *Exits to Permanent Housing*

Exits from Emergency Shelters to permanent housing interventions by type to evaluate the program's success in facilitating pathways to stable housing solutions.

#### *Exits to Places Not Meant for Habitation*

Track exits from Emergency Shelters to places not meant for habitation to identify any gaps in service provision and opportunities for improvement.

#### *Monitoring*

The CSC program was implemented as a pilot initiative in January 2024, with ongoing monitoring, analysis, and reporting of the specified KPIs to assess the program's impact and effectiveness. Regular reviews and adjustments can be made based on evaluation findings to ensure the program meets its objectives and effectively serves the needs of unsheltered individuals in San Antonio.

#### ***Domestic and Sexual Violence Access***

CoC-funded victim services providers (VSPs) may use the Homelink system or an alternative that meets the minimum HUD and Homelink requirements. Those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence (DV), dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking have safe



and confidential access to the Homelink process, services, domestic violence hotlines, and shelters. Clients fleeing DV can connect to Homelink through an access point that has Skilled Assessors who have been specifically trained to address DV-related housing needs.

The Homelink assessment includes a DV safety screening to determine if a household should be provided information to a VSP or service provider. Households can seek emergency DV services or continue with the Homelink assessments.

### ***Equal, Anti-discrimination, and Low Barrier Access***

Households eligible for the Homelink process include those falling under Category 1 (literally homeless) and Category 4 (fleeing domestic violence) of the HUD Homeless Definition, residing within Bexar County (having stayed in Bexar County the previous night, except for individuals fleeing domestic violence and seeking safety elsewhere).

CTH ensures Homelink is available to all eligible households, regardless of perceived, actual, explicit, and/or implicit barriers, through the following:

- The Homelink process is accessible to all eligible households regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.
- Different populations and subpopulations (experiencing chronic homelessness, veterans, families with children, youth, and survivors of domestic violence) in Bexar County have fair and equal access to the Homelink process, irrespective of the location or method by which they access the system.
- Households are not screened out of the Homelink process due to perceived barriers related to housing or services (e.g., low or no income, active or historical substance use, history of domestic violence, resistance to receiving services, the type or extent of disability-related services or supports needed, history of evictions or poor credit, lease violations, criminal history). No documentation is required at the time of accessing the system.
- The Homelink process is accessible to persons with Limited English Proficiency, following HUD's published Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients: Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons (LEP Guidance) (72 FR 2732). Each hub ensures that Spanish interpretation is available as needed. Given the high population of Spanish-speaking households in Bexar County, Homelink hubs have bilingual staff who can typically cover Spanish interpretation needs onsite without external interpretation services. Spanish services



are listed in Homelink Access Point marketing materials. In exceptional situations when bilingual staff is unavailable or the client speaks a language requiring special accommodation, the Homelink Hub contacts CTH to coordinate services.

- The Homelink process is accessible to all eligible households regardless of disabilities, including providing physically accessible locations for individuals who use wheelchairs, as described in Homelink Access Point marketing materials. If a household requests reasonable accommodation due to a disability, CTH is responsible for granting it within three business days. Examples include a request to complete an assessment at a different location, providing sign language services, and offering information in accessible formats such as Braille. A mobile outreach team may be utilized if accommodation cannot be met.
- Access to the Homelink system also services those least likely to seek homeless assistance, including individuals actively using illegal substances and living with serious mental illness, through SO teams.

### ***Marketing***

Intentional and targeted marketing strategies are critical to ensuring the Homelink process is available to all eligible persons fairly and equally. Homelink Hub locations are advertised on the CTH website and the San Antonio Community Resource Directory (SACRD) and updated at least quarterly. Homelink signage, provided by CTH, is required by all hubs to ensure recognizability by people experiencing homelessness. CTH creates Homelink Hub flyers to be distributed at homeless service agencies, which are also available for download on the CTH website. Homelink “luggage tags” are also available for clients to connect to their bags. The tags have phone numbers for Homelink Hubs and a QR code to the Homelink website for additional information.

## **8.2 Assessment**

### ***Progressive Client Center Approach***

Homelink employs a progressive engagement approach, utilizing a simple triage to assess each household's needs. Skilled Assessors identify suitable Homelink interventions to address housing crises and enroll households accordingly. Data collected during assessments are evaluated based on community prioritization, considering eligibility for prevention, diversion, housing, and service resources, as well as non-publicly funded housing resources participating in Homelink. The system prioritizes support for the most vulnerable (see prioritization below) and provides continuous access to diversion resources for households experiencing homelessness throughout the process.



**Question: Where did you sleep/stay last night?**

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
Prevention		X		X
Diversion	X			X
Housing	X			X
Voucher	X	X		X
YHDP (18-24)	X	X (couch-surfing)		X

**Homelink Homelessness Prevention**

Homelessness Prevention is a resource within the Homelink system to mitigate the risk of homelessness for individuals and families facing imminent housing instability (Category 2). Clients completing the prevention enrollment and eligible are added to the Prevention Resource Eligibility List if all the following are true:

- Imminent risk (within 14 days),
- Below 30% Area Median Income (AMI),
- Have no additional means of support.
- Minimally score an 11 on the assessment

The Homelink Prevention enrollment consists of a screening to determine if clients are eligible and consider some factors for prioritization (please see below).

- HUD Universal Data Elements (UDE)
- Income
- Family Size
- Lease status, if applicable
- Eviction/Legal Status, if applicable
- Living Situation
- Household composition
- Level of Education



### ***Homelink Diversion***

Homelessness Diversion, also referred to as "rapid exit" or "housing problem solving," targets swiftly diverting households from the homeless response system by promptly identifying safe housing alternatives outside of the system. This approach ensures that the limited housing resources are maximized for the most vulnerable populations. Diversion strategies involve engaging in solutions-focused, strength-based conversations and providing one-time financial assistance to address a household's housing crisis. Implementation of diversion practices, as endorsed by HUD, has been shown to reduce the duration of homelessness, decrease the number of households experiencing first-time homelessness, and lower recidivism rates within communities.

A Diversion-trained Skilled Assessor engages in an exploratory conversation with households to swiftly identify practical solutions for their immediate housing needs. Diversion should be attempted with any household presenting as literally homeless as an initial intervention before proceeding with a full assessment and adding them to the Homelink waitlist for longer-term housing resources like Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing. This approach may be employed at any stage of the process within the homelessness response system.

Households are encouraged to identify safe housing alternatives based on their own or available community resources. Flexible funding assistance is available for households identifying needs likely to resolve their current issues and divert them from homelessness.

#### **Diversion Problem-Solving Approach:**

- Structured problem solving
- Exploration of the situation and available resources
- Inquiry into what can be done to prevent entry into shelter
- Identification of resolutions for the current housing crisis

#### **Eligibility:**

Households experiencing homelessness may access funds through various Homelink/Coordinated Entry access points, including Homelink Hubs, the Homeless Hotline, emergency shelters, and housing and service providers.

Eligible households must be literally homeless, living or about to live tonight in a place not meant for human habitation/unsheltered, or fleeing domestic violence.

#### **Eligible expenses include:**



- Payment for background and credit checks
- Landlord fees
- Move-in costs (including deposit and first month's rent, moving truck fee, and storage)
- Utility deposits and arrears
- Previous housing debt/rental arrears
- Transportation
- Grocery cards
- Interpreter costs
- Fees for assistance securing IDs, birth certificates, and social security cards
- Certifications or license fees related to school or employment
- Work or education-related assistance
- Other financial costs aiding the household in obtaining housing

#### **Expected Outcomes:**

- Households experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence have access to Diversion Problem-Solving Assessment at any Homelink access point
- All Skilled Assessors are trained in Diversion Problem Solving
- 25% of households will be successfully diverted from/rapidly exit emergency shelters and the REL
- 75% of households successfully diverted will remain stable in their housing after 30 days
- 100% of Diversion funding services and assistance will be documented in HMIS.

#### ***Homelink Housing***

In 2021, the HRSAC (via CTH) and The Notre Dame Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities (LEO) began a collaboration to develop, implement, and evaluate a simplified assessment tool, the Resource Placement Index (RPI) within the homelessness response system to improve the effectiveness and equity of housing assistance allocation. This tool replaced the previous tool after it became obsolete.

#### ***Elements of the RPI***

- Data-driven risk scoring – The tool uses the same required data assessments as all ESG and CoC projects; thus, enrollment in a qualifying project satisfies this component of the tool. The assessments are comprised of required HUD assessments, including Universal Assessment, Program Assessment, Financial Assessment, and Health Insurance Assessment.



- Skilled Assessor ratings: subjective assessments of client vulnerability from staff who are working with the client.
- Question regarding former status pertaining to the Child Welfare System.
- Client preferences: Clients will provide input on program and provider preferences, which may influence referral assignments. (Phase II)

### ***Pilot Application***

- All clients undergo the same assessment process, which includes HUD-mandated data collection, empirically validated questions, case worker ratings of client vulnerability, and a survey of client preferences (Phase II – Anticipated Fall 2024).
- During the pilot phase the RPI is being evaluated to validate and refine its effectiveness and understand a community definition of vulnerability to help identify vulnerability factors that should be included and/or adjusted in the final tool based on the frequency of occurrence of the same/similar Skilled Assessor justifications.

### ***Implementation Timeline***

- Pilot Phase I: A New Assessment comprised of a Data-driven score and Skilled Assessor rating was implemented in November 2022.
- Pilot Phase II: Incorporating client preference is anticipated for Fall 2024.

### ***Updating Assessments***

It is desired that a client's coordinated entry assessment should be updated whenever there are significant changes in their circumstances that may impact their vulnerability score or eligibility for services. This includes changes in family composition, such as the addition or removal of household members, changes in health status, or any other major life changes that could affect their housing needs. Skilled Assessors are responsible for regularly reviewing and updating assessments to reflect the client's current situation accurately. This ensures clients receive appropriate support and assistance based on their evolving needs and circumstances.

### ***Voucher***

To ensure equitable access to resources for clients experiencing homelessness, Homelink coordinates with both Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), Opportunity Home San Antonio OHSA) and Housing Authority of Bexar County (HABC) to allocate vouchers through the homeless response system. This policy ensures that individuals and families in need are connected with appropriate housing resources in a fair and efficient manner. By centralizing the distribution of



PHA vouchers through coordinated entry, Homelink aims to streamline the process, prioritize those most in need, and facilitate the transition to stable housing for vulnerable populations.

Vouchers through Homelink must be connected with a Homelink provider willing to provide case management support to the household while applying for the voucher, identifying housing, and a minimum of three months' post-move-in stabilization case management. Please see the CTH for more information about the vouchers that are available.

### **SOAR**

The SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program has been integrated into the local Homelessness Response system. It is a resource that provides enhanced support to clients experiencing chronic unsheltered homelessness with high acuity needs. SOAR streamlines access to Social Security disability benefits, fostering a path to long-term care and assisted care facilities. This collaborative effort can significantly and positively impact clients obtaining the most beneficial housing intervention to meet their unique needs, as current housing and shelter options are very limited in San Antonio Bexar County.

### **Homelink SOAR Target Population:**

Qualifying Homelink SOAR Referral Eligibility:

- Qualify for SOAR
- Unsheltered/Previously Unsheltered
- High acuity
- Actively participating in ES/Street Outreach (SO) services (Current Living Situation (CLS) within the past 30 days)
- Chronic Homeless

### **Privacy Protection**

CTH requires obtaining consent to share and store participant information for the purpose of assessing and referring participants through the Homelink process. Participants retain the right to decide which information they provide during the assessment process without facing retribution or experiencing limited access to assistance. Services will not be withheld if a participant declines to provide certain pieces of information, unless such information is essential to establish or document program eligibility as per the relevant program regulation or Federal statute mandating the collection, use, storage, and reporting of personally identifying information as a condition of program participation.



Records containing personally identifying information (PII) are maintained securely and confidentially, with the address of any family violence project not disclosed publicly. The collection and sharing of PII of households fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are not obligatory. Housing providers receiving a referral using an HMIS number instead of the actual name must contact the VSP or CTH DV Coordinator to obtain the program participant's contact information.

Households are neither asked nor required to disclose specific disabilities or diagnoses unless necessary to determine program eligibility and make appropriate referrals. Participants are informed of their right to file a nondiscrimination complaint through the grievance process, which can be accessed [here](#).

### ***Domestic Violence Safety Planning***

Homelink prioritizes the safety and well-being of domestic violence (DV) survivors by adhering to HUD's stringent guidelines for safety planning. With a survivor-centered approach, we ensure confidentiality, conduct thorough assessments, and provide access to a range of DV-specific housing services, including VSP ES resources, to meet HHS' immediate needs. The individualized safety plans are trauma-informed, non-discriminatory, and tailored to each survivor's unique circumstances. Survivors are offered ongoing support and follow-up to monitor safety and adjust plans as needed, ensuring DV survivors receive the care and assistance they deserve. HHS presenting at an access point will be asked if they would like to involve law enforcement to increase safety in transition.

## **8.3 Prioritization**

### ***Homelessness Prevention***

Households meeting the Homelink Homelessness Prevention eligibility will be placed on the Homelink Prevention Resource Eligibility List (REL). Households added to the REL are added by assessment date, with the earliest date at the top of the list. Prevention referrals are prioritized by assessment date. The following factors are considered in the HP Prioritization:

- Lease Status/Living Situation (doubled-up/living with support – not on lease)
- Income
- Family Composition
- Families with minor children
- Education Level (equity proxy)



### *Homelink SOAR*

Referrals are prioritized for approval based on the Homelink Data-Driven Prioritization Score if there are more referrals than program capacity.

### *Homelink Housing*

To ensure limited housing resources are used strategically and effectively, Homelink determines a prioritization order for each project type within the CoC's geographic area. Priorities are consistent with CoC and ESG written standards established under 24 CFR 576.400(e) and 24 CFR 578(a)(9).

The San Antonio/Bexar County CoC approves a local prioritization policy based on project type for Transitional Housing (TH), Rapid Re-housing (RRH), and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) as needed. Homelink follows [HUD's Notice on Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing](#) for its PSH prioritization when prioritization cannot occur via the local RPI prioritization.

### *Priority pool*

Homelink's Priority Pool (PP) serves as a crucial tool within the system, incorporating the most vulnerable households from the Resource Eligibility List (REL). The pool serves two primary purposes, one for front door partners and the other for housing providers. For front-door partners, the pool serves to notify them that their clients have reached the pool and will be receiving an upcoming housing referral, allowing front-door partners to prepare and inform clients while assisting them in collecting necessary documentation for housing, as needed. Additionally, the PP facilitates housing providers as they run the report in the HMIS report and select the first eligible clients from the top of the pool for referral to project openings. Comprised of the top 100 households from the REL, the PP ensures representation from diverse, vulnerable populations, including those fleeing domestic violence, youth, young adults (YYA), veterans, and families, with a minimum of 10 households from each category to guarantee eligibility for referral to population-specific project types (June 2024).

The PP is generated every Monday in HMIS. The generation includes replenishing the list back to 100 HHs each Monday with the consideration for population-specific projects.

Clients added to the PP stay on the PP until one of the following occurs:



- HH is referred to a housing intervention
- HH becomes inactive (30+ days with no documented service or CLS in HMIS)
- HH's qualifying enrollment has been closed for 30+ days.

#### *Resource Placement Index (RPI) Tool*

As indicated above in the Assessment Section, the community has been piloting a new prioritization tool, the Resource Placement Index (RPI), since December 2022. The Randomized Control Trial (RCT) utilizes the random selection of clients being added to the PP based on their Data Driven score or the Skilled Assessor Rating. This methodology aids in identifying the impact of assessment tool features on placement equity and housing outcomes by randomly selecting individuals seeking assistance to be enrolled and served using different versions of the new tool. The pilot aims to add clients from each assessment area at an equal rate (e.g., the PP needs to be refreshed back to 100 by adding 30 new HHs, 15 HHs will be added based on their Data Driven Score and 15 will be added based on their Skilled Assessor rating).

As indicated above, all clients receive both versions of the assessment. After the assessment, the Skilled Assessor score is auto-computed into a priority score based on the relative ranking that puts these clients on the same numerical scale as the data-driven score. For example, the client that the Skilled Assessor rates highest gets similar prioritization as the client from that Skilled Assessor with the highest data-driven rating. In particular, the rating score adds up two components:

- Agency component: all clients will start with the average prioritization points from the data-driven score for a client from their agency, and
- Individual component: an individual gets added points for being higher in the case worker's relative rankings.

## **8.4 Referrals**

### ***Housing First***

The Housing First Policy ensures equitable access to crisis response services and homeless-designated housing within Homelink participating programs. Enrollment decisions are based on standardized eligibility criteria established by program funding guidelines, with a commitment to non-discrimination principles, prohibiting exclusion based on income, employment, disability status, or substance use. Exceptions may apply in cases mandated by the primary funder or documented neighborhood agreements, with funders required to justify any restrictions based on specific household attributes or characteristics (i.e., property proximity to a school, etc.).



Close to Home oversees compliance with this policy, ensuring that individuals and families experiencing homelessness have fair and equal opportunities for housing assistance.

### ***Homelink Diversion***

Diversion referrals are completed immediately after the Diversion Enrollment and Problem-Solving Assessment for eligible clients. Diversion referrals are approved for up to \$2000 if HH meets eligibility requirements, has submitted all required documentation in HMIS, Service is an eligible service and funds are available.

### ***Homelink SOAR***

Homelink SOAR Referrals are processed and assigned in the order they are received, provided the client meets the necessary criteria. To ensure continuity of care, referrals with existing relationships to SOAR providers are directed to those specific providers, contingent upon their capacity. For instance, if a client is currently engaged with agency X's SO team, the referral for SOAR services will be routed to agency X, pending their availability to accommodate the referral.

### **Capacity**

- Five (5) new Homelink SOAR clients per month max/per staff, Caseload Max: 5 per staff assigned per month until total Homelink SOAR program caseload reaches 35<sup>1</sup> (five max per SOAR Case Manager), waitlist up to 10, rolling.
- SOAR Case Managers can be filled to capacity with referrals from prior relationships with their organization.
- As medical documentation is required for SSI/SSDI applications, each SNOFO-funded SOAR agency establishes relationships with two service providers able to provide monthly support/verifications for up to 5 clients.

### ***Homelink HP***

Homelink HP Providers manage their own referrals from the HP Resource Eligibility List (REL) in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) based on their project capacity. Referrals must adhere to the prioritization order outlined above. For detailed HP referral procedures, please [click here](#). Close to Home (CTH) conducts weekly monitoring of prevention referrals to ensure compliance with prioritization, case conferencing, client contact initiation, and referral outcomes. Any unsuccessful referrals must be reported and discussed during the HP breakout session of the [Weekly Community Case Conferencing](#).

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<sup>1</sup> 35 is the anticipated maximum collective community capacity across all Homelink SOAR service providers.



## *Homelink Housing*

### *Transitional Housing*

For the standalone TLLC TH project, TLLC notifies the CTH team weekly of openings within the project. CTH includes the information sent out with the Weekly Community Case Conferencing Report. Front-door partners can present HHs at CCC that they believe meet the TH project criteria. Referrals will be completed at CCC.

### *TH-RRH, RRH, and PSH Referrals*

Homelink Housing Providers (including TH-RRH, RRH, and PSH projects) manage their own referrals from the Priority Pool in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) based on their project capacity. Providers run the PP report in the HMIS report and select the **first eligible** clients from the top of the pool for referral to their project openings. For detailed referral procedures, please click [here](#). Close to Home (CTH) conducts weekly monitoring of referrals to ensure compliance with prioritization, case conferencing, client contact initiation, and referral outcomes. Any unsuccessful referrals must be reported and discussed during Weekly Community Case Conferencing. Ineligible (i.e., the client was referred to a YYA project, but the client is 26, etc.) referrals may be reassigned during case conferencing. Any referrals resolved as the client refused or could not locate require a completed and signed [Client Declination](#) form and the [Due Diligence Checklist](#), respectively.

### *Referral coordination (community Case Conferencing)*

A Weekly CCC report is sent to all front door and Housing providers identifying the following:

- # of Housing, Prevention and SOAR Open referrals
- # Opened from previous week
- HMIS numbers for referrals with no documentation of CC or Initial Contact
- Ineligible Referrals
- Openings at TLLC

This structured meeting format fosters collaboration and effective communication among teams and providers involved in homelessness support, prevention, and housing solutions. The general session allows for overall updates and strategic discussions, followed by specialized breakout sessions that delve deeper into population-specific areas of concern, ensuring a comprehensive approach to addressing homelessness-related challenges. This expanded the Weekly Community Case Conferencing, which includes separate Breakout meetings for specific populations, enhances collaboration, coordination, and service delivery, optimizes resource use, and improves client outcomes in these vulnerable situations. Separate breakout meetings for Homelessness Prevention, Domestic Violence, and SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and



Recovery) is a practical approach to address the unique needs of these populations and their respective service providers, including the following:

- **Specialized Focus:** By creating separate breakout meetings, each focusing on a particular population (homelessness prevention, domestic violence, and SOAR), service providers can concentrate on the distinct challenges, resources, and strategies relevant to their area of expertise. This ensures that discussions are tailored to the client's needs.
- **Efficient Use of Time:** Instead of holding separate meetings for each population, expanding the scope and structure of this pre-existing weekly meeting allows for efficient use of time and resources. It prevents duplication of efforts and minimizes the need for providers to attend multiple meetings on different days.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** These separate breakout sessions allow providers to collaborate, share best practices, and network with others who work with similar client populations. This can lead to better coordination of services and the discovery of new resources or approaches.
- **Streamlined Communication:** All relevant providers in one meeting promote streamlined communication. Providers can discuss client cases more comprehensively and ensure that clients receive the most appropriate and coordinated services, reducing gaps and redundancies in care.
- **Improved Resource Allocation:** With a clearer understanding of the resources available for each population, service providers can allocate resources more effectively to meet the specific needs of clients in the areas of homelessness prevention, domestic violence, and SOAR.
- **Data Sharing:** Information about clients and their needs can be shared more easily and securely within these specialized breakout sessions, helping to address the issue of clients being connected to non-continuum resources, as mentioned in your earlier points.

### **Meeting Structure**

General Session (Facilitated by CTH System Administrative Coordination, led by COSA Street Outreach (SO) Manager)

- Announcements and opportunities sharing.
- Review of follow-up actions from the previous week.
- Discussion of new referrals for Case Conferencing (CC) from Front Door/Housing Partner Connect.



- Updates on referrals open for longer than 30 days from housing providers.
- Presentation of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Bridge Referral Requests by housing providers.
- Presentation on ineligible or unlocatable referrals, with possible reopening or reassignment by housing provider/front door.
- Presentation of Transitional Living and Learning Center (TLLC) direct referrals by Front Door provider.
- Assignment of Navigator referrals by SO Manager.

Breakout: Homelessness Prevention (HP) (Led by CTH CE Manager)

- Documentation and discussion in CCC workbook.
- Participation from Hotline Staff and designees from ESG/TBRA HP projects.
- Review and discussion on Ineligible HP referrals, including updates.
- Review of referrals with no contact documented in HMIS.
- Discussion on referrals open for more than 10 days without outcomes, exploring updates or connection ideas.
- Capacity assessment and projections.

Breakout: Domestic Violence (DV) (Led by CTH DV & Training Coordinator)

- Involvement of FVPS, DV-specific project providers, and Hotline.
- Addressing population-specific program announcements.
- Emergency transfer case conferencing.
- Case discussions on new referrals and ineligible referrals.
- Updates on expedited referrals.
- Updates on Current Living Situation (CLS).
- Case conferencing activities.

Breakout: SOAR/Navigator (After General Session, Led by SO Manager/ CTH SOAR Coordinator)

- Review of approved and assigned SOAR Referrals or waitlisted referrals (up to 10).
- Opportunity for front door workers to case conference with newly assigned Navigators/SOAR CMs.
- Resource sharing and general case conferencing among Navigators, SOAR Case Managers, and Front Door Staff.
- Identification of housing barriers for specific populations, aiming to develop targeted engagement strategies.
- SOAR Training



### ***Veteran Coordination***

There is effective collaboration between veteran providers and Homelink to address the needs of veterans experiencing homelessness. When veterans appear on the Priority Pool (PP), they are referred to the Veteran Case Conferencing Chair. During or before the Veteran Case Conferencing (CC), a member will determine the veteran eligibility status ([Appendix D](#)) of clients from the PP. Those deemed ineligible will be updated in HMIS and remain on the PP for referral to non-veteran-specific Homelink housing resources. Eligible veterans will be connected to a veteran provider, and their Homelink enrollment will be updated to reflect the referral, ensuring they receive appropriate support tailored to their needs.

### ***Domestic Violence Coordination & Safety Planning***

Referrals to Homelink Housing projects for HHs fleeing DV are pulled by Housing Providers in the same way as identified above for general referrals. DV Breakout CCC is meant to ensure successful referrals. Presentation of Transitional Living and Learning Center (TLLC) direct referrals by Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS) (when applicable). Please [click here](#) for more information about the DV Breakout.

## **9. Monitoring System Performance and Measuring Impact**

### **9.1 HMIS**

Homelink mandates the utilization of HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) as the primary tool for managing client data and referrals in compliance with HUD requirements for federal reporting for ESG, CoC, and YHDP-funded projects. All participating agencies and service providers must input client information accurately and promptly into HMIS to ensure efficient coordination of services and resources. HMIS serves as the central database for tracking client assessments, referrals, and outcomes, facilitating collaboration among agencies and enabling data-driven decision-making to address homelessness effectively. Compliance with HMIS data entry and privacy guidelines is essential for maintaining the integrity and security of client information while maximizing the effectiveness of coordinated entry efforts. This includes reporting requirements such as the Point-in-Time (PIT) count, Housing Inventory Count (HIC), Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA), and System Performance Measures (SPMs) as mandated by HUD.



## 9.2 Local Performance Monitoring

In addition to the performance monitoring identified in this policy, there will be three primary tools used for reporting performance. – proposed August 2024.

### *San Antonio and Bexar County CoC System Performance Dashboard*

Objective: The centralized platform for tracking and analyzing local system performance indicators and Homelink operational data quality and outcomes.

Audience: CoC Leadership

Frequency: Monthly

- **Homeless Strategic Plan Outcomes (local system performance metrics)**
  - **Sheltered Demographics:** # of HH experiencing sheltered homelessness by race, age, gender, and household composition
  - **Unsheltered Demographics:** # of HH experiencing unsheltered homelessness by race, age, gender, and household composition
  - **Unsheltered to Higher Level of Care:** # of HH moving from unsheltered situations to sheltered enrollment
  - **Unsheltered to Housed:** # of HH moving to permanent housing from unsheltered situations
  - **Sheltered to Housed:** # of HH moving to permanent housing from sheltered situations
  - **Returns to Homelessness:** Recidivism rates by intervention types, look at 6 months, 1 year, 2 years
  - **Chronically Homeless:** # of HH experiencing chronic homelessness
  - **Families:** # of HH experiencing homelessness with minor children
  - **Youth & Young Adults:** # of HH experiencing homelessness between ages 18-24
  - **Older Adults:** # of HH experiencing homelessness ages 50+ (due to TTV requirement)
  - **Veterans:** # of HH experiencing homelessness with “yes” for veteran status
  - **Domestic Violence:** # of HH experiencing domestic violence (notate note including FVPS clients)
  - **First-Time Homeless:** # of HH who report first-time homelessness who are successfully referred to prevention or diversion
  - **Increasing Income:** % increasing income, broken out by benefit income and employment income
  - **Average Length of Time Homeless:** Broken out for sheltered & unsheltered, compared to previous month



- **Homelink Activity, by intervention type (Homelink operational data quality and outcomes)**
  - **Total Homelink Enrollments:** # of enrollments into Homelink projects during the previous month
  - **CSC:** # of HH referred to enrolled in ES, via this coordination.
  - **REL:** # of HH on Resource Eligibility List (REL)
  - **PP:** # of HH added to Priority Pool (PP)
  - **Referrals from PP:** % of HH referred that came from PP
  - **Total Referrals:** # of HH referred to Homelink interventions by type
  - **Average Time to PP:** Average time from Homelink enrollment to being added to PP
  - **Referral Success Rate:** # of referrals and referral success rate
  - **Successfully Housed:** # of housed and housing success rate
  - **Average Time Enrollment to Housed:** Average time between enrollment and episode resolving service.
  - **Average Time to Referral Closure:** Average time to resolve Homelink referral.
  - % of allocated vouchers

### ***Monthly San Antonio and Bexar County CoC System Performance Report***

Objective: A monthly analysis of the CoC Performance Dashboard that is provided to the community to help make decisions and determine performance improvement needs.

Audience: Funders, committee members, program staff, and Alliance to House Everyone agencies

- Homeless Strategic Plan Outcomes Analysis (see above)
- Homelink Redesign Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Analysis
  - Review of specific measures to ensure redesign has the intended effect
- Homelink Activity
  - Analysis of Dashboard “Homelink Activity” metrics for the month (see above)
- GIS map of Street Outreach (SO) services, Emergency Shelter (ES), Safe Haven (SH), and Supportive Services Only (SSO) enrollments

### ***Monthly San Antonio and Bexar County CoC Project-Level Performance Report***

Objective: A monthly report for each project participating in Homelink for providers and funders to ensure projects are high-performing and following policies and procedures.

Audience: Project staff and funder.

- **Front Door Project Summary:**



- # of New Enrollments
  - # of Open Enrollments
  - # of Active Enrollments
  - # of enrollments closed for inactivity
  - # of enrollments added to PP
  - # of enrollments referred from PP
  - # of enrollments successfully connected to Homelink Intervention.
  - % of Enrollments with Date of Engagement (SO only)
  - # of Clients referred to ES via CSC (SO only)
  - % of Enrollments with Current Living Situation in the past 30 days (SO only)
- **Prevention/Housing Project Summary:**
    - **Statistics:**
      - # of New Referrals
      - # of Open Referrals
      - % of Referrals pulled from PP/Prioritized HP REL
      - % of Rejected referrals by reason type
      - # of Referrals Resolved within 30 days
      - # of Referrals Open for >30 Days
      - # of Referrals Successfully Enrolled in Project
      - # of Project Enrollments with no CE Referral Event.
      - # of HHs with Move-in/Service Date
    - **Outcomes**
      - Average Time from Project Enrollment to Move-in/Service Date
      - % of HH recidivating back into homelessness after project exit (0-6 months; 7-12 months; and 13-24 months)
      - % of HH exiting to permanent housing destinations
      - % of HH increasing cash and non-cash income

### **9.3 RPI Study Design, Equity Analysis, and System Implications**

The primary goal of this evaluation will be to determine what combination of data-driven decision-making, skilled assessor evaluation, and client preferences do the best to prioritize people who will benefit the most from housing assistance. The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of various approaches to prioritizing housing assistance by addressing the following questions:

Answering this larger question will require answering a few more focused questions:



- What factors are most important in identifying clients at greatest risk of housing instability and prolonged homelessness?
- How well do subjective Skilled Assessor impressions match data-informed predictions?
- Does incorporating client input into referral prioritization shape housing intervention effectiveness?
- Do study findings support the HUD “order of priority” for clients who qualify for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)?
- Do assessor identities (gender, race/ethnicity)—alone or in relation to client identities— influence their subjective assessments?
- Are these scoring and prioritization systems equitable across protected classes, such as age, gender, race, and ethnicity?
- Are referrals being made and successful equally across protected classes?
- Are housing move-ins equitable across protected classes?
- Are returns to homelessness equitable across protected classes?

#### **9.4 Annual CE Evaluation**

Homelink undergoes an annual evaluation to assess its effectiveness in addressing homelessness. This evaluation includes analyzing data, gathering stakeholder feedback, and measuring outcomes to ensure compliance with HUD requirements and local regulations. It also focuses on promoting equity and making recommendations for improvement. By conducting this evaluation, Homelink aims to continuously improve its services and achieve its goal of ending homelessness in the community.



## Appendix A: Homelessness Definitions

HEARTH Homeless's Final Definition can be found [here](#).

The Criteria and Recordkeeping Requirements for the different homeless definitions can be found [here](#) and are included below.

<b>CRITERIA FOR DEFINING HOMELESS</b>	<b>Category 1</b>	Literally Homeless	<p>(1) Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation;</li> <li>(ii) Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); <u>or</u></li> <li>(iii) Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less <u>and</u> who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution</li> </ul>
	<b>Category 2</b>	Imminent Risk of Homelessness	<p>(2) Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;</li> <li>(ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; <u>and</u></li> <li>(iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing</li> </ul>
	<b>Category 3</b>	Homeless under other Federal statutes	<p>(3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;</li> <li>(ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;</li> <li>(iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; <u>and</u></li> <li>(iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers</li> </ul>
	<b>Category 4</b>	Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee DV	<p>(4) Any individual or family who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence;</li> <li>(ii) Has no other residence; <u>and</u></li> <li>(iii) Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing</li> </ul>



## Appendix B: Homelink Participating Provider List by Project Type

### Homelink Homelessness Prevention (HP)

- SAMMinistries (COSA HOME ARP funded)
- SAMMinistries (Bexar County ESG funded)
- Endeavors (COSA HOME ARP funded)

### Homelink Diversion

- Any Homelink Partner (DHS, COSA funded)

### Emergency Shelters (ES)

- Haven for Hope
- SAMMinistries
- The Salvation Army
- Family Violence Prevention Services

### Street Outreach (SO)

- Bexar County (Haven)
- Department of Human Services (DHS), City of San Antonio (COSA)
- Haven for Hope
- SAMMinistries
- Corazon Ministries
- Christian Assistance Ministries (CAM)
- Center for Healthcare Services (CHCS)

### Homelink Access

- Homeless Connections Hotline

### Day Centers

- Corazon Ministries
- Young Adult Stability and Support (YASS) Center (18-25 only)

### Homelink SSI/SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery (SOAR)

- Haven for Hope



- SAMMinistries
- SA Hope Center (SAHC)

### **Other Supports**

- Identification Recovery
  - SAPD Hope Team (COSA funded)
- Provider Liable Assurance for Community Engagement (PLACE)
  - Any Homelink Partner (NHSD, COSA funded)

### **Public Housing Agencies (PHA)**

- Housing Authority of Bexar County (HABC)
  - Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)
  - Housing Stability Vouchers (HSV)
- Opportunity Home San Antonio (OHSA)
  - Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)
  - Family Referral Program (FRP)
  - Housing Stability Vouchers (HSV)
  - Housing Vouchers
  - Move-on Vouchers

### **Transitional Housing (TH)**

- Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS)
- SAMMinistries

### **Transitional Housing to Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH)**

- Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS) (Fleeing DV only)
- SAMMinistries (18-25 only) X2
- SAMMinistries (Fleeing DV only)

### **Rapid Rehousing (RRH)**

- American GI Forum (CoC)
- Endeavors (CoC/one 18-25 only/one DV only) X3
- Family Violence Prevention Services (CoC – Fleeing DV only)
- Family Violence Prevention Services (TDHCA ESG – Fleeing DV only)
- Haven for Hope (CoC/Unsheltered NOFO)
- St. Vincent De Paul (CoC)
- SAMMinistries (TDHCA ESG)



- SAMMinistries (CoC/Unsheltered) X2?
- Thrive (CoC/YHDP – 18-25 only) X2
- UTSA (CoC – 18-25 only)

#### **Rapid Rehousing to Permanent Supportive Housing Bridge (RRH-PSH)**

- Endeavors (COSA HOME-ARP TBRA)
- The Salvation Army (COSA HOME-ARP TBRA)
- SAMMinistries (COSA HOME-ARP TBRA)

#### **Permanent Supportive Housing**

- American GI Forum (CoC)
- Endeavors (CoC) X2
- SAMMinistries (Bexar County ESG)
- SAMMinistries (CoC/Unsheltered CoC) X5
- San Antonio Aids Foundation (CoC)
- Towne Twin Village (Housing Bond)

### Appendix C: CTH Geographic Coverage Map



 2016 CoC Boundary  2015 CoC Boundary



## Appendix D: Determining Veteran Eligibility

The veteran is overall responsible for securing and maintaining his/her verification documents (DD 214 or Statement of Service), but in the event the veterans does not have these items the Haven for Hope veteran navigator teams will ensure these documents are acquired through the STXVA eligibility system or via National Archives. Veterans should also be advised to have the documents secured at the Bexar County Clerk's Office.

Although it is not required, filing your DD 214 with the Bexar County Clerk's Office provides permanent retention of the record. Doing so allows the County Clerk's Office to provide a certified copy of your DD 214 should you need a replacement copy for your records in the future. An original, complete DD 214 must be provided for the filing and will be returned once the filing is completed.

Veterans can also order their eligibility documents (DD214 or Statement of Service) by visiting their local Veterans Services Organization or the Eligibility section of their local Veterans Administration.

### WHERE TO FILE

#### *Recording Department*

#### **Physical Address**

101 W. Nueva, Suite 103

San Antonio, TX 78205

Phone: 210-335-2581

### WHERE TO REQUEST A COPY

#### *Vital Statistics*

#### **Physical Address**

101 W. Nueva, Suite B110

San Antonio, TX 78205

Phone: 210-335-2581

### FILING A DD 214 MILITARY DISCHARGE

A DD214 can be filed on the first floor of the Paul Elizondo Tower in Suite 103. To file a DD 214, the County Clerk's Office requires proof of age and identity and the original, complete DD 214. Once recorded, the original DD 214 is returned along with three (3) certified copies free of charge. There is no fee for filing a DD 214. Common forms of identification used to file include:

- Driver's License



- An original or certified copy of the Birth Certificate
- Passport
- Visa or Military identification card

If you do not have an original DD 214, a certified copy can be requested online at [www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records) or submitted by mail or fax using the SF-180 Form which is provided on the same website. For customer service, please contact the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri by calling 314-801-0800.

#### **REQUESTING A COPY OF A DD 214 MILITARY DISCHARGE**

Once a DD 214 has been recorded with the Bexar County Clerk's Office, a copy can be obtained from the Bexar County Clerk's Vital Statistics Department located in the basement of the Paul Elizondo Tower. Aside from the Veteran, only immediate family (spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, sister, or brother) may request a copy. There is no fee required for requesting a copy of a DD 214.

In order to request a copy of a DD 214, the County Clerk's Office requires proof of age and identity in the form of a valid government-issued or state-issued photo identification. Information about the veteran is also required. The minimum information that is needed is the veteran's full name. While the year of discharge is not required, it is extremely helpful in processing the request.