



HUD-VASH HMIS Manual

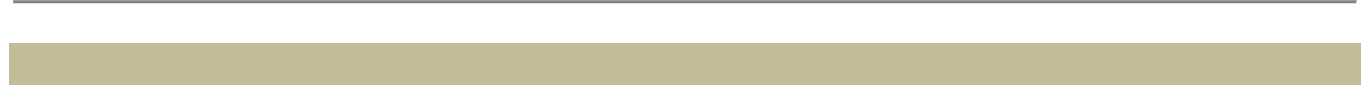
Federally-Funded Programs for Homeless Veterans

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Introduction

This manual is intended to support data collection and reporting efforts of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agencies and U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veteran Affairs (VA) program grantees administering HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) vouchers. The HUD-VASH program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA provides these services for participating Veterans at VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) and community-based outreach clinics.

HUD-VASH staff are required to use the VA's Homeless Operations Management and Evaluation System (HOMES) database. Any HUD-VASH use of HMIS is voluntary, but encouraged. However, there are a select few HUD-VASH Other Than Honorable (OTH) projects that have been funded in FY 18 that are not able to use HOMES and therefore are required to participate in HMIS for data collection purposes. Reporting specifications will be finalized soon to allow the VA to compare the data in HOMES for HUD-VASH to the data collected in HMIS for HUD-VASH OTH and evaluate outcomes of the pilot HUD-VASH OTH program for clients.

This manual provides information on HMIS setup for HUD-VASH funded projects, including HUD-VASH OTH. While local data collection instruction from HMIS Leads and the [HUD 2017 Data Standards Manual](#) will help with HUD-VASH data collection for HMIS users, this HUD-VASH Programs HMIS Manual is meant to help system administrators and HMIS Lead staff ensure that HUD-VASH programs are properly set up in HMIS.

Additional Resources

- **VA Homeless Programs:** Guidance about the VA homeless programs and requirements can be found online at the [VA Homeless Programs](#) page.
- **Ask A Question:** To ask a question about any VA Programs HMIS requirement go to the "[Ask A Question](#)" section of the HUD Exchange. Please be sure to select "HMIS" for your question under "My Question is Related To." HUD and VA program staff are working together to answer questions that come in on the AAQ related to the VA programs and HMIS.
- **HMIS:** There are a variety of documents available on the HUD Exchange [2017 HMIS Data Standards](#) page that comprise the suite of HMIS Data Standard resources, which are highlighted in the table below. Each of the documents has a specific purpose and intended audience. The HMIS Lead should be familiar with all of the documents and collectively use them as their HMIS reference materials along with specific materials provided by the software vendor.

Document Name	Intended Audience	Contents
HMIS Data Standards Dictionary	HMIS Vendors & HMIS Lead Agencies	The Dictionary provides the detailed information required for system programming of each HMIS element and the responses required for an HMIS software. It delineates data collection requirements, system logic, and contains the XML and CSV tables and numbers. It also includes critical information about data collection stages, federal partner data collection required elements, and metadata data elements.
HMIS Data Standards Manual	HMIS Lead Agencies and HMIS Users	The manual provides data collection instructions for the Project Descriptor Data Elements, Universal Data Elements, and the Common Program Specific Data Elements. It contains information on project set up, client-level data collection requirements, and detailed descriptions of each data element.
HMIS Standard Reporting Terminology Glossary	HMIS Lead Agencies	The HMIS Standards Reporting Terminology Glossary is the standard report document for HMIS implementations. The glossary is designed to provide HMIS and their programmers a foundation for HMIS-required reports.

HMIS Project Setup Steps

It is important to be sure that communities understand the difference between a **program** and a **project** because they have distinct meanings in this context. A program is the source of funding that the organization is receiving to run its project (e.g., Grant and Per Diem Program funding for ABC Transitional Housing project).

1. Identify Projects for Inclusion in HMIS

Identify all of the **projects** within the HMIS implementation that receive HUD-VASH funding. The [VAMC](#) serving your community should be aware of all funding awarded to your CoC. VA has also posted their [Directory of Veteran Service Organizations](#) online, which will assist with contact information.

2. Identify the Federal Partner Program Funding each Project

The HUD-VASH program combines HUD-funded Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by Veteran’s Affairs. VA provides these services for participating veterans at VAMCs and community-based outpatient clinics. These permanent supportive housing projects have been encouraged by the VA to participate in HMIS.

Every project receiving funding through this program must be included in a continuum’s HIC and PIT Count. In communities that use HMIS to generate the HIC, all projects funded under these programs must be entered into HMIS, regardless of HMIS participation. Furthermore, every project in a CoC’s HIC is required to be set up in HMIS regardless of whether client level data is collected in HMIS.

3. Set Up Projects in HMIS

One of the most critical steps in accurate data collection and reporting is ensuring that a project is set up properly in an HMIS. Incorrect project setup will jeopardize recipients' ability to produce accurate, reliable reports and will affect the community's ability to generate community-wide reports including System Performance Measures.

HMIS System Administrators should follow the procedures established for their particular HMIS when setting up projects in the HMIS. These setup procedures must include, at a minimum, that:

1. the HMIS includes project descriptor information for all ESG projects participating in HMIS; and
2. the HMIS Lead, in consultation with the CoC, review project descriptor data at least once annually and update that data as needed.

The HMIS Lead Agency must ensure that the HMIS includes project descriptor information for all residential continuum projects, regardless of their participation in HMIS.

The following are required Project Descriptor Data Elements:

Organization Identifiers (2.1) – The name of the agency/organization receiving HUD-VASH funding must be entered. An identification number will be generated by the HMIS. There may be only one record in HMIS for each agency/organization, regardless of how many projects they operate. In the HMIS Data Standards, HUD strongly recommends that the name of the organization is the entity's legal name - not an abbreviation or other derivative since the name is transmitted in reports.

Project Identifiers (2.2) –

- **Project ID:** A Project ID must be assigned to each project via a system generated number or code. Each project must receive a distinct identifier that is consistently associated with that project.
- **Project Name:** The name of the project receiving HUD - VASH funding and providing the direct service must also be entered or identified with the HUD - VASH project. HMIS administrators should note that the name of the project on the Housing Authority's grant agreement with HUD often differs from its common name at its administrative organization or how it is known within the community and often not the same name as is used on the HIC. System administrators should maintain mapping information to correlate grant names, HIC names, and common names with the project identifiers either within the HMIS itself or separately.
- **Operating Start Date:** Beginning in October 2017, the Operating Start Date of a project must be completed on all projects within the HMIS. The Operating Start Date of the project is defined as the first day the project provided services and/or housing. Thus, this date must be no later than the date the first client served in the project was entered into the project. For projects which began operating prior to October 1, 2012, the start date may be estimated if not known.

- **Operating End Date:** An Operating End Date must be entered when a project closes. The Operating End Date must be the last day on which the last client received housing/services. The Operating End Date should be left empty if the project is still in operation (refer to the specific HMIS instructions on project close out in an HMIS).

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

Project Type (2.4) – Continuum Project should be answered ‘Yes’ for all projects funded under programs listed below. Appropriate project types will be critical to the CoC’s ability to produce system wide performance measures. VA project types should be set up as follows:

Component	Project Type #	Project Type Name
HUD: HUD/VASH	3	PH – Permanent Supportive Housing
HUD: HUD/VASH-OTH	3	PH – Permanent Supportive Housing

Method for Tracking Emergency Shelter Utilization (2.5) – Among HUD-VASH programs, this is not a relevant data element.

Federal Partner Funding Sources (2.6) – Projects funded in whole or in part by VA funds are to be identified based on the VA program. Select the appropriate VA program for each project:

Component	Federal Funder Source #	Federal Funder Source Name
HUD:HUD/VASH	20	HUD:HUD/VASH
HUD:HUD/VASH OTH	20	HUD:HUD/VASH

For HUD-VASH projects the **Grant Identifier** field should include the HUD grant number, along with the corresponding Grant Start Date and Grant End Date.

Bed and Unit Inventory Information (2.7) –

HMIS administrators must complete the bed and unit inventory information for projects that provide lodging (Permanent Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-housing, and Safe Haven). This information should match the Housing Inventory Count (HIC). The bed and unit information is based on

the number and type of beds in the entire project, which may be more beds/units than are funded by the HUD-VASH Program.

HMIS Leads should consult their HMIS vendor regarding the specific way to complete this element to meet all of the requirements. Correct set-up is critical for accurate reporting in the new Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) beginning in 2018.

- **Additional Project Information (2.8)** –Each residential project, including HUD-VASH and HUD – VASH OTH must have at least one record of *Additional Project Information*. ‘Geocode,’ ‘Project ZIP code,’ and ‘Project Street Address’ fields must reflect the location of the project’s principal lodging site or, for multiple site projects, the area in which most of the project’s clients are housed. Tenant-based scattered site projects and Victim Services Providers are only required to complete the geocode and ZIP code fields and may use mailing or administrative address information if they wish to complete the remainder of the address fields.

HMIS Leads should consult their HMIS vendor regarding the specific way to complete this element to meet all of the requirements. Correct set-up is critical for accurate reporting in the new Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) beginning in 2018.

Data Collection Requirements

Information on the rationale, collection point, subjects, and instructions for each element can be found in the [HMIS Data Standards Dictionary and Manual](#).

All HUD-VASH projects participating in HMIS are required to collect and enter Universal Data Elements and relevant Program-Specific Data Elements. The Program Specific Data Elements to be collected by HUD-VASH projects are shown below:

Data Collection Requirements by Program Component:

Data Element #	Name	HUD-VASH	HUD-VASH-OTH
3.1-3.917	Universal Data Elements	X	X
4.2	Income and Sources	X	X
4.3	Non-Cash Benefits	X	X
4.4	Health Insurance	X	X
4.5	Physical Disability	X	X
4.6	Developmental Disability	X	X
4.7	Chronic Health Condition	X	X
4.8	HIV/AIDS	X	X
4.9	Mental Health Problem	X	X
4.10	Substance Abuse	X	X
4.11	Domestic Violence	X	X
4.18	Housing Assessment Disposition	CE	CE
V1	Veteran's Information	X	X
V5	Last Permanent Address	X	X
V6	VAMC Station Number	X	X
V8	HUD-VASH Voucher Tracking		X
V9	HUD-VASH Exit Information		X
R4	Last Grade Completed	X	X
R6	Employment Status		X
R7	General Health Status		X

X = Data collection required

CE = Data collection required for coordinated entry

Special Data Collection Instructions

None.