Washington County Data Quality Plan

Version 1 (2023)

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1 Introduction

Washington County Department of Housing Services (WCHS), a department within Washington County, is the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agency ("HMIS Lead"). WHCS administers HMIS and assists in supporting HMIS data entry on behalf of the OR-506 (Hillsboro, Beaverton/Washington County) Continuum of Care (CoC) ("local CoC"), which is governed by the CoC Board. The CoC Board provides oversight, policy review, and guidance for the HMIS Project.

HMIS is a locally administered electronic system that stores client-level information about persons who access homeless services in a community. This document includes a Data Quality (DQ) Plan and protocols for ongoing data quality monitoring that meet requirements set forth by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It is developed by the Washington County HMIS team in coordination with subject matter experts both within and external to the department. This HMIS Data Quality Plan is to be updated annually, and in accordance with the latest HMIS Data Standards (including quality thresholds) and local requirements.

2 Foundation

2.1 Development Process

This Data Quality & Monitoring Plan has been developed by staff at Washington County Department of Housing Services in their capacity as HMIS Lead Agency for Washington County. As part of the development process of this Data Quality Plan, Washington County staff reviewed HUD Data Standards, Data Quality plans of surrounding counties, and conducted independent research on data quality development guides to align with best practices for implementation. Stakeholder input was incorporated into a final draft for review and approval by the Washington County Continuum of Care Board as the authorizing entity for the regional implementation of HMIS.

2.2 What is data quality and why does it matter?

Data Quality (DQ) is a term that refers to the reliability and validity of client-level data collected in the HMIS. It is measured by the extent to which the client data in the system reflect actual information in the real world. With good data quality, the local CoC can "tell the story" of the population experiencing homelessness. The quality of data is determined by assessing certain characteristics such as timeliness, completeness, and accuracy.

Quality data within HMIS is an integral part of all work to end homelessness because it:
- Provides a clearer understanding of homelessness within the community, which:
    - Allows for data-informed decisions at both the project- and system levels;
    - Enables a CoC, and projects within a CoC, to tell the story of homelessness as realistically and completely as possible for use in advocacy and community education;
- Provides direct care staff with immediate access to important client information that can streamline daily activities and may result in improved service delivery and prompt referrals for clients;
- May directly affect clients through the Coordinated Entry process and may determine which services they may or may not appear to be eligible for;
- Results in more accurate and complete reports for funders and partners, which can affect:
    - Meeting the requirements for CoC and other federal funding streams;
    - The funding opportunities providers apply for; and
    - A provider's ability to obtain funding to provide needed services to individuals at risk of and/or experiencing homelessness.

2.3 What is a DQ plan?

An HMIS Data Quality Plan is a system-wide document that supports a CoC to achieve reliable data in their local HMIS. The plan intends to accomplish the following:

- Identify the responsibilities of all parties within the CoC with respect to HMIS data quality;
- Establish specific data quality standards for timeliness, completeness, accuracy, and consistency;
- Describe the procedures for implementing the plan and monitoring progress toward meeting data quality standards, including:
  - Defining how improvement opportunities in data quality are addressed; and
  - Establishing timelines for monitoring data quality on a regular basis.

2.4 What is a DQ monitoring plan?

A data quality monitoring plan is a set of procedures that outlines a regular, ongoing process for analyzing and reporting on the reliability and validity of the data entered into the HMIS at both the project and aggregate system levels. A data quality monitoring plan is the primary tool for tracking and generating information necessary to identify areas for data quality improvement.

2.5 Our HMIS software

The WellSky software product, Community Services (formerly known as "ServicePoint"), has been adopted by the local CoC as the official HMIS for CoC providers. For the purposes of this document, "HMIS" refers to Community Services and all modules, assessments, and reporting capacities, standard or customized, contained therein.

3 Data Quality Plan

3.1 Purpose

The Washington County HMIS Data Quality Plan has been developed to provide actionable, measurable steps to address data quality within the HMIS, which includes HUD defined CoC: Hillsboro/Beaverton/Washington County (OR-506).

3.2 Overview

The HMIS Data Quality Plan begins by identifying the data entered into HMIS, and then explains the quality standards and goals set forth by the CoC for these data. The plan addresses the various components of data quality – completeness, timeliness, accuracy, consistency, and – and provides the standards (minimum requirements) that HMIS participating organizations entering data into HMIS must meet. Finally, the plan provides how data quality is monitored.

3.3 Participation

All federally funded homeless services projects are required to use HMIS and must meet certain data quality expectations to ensure accurate reporting for those grants. All providers that enter data into the HMIS contribute to the overall picture of homelessness in the local area. All projects and programs entering data into HMIS, regardless of funding source, are required to provide data consistent with these standards.

3.4 HMIS Data

3.4.1 Universal Data Elements (UDEs)

Purpose. The purpose of UDEs are to ensure that all service providers participating in the Washington County HMIS are documenting the data elements necessary to produce a Continuum-wide unduplicated count of clients served. This provides accurate counts for various reporting requirements, including the Annual Performance Report (APR) and the Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA) collected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), plus other reporting requirements. This also ensures that the CoC has sufficient client data to conduct basic analysis on the extent and characteristics of the populations served. HUD Designation refers to the element index number in the HUD Data Exchange resource. The required UDEs, which clients they must be collected for, and their collection points are summarized in the following table:

HUD Designation	Field	Collected About	Collection Point
3.01	Name	All clients	Record Creation
3.01.5	Name Data Quality	All clients	Record Creation
3.02	Social Security Number	All clients	Record Creation
3.02.2	SSN Data Quality	All clients	Record Creation
3.03	Date of Birth	All clients	Record Creation
3.03.2	DOB Data Quality	All clients	Record Creation
3.04	Race and Ethnicity	All clients	Record Creation
3.06	Gender	All clients	Record Creation
3.07	Veteran Status	All clients	Record Creation
3.08	Disabling Condition	All clients	Project Start
3.10	Project Start Date	All clients	Project Start
3.11	Project Exit Date	All clients	Project Exit
3.12	Destination	All clients	Project Exit
3.15	Relationship to Head of Household	All clients	Project Start
3.16	Enrollment CoC	HOH	Project Start, Update
3.20	Housing Move-in Date	HOH	At Move In (Update)
3.917	Prior Living Situation	HOH and Adults	Project Start

Collection. All projects participating in HMIS are required to collect the UDEs, regardless of funding source. The Personally Identifying Information (PII) UDEs (3.01 through 3.07) must be collected once per client, regardless of how many project stays that client has in the system and is done through the creation of the client profile in HMIS. The remaining UDEs (3.08 through 3.917) are to be collected at least once per project stay when the program entry is created or closed.

3.4.2 Program Specific Data Elements (PSDEs)

Purpose. The purpose of PSDEs are to provide information about the characteristics of clients, the services that are provided, and client outcomes.

The PSDEs that are required for local and federal reporting include the common elements found in the table below. Depending on the funding source, PSDEs may differ. Refer to the HMIS Data

Dictionary, found on the HMIS Data Standards page, for exhaustive program-specific data elements requirements. The table below provides the "Common Program Specific Data Elements", which are the PSDEs that are collected across most Federal Partner programs. These Common PSDEs are listed along with their collection point within a client's project stay:

HUD Designation	Field	Collected about	Collection Point
4.02	Income and Sources	HOH and Adults	Project Start, Update, Annual Assessment, Project Exit
4.03	Non-Cash Benefits	HOH and Adults	Project Start, Update, Annual Assessment, Project Exit
4.04	Health Insurance	All clients	Project Start, Update, Annual Assessment, Project Exit
4.05	Physical Disability	All clients	Project Start, Update, Project Exit
4.06	Developmental Disability	All clients	Project Start, Update, Project Exit
4.07	Chronic Health Condition	All clients	Project Start, Update, Project Exit
4.08	HIV/AIDS	All clients	Project Start, Update, Project Exit
4.09	Mental Health Disorder	All clients	Project Start, Update, Project Exit
4.1	Substance Use Disorder	All clients	Project Start, Update, Project Exit
4.11	Domestic Violence	HOH and Adults	Project Start, Update
4.12	Current Living Situation	HOH and Adults	Occurrence point (at time of contact)
4.13	Date of Engagement	HOH and Adults	Occurrence point (at point of engagement)

Collection. PDEs may be collected at project start, update, annual assessment, project exit and/or at every event occurrence. Not all PDEs are required for collection by all projects, and some HMIS-participating projects may only collect the UDEs and not collect any PDEs. Staff are expected to review and understand any program specific HMIS Data Entry workflows to determine which PDEs are required.

3.4.3 Washington County Specific Data Elements

Field	Collected About	Collection Point
REALD	All household members	Record Creation and/or Phase 1 Assessment

3.4.4 Project Descriptor Data Elements

Purpose. The PDDEs are basic information about the projects participating in HMIS and help ensure HMIS is a consistent and comprehensive database of information about people experiencing homelessness. The PDDEs are the 'building blocks' of HMIS. They enable HMIS to:

- Associate client-level records with the various projects in which clients will enroll in across project types;
- Identify which federal/local partner programs are providing funding to the project; and
- Record bed and unit inventory and other information, by project, relevant to the Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA), System Performance Measures (SPMs), Housing Inventory Counts (HIC), Point In Time (PIT) counts, and bed utilization reporting required by HUD. This information will be verified or updated at least annually for administrative reporting purposes.

The required PDDEs are the following:

- Name of the agency/organization receiving CoC funding
- HMIS identification number
- Project ID
- Project Name
- Operating Start Date
- Operating End Date
- Continuum of Care Project
- Project Type
- Funding Sources
- Bed and Unit Inventory Information (As needed for Shelters/Annual for RRH and PH)
- Project description
- Location Information
- Contact Information

Collection. PDDEs are entered and managed by the Washington County HMIS team with internal project staff, not HMIS end users. Participating agencies must inform the Washington County HMIS team staff of changes to Bed and Unit Inventory Information within 15 days of an inventory change to ensure accuracy of capacity reporting.

3.4.5 Federal Partner Program Elements

Purpose. Federal Partner Program Elements are data fields required for specific federally funded program types that may not be relevant to other projects.

Federal Partners active in Washington County with specific FPPE are:

- FYSB RHY (Family and Youth Services Bureau Runaway and Homeless Youth Program)
- HUD COC (US Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care)
- HUD ESG (US Department of Housing and Urban Development Emergency Solutions Grants)
- HUD VASH (US Department of Housing and Urban Development Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing)
- VA (Veterans Affairs) Collection. Collection points for each program type are defined in the HUD Data Standards resource.

4 Defining Data Quality

4.1 The four components of data quality

HUD identifies four components of data quality: timeliness, completeness, accuracy and consistency. These components are defined and detailed below and are further described in sections 5.2-5.4 as it pertains to the specific types of data elements.

Data Quality Component	Description	Features
Timeliness	The extent to which the data are collected and available when needed.	• Data are entered soon after collected • Changing data are kept up to date
Completeness	The extent to which all required data are known and documented. Coverage and utilization are both forms of completeness.	• All clients served are entered • Complete identifying data entered • Complete characteristics fields entered • All services entered • Complete exit data entered
Accuracy	The extent to which the data reflects the real-world client or service.	• Accurate data entered by staff • Can perform logic checks of the data to uncover where inaccuracies lie

In addition, Washington County includes adherence to program data entry workflows as an additional element of Data Quality.

4.2 Client refused response options

Most HUD required data elements provide a "Client refused" response option. Staff are expected to ask all clients all the Universal Data Elements and Program Specific Data Elements. Clients always have the right to decline to answer. In some situations it may be appropriate to skip certain questions (for example the domestic violence related questions) if the place where the assessment is being completed does not allow the client confidentiality/safety. Staff are expected to use their discretion while completing the assessment.

5 HMIS program specific data quality standards

5.1 Purpose

The following data quality standards are the minimum standards to be met by all organizations entering data into HMIS. When data quality standards are met, reporting is more reliable and can be used to evaluate service delivery, project design and effectiveness, and efficiency of the system.

5.2 Timeliness

Is the required information entered into HMIS within the required period of time?

Definition. Data timeliness is the length of time between when HMIS information is collected and when that information is entered into HMIS. Data timeliness cannot be edited and can only be improved going forward.

Importance. Entering data into HMIS in a timely manner is necessary to ensure that clients receive or make connections to the services they need in a quick and efficient manner. Timely data entry also ensures that data are accessible when it is needed, whether for monitoring purposes, meeting funding requirements, or for responding to requests for information. Finally, when data are entered in a timely manner, it helps reduce human error that can occur when too much time has elapsed between the data collection/service transaction and the data entry.

Standards. The Washington County HMIS team encourages all HMIS-participating organizations to aspire to 100% of data being entered into HMIS in a timely manner. Entering data in a timely manner can reduce human error that occurs when too much time elapses between data collection/service delivery and data entry. Timely data entry allows the agencies to gain an accurate picture of the various programs clients are involved with. However, the Washington County HMIS team recognizes this may not be realistic or even possible in all cases.

All required data are to be entered into HMIS within 3 business days of the associated activity (e.g. program entries, program exits, service transactions, etc. as indicated by data workflow).

5.3 Completeness

Are all the required data elements for clients served recorded in HMIS?

Definition. Data Completeness is the percentage of data fields for any given client, project enrollment, provider, organization, or system that are filled in or answered. Data Completeness is also the degree to which all required data are known and documented. Incomplete or missing data always consists of null and "data not collected" values, and may include "other" values for some data elements.

Importance. Complete data are critical to finding the right services for clients to end their homelessness experience. Incomplete data can negatively impact the Washington County HMIS team and HUD's ability to make population-level assessments, analyze patterns in client information, identify changes within the homeless population, and adapt strategies appropriately. HMIS data quality is also part of funding applications, and low HMIS data quality scores may impact renewal funding or future funding requests.

Standards. Data completeness is evaluated for the current fiscal year at the conclusion of each quarter to ensure organizations are completing records to the best of their ability, including updating records and entering in additional information that is gained as client interactions take place. The Washington County HMIS team encourages all HMIS-participating organizations to aspire to 100% collection of all data elements (Universal, Washington County, Project Descriptor, and Program Specific), but recognize that 100% data completeness may not be realistic or possible in all cases.

The percentage of all clients served with "null/missing" UDEs should be no higher than 5% across all programs.

5.4 Accuracy/Validity

"Are all clients in the correct project?" and "Are all clients in HMIS" and "Does HMIS data accurately reflect true client information?"

Definition & Importance. Information entered in HMIS needs to accurately represent the clients who are served by any homeless services project contributing data to HMIS. Inaccurate data, sometimes referred to as incongruent data, is evaluated at both the client and household levels, and highlights data elements that appear to rationally conflict with one or more other data elements.

Data accuracy is not easy to manage or monitor and requires specific reports that look at congruency between and among responses to data elements within the system, as well as checks between what the client has told an intake worker and what data are entered into HMIS. Additionally, the HUD Longitudinal System Analysis Guide looks at specific data quality measures in relation to the community-wide report submission to HUD on an annual basis.

Standards. A list of common accuracy measures are included below. These measures are included in data quality monitoring and **should be maintained to 95% or better error rate for a given project.**

Accuracy/Validity Measure	Data Elements Involved	Accuracy/Validity Test
Date of Birth <> Project Start Date	Date of Birth (DOB) Project Start Date (PSD)	DOB is not the same date as PSD for Heads of Households
Household Error	Relationship to Head of Household	At least one, and only one, Head of Household per entry (no HoH is an error, multiple HoH is an error)
Prior Living Situation and Dependencies are Congruent	Prior Living Situation (PLS) Length of time in previous place Approximate date homelessness started Number of times experiencing homelessness in last 3 years Number of months experiencing homelessness in last 3 years	Dependencies answered if PLS indicates the client came from a homeless situation.
Disabling Condition has a Source	Disabling Condition (DS) Physical Disability Developmental Disability Chronic Health Condition HIV/AIDS Mental Health Problem Substance Abuse	If Yes to Disabling Condition, then Yes to at least one source. Each category of disability must have a Yes or No answer.
Monthly Income has a Source	Income Sources	If Yes to Income, then Yes to at least one source. Each category of income must have a Yes or No answer.

Non-Cash Benefits has a Source	Non-Cash benefits (NCB) Sources	If Yes to NCB, then Yes to at least one source. Each category of NCB must have a Yes or No answer.
Health Insurance has a Type	Health Insurance (HI) Types	If Yes to HI, then Yes to at least one source. Each category of HI must have a Yes or No answer.
Domestic Violence and Dependencies are congruent	Domestic Violence When experience occurred Are you currently fleeing	Dependencies answered if DV indicates the client experienced DV.
Veterans are Not Minors	Veterans Status (VS) Date of Birth	VS is not Yes for clients under 18 years of age.
Client Location is Appropriate to Project	Client Location Project Information Continuum of Care Information	CL for a client enrollment matches CoC info for the project.
Housing Move-in Date is Accurate for Permanent Housing (PH) programs	Housing Move-in Date (HMID) Entry Date	Ensure HMID does not predate the Entry Date for RRH, PSH, PH-Housing Only, PH- Housing with Services.
A Null Exit Date Accurately Reflects Program Participation	Program Type Entry Date Exit Date	Clients enrolled in a Permanent Housing program type for 6 months or more without a HMID must be confirmed as still active in the program.

5.5 Consistency

"Are the required data elements being recorded in HMIS in a consistent manner across projects?"

Definition/Importance. Data consistency means that data are understood, collected, and entered in the same way across all projects in HMIS. Consistency directly affects the accuracy of data.

Standards. Initial User Training Standard: All workers entering or accessing data within HMIS must complete an initial training before they are allowed to access the live HMIS system. Additional training opportunities and ongoing support are offered to each user by the Washington County HMIS team.

Training is also offered for intake workers who do not do data entry, to ensure they understand the purpose and importance of the information they are collecting.

Monthly Activity User Standard: Users must log into HMIS and enter data at least once per month to maintain active user status. Users must enter data on a regular and consistent basis to maintain HMIS access to prevent a backlog of data entry and to ensure they maintain familiarity with HMIS and the workflows for which they are responsible.

User Employment Standard: The Washington County HMIS team must be notified by an organization within 72 hours of any existing HMIS user no longer being employed at the organization, or moving into a role for which they no longer require access to HMIS.

5.6 Data Entry Workflow Adherence

During onboarding, providers will be required to complete specific training regarding their roles and the data entry those roles require. The Washington County HMIS team have provided data entry workflows to accompany video training and users are graded on a rubric system once they have completed their training in HMIS. Users are required to meet 90% benchmark on all HMIS data entry exercises prior to being given access to HMIS. Once given access, users are then required to adhere to their set workflows while performing their roles with an error rate of <5%.

Specific areas include:

- Enrolling clients using ShelterPoint vs. ClientPoint
- Creating enrollments under the correct program type
- Phase 1 creation and resulting CES referral accuracy
- Unduplicated program entries
- Entering the appropriate ROI's
- Using the Case Manager tab
- Entering Rental Requests and Habitability Inspections via interim on program entry for select programs

6 Data quality monitoring plan

6.1 Purpose

Ongoing HMIS data quality monitoring will be conducted to ensure organizations maintain a high level of data quality. Regular monitoring allows data quality issues to be identified quickly, encourages process solutions to be implemented earlier, and minimizes the number of ongoing errors. Swift identification of errors also allows staff to make corrections while still in contact with participants before data entry errors can compound.

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles:

CoC board: The CoC Board provides authorization and oversight of the Washington County HMIS team. They will support the efforts of the team by enforcing the incentives described in the data quality monitoring plan.

Washington County HMIS team: The Washington County HMIS team is responsible for reviewing monthly data quality reports, work with providers to identify steps necessary to correct data and/or data collection processes, keep a running monthly spreadsheet that identifies the changes in compliancy levels, to identify training needs, and report on progress to the general CoC membership.

Quality Assurance Position (QAP): These positions are to be filled by the agencies Washington County partners with to act as an organizational expert in HMIS at the given agency and are to work in tandem with the Washington County HMIS to ensure compliance with data quality expectations. These select agencies will hold renewable contracts for the QAP and are offered to agencies that hold 2 or more SHS Housing Program contracts

Providers: Providers are responsible for entering and correcting data in accordance with the data quality plan. The provider's organizational leadership should oversee intake and data entry workers to ensure quality data collection and entry practices.

6.3 General Process

Data Quality is evaluated for the current or recently completed fiscal year to ensure organizations are completing records to the best of their ability, including updating records and entering in additional information that is gained as client interactions take place. HMIS data will be monitored

regularly at the user-, project-, organization-, and system-levels to ensure that the above standards are met by all HMIS-participating organizations. A current copy of this HMIS Data Quality Plan will be posted to the Washington County website to ensure that HMIS-participating organizations are aware of the minimum data entry standards they are required to meet.

The Washington County HMIS team will monitor data quality in coordination with HMIS participating organizations in addition to coordinating efforts with agencies that hold QAP contracts. The Washington County HMIS team will send monthly reports to organizations to monitor high-level data and compliance with programs as well as specific information regarding the nature of any inaccuracies and the methods by which to correct them, in addition to.

Expectation for agencies with QAP: Organizations who maintain QA positions will send in regular monthly reports in accordance with the DQ plan and be provided training to correct and maintain quality data.

Expectations for agencies without QAP: The Washington County HMIS team will assist these agencies in running these reports on a regular schedule and work with the providers to establish fair deadlines for needed corrections.
The Washington County HMIS team and the organization and/or end user will work together to develop a plan and timeline to improve to meet Data Quality standards as needed.

6.4 Monitoring Schedule

The following reports are required on a regular basis to monitor data quality at a minimum. The HMIS team may send or request additional reports as needed to monitor data quality.

Report	Frequency	Responsible party
DQ – Program Entry Workflow Errors	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report
DQ – HUD Data Element Errors	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report

DQ – Release of Information Errors	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report
DQ – Housing Move-in Date errors	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report
DQ – Phase 1 Assessment Errors	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report
DQ – Community Connect Referral Errors	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report
DQ – Enrollment Report	Monthly	Provider is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team/QAP (if applicable) will run and provide the report
LSA Data Quality	Monthly	WashCo HMIS team is responsible for correcting errors found in the report WashCo HMIS team will run the report