

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**[Docket No. FR 4848-N-01]****Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) Data and Technical Standards Notice**

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, HUD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice states the intent of HUD to implement Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS).

DATES: *Comment Due Date:* September 22, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments regarding this notice to Michael Roanhouse, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, Room 7262, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20410-7000. Comments should refer to the above docket number and title.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Roanhouse, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, Room 7262, Department of Housing and Urban

Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20410-7000; telephone (202) 708-1226, ext. 4482 (this is not a toll-free number). Hearing- or speech-impaired individuals may access this number by calling the toll-free Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**1. Introduction**

This notice sets forth the Department's intention to implement Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS). An HMIS is a computerized data collection application designed to capture client-level information over time on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons. This notice presents background information on Congressional direction on improving homeless data collection and analysis at the local and national levels and specific statutorily based programmatic and planning requirements for addressing homeless needs. The notice also describes the benefits of developing an HMIS for: Homeless persons; local homeless assistance providers; local bodies that plan for and coordinate homeless services, known as Continuums of Care (CoC); and national policy makers. The notice provides detailed guidance on the development of data and technical standards that will allow local CoC to generate consistent

reports so that the characteristics of homeless populations across the United States can be determined. The notice also describes how data are to be collected and safeguarded.

This notice is being published as a draft to permit CoC planning bodies, homeless service providers, local and state governments, advocates, and homeless clients an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed standards. The next two sections lay out Congressional direction to HUD on HMIS specifically and then on homelessness-related data collection generally.

It has been determined in concert with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that the information collection implicit in this notice requires OMB clearance. For purposes of the OMB clearance, this notice will serve as the 60-day **Federal Register** Notice under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The final report based on the public comments received on this draft version will include an estimate of burden for all potential users of the Notice. As an interim step, this draft version sets out below the existing HUD information collection requirements that HMIS will support when fully operational in American communities and the proposed paperwork burden already submitted to OMB for each:

Information collection*	Annual burden hours	Support entire collection	Support part of collection
Annual Performance Report (Competitive Programs)	200,000	X	
Application/Competitive Homeless Programs	203,280		X
Application/HOPWA	28,625		X
Consolidated Plan	549,925		X

Paperwork Reduction Act

The information collection requirements in this notice have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and assigned OMB control numbers 2506-0145, 2106-0112, 2506-0133, and 2506-0117, respectively. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 U.S.C. (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid control number.

1.1. Congressional Direction on Homeless Management Information Systems

Expressions of Congressional concern for better homeless data collection and analysis at both the local and national levels has resulted in Congressional

direction in conference and committee reports over the past several years. The Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108-7, approved February 20, 2003), provides money to HUD to implement these responsibilities. The Act appropriated \$1,225,000,000 to HUD for Homeless Assistance Grants and specifically provided "[t]hat \$11,000,000 of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be available for the national homeless data analysis project." The Conference Report provided guidance as to some of the steps that HUD should take in implementing this project. Specifically, the report stated as follows:

The conferees are concerned that the Department is not taking the proper steps to determine the extent to which HUD's homeless assistance programs are meeting the needs of chronically homeless people.

Therefore, HUD is directed to begin collecting data on the percentage and number of beds and supportive services programs that are serving people who are chronically disabled and/or chronically homeless.

The conferees reiterate the direction and reporting requirement included in the Senate report regarding the collection and analysis of data to assess the effectiveness of the homeless system, and direct that such report also include HUD's timeline for finalizing data requirements for the Homeless Management Information Systems.

The Senate Report referenced above states that:

The Committee remains supportive of the Department's ongoing work on data collection and analysis within the homeless programs. HUD should continue its collaborative efforts with local jurisdictions to collect an array of data on homelessness in order to analyze patterns of use of assistance, including how people enter and exit the homeless assistance system, and to