

requested from him/her about any children under 18 years of age who are applying for services with the household head. The children do not need to be present at the time the household head applies for services. The same household identification number is assigned to the adult head of household and any children who have been identified as applying for services with the head. If there are other adult members of the household (over 18 years of age) who are reported to be part of this household, a separate intake is conducted. As part of this intake, this individual is assigned the same household identification number as the other household members.

#### Program Identification Information

Program identification information for every program offered in a CoC consists of the following four fields:

- Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) Code. To find the 10-digit FIPS code consisting of 2-digit state code, 3-digit county code, and 5-digit place code: (1) Go to website <http://geonames.usgs.gov/fips55.html>; (2) Click on "Search the FIPS55 Data Base"; (3) Click on state from "State Number Code" pull down menu (this also tells you 2-digit state code); (4) Type town or city name in "Fips55 Feature Name" box; and (5) Click on "Send Query", and 3-digit county code and 5-digit place code will be shown.

- Facility Code (to be locally determined)
- Continuum of Care (CoC) Code (HUD-assigned)
- Program Type Code:

- 0—Not applicable
- 1—Street outreach
- 2—Emergency shelter (e.g., facility or vouchers)
- 3—Transitional housing
- 4—Permanent supportive housing
- 5—Homeless prevention (e.g., security deposit or one month's rent)
- 6—Services-only type of program
- 7—Other

The FIPS code, facility code, CoC code, and program type code may be separate fields in the HMIS application. There is no requirement to merge them into a single field.

For each client intake, staff are only required to enter the program type code. Programs may choose to provide more detailed response categories for the services-only type program response. However, staff must be able to collapse these detailed categories into a single service-only type category. A corresponding FIPS code, facility code,

and CoC code should be automatically generated by the HMIS. Once program identification information has been created, the HMIS must ensure that the information is associated with every program event recorded within the CoC.

#### Program Event Numbers

The HMIS application should generate unique codes for every program event occurring within the CoC. This will enable the system to distinguish episodes of service that occur on the same date and within the same program (e.g., two counseling sessions conducted on the same day).

#### Missing Value Categories

Don't know, not applicable, and refused response categories specified for close-ended questions should appear on the same list as the valid responses. For open-ended questions (e.g., name or the name of the child's school), the HMIS application should include the don't know, not applicable, and refused response categories for each field in the data element (e.g., first name, last name, middle initial, and suffix).

#### Other Response Categories

Certain data elements may contain a response category labeled "other." When a data element contains such an option, there should also be, within the same database table, a separate alphanumeric field where the other value may be entered by program staff. For instance, a coded field that accepts the values 0—Red, 1—Yellow, 9—Other should have an accompanying field that accepts open-ended answers such as tangerine, blue, or magenta. The analysis of such data will allow the standard to adapt to include codes for common answers to questions that may not have been anticipated within the current standard.

#### Data Export

Although a standard environment is not specified, any HMIS application must be capable of exporting any and all data collected into a comma-separated values text file using the following format:

- All fields in a given record are separated by a comma;
- All records within a given text file contain the same fields;
- Blank fields are signified by the comma ending the previous field (or the beginning of the line if the field is the first in the record) followed by a comma indicating the end of the empty field;
- Fields containing text information (as opposed to numeric) will be

surrounded by double quotes whenever the field includes blank spaces, commas, or other symbols not part of the standard alphabet;

- The first line of the file shall be a list of the field names included in every record in the file; and
- The list of field names shall be in the same format described above.

#### 5.2 Continuum of Care Requirements

##### Storage Requirements

The CoC must have or designate a central coordinating body that will be responsible for centralized collection and storage of HMIS data.

HMIS data must be collected to a central location at least once a year from all HMIS users within the CoC.

HMIS data must be stored at the central location for a minimum of seven years after the date of collection by the central coordinating body or designee of the CoC.

#### 5.3 Anonymous Data Collection

An anonymous data record is a record that does not provide sufficient (or any) of the protected personal identifiers to uniquely identify the individual in the record. Certain types of service providers, especially those dealing with victims of domestic violence, occasionally use anonymous records to protect a client's privacy and safety. Some HMIS collect anonymous data and assign a system-generated ID to the individual for the purposes of tracking a client's history of services. Other HMIS simply accept anonymous data and do not attempt to associate previously collected data with the data from the current event.

This notice does not preclude the collection of anonymous data within HMIS. It is important to note, however, that there are several important shortcomings associated with the collection of anonymous data. Anonymous data are nearly impossible to be-duplicated at any level. Also, depending on the amount of data collected for the anonymous client, there may be little practical use for the data, except to count intakes within a particular program.

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