

MAINE HMIS Governance Model

The Maine HMIS governance model:

- Defines the relationship between the HMIS implementation and the CoC;
- Establishes organizational requirements for the HMIS implementation;
- Formalizes leadership and oversight expectations; and
- Provides structure for decision-making.

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Maine HMIS Governance Model

The Maine Homeless Management Information System (Maine HMIS) Governance model is developed and formally documented between the HMIS Lead, Grantee, and Continuums of Care (CoC). It ensures that a formal agreement outlining management processes, responsibilities, decision-making structures, and oversight of the HMIS project has been executed (as evidence by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)). In order to be approved, the HMIS Advisory Council creates the Governance model; then looks to the CoC leadership for full agreement and sign off.

Maine HMIS policy is agreed upon and revised when necessary through CoC representation on the statewide Maine HMIS Advisory Council. The Council evaluates information regarding policy recommendations provided from the CoC. The Council reaches consensus on policy decisions and provides those to the CoC for review and approval. Once the recommendations are approved by the ME CoC, they are incorporated into Maine HMIS policy.

The CoC Board, the CoCs, and the HMIS Lead agree to comply with HUD regulations and HUD guidance. If there is a conflict or a question of interpretation, HUD regulations and HUD guidance will control this HMIS charter.

The tables in this document show the responsible entities that govern the following HMIS activities:

- [Planning and Software Selection](#)
- [HMIS Management and Operations – Governance and Management](#)
- [HMIS Management and Operations – Compliance Monitoring](#)
- [HMIS Management and Operations – Data Quality](#)
- [HMIS Policy Development and Oversight](#)
- [Other Federal Requirements](#)

[Appendix A](#) defines HMIS terms in more detail.

NOTE: Be sure to check the Maine HMIS website at <http://mainehomelessplanning.org/> to ensure you have the most up-to-date version of this document. On the right side of the home page, see the link under the heading "Maine HMIS Governance".

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CoC Names: Maine Continuum of Care
CoC Subcommittee: Maine HMIS Advisory Council
HMIS Lead: MaineHousing

Governance Area	Responsible Entity				
	CoC	HMIS Lead	HMIS Advisory Council	Participating Agencies	Other
HMIS Planning and Strategic Activities – Ensures that activities related to HMIS growth and use are developed, reviewed regularly, and are in accordance with the CoC's goals.	X	X	X		
HMIS Program Milestones Development – Identifies general milestones for project management, including training, expanded system functionality, etc.	X	X	X		
Universal Data Elements – Ensures that the HMIS is able to manage the collection of each data element and corresponding response categories for the Universal Data Elements as outlined in the Current HMIS Data Standard.		X			
Project-Specific Data Elements – Ensures that the HMIS is able to manage the collection of each data variable and corresponding response categories for the Project-specific data elements as outlined in the Current HMIS Data Standard..		X			
Unduplicated Client Records -Ensures the HMIS is able to generate a summary report of the number of unduplicated client records that have been entered into the HMIS.		X			
Required Federal Reporting – Ensures the HMIS is consistently able to produce a reliable required federal reports.		X			
HMIS Reports – Ensures the HMIS generates other client served, utilization summary, and demographic reports both at the system and program levels for purposes of understanding the nature and extent of homelessness in the CoC.	X	X			

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Governance Area	Responsible Entity				
	CoC	HMIS Lead	HMIS Advisory Council	Participating Agencies	Other
HMIS Governance Structure – Ensures a HMIS governance model is developed and formally documented between the HMIS Lead Agency/grantee and the community planning body(ies). Ensures that a formal agreement that outlines management processes, responsibilities, decision-making structures, and oversight of the HMIS projects as been executed (as evidenced by a Memorandum of Understanding, Letter of Agreement, or similar such documentation).			X		
HMIS Governance Monitoring –Regularly monitors the HMIS Lead/Grantee on adherence to the agreement.	X				
HMIS Oversight Inclusive Participation – Ensures membership of the HMIS Advisory Council is inclusive of decision makers representing the CoC.	X				
HMIS Technical Support – Provides technical expertise commensurate with the general HMIS program oversight; provides timely support on high level technical matters; reviews and authorizes HMIS software changes in response to the changing requirements of participating Agencies; and, generally reviews and authorizes special issues brought to it by participating Agencies.		X			HUD, HMIS Vendor
HMIS Software Technical Support – Provides technical expertise commensurate with the requirements of the HMIS software and/or system; provides timely support on software technical matters; is responsible for implementation of authorized changes to the HMIS software and processes; and, generally implements resolutions to any special issues authorized by the HMIS Technical Support Entity within the software and/or overall system.		X			HUD, HMIS Vendor
HMIS IT Issue Tracking – Maintains a regularly updated list of HMIS system service requests, activities, deliverables, and resolutions.		X			
HMIS IT Issue Monitoring (Community Level) – Regularly reviews HMIS System service requests, activities, deliverables and resolutions. Provides authoritative support when necessary to expedite IT issue resolution.		X			
HMIS Staff Organization Chart – Maintains a current and accurate organization chart that clearly identifies all team members, roles and responsibilities, and general work activities/functions. Organization chart is available for review (see Appendix B: Organization Chart).		X			

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HMIS Software Training – Provides regular training on software usage, software and data security, and data entry techniques to participating Agencies. Develops, updates, and disseminates data entry tools and training materials, includes train the trainer. Monitors and ensures system and data security.		X			HMIS Vendor
HMIS User Feedback – Manages and maintains mechanisms for soliciting, collecting, and analyzing feedback from end users, program managers, agency executive directors, and homeless persons. Feedback includes impressions of operational milestones and progress, system functionality, and general HMIS operations. Examples of feedback include satisfaction surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups.		X	X		
System Operation and Maintenance – Responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintains the HMIS System.		X			

Governance Area	Responsible Entity				
	CoC	HMIS Lead	HMIS Advisory Council	Participating Agencies	Other
HMIS Management Issues – Ensures that the HMIS is managed in accordance to CoC policies, procedures, and goals.	X	X	X		
Agency and Program HMIS Participation – Regularly monitors program and agency-level participation in HMIS	X	X			
NOFA, AHAR, PIT, and HIC Participation – Ensures participation in the NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability), AHAR (Annual Homeless Assessment Report), PIT (Point in Time), and HIC (Housing Inventory Chart).	X				
Client – Ensures the completion and documentation of Authorization for Disclosure of Health and/or Personal Information, as appropriate with the CoC's Authorization for Disclosure of Health and/or Personal Information Policies and Protocols.		X		X	
Data and System Security – Ensures adherence by agency staff with the HMIS data and system security protocols as outlined by the CoC and the Current HMIS Data Standard.		X		X	

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Governance Area	Responsible Entity				
	CoC	HMIS Lead	HMIS Advisory Council	Participating Agencies	Other
Data Quality Standards – Develops and enforces community level data quality plan and standards.	X	X	X		HUD
Universal Data Elements – Ensures the collection of each data variable and corresponding response categories on all clients served by HUD, other federally funded partners, the State of ME, and non-funded participating projects.	X	X	X	X	
Project-Specific Data Elements – Ensures the collection of each data variable and corresponding response categories specific to their program type on all clients served by HUD, other federally funded partners, the State of ME, and non-funded participating programs.	X	X	X	X	
Data Quality Reports – Regularly runs and disseminates data quality reports to participating programs that indicate levels of data entry completion, consistency with program model, and timeliness as compared to the community data quality standards.		X		X	
Data Quality Reports – Provides technical assistance and training in response to data quality reports disseminated to participating programs that indicate levels of data entry completion, consistency with program model, and timeliness as compared to the community data quality standards.		X			
Data Reports – data entry completion, quality, consistency, and timeliness is compliant with the CSV HUD reporting requirements for uploads to SAGE, HDX, and any other federal required upload repository systems.				X	HUD, HMIS Vendor
Data Quality Reports – Regularly runs and disseminates data quality reports to the community planning entity that indicate cross program levels of data entry completion, consistency with program model, and timeliness as compared to the community data quality standards.		X			

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Data Quality Reports – Regularly reviews data quality reports at community planning level on data entry completion, consistency with program model, and timeliness as compared to the community data quality standards.	X	X	X		HMIS End Users
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Governance Area	Responsible Entity				
	CoC	HMIS Lead	HMIS Advisory Council	Participating Agencies	Other
Client Confidentiality and Privacy Training – Provides regular training on client confidentiality and privacy requirements to intake staff, data entry staff and reporting staff at participating Agencies. Ensures all Agencies have sufficient privacy policies and protocols in place.		X		X	
CoC System Performance Measurement Training – Provides regular training and guidance on program performance measurement.		X			HUD
CoC Community Planning Goals and Objectives Training – Provides training and regularly reviews the progress of the Community Planning Goals and Objectives.	X	X			
Business Practices Training – Provides training and guidance on business practices to support CoC and HMIS policies (CoC-specific protocols, ethics, strategies for communication, etc.).		X	X		
Participating Agency Documentation – Maintains documentation of the number of participating Agencies (utilizing the HMIS system) is up-to-date. A comparative analysis of planned versus actual deployments at the project level is highly desired but not compulsory.		X			
Participation Rates – Provides regular reports on HMIS participation rates to CoC Data Subcommittee. An analysis of agency-specific barriers with potential solutions is highly desired but not compulsory.		X			
Policies and Procedures – Ensures the existence and use of HMIS Policies and Procedures.		X	X		
Agency Participation Agreement – Ensures and maintains written agreements with participating Agencies that describes the protocols for participation in the HMIS.		X			

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Data Sharing Agreements – Ensures and maintains written agreements with participating Agencies who share client level data that describes the level of data element or program information sharing among the data sharing HMIS Agencies.		X			
HMIS End-User Agreement – Ensures and maintains a written agreement with each authorized user of the HMIS that defines participation protocols, including training criteria, consent protocols, system use, and privacy and security standards.		X		X	
Data Release – Ensures that the CoC has a defined and documented HMIS data release protocol that governs release of all data from the HMIS.		X		X	
HMIS Fee - The HMIS Lead Agency can charge an annual per license cost for participation in HMIS, a maximum of which is \$1500. This cost may be waived or reduced at the discretion of the HMIS Lead Agency upon approval of the COC Board.	X	X			

Governance Area	Responsible Entity				
	CoC	HMIS Lead	HMIS Advisory Council	Participating Agencies	Other
Drug-Free Workplace – Ensures the HMIS Lead has adopted a drug-free workplace policy. The policy is posted and available for review.	X				
Homeless Client Participation – At least one homeless person or formerly homeless person participates in policymaking. Participation can include but is not limited to Advisory Council leadership, advisory committees, staff positions, and sub-committee positions.	X	X	X		
Conflict of Interest – The HMIS Grantee has adopted a conflict of interest policy for board members, staff, and volunteers.	X				
Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy – The HMIS Grantee has adopted an equal opportunity and non-discrimination policy.	X				

Appendix A: Maine HMIS Governance Model Definitions

Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) – A report to the U.S. Congress on the extent and nature of homelessness in America. The report is prepared by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, including information about the demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and the capacity to house homeless persons. The report is based primarily on Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data about persons who experience homelessness during a 12-month period.

Annual Performance Report (APR) – A report that tracks program progress and accomplishments in HUD’s competitive homeless assistance programs. The APR provides the grantee and HUD with information necessary to assess each grantee’s performance.

Bed Utilization – An indicator of whether shelter beds are occupied on a particular night or over a period of time.

Central Intake Coordinated Assessment – A centralized or coordinated process designed to make program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals more efficient.

Chronic Homelessness – HUD defines a chronically homeless person as

(1) A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in the Act, who:

(i) Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and

(ii) Has been homeless (as described above) continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined occasions must total at least 12 months

- Occasions separated by a break of at least seven nights
- Stays in institution of fewer than 90 days do not constitute a break

(2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care 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 paragraphs (1) or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

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Authorization for Disclosure of Health and/or Personal Information – This Acknowledgement embodies the element of informed Acknowledgement in a written form. A client completes and signs a document acknowledging that they have an understanding of the options and risks of participating or sharing data in an HMIS system. The signed document is then kept on file at the agency.

Continuum of Care (CoC) – A community with a unified plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency. HUD funds many homeless programs and HMIS implementations through Continuums of Care grants.

Coverage – A term commonly used by CoCs or homeless providers that refers to the number of beds represented in an HMIS divided by the total number of beds available.

Data Quality – The accuracy and completeness of all information collected and reported to the HMIS.

Data Standards – See the current HUD HMIS Data Standard.

Disabling Condition – A disabling condition in reference to chronic homelessness is defined by HUD as a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. A disabling condition limits an individual's ability to work or perform one or more activities of daily living.

Emergency Shelter – Any facility whose primary purpose is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless in general, or for specific populations of the homeless.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) – A federal grant program designed to help improve the quality of existing emergency shelters for the homeless, to make available additional shelters, to meet the costs of operating shelters, to provide essential social services to homeless individuals, and to help prevent homelessness.

Family Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) – A federal program under HHS that supports organizations and communities that work to put an end to youth homelessness, adolescent pregnancy and domestic violence.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – Computerized data collection tool designed to capture client-level information over time on the characteristics and service needs of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness.

HMIS Data Standards – This document describes the Project Description Data Elements, Universal Data Elements, and Project-Specific Data Elements that are used in the HMIS electronic data collection system.

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HMIS Lead Organization – An organization designated to operate the CoC’s HMIS on its behalf. In **Maine**, Maine Housing is both the HMIS Lead and Collaborative Applicant.

Current HMIS Data Standard Manual – This document provides information about the regulations issued by HUD via the Federal Register describing the requirements for implementing HMIS and contains rules about who needs to participate in HMIS, what data to collect, and how to protect client information.

Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) - a point-in-time inventory of provider programs within a Continuum of Care that provide beds and units dedicated to serve persons who are homeless, categorized by five Program Types: Emergency Shelter; Transitional Housing; Rapid Re-housing; Safe Haven; and Permanent Supportive Housing. The Inventory is typically conducted annually during the last ten days in January.

Inferred Acknowledgement – Once clients receive a verbal explanation of HMIS, acknowledgement is assumed for data entry into HMIS.

Informed Acknowledgement – A client is informed of participating in an HMIS system and then specifically asked to acknowledge and sign the Authorization for Disclosure of Health and/or Personal Information form.

McKinney-Vento Act – The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on July 22, 1987. The McKinney-Vento Act funds numerous programs providing a range of services to homeless people, including the Continuum of Care Programs: the Supportive Housing Program, the Shelter Plus Care Program, and the Single Room Occupancy Program, as well as the Emergency Solutions Grant Program.

NERHMIS –New England Regional Homeless Management Information System (NERHMIS).

NOFA – Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) establishes the funding criteria for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Programs.

Participating Agency – An agency that uses HMIS to collect data, including Covered Homeless Organization (CHO)

Point In Time (PIT) - a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night. Continuums of Care also must conduct a count of unsheltered homeless persons every other year (odd numbered years). Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally.

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Unduplicated Count – The number of people who are homeless within a specified location and time period. An unduplicated count ensures that individuals are counted only once regardless of the number of times they entered or exited the homeless system or the number of programs in which they participated. Congress directed HUD to develop a strategy for data collection on homelessness so that an unduplicated count of the homeless at the local level could be produced.

Universal Data Elements (UDE) – Data required to be collected from all clients serviced by homeless assistance programs using an HMIS. These data elements include date of birth, gender, race, ethnicity, veteran`s status, and Social Security Number (SSN). These elements are needed for CoCs to understand the basic dynamics of homelessness in their community and for HUD to meet the Congressional mandate.

Appendix B: HMIS Lead Agency Staff Organization Chart

