HMIS optimization

Office of Housing Stability—Brief area

Staff and contracted partners use the statewide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) 24/7 as Hennepin County's homeless response system. HMIS is our primary database and is useful as a day-to-day case management tool to better serve people experiencing homelessness and to manage HUD compliance needs. All providers contracted to work with the Brief area and all Brief area staff should have HMIS access and use HMIS as their primary database.

HMIS supports and is used for real-time emergency shelter operations. HMIS tracks:

- All shelter stays
- Bed reservations, in real-time
- Bed lists

HMIS tracks and supports every aspect of emergency shelter operations, including:

- Bed placement
- Capacity management
- One-time intake (so we don't have to ask people the same questions each time they enter a new shelter)
- Bans and restrictions
- Case noting
- Housing placements

We don't ask people the same personal questions each time they access a new program. Instead, providers are able to iteratively update information as needed to keep profiles up to date and accurate.

Diversion services

Hennepin Shelter Hotline is the front door into the homeless response system. We use HMIS for all operations and data entry. We record diversion services and outcomes in HMIS and use the data throughout the system as people move through different phases of the system.

Street outreach and housing-focused case management

HMIS supports daily street outreach and case management operations. HMIS is used to record current living situations and case notes, as well as services offered, and housing goal plans throughout engagement for each client. When

Hennepin County Housing Stability

300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487

612 348-3000 | hennepin.us

outreach workers use HMIS for their daily workflows, it informs the system about who is currently experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Drop-in programs

HMIS supports daytime and overnight drop-in programs. People can swipe individualized Community Cards to help guests quickly enter shelter spaces, and to help easily track access points, services offered and case notes.

Coordinated Entry

We record all Coordinated Entry referrals in HMIS, as well as housing outcomes and placements. The tool helps us use the HUD-mandated system to match homeless-dedicated affordable housing units and resources with people experiencing literal homelessness. The Hennepin Connect synced database merges HMIS data and keeps confidentiality for private HMIS profiles and families/individuals fleeing domestic violence.

By-name list

We pull all of the above daily operational HMIS functionalities into a by-name list that allows every HMIS user to use real-time data to know who is in their program, which is a national best practice, and pulls iteratively collected critical data points from all components of the system. Providers can learn about housing barriers, goals and demographics, as well as other critical information such as whether the person is experiencing chronic homelessness, if they have a case manager or a Coordinated Entry referral and more.

For more information, visit hmismn.org.

Contact

Danielle Werder
Senior Department Administrator—Housing Stability
danielle.werder@hennepin.us