



**County of Riverside Continuum of Care and Board  
of Governance**

**CES Oversight Committee Meeting**  
(Planning Session with Margaret McFaddin, HUD TA Consultant)

**Thursday, November 16, 2017**

**1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**DPSS Banning Children/Adult Services  
901 E. Ramsey Street, Banning, CA 92220**

**Chair:** Michelle Davis      **Vice-Chair:** Kimberlee Albers

1. **Call to Order:** Welcome & Introductions
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
  - a. CES Oversight Meeting, October 26, 2017
3. **New Business:**
  - a. Diversion Ad Hoc Committee Report
  - b. CES-HMIS Project Team Report
4. **Unfinished Business:**
  - a. CES Planning Discussion: **Margaret McFaddin, V.P., TDA Inc.**
  - b. Review revised CES Policies & Procedures
5. **Standing Business:**
  - a. CES Lead Feedback
6. **CES Oversight Committee Member Comments**
7. **Call for Agenda Items for the Next Meeting**
8. **Announcements:**
9. **Next Meetings:**
  - **Planning Committee:** November 16, 2017, 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.  
Banning DPSS CPS/APS Office, 901 E. Ramsey Street, Banning, CA 92220
  - **CoC Meeting:** December 13, 2017, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
Banning City Council Chambers, 99 E. Ramsey Street, Banning CA 92220

*The 2018 Schedule of Meetings is pending approval for December 13, 2017*



## Minutes for County of Riverside Continuum of Care CES Oversight Committee Meeting

Thursday, October 26, 2017  
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**DPSS Banning Children/Adult Services**  
**901 E. Ramsey Street, Banning, CA 92220**

TOPIC	PRESENTER	ACTION/ OUTCOME
Call to Order	Margaret McFaddin, Vice President, TDA Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m.</li> <li>• No chair or vice chair was present at the meeting. Margaret requested a nomination for a committee member in attendance to chair the meeting.</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Motion</b> was made by Jill Kowalski and seconded by Leonard Jarman to nominate Kimberlee Albers, Step Up on Second, to chair the meeting. <b>Motion carried.</b></i></p>
Approval of Minutes	Kimberlee Albers, Step Up on Second	<i><b>Motion</b> was made by Jill Kowalski and seconded by Amy Bruno to approve the previous minutes for September 21, 2017. <b>Motion carried.</b></i>
ACTIONS & DECISIONS	PRESENTER	ACTION/ OUTCOME
CES Oversight Vice-Chairperson Election	Margaret McFaddin, Vice President, TDA Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridgette Recksiek stepped down from her position as Vice-Chairperson.</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Motion</b> was made by Jill Kowalski and seconded by Karyn Young-Lowe to elect Kimberlee Albers, Step Up on Second as the new Vice-Chairperson for Coordinated Entry System (CES) Oversight Committee. <b>Motion carried.</b></i></p>
CES Planning Discussion  Dates	Margaret McFaddin, Vice President, TDA Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margaret reviewed five main agenda items for planning and discussion:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dates</li> <li>○ Review from last month</li> <li>○ CES, HMIS project update</li> <li>○ Navigation</li> <li>○ Reports and data needs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Key dates:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ November 16, 2017: next CES Oversight meeting; Margaret will be in attendance.</li> <li>○ December 13, 2017: CoC meeting where CES Oversight will present the draft CES Policies and Procedures (P&amp;P) for the CoC to approve or add revisions.</li> <li>○ January 2018: Board of Governance (BOG) meeting where the BOG members will vote to approve the CES P&amp;P.</li> <li>○ January 23, 2018: final deadline for an approved CES P&amp;P per HUD guidelines.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Jill suggested sending the draft P&amp;P to the BOG members for advance review while the CoC is reviewing them before approval.</li> </ul>

Review from last month

- Margaret directed the committee members to three handouts she provided that delivers background information to processes and the concept of creating a successful diversion program for homeless families. The three documents can be accessed below:
  - [CAN Assessment Outline](#)
  - [BoS Coordinated Assessment Tool](#)
  - [Closing the Front Door: Creating a Successful Diversion Program for Homeless Families](#)
- Jill added that Elizabeth Hernandez, DPSS Program Specialist, also created a similar document that would be shared with the committee members and the CoC.
- Margaret recommended the committee members to form a subcommittee with three to four members that would focus their efforts on setting a diversion policy in place that will be a standardized process in training and screening tools by January 23, 2018 to meet HUD's requirements.
- Four committee members were selected to form the subcommittee "Ad Hoc Diversion Group":
  - Aaron Avila, Riverside County Sheriff Department – Homeless Outreach
  - Elizabeth Hernandez, Riverside County Department of Public Social Services
  - Kimberlee Albers, Step Up on Second
  - Marcus Cannon, Riverside University Health Systems – Behavioral Health
- Aaron Avila will convene the first meeting for the Ad Hoc Diversion Group.
- Margaret recapped from last month's topic of Prioritization of clients in CES. Currently, language from the Written Standards prioritizes VI-SPDAT score and length of time homeless. In discussion, the committee deliberated on alternative options for ranking vulnerability for homeless families and individuals. Marcus Cannon asked mathematically how we can weigh the two variables, especially if length of time homeless can vary widely for all chronic homeless. Kimberlee Albers brought up examples from San Bernardino County on how they calculate scores for length of time homeless. She mentioned they use a benchmark system in VI-SPDAT to score length of time homeless; for example, 10-15 years, 5 -9 years, 1-4 years and 1 year and under. Margaret suggested a working pilot to start on November 1, to test if this new system is working.
- Marcus Cannon brought up a concern with receiving too many referrals from far away cities and not enough Navigators to access their needs. The committees discussed this as part of a data need and asked if DPSS could provide an internal matrix directory that includes a list of the numbers of Navigators and Outreach workers in each city and which city or county they are serving.
- The committee continued discussion on instituting a pilot project on prioritization based on VI-SPDAT score and length of time homeless and concluded that this could not be calculated correctly until an updated and standardized pre-screening tool is completed. The committee agreed to not move forward with the pilot until the Ad Hoc Diversion Group delivers the following updates on:
  - Tool
  - Training script
  - Safety Planning
  - Prioritization on the weight of score and time homeless

Data		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of October 5, 2017 the new HMIS system, Client Track with all new data standards launched and Homelink went down. The CES and HMIS project team will be meeting in the next week to discuss a timeline for when CES can be implemented into HMIS. One of the goals of this group is to discuss and create access to the by name list, that is available and transparent, so everyone involved can have access to the data until it is in HMIS.</li> </ul>
Review draft CES Policies & Procedures  Access          Navigation	Margaret McFaddin, Vice President, TDA Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Margaret directed the committee to the <a href="#">draft P&amp;P</a>, page 4 &amp; 5, Article II, Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>She requested the Committee to review the questions and send her their answers and comments.</li> <li>Kimberlee Albers mentioned in San Bernardino County, equal access is a main priority, they hired a consultant to look at all of their sites to ensure accessibility to all, including disability access site.</li> <li>Margaret suggested DPSS to send an email out to all HUD CoC and ESG funded programs to include equal access, including disability.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Page 5, Article II, Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Margaret discussed how to incorporate organizations serving victims of Domestic Violence (DV) in this category. The Committee agreed to provide Hotlines for victims of DV and have protocols in place for how to move forward with serving this group. Currently our DV agencies do not submit data to CES. Examples were brought up from other CoC's that some have their own intake, or some participate with CES but with a client ID instead of their full name to protect confidentiality. Marcus mentioned their current process is putting the clients name as "confidential client 1, or confidential client 2" or their names are redacted. The committee agreed to add wording of DV to be put in the policies.</li> <li>Safety planning will also be put in place so all Navigators and Outreach workers are trained to recognize protocols and how to properly engage DV victims.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Page 6, homeless prevention diversion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk assessment will be used to prioritize those with the greatest risk of becoming homeless. Our CoC has adopted this but have not implemented it yet.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Page 7, Navigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Margaret pulled ideas from the HomeConnect manual on Navigation.</li> <li>The goal is to instill structure on how Navigators are assigned and to implement this process. A defined role of the Navigator needs to be standardized. To expedite the process in completing the initial assessment, we need to clarify on what Navigators are going to do before it gets referred to the housing provider.</li> <li>Along with that, with the new data standards that went into effect on October 1, those housing providers for PSH or RRH, housing providers cannot enter "Project Start Date". "Project Start Date" is defined as the date following application when the client has been admitted into the project; with 3 factors, self-certification, from a referral that meets criteria for the program or has a disability. Staff time can only be charged to a grant if they have a HUD eligible client.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Reports and data needs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kimberlee Albers brought forth the situation where in the VI-SPDAT, whoever is entering the data will be listed as a Navigator, regardless if they are a Navigator or not. The committee discussed if the best practice would be for the people doing SPDATs should be the Navigator. Jill Kowalski suggested limiting the number of people inputting SPDATs if that is not their defined role, to ensure data entered is precise and correct.</li> <li>○ Amy Bruno suggested creating a system change that is more standardized to meet the new needs of Navigators.</li> <li>○ The committee also discussed streamlining a process for Navigators training and to get doc-ready. Marcus will provide Margaret with their current process for getting doc-ready.</li> <li>● Reports and data needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Directory of housing inventory</li> <li>○ Share vacancies, real-time report from HMIS to run on a monthly basis</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Margaret concludes with recapping remarks that CES will continue to prioritize based on score VI-SPDAT score and length of time homeless until the Ad Hoc Diversion Group comes up with screening diversion protocols.</p>
Call for Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:	Margaret McFaddin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>ACTION/ OUTCOME</b>
<b>Next meeting</b>	Margaret McFaddin	<b>Thursday, November 16, 2017</b> 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. DPSS Children & Adult Services Office 901 E. Ramsey Street, Banning, CA 92220
<b>Adjournment</b>	Margaret McFaddin	The meeting was adjourned by Margaret McFaddin at 3:20 p.m.

## CES Oversight Committee Meeting– October 26, 2017: Attendance Report

**Total in Attendance: 17**

**Committee Members: 11**

\*Chair \*\*Vice Chair

\*\*\*Navigation Review

Council Representative

**DPSS Staff: 5**

DPSS Homeless Programs

Donyielle Holley

Elizabeth Hernandez

Evelyn Pham

Jill Kowalski

Rowena Concepcion

Foothills Aids Project

Jewish Family Services of San Diego

LightHouse Social Services

Lutheran Social Services of SoCal

Path of Life Ministries

Riverside County Sheriff – Homeless Outreach

Riverside County Sheriff – Homeless Outreach

RUHS Behavioral Health

RUHS Behavioral Health

RUHS Behavioral Health – HCRT Vet Outreach

Step Up on Second

Irene Ramirez

Julie Hirsh

Karyn Young-Lowe

Deniece Marshall

Leonard Jarman

Aaron Avila

Deirdre Ritter

Marcus Cannon

Eleno Puente

Amy Bruno\*\*\*

Kimberlee Albers

**Guests: 1**

TDA Consulting, Inc.

Margaret McFaddin



# Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures

County of Riverside Continuum of Care

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DRAFT NOVEMBER, 2017

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## Riverside County CoC Coordinated Entry System (CES)

### ARTICLE I. OVERVIEW

The Riverside County Continuum of Care (CoC) Oversight Committee has developed the following ***Riverside County Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures*** (CES PP) in conjunction with the ***Riverside County Continuum of Care Written Standards*** (required under Continuum of Care Program interim rule - 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) and (9); 24 CFR 578.23(c)(9) and (11); and Emergency Solutions Grant Program interim rule – 24 CFR 576.400(d)) to operate a Coordinated Entry System (CES) that serves to increase the efficiency of the local crisis response system and improve the fairness and ease of access to resources.

The ***Riverside County Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures*** outlines the process and policies for full implementation of the CES, as required of Continuums of Care under 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8) that are directly providing homeless housing and services, and operating Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Supportive Services Only (SSO) projects.

### SECTION 1.01 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a part of the Riverside County Continuum of Care's cohesive and integrated housing crisis response system. The CES is designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and referral for resources. In compliance with 24 CFR 578.3 and 24 CFR 578.7(a)(8), the CES will include the following:

- Coverage of the entire geographic area of Riverside County;
- Easy access by individuals and families seeking housing or services;
- Broad advertisement;
- A comprehensive and standardized assessment tool;
- An initial, comprehensive assessment of needs of individuals and families for housing and services; and
- A specific policy to guide the operation of the coordinated assessment system to address the needs of the individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers.

To further the goals of ending homelessness in Riverside County, the CES PP is also guided by:

- [USICH/HUD's Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#)
- [HUD's Coordinated Entry Policy Brief](#) that outlines key principles for an effective coordinated entry system
- [HUD's Notice CPD 17-01 - Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System](#)
- [HUD 2017 HMIS Data Standards Data Manual](#)
- [HUD Notices CPD-16-11 and CPD-14-012 on the Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and other Vulnerable Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing and Record Keeping Requirements for Documenting Chronic Homeless Status](#)

### SECTION 1.02 MISSION AND PURPOSE

The Riverside County CES serves the Riverside County Continuum of Care's goal to end homelessness and endeavors to streamline the process of prioritizing and connecting persons

experiencing housing instability with appropriate housing interventions in a manner that respects client choice in housing and client self-determination. The CES process is intended to help communities identify and prioritize persons for access to housing and services based on severity of need and vulnerability. The process also provides information to CoCs about service needs and gaps to help communities strategically allocate resources. By gathering information through a standardized assessment process, coordinated entry provides a CoC with data that it can use for system and project planning and resource allocation.

The CES is designed to:

- Ensure clarity, transparency, consistency and accountability for persons experiencing housing crisis, referral sources, and homeless service providers throughout the assessment and referral process;
- Ensure that clients gain fair and equal access as efficiently and effectively as possible, in a standardized and consistent way, to the type of intervention most appropriate to their immediate and long-term housing needs;
- Ensure that people who are experiencing a housing crisis the longest and/or are the most vulnerable have priority access to scarce permanent housing resources;
- Facilitate exits from a housing crisis to stable housing in the most rapid manner possible given available resources;
- Adhere to federal regulations and guidelines;
- Ensure full coverage of Riverside County CoC's geographic area; and
- Provide real-time knowledge about program housing inventories and capacity.

### SECTION 1.03 CORE ELEMENTS

Coordinated entry works by establishing a common process to assess the situation of all households who request help through the housing crisis response system. Core elements of the system are:

- Access – The engagement point for persons experiencing a housing crisis
- Assessment – Standardized process to gather information on people's needs, preferences and the barriers they face to regaining housing stability
- Prioritization – Established policies and procedures to ensure persons with greatest need and vulnerability receive supports they need to resolve housing crisis
- Referral – Linkage to appropriate and available housing and supportive services

### ARTICLE II. ACCESS

The CES Oversight Committee has adopted a hybrid "No wrong door"/assessment hotline model of access to the CES. The CES provides the same assessment approach, including standardized decision-making at all access points.

The CES Lead Agency will market access to the Riverside CES by making presentations at public gatherings of housing and service providers and community events. The CES 800 number is printed on products (e.g. bracelets, lanyards, bags) and distributed to the public at public places such as libraries, hospitals, websites, public housing authorities, and social media.

Riverside CES complies with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Federal civil rights laws, including:

**Comment [m1]:** Are all places accessible to all? Communication with individuals with disabilities/LEP?

- Fair Housing Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act

The Riverside County Continuum of Care non-discriminatory policy, regarding the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) final rule regarding equal access to Community Planning and Development (CPD) funded programs regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status, will ensure that individuals are aware of their rights to equal access to CPD funded programs.

Persons presenting for emergency assistance at an access point at times when the CES intake and assessment process is not operating will be referred to the CES 800 number.

Any person presenting for assistance at any access point that is identified as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking will not be denied access to the crisis response system. The CES Lead Agency will include safety planning and trauma-informed care into its annual training for staff who provide initial access and assessment.

**Comment [m2]:** CES Lead to provide information

The three main types of access are through places, people and telephone.

First, access points include the physical locations of agencies providing housing and services such as Access Centers, emergency shelters, food banks, mental health services, homeless services and social service agencies. These locations offer access, limited assessment, referrals, and the standard services of each provider. Each location is independently operated and staffed. The hours of operation vary and depend on each provider.

**Comment [m3]:** DPSS will provide list of accessible sites

Every CoC-funded program will participate in CES and will serve as a physical access point. See Appendix A for a listing and map of locations.

**Comment [m4]:** DPSS will provide resource directory

The CES Lead Agency will train staff at CES physical access points and CES outreach workers/navigators in the administration of the screening and assessment tools and describe the process for administering and completing the surveys.

Second, access is through contact with outreach workers and law enforcement personnel. Riverside CoC CES Lead agency will identify local street engagement teams and coordinate outreach efforts and access points. The CES Lead Agency will maintain a directory of outreach workers/navigators. The directory will include the following information: name, email address, phone, organization, service area, sub-populations. See Appendix B for a current directory. The CES Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant will coordinate the development and maintenance of mapping system for more effective street outreach and engagement as well as system identification of service provision needs in key county geographic areas.

**Comment [m5]:** DPSS creating directory

Street outreach contacts will be entered into HMIS. This entry will begin the process of entering homeless persons engaged by Street Outreach workers into the Coordinated Entry System.

Third, HomeConnect CES operates an 800 # hotline, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. This virtual access point provides an initial assessment screening. The process is:

1. CES Lead operator receives call and provides triage using a form or a checklist. See Appendix for checklist.
2. Operator will refer to the outreach directory and refer by service area and assistance needed.
3. Outreach accepts or declines referral within 48 hours (declined referrals prompt the operator to call a different outreach team).

When no one is available to answer the call, callers are prompted to dial 9-1-1 in an emergency or to leave a voice message for all other instances.

### Homeless Prevention/ Diversion

Homeless prevention assistance will be targeted to households who are at risk of losing their present housing and becoming homeless. While there are many people who are housed and have a great need for rental assistance, not everyone will become homeless without assistance. A risk assessment will be used to assess the household’s level of crisis and prioritize those who are at greatest risk of becoming homeless.

**Comment [m6]:** Ad Hoc Diversion Committee created to define diversion/screening tool/script, training plan, weighting prioritization elements

**Comment [MM7]:** This language is part of written standards.

Clients who present at any access point are triaged with a screening tool for shelter diversion or entry into the coordinated entry system. If it is determined that shelter diversion is not possible, the access point staff will refer the client to emergency shelter or CES Lead Agency for referral to an outreach worker/ navigator. The Collaborative Applicant and CES Lead Agency will coordinate the development and maintenance of a directory of resources for homeless prevention.

### ARTICLE III. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of gathering information about a person presenting to the crisis response system. Assessment includes documenting information about the barriers the person faces to being rapidly housed and any characteristics that might make him or her more vulnerable while homeless.

In addition to identifying a person’s overall needs and preferences, the assessment also must appropriately triage the person by asking about immediate needs (e.g., “Are you safe where you are right now?” “Do you need medical services?”), accurately evaluating his or her vulnerability and barriers to housing, and providing information to support accurate referrals.

A coordinated outreach and engagement effort ensures that all CES Participating Agencies are using a universal approach to CES assessment.

#### Assessment Process

Riverside CES incorporates a client-centered approach to the assessment process, including the following:

- Assessments are based in part on participant’s strengths, goals, risks and protective factors.
- Tools and assessment processes are easily understood by participants.
- Assessments are sensitive to participants’ lived experiences.
- Participants are offered choice in decisions about location and type of housing.

- Participants are able to easily understand to which program they are being referred, what the program expects of them, what they can expect of the program and evidence of the program's rate of success

### Assessment Tool

This assessment approach includes the use of an assessment tool. A common assessment tool is a standard set of questions used by outreach and engagement workers to quickly assess people based on need and eligibility. The tool is used to understand the needs of a person experiencing homelessness, identify prioritization by vulnerability and to refer to the most appropriate housing or service intervention based on that need. The assessment applies a standardized scoring system to assist our community in determining the most appropriate level of intervention for an individual or family.

The Riverside County CoC has selected the VI-SPDAT, Version 2.0 (Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Assessment Tool) as the CES common assessment tool. Both the Individual and Family forms are used, as appropriate.

### Navigation

Navigation is defined as intensive supports, case management and engagement in development of a housing plan. Persons who require this additional support that access the CES through contact and assessment by street engagement staff will be navigated by the individual or program completing the initial assessment. If the assessed individual is not assigned a navigation team prior to placement and is placed on the CES Next Housed list, the agency-CES Lead Agency will assign a navigator. staff that receives the housing referral will perform the navigation.

**Comment [m8]:** What about persons who don't access from the street?

The CES Lead Agency places a person on the Next Housed List when If the participant remains on the Next Housed list for a period longer than 10 business days, the CES Navigation Council will conduct a Navigation Council Review of the case to identify any barriers to housing for the individual. CES Lead Agency will assign a navigator to assist with elimination of those barriers and work closely with the individual to develop a housing plan.

**Comment [m9]:** What are criteria for placement on the Next Housed List? Conflict information about assigning navigators. Is it upon placement or after 10 days?

The individuals or families with the highest priority are assigned a Housing Navigator from the community to assist them in preparing to be referred to an available housing resource. This Housing Navigator provides support throughout the process, which may include accompanying them to all housing-related appointments and other necessary social service or benefit acquisition appointments, until such time that they are permanently housed.

The Housing Navigator serves as the primary point of contact for an individual or family after they have been assessed, and provides assistance in obtaining the program eligibility documents needed for that individual or family to enter housing. Program eligibility documents may include chronically homeless verification and disability documentation. Common documents needed are an ID, Birth Certificate, Social Security Card and DD214 (for Veterans). As Riverside County CoC has identified itself as a Housing First model, selection for housing identification does not wait until all the documents are acquired.

Additional duties of a Housing Navigator might include: securing bridge or emergency housing, applying for financial or medical benefits and assisting in the housing search if a client is issued a housing voucher rather than referred to a site-based unit.

### Training

The CES Lead Agency will train staff at CES access points in the administration of the screening and assessment tools and describe the process for administering and completing the surveys. These

trainings, held at least annually, will provide assessors clear guidance on CoC-approved policies and procedures. The training curricula will include a review of CES policies and procedures, requirements for use of assessment information to determine prioritization, and criteria for uniform decision-making and referrals.

The CES Lead Agency will maintain a roster of persons who have completed the assessment training and certify persons as CES assessors. CES assessors will be encouraged to attend and participate in group sessions to share best practices and to learn from each other. These sessions could occur at the weekly Navigation Review Council meetings or at other scheduled times. The CES Lead Agency will incorporate the use of web-based technology for these training sessions.

During the engagement and assessment process, assessors will inform participants that they have the opportunity to file a nondiscrimination complaint. Assessors will also inform participants that they have full autonomy (1) to decide what information they provide during the assessment process, (2) to refuse to answer assessment questions, and (3) to refuse housing and service options without any limitation on access to other forms of assistance.

Comment [m10]: How does that happen?

Notwithstanding the above paragraph, participants may be required to provide any information that is necessary to determine program eligibility.

Any participant data collected during the engagement and assessment process will be protected according to applicable privacy protection rules and regulations. Participants cannot be required to disclose any specific disability or diagnosis unless that disclosure is required for determining program eligibility to make appropriate referrals.

Street outreach workers will submit the completed VI-SPDAT electronically to the system or if pre-arranged, via a paper copy to the CES Lead Agency or approved community provider.

Comment [m11]: ?? HMIS??

#### ARTICLE IV. PRIORITIZATION FOR HOUSING

Prioritization is based on and aligns with the [HUD Prioritization Notice CPD-16-11](#) and *Riverside CoC Written Standards* for permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter and street outreach criteria.

##### **Prioritizing Chronically Homeless**

PSH is not a one-size-fits-all approach and should only be offered to those households that truly need that level of support. Thus, in order to use our limited resources in the most effective means possible, the Riverside County CoC is committed to prioritizing those most in need through an established order of priority. Within that order of priority, all CoC-PSH funded programs are required ensure compliance with the “chronically homeless” definition and to fill vacant beds with chronically homeless individuals (CPD-16-011 (7/25/16)).

The Riverside County CoC has developed an order of priority to establish a uniform process for prioritizing placement into PSH through the CES. The overarching intent of this order of priority is to ensure that chronically homeless persons with the longest lengths of time homeless and the most severe service needs are prioritized for housing. If there are no chronically homeless persons within the CoC, then prioritization will be:

1) **First Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Long Periods of Episodic Homelessness and Severe Service Needs

2) **Second Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability with Severe Service Needs.

3) **Third Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Places Not Meant for Human Habitation, Safe Haven, or Emergency Shelter Without Severe Service Needs.

4) **Fourth Priority**—Homeless Individuals and Families with a Disability Coming from Transitional Housing.

#### **Prioritizing Rapid Rehousing**

The Riverside County CoC will prioritize the following subpopulations:

- 1) families with children
- 2) domestic violence survivors
- 3) single adults
- 4) veterans that can exit homelessness with little or no assistance, those who experience chronic homelessness and who need permanent supportive housing, and households who are seeking a therapeutic residential environment, including those recovering from addiction.

#### **Prioritizing Transitional Housing**

The Riverside County CoC prioritizes TH as follows (2015 HUD CoC NOFA):

- 1) Domestic violence survivors and youth ages 18 – 24 will be prioritized for transitional housing if they are not assessed as chronically homeless.
- 2) All chronically homeless individuals and families will not be served through transitional housing unless other housing is not available (Coordinated Entry Brief, pg. 5). Such households will be served by permanent supportive housing through a Housing First approach.

#### **Emergency Shelter**

Access and entry to emergency shelter will not be subject to prioritization based on severity of service need or vulnerability, allowing for an immediate crisis response. Essential services provided by emergency shelters will be targeted to individuals/families that cannot be diverted from the crisis response system, are literally homeless, can be safely accommodated in the shelter, and are not in need of emergency medical or psychiatric services or are a danger to self or others.

The CES Lead Agency will determine initial prioritization by length of time homeless and score on the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool).

The Assessor/Outreach Worker completes the VI-SPDAT and Prioritization Request Form with the client, following the completion of a pre-screening tool. The pre-screening tool identifies diversion from the crisis response system or the need for assessment and prioritization. The Prioritization Request Form may include the following factors:

- Death-related illness
- High use of public resources (e.g. law enforcement, emergency department, psychiatric facilities)

- Significant health challenges or functional impairments, including mental health symptoms
- Vulnerability to illness or death
- Vulnerability to victimization and human trafficking
- Youth at risk, especially children 0-3 living on the street
- Advanced age of 75+ years

**Process for Prioritization Review at Navigation Review Council**

- 1) Navigator/Advocate emails Prioritization Request Form to CES Lead Agency
- 2) Navigator/Advocate presents identified need to Council through the Prioritization Request Form
- 3) Navigator/Advocate leads discussion at the weekly Navigation Review Council meeting
- 4) Demonstration of need based on:
  - a. Narrative on the form
  - b. If medical or mental health component,
    - i. Initial professional assessment documentation
    - ii. Secondary verification in addition to the presenting Navigator/Advocate
- 5) Navigation Review Council discussion
- 6) Navigation Review Council recommendation

**By Name List**

Riverside County CoC CES has established a CoC-wide list of all known homeless persons who are seeking or may need CoC housing and services to resolve their housing crisis. This list generated during the prioritization process is referred to as a By Name or Active List. The CES Lead Agency maintains the By Name List.

- This Active list is a client “by-name” list of various demographics and groups of individuals that are currently homeless. See Appendix for sample of client record fields.
- The Active list is generated as an output from the CES data base system (transitioning from HOMELINK to HMIS).
- The data tracking system will track a client’s return to homelessness (recidivism), and the reasons for those ongoing events.
- Filtered “by-name” lists include veterans, individuals, families, disability and vulnerability levels.

**ARTICLE V. REFERRAL**

The Housing Linkage phase is a process by which housing provider programs and other available resources are connected with individuals/families experiencing homelessness that have been prioritized for specific housing interventions through the CES process. CES Lead Agency will maintain an Internet-based database of housing linkages, tracking the date of referral and referral outcome. CES Lead Agency processes referrals on a daily basis.

Housing providers participating in the HomeConnect CES system commit to filling vacancies with referrals from the centralized housing resource list. All CoC-funded and ESG-funded housing and service providers are required to participate in CES as a condition of their funding and will only accept referrals from CES to fill vacancies. Each participating program must execute a CES Participating Agency Agreement.

**Comment [m12]:** Is this list open to all HMIS users?

**Comment [m13]:** What about non-funded?

All CES Participating Agencies will comply with the equal access and nondiscrimination provisions of Federal civil rights laws and Fair Housing laws.

A CES Participating Agency may decline a referral for good cause. The CES Lead Agency will track the number of housing referral refusals and report on a quarterly basis to the CES Oversight Committee.

Comment [m14]: Discuss

Each participant may refuse or deny any Home Connection referral as a part of their Choice for Housing options. He/she will remain on the Prioritization list with the notation of the specific concerns and preferences. After the second refusal, the participant is counseled by ?? about housing concerns.

Comment [m15]: Where on priority list are they?

Comment [m16]: Where is participant placed on priority list after second refusal?

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Refusal of all services and a desire for no Home Connections, assessment and services, will also be respected and the individual will be notated as a "Long Engagement ". Continued outreach will be documented in the HomeConnect system and Active List. The individual/family will be maintained on the Active list until the individual is willing to accept a housing opportunity.

Housing providers provide eligibility criteria for their housing units or vouchers in conjunction with signing the CES Participating Agency Agreement. Upon housing unit availability, each housing provider completes the ?? form and submits the information to the CES point of contact via email. The CES Lead Agency maintains a Housing Vacancy List by date and time of receipt of email from housing provider.

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Based on housing program eligibility criteria, CES housing matchers link the household with the highest priority to the housing provider within ?? days of receipt of notification of unit availability. Once a referral is made, if the housing provider is unable to locate the participant within 3 business days, the housing provider may return the referral.

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Housing vacancies are provided to the CES Lead Agency by calling 1-800-498-8847 or emailing the HomeConnect address.

Comment [m17]: ??

Housing providers may re-locate housed households that have been referred through CES within the geography of the Riverside Continuum of Care without re-submitting that household to the CES for subsequent prioritization and housing referral.

## Appeals

Individuals or families who wish to appeal the referral process may do so by submitting a verbal or written request to the Home Connect phone number, -email, or any member of the Review Council or the COC to request an appeal for reconsideration of the Home Connection process in their case by the Navigation Review Council.

The information provided must include the concern, reason they believe their Home Connection was not in alliance with the Home Connection prioritization process and resolution they desire.

The CES Lead Agency will present the appeal at the next scheduled meeting of the Navigation Review Council for discussion.

Comment [m18]: Or should it be the CES Oversight committee?

## ARTICLE VI. DATA MANAGEMENT

Comment [m19]: In transition to HMIS

The HomeConnect system is maintained with HMIS quality security standards. All documents and Active lists are maintained with HIPAA level security. Active Lists are available for review during the Navigation

Review Council meetings through a screen projection. Active lists are not to be printed or exchanged outside of the Navigation Council meetings. Each member of the Navigation Council has signed a confidentiality notice and it is reviewed in each council meeting to ensure the highest level of confidentiality.

Prior to intake and assessment, participants will be informed of reasons for the collection and sharing of personal data. **Written participant consent** to share personal data will be obtained. Participants may request to have all their information restricted. This request will not affect their status on the Active list if they wish to remain active and receive any HomeConnection referral for which they could be eligible.

Comment [m20]: confirm

All vulnerability assessments are treated with secure confidentiality. Participants are not required to disclose disability or diagnosis.

Individuals are allowed to submit a complaint either verbally or in writing to the CES Lead Agency regarding their concerns around a disability discrimination situation. Each complaint submitted will be reviewed by the CES Lead Agency. Any necessary actions and additional trainings will be handled on a case by case review status.

**Daily review** of the data quality in the system will determine the need for re-training on issues around data entry, reliability, and entry timeliness.

Comment [m21]: Who reviews?

#### ARTICLE VII. EVALUATION

The CES Oversight Committee will ensure that evaluation processes are guided by the Riverside County Continuum of Care Membership, its stakeholders, and the homeless individuals and families it serves by conducting a survey of the CES system's functionality at least once annually. The evaluation process will also include feedback from focus groups and individual interviews.

This annual evaluation of the intake, assessment, and referral process will consult with program participants as well as participating projects. The evaluation results will be included in the informed process for documenting CES system gaps and updating CES policies and procedures.

The CES Oversight Committee shall designate an agent to prepare and administer the evaluation, decide on the evaluation criteria, evaluation tool, and how the evaluation results will be reported to the CoC Board of Governance.

#### ARTICLE VIII. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The governance of the Riverside CoC Coordinated Entry System shall be comprised of four main entities – the CoC Membership, the Board of Governance (BOG), HMIS Administrators' Council, and the CES Oversight Committee. The CoC Collaborative Applicant serves as a funder, grant administrator and HMIS Lead Agency.



### CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)

The County of Riverside CoC is the planning body that coordinates the community’s policies, strategies and activities toward ending homelessness.

#### KEY DUTIES

Duties of the CoC are stated in section 5.04 of the County of Riverside Continuum of Care Board of Governance Charter. Regularly scheduled meetings are announced in compliance with the Brown Act.

### CoC BOARD OF GOVERNANCE (BOG)

The Board of Governance is comprised of elected members who advocate for and provide information and/or recommendations to the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors, local government and other elected officials that will monitor the overall effectiveness of the CoC planning processes and activities.

#### KEY DUTIES

Duties of the BOG are stated in section 6.06 of the County of Riverside Continuum of Care Board of Governance Charter. Regularly scheduled meetings are announced in compliance with the Brown Act.

### CES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The CES Oversight Committee is comprised of key stakeholder agencies, CoC and ESG funded agencies and law enforcement agencies. It is responsible for oversight to ensure that the CES is managed, well-coordinated, collaborative, open and transparent, continually improving, and serves the needs of the Continuum of Care membership. The CES Oversight Committee serves as the policy making body for the County of Riverside Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System and makes recommendations to the Board of Governance for review and approval.

#### CES OFFICERS

The CES Officers should be comprised of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary.

#### **CES CHAIRPERSON**

The CES Chairperson shall be elected by the CES Oversight Committee and shall serve for a term of two years. The Chairperson shall have the following responsibilities:

- Conduct all CES Oversight Committee meetings;
- Ensure the actions of the CES Oversight Committee are consistent with CoC Board of Governance Charter;
- Review and protect the mission of the CoC and the CES Oversight Committee;
- Speak or assign someone to speak on behalf of the CES Oversight Committee, as requested;
- Sets the CES Oversight Committee meeting schedule and agenda with assistance from the Collaborative Applicant and CES Lead Agency;

#### **CES VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

The CES Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the CES Oversight Committee and shall serve for a term of two years. The Vice-Chairperson shall act when the Chairperson is unavailable to act.

#### **SECRETARY**

The Collaborative Applicant shall serve as the Secretary and will be responsible for ensuring the records and minutes of the Committee meetings are properly recorded, reviewed, and distributed in a timely manner. The Secretary will ensure maintenance of records of meeting attendance and performs other duties as may be delegated.

#### **VOTING**

Each member of the CES Oversight Committee is a voting member and may vote on any actionable item that is presented to the CES Oversight Committee for a vote. Each member shall designate a delegate and an alternate delegate who would be present to cast the member's vote.

Any member who has a financial interest in any outcome of any voting must declare a conflict of interest and not cast a vote, in accordance with 578.95 of the CoC Program Interim Rule for Conflict of Interest.

#### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The CES Oversight Committee has the following key responsibilities:

- Create and update CES policies and procedures within the Continuum of Care Governance framework that comply with all applicable federal and state laws, and local CoC Written Standards;
- Create and update CES prioritization policies and procedures on behalf of the CoC with input from all community stakeholders that are consistent with CoC Written Standards, and are applied consistently throughout the CoC geographic area for all populations to ensure full coverage;
- Ensure that ESG projects serve clients in accordance with written standards established under 24 CFR 576.400(e);
- Ensure that a policy is created to address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers;
- Ensure that an affirmative marketing and outreach plan is created and updated in accordance with 24 CFR 578.93(c) and 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) for CoC Funded projects and 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b) for ESG funded projects;

- Evaluate CES project performance and outcomes at least once yearly, and prior to submitting the CES project renewal application with the CoC annual Consolidated Application;
- Review and recommend:
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CES Lead Agency and the CoC;
  - CES Project Budget; and
  - CES Marketing Plan;
- In partnership with the **Standards and Evaluation Committee** and **HMIS Administrators Council**, the CES Oversight Committee reviews and recommends a CES Participating Agency Agreement;
- In partnership with the **Standards and Evaluation Committee**, the CES Oversight Committee reviews and recommends:
  - Guidance to the CoC Board of Governance for the monitoring tool that will be utilized to review CES grant compliance.

#### HMIS ADMINISTRATORS COUNCIL

The HMIS Administrators' Council is comprised of HMIS Agency Administrators and HMIS lead staff to provide oversight, guidance and data quality assurance within the chosen HMIS system, on behalf of the County of Riverside CoC.

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) refers to a client-level data base system for tracking the use of homeless programs and producing an unduplicated count of the people using homeless programs. All housing service providers in the Riverside County Continuum of Care are required to participate in HMIS to contribute to a better understanding of homelessness in our communities.

**Comment [m22]:** Should this be CoC and ESG-funded?

#### ROLE

The HMIS Administrators Council will collaborate with the CES Oversight Committee to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state laws regarding protection of client privacy and confidentiality regulations, user conduct, security and ongoing functionality and stability of services used to support the CES in the HMIS system.

HMIS Administrators Council and CES Oversight Committee agree they will establish mutually satisfactory methods for the exchange of such information as may be necessary in order that each party may perform its duties and functions; and appropriate procedures to ensure all information is safeguarded from improper disclosure in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations.

HMIS Administrators Council and CES Oversight Committee also agree they will establish mutually satisfactory methods for problem resolution.

#### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO CES

In collaboration with the CES Oversight Committee:

- Determine and recommend data use guidelines for the CES system
- Determine and recommend data use guidelines for participating agencies
- Review and recommend an HMIS Workflow that considers:
  - Client consent and Release of Information to share data;
  - Confidentiality Agreement for partnering agencies and staff;

- Use of HMIS, according to funder requirements and in compliance with HUD HMIS guidelines;
- HIPAA compliant referral process;
- Safety for victims of domestic violence; and
- Local data sharing protocols and client privacy protocols adopted for the CoC.
- Ensure collaboration with the CES Oversight Committee so that the required data elements are collected per [2017 HMIS Data Standards Data Manual](#)

#### CO C COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT AND HMIS LEAD AGENCY

##### ROLE

The Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) is the HUD grantee responsible for administering the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program grants, the State Emergency Solutions Grant (State ESG), the CoC Planning Grant, and the CES Project Grant. DPSS also serves as the HMIS Lead Agency for the CoC.

##### KEY DUTIES

The Collaborative Applicant is the eligible applicant designated by the Continuum of Care (CoC) to:

- Complete and submit the CoC Registration;
- Submit the CoC Consolidated Application (which includes the CoC Application and CoC Priority Listing);
- Apply for CoC Planning funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition;
- Apply for HMIS Lead Agency funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition;
- Apply for CES Project funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition; and
- Serve as the HMIS Lead Agency with duties and responsibilities outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CoC.

#### CES LEAD AGENCY

##### ROLE

The CoC will designate a lead agency to serve as the CES administrator.

##### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The CES Lead Agency is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the CES, including but not limited to:

- Reinforces common purpose, guidelines, and shared process to assist all populations;
- Designing and executing ongoing quality control activities to ensure clarity, transparency, and consistency in order to remain accountable to the homeless clients served, the Riverside County Continuum of Care and its stakeholders, the CoC's Collaborative Applicant and Grant Recipient, referral sources, and homeless service providers throughout the coordinated entry process. This includes:
  - Report generating, as specified by the CES Oversight Committee
  - Communicating to user agencies and outreach coordinators
  - Deactivating/Reactivating client records
  - Responding to requests for client deletions
  - Responding to system data inquiries in a timely manner

- Create and regularly update a CES training curriculum for initial and ongoing training of Partner staff to ensure uniform application of screening, assessment and referral protocols. Creating a training delivery schedule that ensures training at least annually to all stakeholder agencies;
- Create, and submit for review and approval to the CES Oversight Committee, a CES marketing plan that conforms to 24 CFR 578.93(c) and 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) for CoC Funded projects and 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b) for ESG funded projects;
- Create and submit for review and approval to the CES Oversight Committee, a proposed CES Budget plan that conforms with CoC Interim Rule 578 and 578.3 for Supportive Services Only (SSO) grants;
- Widely distribute marketing materials regarding homeless services available through the CES and how to access those services;
- Ensure that pertinent information is entered into HMIS for monitoring and tracking the process of referrals including vacancy reporting and completion of assessments;
- Convene local collaboration and partnership meetings in the CES Navigators Council to review and resolve rejection decisions by receiving programs and refusals by clients to engage in a housing plan in compliance with receiving program guidelines;
- Manage an eligibility determination appeals process in compliance with the protocols described in the Riverside Continuum of Care Written Standards;
- Manage the manual processes as necessary to enable participation in the CES by providers not participating in HMIS;
- Provide reasonable accommodation assessments for individuals with a mobility impairment;
- Participate in periodically evaluating efforts to ensure that the CES is functioning as intended and serves the purposes of the Riverside County Continuum of Care, its stakeholders and the homeless clients it serves;
- Participate in the evaluation and adjustment processes informed by the Riverside County CES Oversight Council; and
- Ensure that all requirements (programmatic and fiscal) for CoC sub-recipient grant funds received to underwrite any part of expenses associated with the continued development and implementation of the CES are met.

#### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH THE CoC**

In accordance with CoC Interim Rule 578.7, Responsibilities of the Continuum of Care, the role and responsibilities of the CES Lead Agency should be incorporated in a written Memorandum of Understanding between the CES Lead Agency and the CoC. The CES Oversight Committee is tasked with reviewing and updating the MOU not less than once annually to ensure compliance with all federal and state regulations governing the CoC and ESG Programs.

#### **CES PROJECT APPLICATION FOR THE CoC CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION**

To ensure that all programmatic and fiscal requirements are met for the continued development and implementation of the CES, the CES Oversight Committee shall review and recommend for inclusion the CoC project renewal application before it can be submitted with the CoC Consolidated Application. The CES Oversight Committee will work with the Collaborative Applicant to ensure that the CES renewal application meets the guidelines for the annual CoC Notice of Funding Availability and the local review panel process for renewing project applications.

#### **CES PROJECT BUDGET**

To ensure that all fiscal requirements for CoC sub-recipient grant funds received to underwrite any part of expenses associated with the continued development and implementation of the CES are met, the CES Oversight Committee will review the CES project budget included with the renewal project application not less than once annually, and prior to the inclusion of the renewal application with the COC Collaborative Application in response to an open NOFA.

CES Oversight Committee will also review and approve budget amendments on behalf of the CoC prior to expenditure authorization.

#### **CES MARKETING PLAN**

To ensure that all federal and state regulations housing laws are met, and to ensure that the CoC is affirmatively and proactively marketing HUD-assisted housing and supportive services that are inclusive of non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws, the CES Oversight Committee will review and approve the CES marketing plan that conforms to 24 CFR 578.93(c) and 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) for CoC Funded projects and 24 CFR 576.407(a) and (b) for ESG funded projects.

#### **CES NAVIGATION COUNCIL & NAVIGATION SUPPORT**

The CES Navigation Council is an integral part of the CES. The CES Council is responsible for:

- case conferencing;
- providing support in implementing the Continuum of Care's Coordinated Entry System; and
- following the prioritization process established by the Continuum of Care for its membership, stakeholders and homeless clients served within the CoC's geographic area.

The CES Lead Agency will assign the individuals or families according to the approved prioritization criteria to a Housing Navigator from the community to assist them in preparing to be referred to an available housing resource. The Housing Navigator provides support throughout the process; this may include:

- accompanying the client to all housing related appointments and other necessary social service or benefit acquisition appointments;
- assisting the client to obtain common identification, income and other source documents that will be needed during the eligibility phase; and
- housing placement assistance until such time that they are permanently housed.

The Navigation Council also serves as a vehicle to open dialogue for different types of housing resources available to meet a broader range of needs and supporting outreach workers, navigators and social workers with more comprehensive solutions beyond the scarce resources available through the CES.

#### **ARTICLE IX APPENDICES AND FORMS**

Housing Providers Listing with Program Eligibility

Homeless verification Form

Disability documentation Form

Release of Information

Shelter Diversion Tool

VI-SPDAT (family)

VI-SPDAT (individual)

Home Connection form

Vacancy Form

Prioritization Request Form

Navigators Directory

Homeless Prevention Resource Directory

Triage/Screening checklist

CES Access Sites

DRAFT