

HMIS Client Fact Sheet

What is HMIS?

HMIS stands for Homeless Management Information System. It is a web/ internet-based system where all client level data is kept for all homeless programs that assist people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.

What is Coordinated Entry?

- The system and process in which all housing referrals are made.

What is the CNYHMIS Release of information and what does it do?

- A document that you can sign to allow your data to be shared across the system.
- All services at other programs or agencies can access a history of your information when you are getting assistance with them.
- This may allow for better coordination of those service providers.
- You can end the release at anytime without penalty and your services won't end.
- Agencies **cannot** refuse you services if you decide not to sign the form.

Why would you sign the release of information?

- You are homeless or at risk of homelessness and are in need of services.
- You will need housing assistance, such as rental assistance, Case Management, or Permanent Housing services.
- You would like the programs you were referred to be able to coordinate and see your information.

Things to consider when signing the release:

- If you are a client who is currently fleeing an abusive relationship or experiencing domestic violence, you may want to keep your data from not being seen by other agencies in HMIS.
- All agencies listed on the ROI will be able to view this information, but exceptions can be made for specific situations. You can fill out a form called the "Visibility Request Form" to limit certain agencies or programs from seeing your record. You can contact the HHC or ask any agency staff for this form.
- Do I know of friends or family who work at other agencies who I don't want to see my information in HMIS for safety or privacy reasons?

Other Things to know about the ROI and HMIS:

- Your data is also being shared with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for purposes of data collection and assessment of homelessness across NY State. Once the data is uploaded to the NYSHADE website, all personal identifying information is erased and can no longer be tracked back to you.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding the ROI please discuss with program staff, their supervisor, or you can email your questions to hmis@hhccny.org
- You can submit a request to lock parts of your file at any time by filling out the Visibility Request Form, and that request should be made to The Housing and Homeless Coalition of CNY via hmis@hhccny.org or 315-314-4644 x204. These requests are only allowed in circumstances where there is a safety or privacy risk to you and/or your children.
- You can request a full audit of your client file at any time via the Client Audit Request form, which is accessible at any agency that participates in HMIS, or you can send a request to hmis@hhccny.org

What happens if someone accesses my data who isn't supposed to?

- Agency where violation happened will complete an investigation.
- Users in violation will be suspended from the system temporarily pending the results of the investigation.
- If the agency wants the user to keep their access, they must submit a plan to ensure that the user doesn't do that again.
- If HMIS Administrator doesn't agree, the Executive Board of the Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHC) will decide.
- Agency can appeal to the full HHC Advisory Board for final decision for user to have access still.
- All clients who had their information accessed will be notified, if possible, and given a chance to express their thoughts and feelings around the violation.
- All clients are given contact information for the agency whose user accessed their information, and they can file a grievance with that agency.
- All clients can have a full audit of their HMIS record, including any user who accessed their file.

If you have concerns for your privacy, you can always request an audit of your HMIS record. Your case worker has access to these forms, or you can access them at www.hhccny.org, or you can email hmis@hhccny.org and we can email or mail you your requested forms.