

Data Quality Guideline

Client data is the most valuable and sensitive asset of the Monterey and San Benito Counties' HMIS project. Data tells the story of what is happening in our communities, so the importance of data quality should be a priority for all HMIS users. For example, homeless projects are expected to have a 95% completeness rate, and outreach programs are expected to have an 85% standard of completeness rate. Data Quality Report Cards are provided at most HMIS meetings and can be requested from your agency's ART license holder.

Agency Admins should take the following steps to assist with assuring data quality:

- 1. All users attend applicable HMIS meetings.** The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers (CHSP) offers HMIS users, Admins, and ART license holders many courses and workshops. These meetings keep users up-to-date on data standard changes, system changes, etc.
- 2. Collect ROI's.** To avoid an array of issues, collect the ROIs before data entry.
- 3. Collect all required data elements at initial contact.** Programs should ensure that all required data elements for each client served are collected and entered correctly into the HMIS. Data collected and entered should be as complete as possible. If users collect and enter all required data elements at first contact with the client, this will resolve many data quality issues.
- 4. Enter clients using the appropriate assessment type for your funding source.** If your program is not directly tied to one of the funding source assessment types, use the HUD assessment by default.
- 5. Enter clients into HMIS in a timely fashion.** Entering clients into HMIS within the first couple of days of intake makes it easier to collect missing information as the client is very interactive and responsive during that period.
- 6. Exit inactive clients.** Clients who have not been active in your program for 6-months should be exited (closed) from the program at the date the client last received services. This practice eliminates the client from future data standard changes and ROI renewals.

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