

Hawaii Coordinated Entry Vision Statement

Background: This Vision Statement is intended to contain the general principles that will be incorporated into the coordinated entry process. All future planning efforts should be measured against the goals contained in this document.

Intent: Implement a transparent coordinated entry process to ensure that people experiencing homelessness in Hawaii are able to rapidly access the most appropriate homeless housing and services to meet their individual needs.

Purpose of Coordinated Entry: Participation in a coordinated entry system is a requirement for all Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funded programs under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009. By the terms of the CoC Interim Rule, coordinated entry is "...a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals... [that] covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool." More importantly, though, development and implementation of coordinated entry in Hawaii is an opportunity to think critically about our homeless response system. Through this process, we aim to increase the speed at which people seeking assistance are able to access the system, match those people to appropriate housing and services by prioritizing those with the most acute needs for placement, reserve the most intense services for those with the greatest vulnerability, improve efficiency by maximizing document readiness and minimizing vacancies throughout the response system, unify a fragmented response system, and ensure that we have a comprehensive array of housing and services to meet the needs of our community.

Key Principles of Hawaii's Coordinated Entry System: Through a community process, we have identified the following key principles as essential to our coordinated entry system:

- Access to the resources of our homeless response system should be fast, transparent, and open to anyone experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness throughout Hawaii.
- The intake, assessment, and referral processes should be streamlined to ease the burden on both clients and frontline service staff by reducing redundancy within the system.
- Housing First should be implemented at the programmatic and systemic levels to reduce barriers to entry and ensure that the most vulnerable clients are able to access the most intensive resources.
- People experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness should be prioritized for resources on the basis of vulnerability and need, while still accounting for and maximizing client choice.
- Homeless housing and service providers, along with other mainstream service providers, should maintain a cooperative approach to problem-solving, goal setting, and systemic orientation.
- The coordinated entry system should prioritize quality assurance to ensure consistency in tools, standards, staff training, and opportunity for people experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness throughout Hawaii.

Key Elements of Hawaii's Coordinated Entry System: Through a community process, we have identified the following key decisions regarding structural components of the coordinated entry system that have already been made:

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- Access Model: People experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness will be able to access the coordinated entry system through: (1) program sites within the CoC; (2) street outreach teams for those encountered in unsheltered environments by outreach staff; and, (3) a complimentary phone system for those unable to access a physical location (likely operated by Aloha United Way 2-1-1).
- Assessment Tool: The coordinated entry system will use the VI-SPDAT as its primary assessment tool. The VI-SPDAT, or subpopulation specific versions such as the F-SPDAT as appropriate, may be supplemented by additional screening/triage tools as needed to: (1) address the health/safety of vulnerable persons (e.g., victims of domestic violence or other persons in immediate distress); and, (2) meet the specialized needs of particularly vulnerable subpopulations (e.g., mental illness, substance abuse, etc.).
- Prioritization: People experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness will be prioritized in a transparent, consistent manner that takes into account the individual's vulnerability and needs. Prioritization will be a transparent process for the benefit of both providers and those seeking assistance. This prioritization scheme may include: (1) VI-SPDAT scores; (2) length of time homeless; (3) physical and mental health conditions; (4) age; (5) document readiness; (6) client choice; and, (7) other factors that are consistent with identifying vulnerability and need.
- Housing Navigation: The coordinated entry system will incorporate housing navigation services that improve the ability of people experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness to move through the homeless response system, increase efficiency in housing placement, and reduce the overall burden on individual programs.