

Schenectady County  
Coordinated Entry  
Policy and Procedure Manual

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## **INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW**

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To implement and maintain a Countywide Coordinated Entry System (CE), Bethesda House and the Legal Aid Society of NENY have developed the following Policies and Procedures Manual to outline and define the goals and objectives of the CE program. This document delineates the roles and responsibilities of each agency and user involved in the program, while establishing protocol for program assessment, referral acceptance, client privacy and consumer disclosure. Each participating agency must have the Director of that agency sign the Agency Agreement at the end of this document, indicating that the agency has reviewed these policies and procedures and will comply with them. Additionally, all users are required to sign the User Agreement (also at the end of this document) indicating that they have reviewed and will abide by these policies and procedures as well.

These policies and procedures will govern the implementation, governance, and evaluation of CE in Schenectady's CoC. It is expected that the standards will adjust as programs evolve, members gain more experience, and Homeless Management Information System data from programs and services is analyzed. This Policy and Procedure Manual will serve as the guiding principles for funding participating ESG and CoC programs. These policies may only be changed by the approval of the CoC HSPB based on recommendations from the CE stakeholders through CE meetings.

## **PURPOSE AND HISTORY OF COORDINATED ENTRY**

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CE is considered one of the many interventions in a community that has united effort to end and prevent homelessness. The CE system is an approach to coordinate and manage housing and supportive services that allows providers to connect clients effectively and efficiently to interventions that will rapidly end their homelessness. The Schenectady County CoC CE process is designed to allow efficient access, assessment, prioritization and referral for homeless individuals and families.

Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc. (recipient) and Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York (sub-recipient) consolidated their individual HUD CoC funding to form a partnership and co-lead the CE program for Schenectady County.

The process works best and provides the greatest value if it is driven by "What does the client need" rather than by provider eligibility. The implementation of a coordinated assessment is considered national best practice. When implemented effectively, coordinated assessment can:

- Reduce the amount of research and the number of phone calls people experiencing homelessness must make before finding crisis housing or services.
- Reduce new entries into homelessness through coordinated system wide diversion and prevention efforts.
- Prevent people experiencing homelessness from entering and exiting multiple programs before getting their needs met.
- Foster increased collaboration between homelessness assistance providers
- Improve a community's ability to perform well on Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act outcomes and make progress on ending homelessness

The CE process makes referrals to all projects receiving Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and CoC Program funds, including Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and transitional housing (TH), as well as other housing and homelessness projects. Projects in the community that are dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness fill all vacancies through referrals, while other housing and services projects determine the extent to which they rely on referrals from CE process.

## **SCHENECTADY COUNTY COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM CORE ELEMENTS**

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- **Access:** the engagement point for persons experiencing a housing crisis could look and function differently depending on the specific community. Persons (families, single, adults, and youth) might initially access the crisis response system by calling a crisis hotline or other information and referral resource, walking into an access point facility, or being engaged through outreach efforts.
- **Assessment:** upon initial access, CoC providers associated with coordinated entry will assess the person's housing needs, preferences, and vulnerability. This coordination entry element is referred to as assessment. It is progressive with multiple layers of sequential information being gathered at various phases in the CE process, for different purposes, by one or more staff.
- **Prioritization:** during assessment, the person's needs and level of vulnerability will be documented for purposes of determining prioritization. Prioritization helps the CoC manage its inventory of community housing resources and services, ensuring that those persons with the greatest need and vulnerability receive the supports they need to resolve their housing crisis.
- **Referral:** the final element is referral. Persons are referred to available CoC housing resources and services in accordance with the CoC's documented prioritization guidelines.

### **Prioritizing people with the most severe service needs and longest amount of time homeless:**

One of the main purposes of CE is to ensure that people with the most severe service needs and longest amount of time homeless are prioritized for housing and homeless assistance. In order to fulfill this process Schenectady County follows the guidelines set forth in HUDs CPD 16-11. People experiencing homelessness will be prioritized for permanent supportive housing. In addition to prioritizing people experiencing homelessness, the CE process prioritizes people who are most likely to need some form of assistance to end their homelessness or who are more vulnerable to the effects of homelessness.

### **Points to consider when prioritizing people for housing and homelessness assistance:**

#### **Based on Vulnerability Scoring from Coordinated Entry Application**

**NOTE: Chronic homelessness is notated with the letter 'C', all 'C's are a priority.**

### **SINGLES**

- If applicant stayed LAST NIGHT in a place not meant for human habitation, shelter paid for by DSS, TH, or Institutional setting – 5 points

- If applicant acknowledges experiencing domestic violence in the last 30 days – 1 point
- If applicant is 18-24 years of age – 1 point
- If applicant is 60 years of age or older – 1 point
- If applicant has served one day (other than training) in active military, naval, or air service – 1 point
- If applicant is pregnant – 1 point
- If applicant has a documented disability – 1 point
- If applicant has two or more documented disabilities – 1 point
- If applicant indicates they have no income or only receive DSS assistance – 1 point
- If applicant indicates criminal history and/or current probation or parole status – 1 point
- If client has had any recent involvement with a Child Protective, Adult protective, Juvenile Justice, Family Court or Foster Care Agency – 1 point
- If client has had multiple points of contact (3 or more) with Emergency Responders such as ambulance, or ER visits within the last 90 days – 1 point
- If client has a seriously underlying medical condition and may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 due to the following: chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, severe obesity, diabetes, immunocompromised, chronic kidney disease, and/or liver disease – 2 points

#### **FAMILIES**

- If HoH stayed LAST NIGHT in a place not meant for human habitation, shelter paid for by DSS, TH or Institutional Setting – 5 points
- If HoH acknowledges experiencing domestic violence in the last 30 days – 1 point
- If HoH is 18-24 years of age – 1 point
- If HoH is 60 years of age or older – 1 point
- If any HH member has served one day (other than training) in active military, naval or air service – 1 point
- If any HH member is currently pregnant – 1 point
- If HoH has a documented disability – 1 point
- If HoH has two or more documented disabilities – 1 point
- If other members of the household (not HoH) have a documented disability – 1 point
- If no one in the household has income or only receive DSS assistance – 1 point
- If anyone in the household indicates criminal history, and/or current probation or parole status – 1 point
- If HoH has had any recent involvement with a Child Protective, Adult Protective, Juvenile Justice, Family Court, or Foster Care Agency – 1 point
- If HoH has had multiple points of contact (3 or more) with Emergency Responders such as ambulance, ER visits within the last 90 days – 1 point
- If client has a serious underlying medical condition and may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 due to the following: chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, severe obesity, diabetes, immunocompromised, chronic kidney disease, and/or liver disease – 2 points

#### **PREVENTION**

- Lock out – Sheriff – 3 points
- Warrant (stayed or not) – 2 points

- Court/Trial date – 1 point
- 14 day rent demand – 1 point
- 21 day rent demand – 1 point
- No income or income to housing ratio 80+ - 3 points
- Income to housing 50-80 – 2 points
- Income to housing 30-20 – 1 point
- COVID (Sick, quarantined, income affected due to COVID)- 3 points
- Household of 5 or more – 3 points
- Single Parent w/minor child(ren) – 2 points
- At risk of losing public housing – 2 points
- At risk of losing supportive housing – 1 point
- Homeless in the past 5 years (street, shelter or motel) – 3 points
- Eviction in the past 5 years (court order or left after notice to quit) – 2 points
- Domestic Violence survivor in the past 5 years – 3 points
- Sex trafficking survivor in the past 5 years – 3 points
- Household member with disabling condition (SMI, chronic illness, substance abuse, developmental disability, physical disability and/or other disabling condition – 3 points
- Experienced chronic homelessness in past 5 years – 3 points

### **Documentation of Homelessness or At-Risk of Homelessness**

The order of priority for obtaining evidence of homelessness and/or at-risk of homelessness is the following:

- Third-party documentation
- Intake worker observations
- Self-certification

### **SCHENECTADY COUNTY COORDINATED ENTRY “NO WRONG DOOR” STRUCTURE**

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The structure of the CE system in Schenectady can be described as follows:

**No Wrong Door**, the principles of this approach are:

- A household can seek housing assistance through any of the participating homeless services providers and will receive integrated services
- Households should have equal access to information and advice about the housing assistance for which they are eligible in order to assist them in making informed choices about available services that best meet their needs
- Participating providers have a responsibility to respond to the range of household needs and act as the primary contact for households who apply for assistance through tier service unless or until another provider assumes the role

- Participating providers will provide a proactive service that facilitates the household applying for assistance or accessing services from another provider regardless of whether the original provider delivers the specific housing services required by a presenting household
- Participating housing providers will work collaboratively to achieve responsive and streamlined access to services and cooperate to use available resources to achieve the best possible housing outcomes for the household, particularly for those with high, complex or urgent needs

### **CoC Domestic Violence**

When a household engages with a Point of Entry (POE) and through the intake process, it is revealed that they are involved in a domestic violence (DV) situation, the POE will immediately contact the DV shelter. The household will stay in the DV emergency shelter program, as determined by the DV program. The DV agency will submit a CoC application and send it to the Coordinated Entry Lead. All identifying information will be left off the application; a unique client ID will identify the person.

### **CoC Youth**

When a household enters a POE and through the intake process it is revealed that they are eighteen (18) years of age or older, their CoC application will be submitted to the CE Lead for housing. The CoC agency that is specific to providing services to the Youth population, will not submit application to the CE for consumers under eighteen (18) years of age.

## **SCHENECTADY COUNTY CE PROCESS**

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The process is designed to prevent duplication of services, reduce length of homelessness and improve communication among agencies. The process is a combination of the following:

All agencies must use the approved universal intake and assessment form and include the client's vulnerability score on the documents. The vulnerability scores in combination with the length of time homeless will be used to prioritize each client. Each POE agency will complete appropriate paperwork and refer to three (3) agencies in addition to the CE Recipient Agency. The Recipient Agency will enter client data into the HMIS System and track client activity as it is received from the referral agency. The process is designed to be easy for the client and provide quick and seamless entry into homelessness services. Individuals and families will be referred to the most appropriate resource(s) for their individual situation. The Recipient and Sub-Recipient agencies will co-lead twice monthly meetings.

The CoC ensures participants may not be denied access to the CE process on the basis that the participant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

### **Using HMIS and other systems for Coordinated Entry process:**

- Schenectady County will use HMIS to collect and manage data associated with assessments, referrals, current living situations, and discharges from the CE project
- All persons enrolled in the CE System will be input into the local HMIS system
- Data will include HUD required elements as well as information needed to improve the CE referral process.

- If a client indicates that they are a victim of violence, or fleeing violence, and are receiving services from a victim service provider, the victim service provider will not enter personally identifying client information in HMIS but in an HMIS-comparable database
- All households, whether being served by victim service provider or not, have the right to refuse to have their personally identifying information entered into HMIS and shared among CoC providers and still receive services

Agencies shall adhere to the CoC's HMIS data quality and timeliness standards for the input and updating of participant information in HMIS.

### **Operating the Coordinated Entry System:**

There are four (4) principle parts to the CE System within Schenectady that work to provide services to persons presenting as homeless. The CE Lead is responsible for overseeing the process from the time the household presents as homeless at the Point of Entry to being stably housed. The Point of Entry guides the household through the application process, the Referral agency reviews the application and determines if Client qualifies for their specific program and the CEC is responsible for getting weekly updates on vacancies, and Prioritization list.

### **Role of Coordinated Entry Lead**

The CE Lead will oversee the referral process and track all referrals. The CE Lead is responsible for monitoring and managing the priority list and making annotations as necessary. The CE Lead will also communicate regularly with the Point of Entry and Referring agencies to get updates on vacancies and referrals. The CE Lead will co-lead bimonthly CE meetings and is the point of contact for CoC CE questions.

### **Role of Coordinated Entry Coordinator (CEC)**

Housing programs will provide updates of anticipated and current vacancies to ensure swift placement of the next eligible household from the prioritization list.

The CE Lead will co-lead monthly meetings, generate minutes, and be the secondary point of contact for CoC CE questions.

### **Prioritization list Process**

Upon completion of the CE assessment the household will be added to the CE prioritization list. New entries are reviewed at the CE committee meetings and any missing information is discussed. Households will be placed in the appropriate programs, based on household choice and meeting eligibility criteria. The household with the most severe service needs and longest time experiencing homelessness will be prioritized first.

**NOTE:** In the event that two or more homeless households within the same geographic area are identically prioritized for referral to the next available unit, and each household is also eligible for referral to that unit, the CoC should refer the household with the greatest length of time spent homeless.

Homeless Assistance Organizations

CoC funded housing and homelessness prevention providers should be involved in the CE process by helping people access the system and receiving referrals. CoC funded Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing programs should only receive referrals through the CE process.

### **Mainstream Housing and Services**

Affordable housing and mainstream services are crucial tools for ending homelessness this includes referral sources such as public schools, hospitals, public libraries, first responders, and homeless assistance providers within the CoC. Each agency will have a list of providers and their services to assist in long-term stabilization as well as the process to access services at each entity (position to contact and corresponding contact information).

Information from the CE communications plan should be shared with mainstream resource providers, serving people who might experience a housing crisis.

Information will be distributed and will include how priority lists for housing and supportive services will be transitioned to the CE process.

All programs that receive ESG or CoC funding to abide by the Policy and Procedure guidelines. Agency program procedure should reflect the policy and procedures described in this document. The CoC strongly encourages the collaboration with programs that do not receive either of these sources of funds in order to provide comprehensive services to the community's homeless population. The Policy and Procedures have been established to ensure that persons experiencing homelessness receive similar information and support to access and maintain permanent housing.

Geographic Area: Schenectady County

Target Population:

- Chronically Homeless
- Homeless
- Veterans
- Domestic Violence
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Youth
- Physically
- Families

### **Marketing and Non-Discriminatory Access**

CoC's and recipient of HUD CoC Program and ESG Program funding are required to affirmatively market their housing and supportive services projects to eligible persons who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach. This is regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, marital status, handicap, actual or perceived sexual orientation, or gender identity. To ensure the CE process assists CoC Program and ESG Program recipients in meeting this requirement, the following market strategy was developed:

- Regular outreach and communication to entities in outlying areas is performed by the CEF and CEC
- Physical materials, e.g. flyers, brochures are available for distribution including the DV hotline phone number
- CoC agencies have been asked to include a CE statement on their materials and social media.

**Note:** Non-discrimination document attached.

## Training

Training will be conducted by the CELead, Co-Lead, and DV and Youth Program staff

- A training curriculum for CoC and Non-CoC entities has been developed
  - Domestic Violence training is required
  - Youth “best practices” training is required
- Training will include a cross-county curriculum

## Street Outreach

Schenectady County CoC participants in the annual Point in Time count. VCHC and Soldier On provides street outreach to veterans, SAFE Inc. provides street outreach for youth.

## Prevention Services

Prevention services available through Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP), Bethesda House, Legal Aid of NENY and New Choices. Prevention assessments and referrals will be entered into the CE project in HMIS.

## Emergency Shelter Providers

**Schenectady County DSS places families and singles at emergency shelters \and processes referrals for those units to SCAP for families and Bethesda House for singles. Participation from non-funded agencies is strongly encouraged. Grievance/Appeal Process**

There will be a formal grievance and appeals process managed by the CE committee. Choice is central to CE and the appeals process will embrace that same person-centered and easily navigable model. If a participant feels they did not receive fair treatment, they were denied resources or given an inappropriate referral, the participant may appeal these decisions or actions.

- The CE Review Committee is a sub-committee comprised of members of the CE committee and members of the CoC agencies. This sub-committee will meet quarterly to review the program, procedures, and suggested modifications. Meeting minutes will be distributed to the CE agencies. Changes will be recommended to and approved by HSPB.
- CE formal meetings occur twice monthly. Meetings serve as a space for agency representatives to discuss participants’ progress and referral status, troubleshoot any issues, and coordinate outreach. The agency representatives can make recommendations on suggested changes to the CE system.
- Programs are evaluated on their level of participation in CE including having CE staff, participating in the twice monthly meetings, taking referrals from CE, and regular updates on vacancies and waiting lists. Participation in CE will be tracked through the HMIS, for quality, and agencies will be given the opportunity to submit their feedback on the process.

## **EVALUATION/OVERSIGHT**

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The HSPB Board is named as the Evaluation Entity for the HSPB CE Project. The Evaluation Entity will be tasked with conducting an evaluation of the CE Project. The Board will evaluate the CoC's CE project using the methods detailed below. To ensure that each CoC is competitive in the annual CoC competition CARES as the Collaborative Applicant will support the CoC's to facilitate the implementation of this process. CARES will work with the CE lead agencies to draft the survey tools, pull together evaluation entity members for each CoC and assist with facilitating the evaluation process.

Responsibilities of the Evaluation Entity include:

- Plan annual CE evaluation
- Collect data from HMIS (CE data system) to evaluate CE compliance
- Evaluate CE implementation process for effectiveness and efficiency
- Identify policy and process improvements

Desired outcomes of the Evaluation are to:

- Identify opportunities for improvement of the CE project
- Demonstrate to CoC leadership a way to evaluate the CE project in a collaborative, transparent, improvement-focused manner

This Evaluation will not:

- Evaluate the Lead Agency individually
- Evaluate individual agencies within the CE project

Multiple methods to gather data and elicit comprehensive feedback on the Coordinated Entry Project include:

- A comprehensive review of the CE policies and Procedures including geographic coverage, assessment methods and prioritization and referral processes.
- Phone Surveys gathering information from formerly homeless individuals housed through the CE project and those currently on the priority list receiving services through the CE project.
- An online Survey collecting information from CE participating providers within the CoC to gather feedback on the structure of the CE project as well as strengths and barriers.
- Review of HMIS data to ensure CE compliance
- Develop a Lived Experience committee to review assessment tool, access points and over all process

All components of the CE System will be reviewed and assessed monthly by the Co-Lead Agencies, Bethesda House, and Legal Aid Society of NENY, and the CoC Collaborative applicant. Recommendations for policy change will be presented to the HSPB.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Schenectady County CE does not exclude, deny services to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color religion, sex, age, national origin, familial status, gender, sexual identity, or disability in admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services and benefits under any of its programs and activities.

Schenectady County CE is committed to providing services to those who would be least likely to apply for assistance due to any identifying characteristics/conditions listed above by affirmatively marketing our services to these populations. To further this goal, each staff member conducting assessments at point of

entry, is required to read and understand the Fair Housing Act, and the purpose and objectives of the Affirmative Marketing Plan. If you believe an applicant has been denied service due to one of the above characteristics, please contact the CE Facilitator at (845) 374-7873.

If an applicant wishes to file a formal complaint because he/she believes they have been discriminated against for any of the above characteristics, please provide the applicant with the procedure to do so.

The complaint should contain:

- The applicant's name, address and contact information.
- The name and address of the person/organization the complaint is against
- The address or other identification to the housing/program involved
- A short description to the event(s) that caused the applicant to believe his/her rights were violated
- The date(s) to the alleged violation

*\*Unless the housing or program has been designated for specific sub-populations by federal requirements.*

**Fair Housing Act** prohibits discriminatory housing practices based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status.

NY FHEO Center  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10278

(800) 496-4294 (voice)  
(800) 927-9275 (TTY)

Individuals have one year after an alleged violation to file a complaint with HUD, but it should be filed as soon as possible.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act** prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. This includes providing a reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities; program accessibility; effective communication with people who have hearing or vision disabilities; and accessible new construction and alterations.

U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Disability Rights Section- NYAV  
Washington, D.C. 20530

(800) 514-0301 (Voice)  
(800) 514-0383 (TTY)

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act** prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin, including limited English proficiency (LEP) under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Federal Coordination and Compliance Section- NWB  
Civil Rights Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20530

(888) 848-5306 (English and Spanish (ingles y espanol))

(202) 307-2222 (voice)

(202) 307-2678 (TTY)

**Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act** prohibits public entities, which includes state and local governments, and special purpose districts, from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in all their services, programs, and activities, which include housing, and housing-related services such as housing search and referral assistance.

*See SECTION 504 for details to file a complaint*

**Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act** prohibits private entities that own, lease, and operate places of public accommodation, which include shelters, social service establishments, and other public accommodations providing housing, from discriminating on the basis of disability.

*See SECTION 504 for details to file a complaint*

**The Age of Discrimination Act of 1975** prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

*See SECTION 504 for details to file a complaint*

**HUD's Equal Access Rule at 24 CFR 5.105(a)(2) prohibits** discriminatory eligibility determinations in HUD-assisted or HUD-insured housing programs based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status, including any projects funded by the CoC Program, ESG Program, and HOPWA Program.

*See FAIR HOUSING ACT for details on how to file a complaint*

**NYS Human Rights Law** prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, age, marital status, domestic violence victim status, disability, pregnancy related condition, predisposing genetic characteristics, prior arrest or conviction record, familial status, retaliation for opposing unlawful discriminatory practices, gender identity, or transgender status.

NYS Division of Human Rights

Agency Building 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Empire State Plaza

Albany, New York 12210

(518) 474-2705 (voice)

**24 CFR 578.93 Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity** allows recipients of HUD funding to exclusively serve a subpopulation of homeless individuals, in circumstances where the housing addresses the specific needs of that group, for example:

- a) Housing may be limited to one sex where the housing is a single structure with shared bathrooms or bathing facilities;
- b) Housing may be limited to families with children;

- c) Housing may exclude registered sex offenders and persons with violent crime records when a family with a child under 18 resides in the housing;
- d) Sober housing may exclude persons who refuse to sign an occupancy agreement or lease that prohibits participants from possessing, using, or being under the influence of illegal substances and/or alcohol on premises;
- e) Housing may be limited to a specific subpopulation such as homeless veterans, victims of domestic violence, chronically homeless individuals, or persons with AIDS, so long as admission does not discriminate against any protected class (as identified in the stated laws and acts);
- f) Housing that provides specialized support services may limit or prioritize individuals who identify with a specific disability but may not refuse housing to a person who may benefit from the services regardless of having that specific disability.

### **Special Consideration for DV Survivors**

It is of the utmost importance to provide a safe and confidential way for domestic violence survivors and those who are actively fleeing a domestic violence situation to access the CE Process. The following procedures should be implemented when an assessment indicates the applicant is currently or formerly a victim of domestic violence.

### **Emergency Assistance**

If the applicant indicates they are in immediate danger, ask them to hang up and call 911. If the applicant has indicated they are temporarily safe, but you are unable to meet with them at the time, please have the applicant contact 24-hour emergency domestic violence hotline at (518) 374-3386.

### **Sharing Information**

While any applicant may opt out of sharing information with other CE Agencies, it is especially important to explain this option to the applicant. The applicant should be informed that the information provided during the assessment does not have to be shared with any agencies but those to which referrals are made.

To make a referral for a client who opts out of the CE system have the applicant complete a release of information for your agency to share information with the agency to which you will making the referral. Each agency that is referred to must have a separate release of information n file with the applicant's assessment.

When communicating via email wit other agencies refer to the applicant only by their initials.

If the applicant has opted out of the CE process, you may not discuss their case at any group-wide meetings.

### **Application Accommodations**

If the applicant is currently housed at a confidential location/DV shelter do not ask for the address when completing the assessment. Instead, please enter "confidential location" the section which asks where the applicant was/will be during the night.

If obtaining documentation to support applicant's homelessness status has the potential to put them in danger, the applicant may self-certify.

### **Other Considerations**

Verify with the client that it is safe to contact them at the phone number provided. Ask the client to notify you immediately if it ever becomes unsafe to contact them. Work with the client to identify different ways to stay in contact (e.g. schedule a regular time to meet with client)

**Domestic Violence Hotline: (518) 374-3386**

I have received the Policy and Procedures Manual for the Schenectady County Coordinated Entry System and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Manual and any revisions made to it.

Name of Participating Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Designated Agency Representative authorized to sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Agency Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this signed form to:

CARES of NY Inc.

Rachel Bradt

E: [rbradt@caresny.org](mailto:rbradt@caresny.org)

P: 518-489-4130 x 710

## SCHENECTADY COUNTY COORDINATED ENTRY PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING CLIENT GRIEVANCE

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It is Coordinated Entry policy to make every effort to settle difficulties and problems which may occur in the Coordinated Entry process.

Every client who participates in the Coordinated Entry process is entitled to file a grievance if they have a complaint about services they receive from any participating Coordinated Entry Agency. **We would encourage every client to first attempt to resolve problems directly with the Agency that they are working with in the housing process.** If, after addressing concerns with the Agency, the client is not satisfied with the outcome, then the client should proceed with the grievance procedure.

***Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Grievance Form*** will be available at each participating COC Agency.

There are three levels of review available for each grievance:

### Level 1

- The first person to review the grievance will be the Coordinated Entry Facilitator (CEF) and/or the Coordinated Entry Coordinator (CEC).
- Once the grievance is received, the CEF or CEC will contact and meet with the client within three (3) business days.
- At the conclusion of the meeting, the CEF and/or CEC will complete Part II of the ***Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Grievance Form*** and inform the client of the outcome.
- The client will complete Part III and sign and date the form.
  - If you agree with the outcome, the process ends and the resolution is implemented.
  - If you disagree you move to the next level of grievance.

### Level 2

- The Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Team (CE Team) will complete Part IV of the ***Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Grievance Form***.
- The CE Team will conduct a phone conference call to discuss the grievance and the aforementioned meeting.
- At the conclusion of this meeting the CEF and/or CEC will contact the client to convey possible resolutions.
- The client will complete Part V of the ***Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Grievance Form***.
  - If you agree the process ends and the resolution is implemented.
  - If you disagree you move to the next level of grievance.

### Level 3

- A Review Panel, consisting of members that do not receive CoC funding, will complete Part VI of the *Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Grievance Form*.
- At the conclusion of the meeting, the Review Panel will inform the client of the outcome.
- This is the **final step** in the grievance process.
- The decisions of the Review Panel is final.
- The client will complete Part VII of the *Schenectady County Coordinated Entry Grievance Form*.

## SCHENECTADY COUNTY COORDINATED ENTRY GRIEVANCE FORM

**Part I:**

Your Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state your concern (*use back of form, if necessary*): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*What action would you suggest?* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: To Be Completed by CEF or CEC**

CEF or CEC Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Grievance Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended Grievance Solution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CEF or CEC Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part III: To be completed by client, name above:**

\_\_\_ I am satisfied with the recommended grievance solution.

\_\_\_ I am not satisfied with the recommended grievance solution.

Signature of Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part IV: To Be Completed by Coordinated Entry Team**

CEF or CEC Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Grievance Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Conference Call: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended Grievance Solution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Discussed With Client \_\_\_\_\_

CEF or CEC Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part V: To be completed by client, name above:**

I am satisfied with the recommended grievance solution.

I am not satisfied with the recommended grievance solution.

Signature of Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part VI: To Be Completed By Review Panel**

Panel Facilitator's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Grievance Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Review Panel Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Grievance Solution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Discussed with Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Panel Facilitator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part VII: To be completed by client**

I am satisfied with the recommended grievance solution.

I am not satisfied with the recommended grievance solution.

Signature of Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **A SUMMARY OF THE SCHENECTADY COUNTY COORDINATED ENTRY MARKETING AND OUTREACH PLAN**

The goal of the Schenectady County Coordinated Entry is having an understandable, easy to access system to provide Continuum of Care (CoC) and Supportive Housing, to individuals and families in our community.

Implementing and sustaining viable marketing strategies will build community awareness and access to various programs offered through CoC funded agencies. By creating awareness, gaps in services can be bridged which in turn aid in long-term housing for Schenectady County's homeless population, in an effective and timely manner.

As noted within the CoC's Written Standards and Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedure Manual all HUD funded projects must:

- Ensure equal access in housing to all eligible individuals and families regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. Equal access must be granted to individuals in accordance with the individual's gender identity, and in a manner that affords equal access to the individual's family.
  
- I. How will Coordinated Entry engage non-HUD funded organizations and agencies?
  - The Coordinated Entry member agencies will utilize their agency websites to advertise that they are a Point of Entry site for clients to apply for CoC funded housing.
  - A modest brochure will be created explaining the Coordinated Entry Process and will include the participating agencies clients may go to apply for CoC funded housing. The brochures will be distributed to community organizations such as hospitals, churches, mental health clinics, Department of Social Services, libraries, veteran groups and other community organizations.
- II. Who will participate in the Affirmative Outreach and Marketing of Coordinated Entry?
  - All member agencies will be encouraged to advertise that they are a Point of Entry on their website.
  - Agency representatives will assist with distributing the brochure to community organizations.
- III. How will the marketing plan reach those least likely to apply for Housing assistance in the absence of special outreach?
  - The Marketing Plan discusses which segments of the population are least likely to apply for housing without special outreach by considering current racial and ethnic composition of the geographic area as well as language barriers and income eligibility requirements.
  - For those least likely to apply for services we will encourage and support our street outreach teams through regular trainings with community partners including outreach teams. The CoC supports reaching out to those least likely to apply for services specifically the CoC has identified those living on the street, and those with

language barriers as those who would be least likely to apply for housing without special outreach. The CE form can be translated to reach these populations via request with assistance for community partners.

- IV. How will we track the effectiveness of our marketing?
  - Staff completing Coordinated Assessment Applications will ask their client how they heard about the program and note the response on their application. That data will be collected and reported on.