

KYHMIS Questions and Answers

Q: What is the Kentucky Statewide Homeless Management Information System (KYHMIS)?

A: Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a computerized data collection tool designed to capture client-level information over time on the characteristics, service needs and services utilization of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness. An HMIS is designed to aggregate client-level data across a community to generate an unduplicated count of clients serviced within a community's (or state's) system of homeless services – i.e. the Continuum of Care (CoC).

Q: Is there a HUD deadline for implementing use of an HMIS?

A: HUD's original deadline for initiating continuum-level HMIS implementation was identified as September of 2004. HUD is requiring that all programs receiving funding through the 2003 Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) program, Housing Opportunity for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program and other targeted homeless assistance programs (e.g. Shelter + Care) must commit to participation in their local HMIS implementation – as these implementations occur.

Q. Is my agency required to enter data into the KYHMIS?

A. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires agencies receiving McKinney-Vento funds and serving the homeless to participate in a HMIS. McKinney-Vento funded programs include: Supportive Housing Program (SHP); Shelter Plus Care (S+C); Section 8 Moderate Rehab for Single Room Occupancy (SRO); Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG); and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA grantees that specifically target homelessness).

Q: What are the primary benefits for KYHMIS participation?

A: KYHMIS can provide important benefits for consumers, agencies and community alike. *Homeless program consumers* indirectly benefit from service improvements derived from system analysis and directly gain through streamlined referrals, coordinated case management and enhanced access to benefits. HMIS offers front-line *homeless service program staff* tools for faster, more effective client services management through enhanced referrals, case management and service coordination. For *agency administrators*, HMIS assists with access to a variety of agency, program and client-level reports and increased consistency and efficiency in client services reports. *Policymakers and advocates* benefit from access to system-wide data describing the extent and nature of homelessness and a greater understanding of service usage, effectiveness and gaps. This information can be used to better target limited resources and inform community planning and policy decisions. Statewide HMIS implementation offers an opportunity to achieve all of these service coordination and policy benefits, with the added benefit of shared cost and reduced expense.

Q: What Homeless Management Information System has the State of Kentucky chosen?

A: Kentucky has adopted the use of *ServicePoint* (from Bowman Systems) as its platform for a coordinated statewide Homeless Management Information System. *ServicePoint* has been ranked most highly by user groups in a national study. It is being used by dozens of other states and cities around the country. *ServicePoint* is a web-based system that requires no local software installation. It will provide automatic reports for HUD and ESG reporting requirements and offers flexibility so that local agencies and Continua can customize its use for local needs.

Q: How will providers access Kentucky *ServicePoint* software?

A: *ServicePoint* is a web-based training software platform that uses a common/shared “host” or server. Users “dial-in” to the central host for purposes of data-entry and retrieval. High-speed access to the internet is highly recommended for most successful use of this platform. Every_system user (not site) must be licensed and certified for *ServicePoint* use. Version upgrades and enhancements of the core software will occur through Kentucky Housing and without additional installation costs to the users.

Q: Can we use the current system we have for data collection or are all agencies required to use *ServicePoint*?

A: Agencies in Kentucky will be required to use *ServicePoint* in order to aggregate client-level data at the local, community, and state level.

Q: How can I get a new password or my old one reset?

A: Contact your local agency administrator (if you have one), or contact the HMIS Helpdesk to get a new temporary password. The KYHMIS Helpdesk can be reached at 800-633-8896 ext. 446 or kyhmis@kyhousing.org

Q: How often are trainings and how do I get signed up?

A: Trainings are currently done 2 days a month (1 day SHP, 1 Day ESG). To sign up, contact the helpdesk or go to the KY Homeless Web site link: <http://www.kyhousing.org/KYHomeless/KH.asp?sec=75&ID=596>. You can also contact the KYHMIS Help Desk to request a one on one “Go to Meeting”. This allows you to dial in and view the Help Desk computer as the information is explained to you. No traveling required and training is done at your convenience.

Q: What is the difference between the APR Workflow and the Short Stay Workflow?

A: The APR Workflow is for the programs that need to run the HUD Annual Progress Report. These are programs such as SHP, S+C and HOWPA programs. This workflow tracks the entry and exit dates in a program.

The Short Stay Workflow is used where clients usually stay for one week or less. These are ESG funded programs such as emergency or day shelters and do not track entry and exit from a program because the stays are so brief. If an agency wants to track dates, they can use the Service start and end dates to track that information.

Q: I know I entered my client in ServicePoint but they are not on my APR. Where are they?

A: The most common reason for missing people in a report is that one of the dates is incorrect. Usually one will be missed or entered wrong in the entry/exit area or outside of the reporting period. Check the dates on your client record to ensure they are correct. Also be sure that you have a service recorded for that client. You can use the Bowman APR document to see how the fields in the report are gathered from the input data. As always, you can call the KYHMIS Help Desk to help you troubleshoot the problem.

Q. Why is client income not showing on APR?

A. The income section of the HUD 40118 APR will be populated only when the client exits a program. If the client has no exit date in Entry/Exit, no income will show up on the APR (regardless of the numbers you have entered).

Q. How do I run the APR for a particular program?

A. Click on Reports and then click on HUD 40118 APR. Set the provider to be the HUD grant, not your agency. Fill out the starting and ending date range for the report period, then click Build report. When the report is displayed, you can print it by using the Print command in the browser. To see more detail, you can click on the numbers in the APR and see the names of the clients counted in the field. The names function as links so that you can pull up a client record by clicking on the name.

Q: My Annual Progress Report is missing 10 people or more. What can I do?

A: The helpdesk personnel can help you find the records that don't show up in your report. It is much easier to diagnose problems with your APR if you run your report frequently. Depending on the number of clients you handle, running your report weekly, or at least monthly, will make it easier for you to verify your numbers.

Q: Should I put in a "removed date" in the household window?

A: No. Unless a dependant or family member has actually left, via divorce, custody problem, etc, that field should be left blank. It is sometimes confused with the entry/exit screen, but they are separate fields in the database.

Q: What is the APR and what does it do?

A: The purpose of the Annual Performance Report is to track program progress and accomplishments in HUD's competitive homeless assistance programs. The APR provides the grantee and HUD with information necessary to assess each grantee's performance. For more information and the white papers on them, please check the system news section in Servicepoint or call the HMIS Help Desk to receive the document.

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