



# ESG Program HMIS Manual

A GUIDE FOR HMIS USERS AND SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

RELEASED SEPTEMBER 2018

# Contents

- Revision History ..... 2
- Introduction ..... 3
  - Additional Resources ..... 3
- HMIS Resources ..... 3
- HMIS Project Setup ..... 4
  - Identify Projects for Inclusion in HMIS..... 5
  - Identify Funding Components for each Project ..... 5
  - Set Up Projects in HMIS ..... 5
  - Organizational Identifiers (2.1) ..... 6
  - Project Identifiers (2.2) ..... 6
  - Continuum of Care (CoC) Code (2.3)..... 6
  - Project Type (2.4)..... 7
  - Method for Tracking Emergency Shelter Utilization (2.5) ..... 8
  - Federal Partner Funding Sources (2.6)..... 9
    - HUD: ESG – Emergency Shelter (operating and/or essential services)..... 9
    - HUD: ESG – Homelessness Prevention ..... 9
    - HUD: ESG – Rapid Re-Housing ..... 9
    - HUD: ESG – Street Outreach ..... 9
  - Bed and Unit Inventory Information (2.7) ..... 9
  - Additional Project Information (2.8)..... 9
- Special Project Set-up Notes for ESG ..... 10
  - Comparable Databases ..... 10
  - Project funding for Legal Service providers ..... 10
  - Projects funded by multiple jurisdictions ..... 10
- Data Collection Requirements ..... 11
  - Universal Data Elements (UDE)..... 11
    - Special notes about UDE’s: ..... 11
  - Common Data Elements ..... 13
- Special Data Collection Instructions ..... 14
  - Street Outreach..... 14
  - Emergency Shelter ..... 15
  - Homelessness Prevention ..... 16
  - Rapid Re-Housing ..... 16
- ESG Reporting ..... 17

## Revision History

<b>Release Date</b>	<b>Revision Summary</b>
<b>March 2015</b>	First Release
<b>December 2016</b>	Second release; version update to align with 2014 HMIS Data Standards V5 documents.
<b>September 2017</b>	Third release; version update to align with 2017 HMIS Data Standards.
<b>September 2018</b>	Fourth release; update guidance about “Projects funded by multiple jurisdictions” and current ESG Reporting requirements in Sage.

## Introduction

The Emergency Solutions Grants Program (ESG) HMIS Manual is intended to support data collection and reporting efforts of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead Agencies and ESG recipients and subrecipients. This manual provides information on HMIS project setup and data collection guidance specific to the ESG Program.

This document is not a replacement for any specific program guidance, requirements, regulations, notices, and training materials on the ESG Program. This manual only addresses the use of HMIS for ESG.

## Additional Resources

- **ESG Program:** Guidance about the ESG Program and its requirements can be found online at the HUD Exchange on the [ESG Program](#) page.
- **Ask A Question:** To ask a question about any ESG Program HMIS requirement go to the [Ask A Question](#) section of the HUD Exchange. Please be sure to select “HMIS” for your question under “My Question is Related To.” HUD and ESG program staff work together to answer questions that come in on Ask A Question related to ESG and HMIS.

## HMIS Resources

- **HMIS:** There are a variety of documents available on the HUD Exchange [2017 HMIS Data Standards](#) page that comprise the suite of HMIS Data Standard resources, which are briefly described in the table below. Each of the documents has a specific purpose and intended audience. The HMIS Lead should be familiar with all the documents and collectively use them as their HMIS reference materials along with specific materials provided by the software provider.

Manual Name & Link	Intended Audience	Contents
<a href="#">HMIS Data Standards Dictionary</a>	HMIS Vendors & HMIS Lead Agencies	The dictionary provides the detailed information required for system programming on all HMIS elements and responses required to be included in HMIS software. It delineates data collection requirements, system logic, and contains the XML and CSV tables and numbers.  The dictionary also includes critical information about data collection stages, federal partner data collection required elements, project descriptor data elements, and metadata data elements.
<a href="#">HMIS Data Standards Manual</a>	HMIS Lead Agencies & HMIS Users	The manual provides a review of all Universal Data Elements, Project Descriptor Data Elements, and Common Program Specific Data Elements. It contains information on data collection requirements, instructions for data collection, and descriptions that the HMIS User will find as a reference.
<a href="#">Data Mapping Instructions</a>	HMIS Vendors & HMIS Lead Agencies	This document is provided to vendors each time the Data Standards are updated to provide instruction on mapping retired elements and responses to new elements and responses, as required.
<a href="#">2017 HMIS CSV and XML Schemas</a>	HMIS Vendors	These documents outline requirements for a standard export of HMIS data. The Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) programs require regular submission of the current HMIS CSV.
<a href="#">Program Specific HMIS Data Manuals</a>	HMIS Lead Agencies & HMIS Users	The Program Specific Manuals provide guidance and support for data collection and reporting efforts.
<a href="#">Zip Code to Geography Type Crosswalk</a>	HMIS Vendors	Lookup table for geography types based on zip codes required for PDDE 2.8 Additional Project Information.

## HMIS Project Setup

It is important to be sure that communities understand the difference between a **program** and a **project** because they have distinct meanings in this context. A program is the source of funding that the organization is receiving to run its project (e.g., ESG Program funding for ABC Emergency Shelter project). For data collection and reporting purposes, HUD and its federal partners refer to categories of funding within a program as **components**.

The guidance in this manual should also be applied to emergency shelters that are not federally or ESG-funded. Projects which are defined as emergency shelters, whether funded by HUD or not, are included in the community's Housing Inventory Count (HIC). All shelter projects participating in HMIS are also part of the Continuum of Care's System Performance Measures. Therefore, the closer an HMIS implementation can align the non-federally funded shelters with the guidance in this manual, the more the information can be gleaned from them as part of the community's data-driven understanding of performance.

## Identify Projects for Inclusion in HMIS

Identify all the **projects** within the HMIS implementation that receive ESG funding. For example, if the ESG recipient is a county that funds two subrecipients, Nonprofit A with Emergency Shelter funds and Nonprofit B with Rapid Re-Housing funds, then that local HMIS implementation must have two projects in the HMIS implementation: Nonprofit A Emergency Shelter and Nonprofit B Rapid Re-Housing.

## Identify Funding Components for each Project

Identify the **component** for each project funded by the ESG recipient (a local jurisdiction: city, county or state). The ESG Program includes four eligible components:

- Activities under the ESG **Street Outreach** component are designed to meet the immediate needs of unsheltered homeless persons by connecting them with Emergency Shelter, housing and/or emergency health services.
- Activities under the ESG **Emergency Shelter** component include three distinct activity types which may be funded by ESG for an Emergency Shelter:
  - **Shelter Operations**
  - **Essential Services**
  - **Renovations**
- The **Homelessness Prevention** component of ESG funds short- and/or medium-term rental assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services (financial assistance and service costs) designed to prevent an at-risk individual or family from moving into an emergency shelter or living in a place not meant for human habitation.
- The **Rapid Re-Housing** component of ESG funds short- and/or medium-term rental assistance and housing relocation and stabilization services (financial assistance and service costs) designed to quickly move homeless individuals and families from emergency shelter or places not meant for human habitation into permanent housing.

Following the example above, Nonprofit A receives funding under the Emergency Shelter component and Nonprofit B receives funding under the Rapid Re-Housing component.

## Set Up Projects in HMIS

One of the most critical steps in accurate data collection and reporting is ensuring that a project is set up properly in an HMIS. Incorrect project setup will jeopardize recipients' ability to produce accurate, reliable reports and will affect the community's ability to generate community-wide reports including System Performance Measures.

HMIS System Administrators should follow the procedures established for their particular HMIS when setting up projects in the HMIS. These setup procedures must include, at a minimum, that:

1. HMIS includes **project descriptor** information for all ESG projects participating in HMIS; and
2. HMIS Lead, in consultation with the CoC, review project descriptor data at least once annually and update that data as needed.

The HMIS Lead Agency must ensure that the HMIS includes project descriptor information for all residential continuum projects, regardless of their participation in HMIS.

The following are required Project Descriptor Data Elements:

#### Organizational Identifiers (2.1)

- The name of the agency/organization (i.e., recipient or subrecipient) receiving ESG funding and providing the direct services must be entered. An identification number will be generated by the HMIS. There may be only one record in HMIS for each agency/organization, regardless of how many projects they operate. In the HMIS Data Standards, HUD strongly recommends that the name of the organization is the entity's legal name - not an abbreviation or other derivative since the name is transmitted in reports. The organization identified here should be the organization operating the project, and not the ESG recipient, if the ESG recipient is not operating the project directly.

#### Project Identifiers (2.2)

- **Project ID:** A Project ID must be assigned to each project via a system generated number or code. Each project must receive a distinct identifier that is consistently associated with that project.
- **Project Name:** The name of the project receiving ESG funding and providing the direct service must also be entered or identified with the ESG-specific project (e.g., Shelter Name XYZ). HMIS administrators should note that often the name of the project on the grant agreement is not the same as the name the project is called by the organization and/or the common name in the community and often not the same name as is used on the HIC. System administrators should maintain mapping information to correlate grant names, HIC names, and common names with the project identifiers either within the HMIS itself or separately.
- **Operating Start Date:** Beginning in October 2017, the Operating Start Date of a project must be completed on all projects within the HMIS. The Operating Start Date of the project is defined as the first day the project provided services and/or housing. Thus, this date must be no later than the date the first client served in the project was entered into the project. For projects which began operating prior to October 1, 2012, the start date may be estimated if not known.
- **Operating End Date:** An Operating End Date must be entered when a project closes. The Operating End Date must be the last day on which the last client received housing/services. The Operating End Date should be left empty if the project is still in operation (refer to the specific HMIS instructions on project close out in an HMIS).

#### Continuum of Care (CoC) Code (2.3)

- Select the CoC code based on the location of the project. For example, if the project operates in City X, which is part of a CoC consolidated application, select the CoC Code that would be used for the CoC application, regardless of the jurisdiction providing the funding. Refer to the [CoC-Consolidated Plan Jurisdiction and ESG Recipient Crosswalk](#) to determine which CoC claimed the geography of the location of the project. For projects that operate in multiple CoC jurisdictions, (e.g. the project is in the city and the city is within a county and both the city and county have an active CoC) the code for each CoC must be entered.

## Project Type (2.4)

- **Continuum of Care Project:** All ESG-funded projects are considered part of the Continuum of Care, so enter “yes” to identify them as Continuum projects.
- **Project Type:** Each project must be identified with a single HMIS project type. Select only one project type for each project in the HMIS--no single project within an HMIS may have two project types. Recipients or subrecipients that have ESG funding for multiple components falling under separate project types must have separate projects set up in HMIS for each project type. For instance, Nonprofit C receives a grant award from the City to fund both Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention. Nonprofit C must set up a Rapid Re-Housing project AND a separate Homelessness Prevention project in the HMIS.

ESG Program Component - Activity	Continuum Project Type
Street Outreach	Street Outreach
Emergency Shelter – Shelter Operations	Emergency Shelter Day Shelter* Transitional Housing**
Emergency Shelter – Essential Services	Emergency Shelter Day Shelter* Transitional Housing**
Emergency Shelter - Renovations	Emergency Shelter Day Shelter* Transitional Housing**
Homelessness Prevention	Homelessness Prevention
Rapid Re-Housing	PH: Rapid Re-Housing

**\*Project Type: Day Shelter** – Projects that receive ESG funding under the Emergency Shelter component where the activity is carried out in a Day Shelter should select Project Type: Day Shelter instead of Emergency Shelter. Day Shelters are defined as projects that offer daytime facilities and services (no lodging) for persons who are homeless. All Day Shelter projects are required to collect data and report outcomes like those of any Entry/Exit Shelter (i.e., 1) the project reports performance from project start to project exit, assuming that there is a consistent service delivery between start and exit; and 2) that the project is providing services which include a focus on increasing income and housing placement).

**\*\*Project Type: Transitional Housing** – There are some Transitional Housing projects that were funded under the Emergency Shelter Grants program in FY2010, which are “grandfathered” into ESG funding. In such cases, accomplishments for these projects will be reported under “Emergency Shelter” for the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) but must continue to be identified within the HMIS as Project Type: Transitional Housing.

**Project Type: Services Only** – For ESG-funded projects, only legal services providers may be set up in HMIS (or their comparable database) with a project type of ‘Services Only.’ If the legal services provider receives funding from multiple sources, a separate project must be set up for clients receiving services funded under ESG to ensure that reporting includes only clients served with ESG funds (*unless the HMIS or comparable database can meet the criteria laid on in “Projects funded by multiple jurisdictions” on page 9*).

**Essential services funded under the Emergency Shelter component of ESG must be categorized under the Emergency Shelter, Day Shelter or Transitional Housing project type, as applicable.**

*Additional note: Whether using ESG funds for shelter operations, essential services, and/or renovation, ESG recipients are required to report in the CAPER the number of all persons served in ESG-funded Emergency Shelter, Day Shelter and grandfathered Transitional Housing projects. Because the CAPER does not require a breakdown of the number of clients who received essential services and those who only utilized a bed during their stay at the shelter, there is no need or way to distinguish between eligible ESG Emergency Shelter activities (i.e., essential services, shelter operations, or renovation) in HMIS. For these reasons, essential services should not be set up as a “Services Only” project type in HMIS.*

### Method for Tracking Emergency Shelter Utilization (2.5)

The Entry/Exit method should be used for all ESG-funded emergency shelters unless:

- The shelter serves a large number of clients on a nightly basis;
- Clients are permitted to spend nights at the shelter on an irregular basis; and
- There is a high degree of client turnover;

ESG-funded shelters that meet the criteria above may be set up in HMIS to use the Night-by-Night method<sup>1</sup> to track emergency shelter utilization. Due to the different nature of these projects, shelters that meet the criteria for using the Night-by-Night method also have different data collection requirements, as detailed in the [Special Data Collection Instructions](#) section starting on page 10 below.

Once the Method for Tracking Emergency Shelter Utilization has been identified and selected in the HMIS, it should not change. Altering this element will significantly impact project level reporting as well as system level performance reporting. If a shelter requests a change in method and the CoC agrees, then HMIS technical assistance is recommended prior to making the change to ensure that consideration is given to:

- the impact the change will have on reporting;
- the date the project should change types to correspond with funding reports; and
- the difference in performance expectations between the two types of emergency shelter.

Regardless of the method used to track emergency shelter utilization, it must be possible to determine the clients served by any ESG-funded shelter for any given night based on HMIS data. Please see the [HMIS Data Dictionary](#) for additional information.

---

<sup>1</sup> While ESG permits the use of the Night-by-Night method for shelters which meet specific criteria, this is not true of all federal funders. Regardless of the nature of the shelter operation, projects receiving HOPWA Short Term Housing, HOPWA Hotel/Motel, RHY Basic Center Program, or VA Contract Emergency Residential Services funding MUST be set up to use the Entry/Exit method.

## Federal Partner Funding Sources (2.6)

Projects funded in whole or in part by ESG are to be identified as funded by “HUD: ESG – [component name]” - based on the ESG component type. Select the appropriate ESG component for each project:

### HUD: ESG – Emergency Shelter (operating and/or essential services)

- Projects that receive renovation funding from ESG are to be listed under **HUD: ESG Emergency Shelter (operating and/or essential services)**. These projects are expected to report on all persons sheltered in the facility that was renovated just like projects which receive ESG funding for shelter operations and/or essential services.
- If a project receives ESG Program funding for multiple emergency shelter activity types (e.g., funding for both operating or essential services and renovation funding), it should be set up as a single emergency shelter project in HMIS, as long as the funding source (grant identifier) associated with those activities is the same and the client population is identical.
- Projects that received ESG funding for shelter operations or essential services and are “grandfathered” Transitional Housing projects must select **HUD: ESG-Emergency Shelter** as the funding source.

### HUD: ESG – Homelessness Prevention

### HUD: ESG – Rapid Re-Housing

### HUD: ESG – Street Outreach

Next, enter a **grant identifier** for each ESG grant that the project receives along with the grant start and end dates.

## Bed and Unit Inventory Information (2.7)

Projects which provide lodging (Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, and Rapid Re-Housing) must complete the bed and unit inventory information on all residential projects funded through ESG. This information should match the information provided by the CoC for the HIC. The bed and unit information in HMIS is based on the number and type of beds in the entire project, which may be more beds/units than are funded under ESG.

**Note:** The CAPER is consistent with HMIS in that it requires recipients to report on all beds in ESG-funded emergency shelters; HUD does not require emergency shelters to track each bed by funding source. The CAPER does not require recipients to report on bed/unit information for Rapid Re-Housing. However, when reporting in their CAPER on the persons served by Rapid Re-Housing, Homelessness Prevention, or Street Outreach, recipients must only count the persons served through ESG-funded activities for those project types.

## Additional Project Information (2.8)

Each residential project must have at least one record of *Additional Project Information*. ‘Geocode,’ ‘Project ZIP code,’ and ‘Project Street Address’ fields must reflect the location of the project’s principal lodging site or, for multiple site projects, the area in which most of the project’s clients are housed. Tenant-based scattered site projects and Victim Services Providers are only required to complete the geocode and ZIP code fields and may use mailing or administrative address information if they wish to complete the remainder of the address fields.

HMIS Leads should consult their HMIS vendor regarding the specific way to complete this element to meet all of the requirements. Correct set-up is critical for accurate reporting in the new Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) beginning in 2018.

## Special Project Set-up Notes for ESG

### Comparable Databases

Projects funded under ESG where the subrecipient is a victim services provider may not enter client-level data into an HMIS; instead, they must use a comparable database to collect client-level data over time and generate unduplicated aggregate reports based on that data.

- A comparable database must be compliant with HMIS Data and Technical Standards for all required Project Descriptor, Universal, and Program-Specific data elements for any project as identified in this manual and in the HMIS Data Dictionary, as well as all HUD-defined standards for security, privacy, software functionality, and data quality.
- A comparable database must be able to generate a CSV-CAPER Report.
- Projects must enter client-level data; entry of aggregate data is not sufficient.
- ESG-funded providers using a comparable database must follow the same HMIS project typing rules as noted in this manual for each ESG-funded component.
- Client data entered into a comparable database by victim services providers must not be entered directly into or provided to HMIS.

### Project funding for Legal Service providers

Legal services providers are not prohibited from entering client-level data into an HMIS as victim services providers are, but if they have concerns about client confidentiality, the CoC may allow them to use a comparable database. If they elect to do so, the same information as provided for DV providers above is applicable.

### Projects funded by multiple jurisdictions

Projects funded by ESG may receive ESG funding from multiple jurisdictions (e.g., an ESG award from a State and another ESG award from a City). In such cases the following guidance applies:

1. Projects funded under Street Outreach, Homelessness Prevention or Rapid Re-Housing which receive an ESG award from more than one jurisdiction (e.g., City-funded RRH and State-funded RRH) must be able to:
  - a. Separate the clients served in a combined project for each ESG jurisdiction; and
  - b. Produce a valid CAPER for each ESG jurisdiction.

HUD strongly recommends a separate project for each funding source in HMIS. This will ensure clients are not counted twice at the national level. However, the HMIS Lead may elect to create a single project for multiple ESG awards from more than one jurisdiction. If the HMIS Lead chooses the second approach, the HMIS Lead is encouraged to seek guidance through the HUD AAQ to assure the modifications will not negatively impact the ESG data collection and reporting.

2. A single project which receives an ESG: Emergency Shelter award from more than one jurisdiction **does not need to separate its clients into two separate projects** within the HMIS. Each distinct Emergency Shelter, Day Shelter, or Transitional Housing project may combine all their clients in one project within the HMIS. For example: Shelter XYZ receives City and State ESG funding. The shelter is set up in HMIS as one shelter, and there is no need to distinguish between which client was served with each ESG funding source. HUD understands that this will cause the individuals served in the emergency shelter to be counted in both the state and the city CAPERs.

Projects funded by ESG may also receive funding from non-ESG sources. If a recipient’s Street Outreach, Homelessness Prevention, or Rapid Re-Housing project has other funding that is contributed to the same overall program that meets ESG requirements (i.e., those non-ESG funds are eligible as match), then it is appropriate to set up one HMIS project to include persons served by that non-ESG funding source and report those persons served on the CAPER. For example, if the provider has an RRH project that meets all ESG requirements and uses ESG to pay for rental assistance and funds from a foundation to pay for case management/support services (eligible as match), all persons would be included in the HMIS RRH project and reported in the CAPER - even those persons not assisted with ESG rental assistance. However, if the RRH project includes non-ESG funds that are not administered in accordance with ESG requirements (i.e., funds that would not be eligible as match), then persons assisted with only those non-ESG RRH funds must not be included in the HMIS RRH project or reported on the CAPER.

## Data Collection Requirements

Information on the rationale, collection point, subjects, and instructions for each element can be found in the [HMIS Data Standards Dictionary and Manual](#).

### Universal Data Elements (UDE)

All ESG recipients and subrecipients for all project types are required to collect all the Universal Data Elements which include:

<b>3.1 Name</b>	<b>3.10 Project Start Date</b>
<b>3.2 Social Security Number</b>	<b>3.11 Project Exit Date</b>
<b>3.3 Date of Birth</b>	<b>3.12 Destination</b>
<b>3.4 Race</b>	<b>3.15 Relationship to Head of Household</b>
<b>3.5 Ethnicity</b>	<b>3.16 Client Location</b>
<b>3.6 Gender</b>	<b>3.20 Housing Move-in Date</b>
<b>3.7 Veteran Status</b>	<b>3.917 Living Situation</b>
<b>3.8 Disabling Condition</b>	

### Special notes about UDE’s:

- Many of these elements comprise basic demographics about a client which are critical to an HMIS’s client search functionality and ability to de-duplicate client records. Data quality is checked and reported on many basic demographic elements.
- Two of the elements are required to identify a client as chronically homeless: Disabling Condition and Living Situation. Because street outreach and emergency shelter projects are critical in the identification of chronic homeless person’s special attention in training should be provided to users of those project types.
- **Project Start Date** replaces Project Entry and has a new definition of the point of entry for some projects. System Administrators should provide users, especially in RRH, additional information on when each project type is expected to begin data entry with Project Start.
  - **For Street Outreach projects** – it is the date of first contact with the client.
  - **For Emergency Shelters** – it is the night the client first stayed in the shelter for the consecutive shelter period from entry to exit. Night-by-night shelters, which use a bed-night tracking method will have a project start date and will allow clients to re-enter as necessary without “exiting and restarting” for each stay for a specified period.

- **For Transitional Housing** – it is the date the client moves into the residential project (i.e. first night in residence).
- **For all types of Permanent Housing, including Rapid Re-Housing** – it is the date following application that the client was admitted into the project. Admission into the project indicates the client met the following factors:
  - 1) Information provided by the client or from the referral indicates they meet the criteria for admission (for example: if chronic homelessness is required the client indicates they have a serious disability and have been homeless long enough to qualify, even though all documentation may not yet have been gathered);
  - 2) The client has indicated they want to be housed in this project;
  - 3) The client can access services and housing through the project. The expectation is the project has a housing opening (on-site, site-based, scattered-site subsidy) or expects to have one in a reasonably short amount of time
- **For all other types of Service** projects including but not limited to: **day shelter, homelessness prevention, coordinated assessment**, it is the date the client first began working with the project and generally received the first provision of service.

## Common Data Elements

Common elements are data collected by most projects funded by one of the federal partners. The following chart indicates which elements are required for collection for each of the ESG component types. ESG projects must collect data according to the chart below to generate the CSV-CAPER Report.

Number	Element	ES entry/exit	ES Night-by- night	Homelessness Prevention	RRH	Street Outreach
4.2	Income and Sources	x		x	x	x
4.3	Non-Cash Benefits	x		x	x	x
4.4	Health Insurance	x		x	x	x
4.5	Physical Disability	x	x	x	x	x
4.6	Developmental Disability	x	x	x	x	x
4.7	Chronic Health Condition	x	x	x	x	x
4.8	HIV/AIDS	x	x	x	x	x
4.9	Mental Health Problem	x	x	x	x	x
4.10	Substance Abuse	x	x	x	x	x
4.11	Domestic Violence	x	x	x	x	x
4.12	Contact		x			x
4.13	Date of Engagement		x			x
4.14	Bed Night		x			
4.18	Housing Assessment Disposition	CES	CES	CES	CES	CES
W5	Housing Assessment at Exit			x		

X = data collection is required

CES = data collection is determined by how the CoC has structured the coordinated entry system in their area. Placement of the element would be required for any project that is conducting an assessment for the coordinated entry system. This may be across multiple projects or sited in a central access point or coordinated intake center.

## Special Data Collection Instructions

System Administrators and HMIS users need to be aware of the following special data collection issues that apply to ESG-funded projects:

### Street Outreach

**Data Collection Challenges:** A street outreach project is likely to encounter difficulty engaging homeless persons. Street outreach projects may record a project start with limited information about the client and improve on the accuracy and completeness of client data over time by editing data in an HMIS as they engage the client. The initial entry may be as basic as the project entry date, a “made-up” name (e.g., “Redhat Tenthstreetbridge”) that would be identifiable for retrieval by the worker in the system, and gender. However, Street Outreach projects are prohibited from establishing protocols that only require outreach workers to collect minimal client data. Over time, outreach workers must attempt to collect all data required for street outreach projects and edit recorded data for accuracy (e.g., replacing “Redhat” with “Robert”) as the worker learns more about the client.

**De-Duplication of Client Records:** It is possible in a street outreach setting that a single client may be contacted by multiple street outreach workers over a period of time in different locations. Local protocols should be established to determine how coordination among street outreach projects effectively manage the identification and data collection of clients. In a smaller CoC, it may be possible to coordinate street outreach efforts and reduce duplication of client records through case conferences or other efforts to coordinate outreach services. In a larger CoC, client search functionality may be made available in HMIS so that street outreach workers can perform queries or client searches by “made-up” name or alias, or other informal identifier shared with street outreach workers in order to manage the identification of clients. The use of temporary “made-up” names should not be an excuse for excessive de-identified clients or poor data quality. Street Outreach projects and local HMIS leadership should work together to minimize the use of “made-up” names and attain high data quality.

**Project start vs enrollment:** For Street Outreach projects, the project start date is the date of first contact with the client. The project start date is a required Universal Data Element that indicates when a client has joined the project; it is not necessarily the same date as project “enrollment” for the PATH Program.

**Contacts:** A street outreach project is expected to record every contact made with each client in the HMIS. A contact is defined as an interaction between a worker and a client designed to engage the client. Contacts may include activities such as a conversation between the street outreach worker and the client about the client’s well-being or needs, an office visit to discuss their housing plan, a phone call or a referral to another community service. A contact must be recorded anytime a client is met, including when an engagement date or project start date is recorded on the same day.

**Engagements:** Per the HMIS Data Standards and by agreement across all federal partners, an engagement date is the date when an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment or beginning of a case plan. The date of engagement should be entered into HMIS at the point when the client has been engaged by the outreach worker. This date may be on or after the project start date and must be prior to project exit. If the client exits without becoming engaged, the engagement date should be left blank. If the client was contacted on the date of engagement, a contact must also be entered for that date.

**Data Quality:** Reporting to HUD on data quality for street outreach projects is limited to clients with a date of engagement. Therefore, it is important that outreach workers record the engagement date and also review all of the Universal Data Elements and applicable Program Specific Data Elements for completeness and accuracy. The Date of Engagement coincides with the requirement for HMIS data quality, therefore all Universal Data Elements should be entered into HMIS at or before the Date of Engagement.

**HUD System Performance Measures:** Data collected for street outreach projects in HMIS affects the HUD System Performance Measures that are reported for the entire CoC. Measure 7a evaluates how successful street outreach projects are at helping people move off the “street” and towards permanent housing, recognizing this process may be direct or may involve other temporary situations along the way. Measure 7a does not require a Date of Engagement for a client record to be included in the performance measure, only a project exit. Additionally, while data quality is only measured following the Date of Engagement, System Performance Measure 7a measures placement from street outreach beginning at the first contact/project start. This means that HMIS leadership and street outreach projects need to work together to assure that street outreach data is of high quality at the time the [HUD System Performance Measures](#) are calculated regardless of the Date of Engagement.

**Project Exit:** Project exit represents the end of a client’s participation with a project. For street outreach projects, the exit date should coincide with the date that the client is no longer considered to be participating in the project. Reasons to exit a client include:

- The client has entered another project type (e.g., TH, PSH) or otherwise found housing;
- The client is engaged with another outreach worker or project;
- The client is deceased;
- The outreach worker has been unable to locate the client for an extended period of time and there are no recorded contacts.

## Emergency Shelter

### Night-by-Night (NBN) shelters:

- **Night-by-Night** shelters should be set up to collect all data required for Emergency Shelters. However, HUD understands that often NBN shelters are not able to collect exit data. Persons who leave/disappear without completing an exit interview are to be recorded with an exit destination as: No exit interview completed.
- **Contacts:** NBN shelters must record contacts they have with each person served. A contact is defined as an interaction between a worker and a client designed to engage the client. Contacts may include activities such as a conversation between the shelter worker and the client about the client’s well-being or needs, an office visit to discuss their housing plan, or a referral to another community service. A contact must be recorded anytime a client is met, including when an engagement date or project start date is recorded on the same day.
- **Engagements:** NBN shelters are required to record engagements. Per the HMIS Data Standards and by agreement across all federal partners, an engagement date is the date when an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment or beginning of a case plan. The date of engagement should be entered into HMIS at the point when the client has been engaged by the shelter worker. This date may be on or after the project start date and must be prior to project exit. If the client exits without becoming engaged the engagement date should be left blank. If the client was contacted on the date of engagement, a contact must also be entered for that date.

**Day Shelters:** Data collection and performance measurement for Day Shelter and Entry/Exit Shelters are the same, so no other changes in setup or for data collection are required. Follow the visibility requirements for Entry/Exit Shelters in this document when setting up Day Shelters.

**Annual Assessment:** Data collection must include an annual assessment for all persons being served in a project one year or more.

## Homelessness Prevention

- Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing must be set up as two separate projects in an HMIS. They must not be combined into one project.
- Recipients and subrecipients are not required to maintain financial assistance payment information within an HMIS. Recipients or subrecipients may elect to maintain financial assistance as part of a case management record within the HMIS if the software allows for that type of data collection. However, HUD expects that recipients will use other recipient and subrecipient financial records rather than HMIS for financial reporting in the CAPER.
- Recipients or subrecipients must re-evaluate and update information on Homelessness Prevention clients once every 3 months. Information required to be updated in the HMIS, if changes have occurred, include: 4.2 (Income and Sources); 4.3 (Non-Cash Benefits); and 4.4 (Health Insurance).
- In addition to the Universal Data Element – 3.12 (Destination), Homelessness Prevention projects must also collect 4.19 (Housing Assessment at Exit) information to more accurately reflect the housing situation of clients at exit.

## Rapid Re-Housing

- The project start date was changed beginning October 1, 2017 to the date the client(s) were admitted to the project. This means the client has completed an application, and they have been “admitted” to the project. In this context, the requirements for admittance must be:
  - Information provided by the client or from the referral provider indicates that the client meets the criteria required for admission to the project. This does not mean that all or any of the eligibility documentation has been gathered that may be required for the project;
  - The client has indicated they want to be housed in this project; and
  - The client is able to access services and housing through the project. This means that there is an expectation that within a reasonably short period of time the project expects to have an opening (rental subsidy available for scattered site or unit available for site-based).
- The project start date is not expected to generate a “waiting list” for housing. It is not expected that everyone with a project start will actually move into a unit with the project. It is expected that the time it takes from project start to move into housing will be carefully reviewed by the community to determine program and system performance and continuously strive to reduce the time from project start to move-in.

- HUD has not developed, with the 2017 data standards, an element to provide information on why a client who had a start date did not move into housing. Communities are encouraged to consider a variety of ways to document the issues to inform continuous improvement strategies.
- Housing move-in date must be completed for all clients who have moved into housing. Move-in means a lease arrangement has been made, the client has a key or entry ability to the unit and that the client has physically slept in the unit. (Beginning in October 2017 communities may no longer use the pre-entry method of housing and must use the project start date and housing move-in date together instead.)
- HUD strongly recommends the use of the housing move-in date field be carefully monitored by both projects and HMIS Leads in rapid re-housing projects to ensure accuracy. It is critically important the dates are up-to-date any time one of the following reports are being generated: point-in-time information for the Housing Inventory Chart, Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for a project; System Performance Measures and any other report for a federal funder like the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program where this may affect project outcomes.
- It is important to note that clients who do not have a residential move-in date to housing are still considered, and should be counted as, homeless (living on the streets, in-shelter, etc.). Thus, HMIS System Administrators must have a way to identify the persons who “started” but have not “moved into” the housing yet for purposes of generating accurate counting and reporting.
- Recipients or subrecipients must re-evaluate and update information on Rapid Re-Housing clients once annually. Information required to be updated in the HMIS includes: 4.2 (Income and Sources); 4.3 (Non-Cash Benefits); and 4.4 (Health Insurance). Data elements required for collection at annual assessment must be entered with an *Information Date* of no more than 30 days before or after the one-year anniversary of the head of household’s *Project Start Date*, regardless of the date of the most recent ‘update’ or any other ‘annual assessment’.

## ESG Reporting

- ESG recipients are required to collect aggregated ESG Program information from each subrecipient via the Sage HMIS Reporting Repository.
- Subrecipients are required to submit a project-level CSV-CAPER Report to each ESG recipient that funded a project, using the date range specified by the recipient.
- Subrecipients can find additional information about ESG reporting requirements in the [Sage ESG CAPER Guidebook for ESG-funded Programs](#).