

## Standards for Providers

### Policy F. 10 – Recipient and Sub-Recipient Recordkeeping Requirements

#### Recordkeeping Requirements Under 24 CFR 578.103

- A. In General. Every recipient and sub-recipient of Continuum of Care (CoC) grant funds must establish and maintain standard operating procedures for ensuring that those funds are used in accordance with the requirements of 24 CFR Part 578 and must maintain sufficient records to enable HCCSC’s Collaborative Applicant and HUD to determine whether the recipient and its sub-recipients are meeting the requirements of 24 CFR Part 578.
- B. Specific Recordkeeping Requirements. In particular, recipients and sub-recipients of CoC grant funds must establish and maintain the records specified in 24 CFR 578.103 (incorporated herein as Attachment A) as necessary to prove the eligibility of participants in CoC-funded programs, the services provided to those participants, and compliance with other federal requirements.

#### I. **Special Requirements for Projects that are Required to Serve the Chronically Homelessness**

On December 4, 2015, HUD issued its final rule defining “chronically homeless” and specifying records recipients must maintain in order to prove that clients they serve meet that definition. See 80 FR 75791 et seq, which is incorporated herein as Attachment B. All CoC-recipients and all other HCCSC projects that are required by funding restrictions or by HCCSC policies to serve the chronically homeless exclusively or to give priority to the chronically homeless must observe the recordkeeping requirements outlined in 24 CFR 578.103(a)(4) to prove that the clients they are serving do, in fact, meet HUD’s definition of “chronically homeless.”

#### II. **Requirement to Upload to HMIS all Documents Proving Eligibility**

As reflected in Section V.B. of the HCCSC’s *Central Intake and Standardized Assessment Guide*, before admitting clients, an HCCSC project must confirm and document their eligibility for the project, including their homeless or chronically homeless status and, if applicable, their disability and their income. In addition, the project must upload into HMIS any documentation providing evidence of eligibility if it has not been uploaded already.

## ATTACHMENT A

### § 578.103 Recordkeeping requirements.

(a) *In general.* The recipient and its subrecipients must establish and maintain standard operating procedures for ensuring that Continuum of Care program funds are used in accordance with the requirements of this part and must establish and maintain sufficient records to enable HUD to determine whether the recipient and its subrecipients are meeting the requirements of this part, including:

- (1) *Continuum of Care records.* Each collaborative applicant must keep the following documentation related to establishing and operating a Continuum of Care:
  - (i) Evidence that the Board selected by the Continuum of Care meets the requirements of § 578.5(b);
  - (ii) Evidence that the Continuum has been established and operated as set forth in subpart B of this part, including published agendas and meeting minutes, an approved Governance Charter that is reviewed and updated annually, a written process for selecting a board that is reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years, evidence required for designating a single HMIS for the Continuum, and monitoring reports of recipients and subrecipients;
  - (iii) Evidence that the Continuum has prepared the application for funds as set forth in § 578.9, including the designation of the eligible applicant to be the collaborative applicant.
- (2) *Unified funding agency records.* UFAs that requested grant amendments from HUD, as set forth in § 578.105, must keep evidence that the Continuum. This evidence may include minutes of meetings at which the grant amendment was discussed and approved.
- (3) *Homeless status.* Acceptable evidence of the homeless as status is set forth in 24 CFR 576.500(b).
- (4) *At risk of homelessness status.* Form those recipients and subrecipients that serve persons at risk of homelessness, the recipient or subrecipient must keep records that establish “at risk of homelessness” status of each individual or family who receives Continuum of Care homelessness prevention assistance. Acceptable evidence is found in 24 CFR 576.500(c).
- (5) *Records of reasonable belief of imminent threat of harm.* For each program participant who moved to a different Continuum of Care due to imminent threat of further domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under § 578.51(c)(3), each recipient or subrecipient of assistance under this part must retain:
  - (i) Documentation of the original incidence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, only if the original violence is not already documented in the program participant’s case file. This may be written observation of the housing or service provider; a letter or other documentation from a victim service provider, social worker, legal assistance provider, pastoral counselor, mental health provider, or other professional from whom the victim has sought assistance; medical or dental records; court records or law enforcement records; or written certification by the program participant to whom the violence occurred or by the head of household.
  - (ii) Documentation of the reasonable belief of imminent threat of further domestic violence, dating violence, or sexual assault or stalking, which would include threats from a third-party, such as a friend or family member of the perpetrator of the violence. This may be written observation by the housing or service provider; a letter or other documentation from a victim

service provider, social worker, legal assistance provider, pastoral counselor, mental health provider, or other professional from whom the victim has sought assistance; current restraining order; recent court order or other court records; law enforcement report or records; communication records from the perpetrator of the violence or family members or friends of the perpetrator of the violence, including emails, voicemails, text messages, and social media posts; or a written certification by the program participant to whom the violence occurred or the head of household.

- (6) *Annual income.* For each program participant who receives housing assistance where rent or an occupancy charge is paid by the program participant, the recipient or subrecipient must keep the following documentation of annual income:
- (i) Income evaluation form specified by HUD and completed by the recipient or subrecipient; and
  - (ii) Source documents (*e.g.*, most recent wage statement, unemployment compensation statement, public benefits statement, bank statement) for the assets held by the program participant and income received before the date of the evaluation;
  - (iii) To the extent that source documents are unobtainable, a written statement by the relevant third party (*e.g.*, employer, government benefits administrator) or the written certification by the recipient's or subrecipient's intake staff of the oral verification by the relevant third party of the income the program participant received over the most recent period; or
  - (iv) To the extent that source documents and third-party verification are unobtainable, the written certification by the program participant of the amount of income that the program participant is reasonably expected to receive over the 3-month period following the evaluation.
- (7) *Program participant records.* In addition to evidence of "homeless" status or "at-risk-of-homelessness" status, as applicable, the recipient or subrecipient must keep records for each program participant that document:
- (i) The services and assistance provided to that program participant, including evidence that the recipient or subrecipient has conducted an annual assessment of services for those program participants that remain in the program for more than a year and adjusted the service package accordingly, and including case management services as provided in § 578.37(a)(1)(ii)(F); and
  - (ii) Where applicable, compliance with the termination of assistance requirement in § 578.91.
- (8) *Housing standards.* The recipient or subrecipient must retain documentation of compliance with the housing standards in § 578.75(b), including inspection reports.
- (9) *Services provided.* The recipient or subrecipient must document the types of supportive services provided under the recipient's program and the amounts spent on those services. The recipient or subrecipient must keep record that these records were reviewed at least annually and that the service package offered to program participants was adjusted as necessary.
- (10) *Match.* The recipient must keep records of the source and use of contributions made to satisfy the match requirement in § 578.73. The records must indicate the grant and fiscal year for which each matching contribution is counted. The records must show how the value placed on third party in-kind contributions was derived. To the extent feasible, volunteer services must be supported by the same methods that the organization uses to support the allocation of regular personnel costs.

- (11) *Conflicts of interest.* The recipient and its subrecipients must keep records to show compliance with the organizational conflict-of-interest requirements in § 578.95(c), the Continuum of Care board conflict-of-interest requirements in § 578.95(b), the other conflict requirements in § 578.95(d), a copy of the personal conflict-of-interest policy developed and implemented to comply with the requirements in §578.95, and records supporting exceptions to the personal conflict-of-interest prohibitions.
- (12) *Homeless participation.* The recipient or subrecipient must document its compliance with the homeless participation requirements under § 578.75(g).
- (13) *Faith-based activities.* The recipient and its subrecipients must document their compliance with the faith-based activities requirements under § 578.87(b).
- (14) *Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.* Recipients and subrecipients must maintain copies of their marketing, outreach, and other materials used to inform eligible persons of the program to document compliance with the requirements in § 578.93(c).
- (15) *Other federal requirements.* The recipient and its subrecipients must document their compliance with the federal requirements in § 578.99, as applicable.
- (16) *Subrecipients and contractors.*
  - (i) The recipient must retain copies of all solicitations of and agreements with subrecipients, records of all payment requests by and dates of payments made to subrecipients, and documentation of all monitoring and sanctions of subrecipients, as applicable.
  - (ii) The recipient must retain documentation of monitoring subrecipients, including any monitoring findings and corrective actions required.
  - (iii) The recipient and its subrecipients must retain copies of all procurement contracts and documentation of compliance with the procurement requirements in 24 CFR 85.36 and 24 CFR part 84.
- (17) *Other records specified by HUD.* The recipient and subrecipients must keep other records specified by HUD.

(b) *Confidentiality.* In addition to meeting the specific confidentiality and security requirements for HMIS data, the recipient and its subrecipients must develop and implement written procedures to ensure:

- (1) All records containing protected identifying information of any individual or family who applies for and/or receives Continuum of Care assistance will be kept secure and confidential;
- (2) The address or location of any family violence project assisted with Continuum of Care funds will not be made public, except with written authorization of the person responsible for the operation of the project; and
- (3) The address or location of any housing of a program participant will not be made public, except as provided under a preexisting privacy policy of the recipient or subrecipient and consistent with State and local laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality;

(c) *Period of record retention.* All records pertaining to Continuum of Care funds must be retained for the greater of 5 years or the period specified below. Copies made by microfilming, photocopying, or similar methods may be substituted for the original records.

- (1) Documentation of each program participant's qualification as a family or individual at risk of homelessness or as a homeless family or individual and other program participant records must

be retained for 5 years after the expenditure of all funds from the grant under which the program participant was served; and

(2) Where Continuum of Care funds are used for the acquisition, new construction, or rehabilitation of a project site, records must be retained until 15 years after the date that the project site is first occupied, or used, by program participants.

(d) *Access to records.* (1) *Federal Government rights.* Notwithstanding the confidentiality procedures established under paragraph (b) of this section, HUD, the HUD Office of the Inspector General, and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their authorized representatives, must have the right of access to all books, documents, papers, or other records of the recipient and its subrecipients that are pertinent to the Continuum of Care grant, in order to make audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts. These rights of access are not limited to the required retention period, but last as long as the records are retained.

(2) *Public rights.* The recipient must provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable access to records regarding any uses of Continuum of Care funds the recipient received during the preceding 5 years, consistent with State and local laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality and confidentiality requirements in this part.

(e) *Reports.* In addition to the reporting requirements in 24 CFR parts 84 and 85, the recipient must collect and report data on its use of Continuum of Care funds in an Annual Performance Report (APR), as well as in any additional reports as and when required by HUD. Projects receiving grant funds only for acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction must submit APRs for 15 years from the date of initial occupancy or the date of initial service provision, unless HUD provides an exception under § 578.81(e).

## ATTACHMENT B

### § 91.5 Definitions.

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*Chronically homeless* means:

(1) A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who:

- (i) Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
  - (ii) Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (1)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute as a break in homelessness, but rather such stays are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility;
- (2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility; or
- (3) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) or (2) of this definition, including a fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

\* \* \* \* \*

### PART 578—CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAM

3. The authority citation for 24 CFR part 578 continues to read as follows: **Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 11371 *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. 3535(d).

4. In § 578.3, the definition of “Chronically homeless” is revised to read as follows:

### § 578.3 Definitions.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Chronically homeless* means:

- (1) A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who:
- (i) Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
  - (ii) Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (1)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute as a break in homelessness, but rather such stays are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility;
- (2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility; or

- (3) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

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**§ 578.87 [Amended]**

5. In § 578.87, paragraph (b)(4) is amended by removing the reference “§ 578.103(a)(13)” and adding in its place “§ 578.103(a)(14)”.

6. In § 578.103, redesignate paragraphs (a)(4) through (17) as paragraphs (a)(5) through (18) and add paragraph (a)(4) to read as follows:

**§ 578.103 Recordkeeping requirements.**

(a) \* \* \*

(4) *Chronically homeless status.* The recipient must maintain and follow written intake procedures to ensure compliance with the chronically homeless definition in § 578.3. The procedures must require documentation at intake of the evidence relied upon to establish and verify chronically homeless status. The procedures must establish the order of priority for obtaining evidence as third-party documentation first, intake worker observations second, and certification from the person seeking assistance third. Records contained in an HMIS, or comparable database used by victim service or legal service providers, are acceptable evidence of third-party documentation and intake worker observations if the HMIS, or comparable database, retains an auditable history of all entries, including the person who entered the data, the date of entry, and the change made, and if the HMIS prevents overrides or changes of the dates on which entries are made.

(i) For paragraph (1) of the “Chronically homeless” definition in § 578.3, evidence that the individual is a “homeless individual with a disability” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)) must include:

(A) Evidence of homeless status as set forth in paragraph (a)(3) of this section; and

(B) Evidence of a disability. In addition to the documentation required under paragraph (a)(4)(i)(A) of this section, the procedures must require documentation at intake of the evidence relied upon to establish and verify the disability of the person applying for homeless assistance. The recipient must keep these records for 5 years after the end of the grant term. Acceptable evidence of the disability includes:

(1) Written verification of the disability from a professional licensed by the state to diagnose and treat the disability and his or her certification that the disability is expected to be long continuing or of indefinite duration and substantially impedes the individual’s ability to live independently;

(2) Written verification from the Social Security Administration;

(3) The receipt of a disability check (*e.g.*, Social Security Disability Insurance check or Veteran Disability Compensation);

(4) Intake staff-recorded observation of disability that, no later than 45 days from the application for assistance, is confirmed and accompanied by evidence in paragraph (a)(4)(i)(B)(1), (2), (3), or (5) of this section; or

(5) Other documentation approved by HUD.

(ii) For paragraph (1)(i) of the “Chronically homeless” definition in § 578.3, evidence that the individual lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter, which includes:

(A) An HMIS record or record from a comparable database;

(B) A written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living;

(C) A written referral by another housing or service provider; or

- (D) Where evidence in paragraphs (a)(4)(ii)(A) through (C) of this section cannot be obtained, a certification by the individual seeking assistance, which must be accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation of the individual or family seeking assistance and the steps taken to obtain evidence in paragraphs (a)(4)(ii)(A) through (C).
- (iii) For paragraph (1)(ii) of the "Chronically homeless" definition in § 578.3, evidence must include a combination of the evidence described in paragraphs (a)(4)(ii)(A) through (D) of this section, subject to the following conditions:
- (A) Third-party documentation of a single encounter with a homeless service provider on a single day within 1 month is sufficient to consider an individual as homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter for the entire calendar month (*e.g.*, an encounter on May 5, 2015, counts for May 1—May 31, 2015), unless there is evidence that there have been at least 7 consecutive nights not living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter during that month (*e.g.*, evidence in HMIS of a stay in transitional housing);
  - (B) Each break in homelessness of at least 7 consecutive nights not living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter between separate occasions must be documented with the evidence described in paragraphs (a)(4)(ii)(A) through (D) of this section;
  - (C) Evidence of stays in institutional care facilities fewer than 90 days included in the total of at least 12 months of living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter must include the evidence in paragraphs (a)(4)(iv)(A) through (B) of this section and evidence described in paragraphs (a)(4)(ii)(A) through (D) of this section that the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately prior to entering the institutional care facility; and
  - (D) For at least 75 percent of the chronically homeless individuals and families assisted by a recipient in a project during an operating year, no more than 3 months of living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter may be documented using the evidence in paragraph (a)(4)(ii)(D) of this section for each assisted chronically homeless individual or family. This limitation does not apply to documentation of breaks in homelessness between separate occasions, which may be documented entirely based on a self-report by the individual seeking assistance.
- (iv) If an individual qualifies as chronically homeless under paragraph (2) of the "Chronically homeless" definition in § 578.3 because he or she has been residing in an institutional care facility for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of the definition, before entering that facility, evidence must include the following:
- (A) Discharge paperwork or a written or oral referral from a social worker, case manager, or other appropriate official of the institutional care facility stating the beginning and end dates of the time residing in the institutional care facility. All oral statements must be recorded by the intake worker; or
  - (B) Where the evidence in paragraph (a)(4)(iv)(A) of this section is not obtainable, a written record of the intake worker's due diligence in attempting to obtain the evidence described in paragraph (a)(4)(iv)(A) and a certification by the individual seeking assistance that states that he or she is exiting or has just exited an institutional care facility where he or she resided for fewer than 90 days; and
  - (C) Evidence as set forth in paragraphs (a)(4)(i) through (iii) of this section that the individual met the criteria in paragraph (1) of the definition for "Chronically homeless" in § 578.3, immediately prior to entry into the institutional care facility.
- (v) If a family qualifies as chronically homeless under paragraph (3) of the "Chronically homeless" definition in § 578.3, evidence must include the evidence as set forth in paragraphs (a)(4)(i) through

(iv) of this section that the adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) or (2) of the definition.