

Yolo County Homeless Assessment and Referral System - Overview

What is Coordinated Entry?

Coordinated Entry is a system of coordination mandated by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for homeless services. Coordinated Entry requires organizations that serve people experiencing homelessness throughout a local community to adopt standardized assessment, prioritization, and referral processes to ensure that all persons experiencing homelessness have fair and equal access to the services available. Coordinated Entry ensures that the most vulnerable individuals or families are prioritized first for permanent housing placements. In Yolo County, programs funded by Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grant are required to participate in Coordinated Entry. However, all homeless services providers are *strongly encouraged* to participate.

Quick Note

The terms “Homeless Assessment and Referral System” and “Coordinated Entry” mean the same thing. Many people who work in the homeless system are most familiar with the term Coordinated Entry, but the term Homeless Assessment and Referral System should be used with the public and with local residents experiencing homelessness.

Stages of Coordinated Entry

Coordinated Entry is broken up into four stages:

1. Access
2. Assessment
3. Prioritization
4. Referral

Access

During the Access stage, an individual or family first comes into contact with the system by connecting with either a *Referral Site* or a *Point of Entry*. A Referral Site can be any agency that is utilized by persons experiencing homelessness and that refers people to Points of Entry, or other resources to meet their needs. Organizations that are referral sites may or may not conduct simple Prevention and Diversion assessments prior to referring a client to a Point of Entry.

Referral Sites	Points of Entry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-1-1 • Grace in Action • Interfaith Rotating Winter Shelter of Davis • Legal Services of Northern California • Resources for Independent Living • Rural Innovations in Social Economics • Shores of Hope • Sutter Davis Hospital • Veteran’s Services Administration • Woodland Memorial Hospital • Woodland Police Department • Yolo Community Care Continuum • Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency • Yolo County Library • Yolo County Housing 	<p><i>Outreach Only</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Davis Police Department • City of West Sacramento Police Department • Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency <p><i>Physical Site Only</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower Yolo / Family Resource Center <p><i>Outreach and Physical Site</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davis Community Meals and Housing (DCMH) • Fourth and Hope



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Assessment

Once a client accesses the system, they are first assessed utilizing Prevention and Diversion strategies to either prevent homelessness or divert them from the homeless services system. *Prevention* helps people to remain in their current housing situation, while *Diversion* finds new, safe, and appropriate housing for people. If Prevention and Diversion strategies are unsuccessful, the individual or family may complete a full assessment to assess their overall vulnerability, utilizing a assessment tool called the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT). Full assessments are only completed at Points of Entry, and results will be entered into the Homeless Management Information System.

The results of the assessment process help staff determine the most appropriate permanent housing option for persons experiencing homelessness in Yolo County.

What is HMIS?

HMIS is the electronic Homeless Management Information System where homeless service providers track client information. The system is also utilized to maintain a countywide prioritization list for use when making housing placement decisions in the Coordinated Entry process.

Prioritization

Prioritization is the process by which individuals are prioritized for housing and services that are available in our community. The most vulnerable individuals have prioritized first for the most intensive case management and permanent housing services. In Yolo County, prioritization is based on a combination of factors associated with each person or family, including: the results of the assessment process, chronic homelessness and/or length of time homeless, and disabling conditions.

Referral

Once an individual or family's level of vulnerability is determined, they are referred to the most appropriate services according to the prioritization system described above. Housing Solutions include: Permanent Supportive Housing for extremely vulnerable clients; Rapid Re-Housing for moderately vulnerable clients; and Community Based Housing for the least vulnerable.

System Summary

