

Coordinated Entry and Assessment-Based Housing Referral System (CEA-BHRS) FAQs for Individuals and Families

1. What happened to my housing application that was already submitted in ICHS, or on paper, or in HMIS?

Philadelphia is transitioning to a new housing referral process that uses the information from the CEA-BHRS housing assessment to potentially match you to housing resources that may be available. The questions asked in the CEA-BHRS housing assessment are different than the information included in the housing applications that were already submitted for you, so it is important that you complete the new CEA-BHRS housing assessment. Housing matches are no longer being made using the old ICHS, paper, or old HMIS housing application.

2. I completed the CEA-BHRS housing assessment, what should I do next?

Continue to seek housing and utilize services and resources available in the community. Now that we have your information in HMIS someone will contact you if there's space available in a program that looks like a good fit for you. If your contact information changes, please inform your service provider and they can update your information in the HMIS database.

3. Is there a waitlist for housing? How long does it take to get housing?

CEA-BHRS does not use a waitlist for its housing resources. Instead, we have a Prioritized By-Name List where we match the needs of the household experiencing homelessness with housing resources that are currently available. Because the Prioritized By-Name List does not work like a waiting list and we cannot predict upcoming vacancies or potential matches for those vacancies, wait time is uncertain.

4. Am I guaranteed housing?

Unfortunately, there is not enough housing available through CEA-BHRS for everyone who needs it. Given the lack of housing available in our community, many people will not be matched with housing through CEA-BHRS for a long time, if at all. If space becomes available in a program that looks like a good fit for you, someone will reach out to you.

Once you've completed the CEA-BHRS housing assessment, you are strongly encouraged to continue to seek other housing options. We hope to use information gathered through assessments to advocate for the development of more housing for people who are experiencing homelessness, but until more housing is developed many people will not receive housing referrals through CEA-BHRS.

5. Why did my friend get housed before me?

The CEA-BHRS housing assessment helps us figure out which type of housing program is best for you. We use that information to identify programs that you are likely eligible for and that look like a good fit for you. Because each program has different eligibility requirements we can't house people in the order they do the assessment. People who have received housing referrals through this program have been matched to programs that are a good fit for them, but that might not be a good fit for you.