

Housing Opportunities Under CEA-BHRS Fact Sheet for Behavioral Health Services Community

What is CEA-BHRS?

It's a *process* designed to coordinate program participants' access to, assessment for, and referrals to homeless assistance services (including prevention, diversion, and emergency shelter) and housing assistance. The acronym is Coordinated Entry and Assessment-Based Housing Referral System.

What does CEA-BHRS do?

- Ensures households at risk of, or experiencing homelessness have fair and equitable access to a streamlined and standardized process which links them to appropriate resources to quickly end their housing crisis permanently.
- Increases efficiency of the homeless assistance system, and fairness and ease of access to resources for households.
- Streamlines and standardizes the process to obtain housing assistance (Homelessness Prevention, Diversion, Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing).
- Prioritizes those who are most in need of assistance.
- Provides information about service needs and gaps to help strategically allocate current resources and identify need for additional resources.

What doesn't CEA-BHRS do?

- It doesn't increase housing, services, or other resources, although it will provide data to help with efforts to do so.
- It doesn't reduce the challenges of serving households who have multiple barriers to obtaining/maintaining housing, but it will more effectively match people's needs with appropriate interventions.

What does it mean for me, and for my participant, for access to housing and services?

- All resources that are homeless-dedicated are now allocated via the CEA-BHRS process, to literally homeless households – households on the street, in Safe Havens, and in emergency shelters including JOH programs.
- The Housing Assessment entered in HMIS is now the start of the process for being considered for housing:
 - Completed about 7 days after household enters emergency shelter, or as appropriate on the street.
 - Conducted by case manager/site staff in Emergency Shelter or by outreach worker (typically).
 - Consists of a standardized assessment tool (VI-SPDAT) and series of eligibility and preference questions.
 - Is used to determine households' eligibility and priority for housing interventions (Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing).
 - Is entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by case manager/outreach worker.
- The CSS application is NO LONGER the start of the housing process for homeless households, but still is the way to access the PSH services that CSS authorizes. It's needed if the household could benefit from those mobile supports.
- There are many housing interventions through CEA-BHRS that don't require the CSS services package.
- Applications submitted in ICHS prior to its shutdown 07/2017 are not being "grandfathered in"; nor are paper housing applications previously submitted to OHS or housing applications submitted in HMIS prior to CEA-BHRS.
- A household's prioritization for housing is based on four factors, in this order: (1) level of vulnerability: high to low; (2) chronic homeless status: chronic before not chronic; (3) length of time homeless: longest to shortest; and (4) sheltered status: unsheltered before sheltered.
- The Blueprint Families program and Bridge Program are not affected by CEA-BHRS.

Steps in CEA-BHRS

1. Site-based staff or outreach worker conducts Housing Assessment for literally homeless household.
2. Site-based staff or Targeted Case Manager submits CSS application (as needed) for the mobile services authorized by CSS. Timing can be at the same time as, or after, Housing Assessment is done.
3. Homeless Services' Supportive Housing Clearinghouse uses information from Housing Assessment to determine:
 - a. What type of intervention available (Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing) is most appropriate for the household
 - b. Households' eligibility for specific programs within that intervention type
 - c. Household's priority for a vacancy when a vacancy arises in that specific program(s)
4. When a housing match is made, housing provider contacts the site-based staff/outreach to start intake process.

NOTE: Outreach staff are not yet completing housing assessments in HMIS – we are working on that.