



## Morristown United for Healthy Living

April 24, 5:30pm- 7:30pm, St. Margaret's Church

### Agenda

*Minutes in purple*

5:30 **Welcome & Introductions**

5:40 **Updates on Ongoing Work**

- Neighborhood Clean-Up Day (debrief)
  - Great attendance for clean-up and lunch! Thanks to all who helped! Pictures available on facebook (Morristown United for Healthy Living) and Twitter (@njhealthmatters)
- Morristown United Facebook page
  - Now live (Morristown United for Healthy Living)—please like our page!
- Morris Arts connection
  - Opportunity to collaborate with Morris Arts on projects that build sense of community; current possibility involves community-based/led arts programming by the totems located at the Early Street Garden (sound system, lights, and small stipends for performers are available!)

6:00 **Joint Learning Opportunity**

- Housing Vouchers 101 (Joann Bjornson, Executive Director, Family Promise of Morris County)
  - Handouts on pp. 5-9 ; basic notes from the discussion follow:
  - The Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC) is an independent organization that oversees planning and implementation of programs that address homelessness in Morris County
    - The focus of this group is on homelessness, not low-income families generally
    - They receive approximately 1.75 annually from HUD
    - A new key initiative of the group is Coordinated Entry (see details on p. 6)
      - The goal is to keep people from getting “lost in the system” (this initiative also includes people who are precariously housed, in dangerous situations, etc., not just those who are already homeless)
  - What role does immigration status play in access to these resources?
    - To receive housing vouchers, documentation is required (head-of-household must be a citizen). It is not required for other services like case management or using the drop-in centers



- The CoC currently has 20 vouchers for people who are chronically homeless (see pp. 10-11 for information about who is eligible) that are available NOW and must be used ASAP
  - These vouchers are also based on free-market rent, meaning it is very difficult to find eligible units in Morris County; landlord would have to accept that price (includes main utilities as well).
  - People need to go through a shelter to access these vouchers or have a way to track their homelessness
  - If someone is staying in a hotel that is paid for by themselves or someone else, it doesn't count
  - Other vouchers (not CoC) are leased up for this round
- Family Promise has a Landlord Incentive Program to increase the benefits to landlords in accepting housing vouchers (despite the fact that it is illegal to not accept housing vouchers, there are loopholes). This program includes help with inspections, disputes, beautification, payment of realty fees, 24-hour on-call support (among other things)
- Are there special programs available for seniors who are unstably housed?
  - Department on Aging is a good place to start when looking for resources
  - Seniors have priority when the voucher waiting list is open
- Housing is a health issue and it effects all of the priority areas being addressed by the North Jersey Health Collaborative
- Ways that Family Promise can support the work of Morristown United:
  - Helping to interveine before landlords evict
  - Case management for people who are experiencing homelessness, or who are precariously/unsafely/unstably housed (pre-homelessness)
  - Connection to existing services and resources (e.g., people who receive foodstamps are also eligible for a free cell phone)
  - Toiletries and higeine items through drop-in centers
  - Spreading the word about available housing units

6:20 **Funding Request Review**

- No pending applications ready for review at this time

6:35 **Break-Outs by Group**

- Break-out for those interested in working on "trainings" (various topics as discussed at previous meetings)
  - Group would like to reach out to community members to assess need for training (and which topics would be most relevant/helpful) before moving forward (need to come up with a plan for this engagement)
  - Idea to do training with landlords related to their rights and responsibilities



- In order to incentivize landlords to attend, we can provide mini-grants for home/property renovations
- Town of Morristown can provide a list of landlords and their contact information
- Community Infrastructure/Sense of Community group
  - Patriot's Path renovation
    - Meeting next week with a Boy Scout troop who has been working on Patriot's Path (Dominique)
    - There is already funding in place to improve the trail, but there is not funding for the proper permitting/environmental assessment
      - Morris County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will look into what this might cost (Esperanza/John)
      - Follow-up with Parks and Rec contact (Ashley)
  - Healthy Corner Stores
    - Everything is in place to start this initiative; we just need a leader for this strategy (who would work with Carlos, Sol, and Ashley). Training, funding, and connections to store owners are readily available
  - Youth and Arts
    - Idea to bring Meet me in Morristown to this neighborhood and make it more accessible to community members in terms of time/date, transportation, and content
    - Opportunities for programming around the totem sculptures (sound system, lights, and small stipends for performers are available!)
    - Idea to engage youth to create artistic window dressings for neighborhood stores/restaurants

7:10 **Report-Backs by Group**

7:30 **Close**

**Next meeting May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5:30-7:30pm**

### Meeting Goals:

- Catch up on the ongoing activities of the coalition
- Learn more about housing vouchers, how they work, who has them, and who is eligible to get them
- Review current funding requests
- Make progress on group action plans (special focus this month on "trainings")



**Our Impact Statement:** We will improve the condition of existing homes, increase access to affordable housing stock (rented and owned), and improve the built environment/community infrastructure via resident education and outreach, policy change/advocacy, improvements to the physical environment, and oversight of existing protections for all people living in 435 with a particular focus on equity.

**Morristown United for Healthy Living: Impact Model**

**Result:** Affordable, accessible, fair, equitable, healthy, safe and smart housing for all residents of Morristown's census tract 435

Improve Condition of Existing Homes

Increase Access to Affordable Housing

Improve Community Infrastructure

Education, outreach and relationship-building

Policy change/advocacy

Improvements to the physical environment/infrastructure

Oversight of existing protections

# Morris County Continuum of Care

P.O. Box 900  
Morristown, NJ 07963-0900  
Phone: 973-285-6851  
Fax: 973-285-6719  
<http://morrishumanservices.org/behavioral/continuum.asp>

## Executive Committee

### CHAIR

Jeff Bashe

### VICE CHAIR

Jodi Miciak  
*United Way of  
Northern NJ*

Mike Armstrong  
*Community Hope*

Joann Bjornson  
*Family Promise of  
Morris County*

Jennifer Carpinteri  
*Morris County Dept. of  
Human Services*

Terry Connolly  
*Community Soup  
Kitchen*

Joseph Gallow  
*Market Street Mission*

Russ Hall  
*Morris County Housing  
Alliance*

Nancy Magee  
*Community Foundation  
of NJ*

Dan McGuire  
*Homeless Solutions*

Kesha Moore, PhD  
*Drew University*

Meagan Quinn  
*Morris County Office of  
Temporary Assistance*

Gwen Rippey, PhD  
*Atlantic Health System*

Lou Schwarcz  
*Mental Health  
Association*

David Scott  
*Market St. Mission*

Patty Sly  
*Jersey Battered  
Women's Service*

Rebekka Zydell  
*Child & Family  
Resources*

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## Morris County Continuum of Care

The Morris County CoC is an independent body, established under the guidelines of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and is made up of a consortium of community providers, advocates, consumers, grant-makers and other stakeholders, both public and private, dedicated to eliminating homelessness in Morris County.

The mission of the Morris County CoC is to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to address and prevent homelessness in Morris County.

The CoC is both a strategic planning body and a vehicle to carry out the responsibilities of a Continuum of Care as defined by HUDt, which includes but are limited to the following duties:

1. To develop and implement the Morris County ten-year plan to end homelessness and other local activities associated with preventing and ending homelessness.
2. To operate the Continuum of Care as prescribed by HUD in the Continuum of Care regulations.
3. To designate and operate the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the purpose of collecting and analyzing data regarding homelessness.
4. To coordinate and implement a system to meet the needs of the homeless population within the Morris County.
5. To prepare and oversee the annual HUD Continuum of Care application for federal funds targeted to serve homeless individuals and families.
6. To ensure that the CoC has strong oversight and guidance through the community-led CoC Executive Committee and its Community Assistance Services Committee.

## CoC Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee is made up of no fewer than 12 and no more than 15 members. A minimum of nine voting members represent agencies that do not receive HUD CoC funding and up to four nonvoting "exofficio" members that receive HUD CoC funds.
2. The committee shall serve as the primary decision making body of the Morris County CoC and shall provide leadership and direction in all aspects related to the governance and management of the Community Assistance Services (CAS) Committee.
3. The Executive Committee is charged with oversight and management of CoC activities. The Executive Committee shall utilize input from the CAS and ad-hoc subcommittees in making decisions.

**Voting Members:** Jeff Bashe (Chair); Jodi Miciak, United Way of Northern New Jersey (Vice-Chair); Mike Armstrong, Community Hope; Joseph Gallow, Consumer Advocate; Russ Hall, Housing Alliance of Morris County; Nancy Magee, Community Foundation of N.J.; ; Kesha Moore, PhD, Drew University; Gwen Rippey, PhD, Atlantic Health System; Dave Scott, Market Street Mission; Terry Connolly, Community Soup Kitchen; Rebekka Zydell, Child & Family Resources.

**Ex-Officio Non-Voting Members:** Joann Bjornson, Family Promise of Morris County; Jennifer Carpinteri, Morris County Department of Human Services; Dan McGuire, Meagan Quinn, Morris County Office of Temporary Assistance; Homeless Solutions; Lou Schwarcz, Mental Health Association of Morris County; Patty Sly, Jersey Battered Women's Services.

CoC Lead Agency: Morris County Department of Human Services



## Voucher Information Sheet

### Key Terms:

**US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** HUD is a U.S. government agency created in 1965 to support community development and home ownership. HUD does this by improving affordable home ownership opportunities, increasing safe and affordable rental options, reducing chronic homelessness, fighting housing discrimination by ensuring equal opportunity in the rental and purchase markets, and supporting vulnerable populations.

**Continuum of Care (COC):** The Continuum of Care is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.

**Coordinated Entry:** Coordinated Entry paves the way for more efficient homeless assistance systems by helping people move through the system faster (by reducing the amount of time people spend moving from program to program before finding the right match); reducing new entries into homelessness (by consistently offering prevention and diversion resources upfront, reducing the number of people entering the system unnecessarily); and improving data collection and quality and providing accurate information on what kind of assistance consumers need.

**Public Housing:** Established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Public housing comes in all sizes and types, from scattered single family houses to high rise apartments for elderly families. There are approximately 1.2 million households living in public housing units, managed by some 3,300 Public Housing Authorities (PHAs).

**Area Median Income (AMI):** HUD sets income limits that determine eligibility for assisted housing programs. HUD develops these limits based on Median Family Income estimates and Fair Market Rent area definitions.

**Fair Market Rents (FMRs):** are primarily used to determine payment standard amounts. Currently, the FMRs for Morris County are:

Number of Bedrooms					
County	0	1	2	3	4
Morris	\$1,007	\$1,063	\$1,288	\$1,655	\$1,886

## **Voucher Overview:**

The housing voucher program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.

A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the public housing authority on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program.

## **Vouchers We Work With:**

### **Public Housing Authority (PHA):**

The PHA receives federal funds from HUD to administer the voucher program. The 5 PHAs in Morris County are: Boonton, Dover, Madison, Morristown, and Morris County. Eligibility for a housing voucher is determined by the PHA based on the total annual gross income and family size and is limited to US citizens and specified categories of non-citizens who have eligible immigration status. If eligible, the PHA puts the person on a waiting list, unless it is able to assist immediately. Important to note, wait lists can be years long. In some cases, they can be closed.

### **HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Vouchers:**

Vouchers for Chronically Homeless only. Focuses on priority sub-populations of Domestic Violence, Youth, Families, Veterans and Coordinated Entry. The CoC decided which agencies are approved to apply, then the CoC submits an application. Each year the subpopulations may change.

### **Department of Community Affairs Vouchers: (DCA)**

- The Section 8 Housing Voucher Program assists in making safe and quality housing in the private rental market affordable to low, and very low-income households by reducing housing costs through direct rent subsidy payments to landlords. The program is funded by the HUD.
- **SRAP** The State Rental Assistance Program provides tenant-based and project-based rental assistance grants, comparable to the Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program and shall be terminated upon the award of a Federal subsidy to the same individual or household.



Family Promise of Morris County is proud to introduce this innovative new program! The Keys to Housing makes safe affordable housing a win-win situation for tenants and landlords. By providing valuable cost effective incentives to landlords, and education to tenants, we help bridge the gap between the cost of living in Morris County and the reality of a new home!

Our Keys to Housing Program is a critical component of fulfilling our mission to end the crisis of homelessness faced by Morris County, New Jersey families. Objectives include locating, obtaining, and retaining permanent housing for homeless families or individuals and successfully processing housing vouchers received from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

#### Keys to Housing:

- preparing clients to present themselves effectively to a landlord
- gathering and analyzing client information
- organizing and leading housing searches
- developing and maintaining positive relationships with landlords who own or manage safe, well-maintained and affordable housing
- assisting landlords, as needed, with expenses related to inspections
- short-term case management to other tenants
- financial and in-kind incentives upon lease signing and lease renewal
- educating clients on how to be responsible tenants through our proprietary "Good Neighbor/Good Tenant" training program
- educating landlords, property managers, and clients on the advantages and policies regarding vouchers
- informing clients and landlords about their rights and responsibilities
- providing ongoing and individualized services to clients and landlords, throughout the entire housing process
- Housing Subsidies
- In-home case management and support services including bus passes, household supplies and more
- Understanding tenant's rights
- Understanding the conditions of the lease
- Prevention of evictions
- Safeguarding property - Renter's insurance



The Landlord component encourages landlords to rent to families or individuals who are beginning on the road to self-sufficiency. Features include:

- ❖ Guaranteed rent
- ❖ A program that explains landlord and tenant rights
- ❖ In-kind incentives upon leasing and leaser renewal
- ❖ Case Managers provide support and act as liaisons between tenants and landlords
- ❖ Short term case management is provided for assistance in working with *other* tenants
- ❖ Small repair and maintenance services are available pre and post-move (such as spackling small holes, painting, minor repairs, etc.)

### **John & Betsy - A Success Story!**

This kind and optimistic couple has been living in a tent near Morristown for years. John, or "Morristown John" as he's known around town, had a house, a family and a job. He discovered a plethora of unpaid bills he didn't know about, he lost his job because of an injury, and he lost his home. Not wanting to be a burden and very low on money he found a quiet spot in the woods and pitched a tent in 2010. He's been there ever since.



Betsy was the sole caretaker of her ailing mother for years and when she passed several years ago, she experienced a profound sadness and found it difficult to take care of daily necessities. When Betsy came out of her grief, she found herself unable to afford housing any longer. A lack of income and a hearing impairment led to her housing crisis.

John says he keeps things neat and orderly and is hoping to have a nice kitchen because he loves to cook. Betsy's primary concern is for John. John now has neuropathy in his leg and experiences pain, especially when he walks on hills or stairs.

The ability to afford safe housing has evaded them until now.

Referred to the Keys to Housing Program through Our Promise Drop in Center, John and Betsy were prioritized for a HUD housing voucher from Family Promise! And, as of May 2nd, they have moved into their own apartment!

John and Betsy have 100% of their rent subsidized and are being assisted with utilities as well. Once John receives Social Security Disability, he will contribute 30% of his income towards rent. Betsy is working with Family Promise Social Workers on education and employment.

John and Betsy have a true home for the first time in 6 years, and hope!



For more information, please contact:

email: [info@familypromisemorris.org](mailto:info@familypromisemorris.org)

phone: 973.998.0820

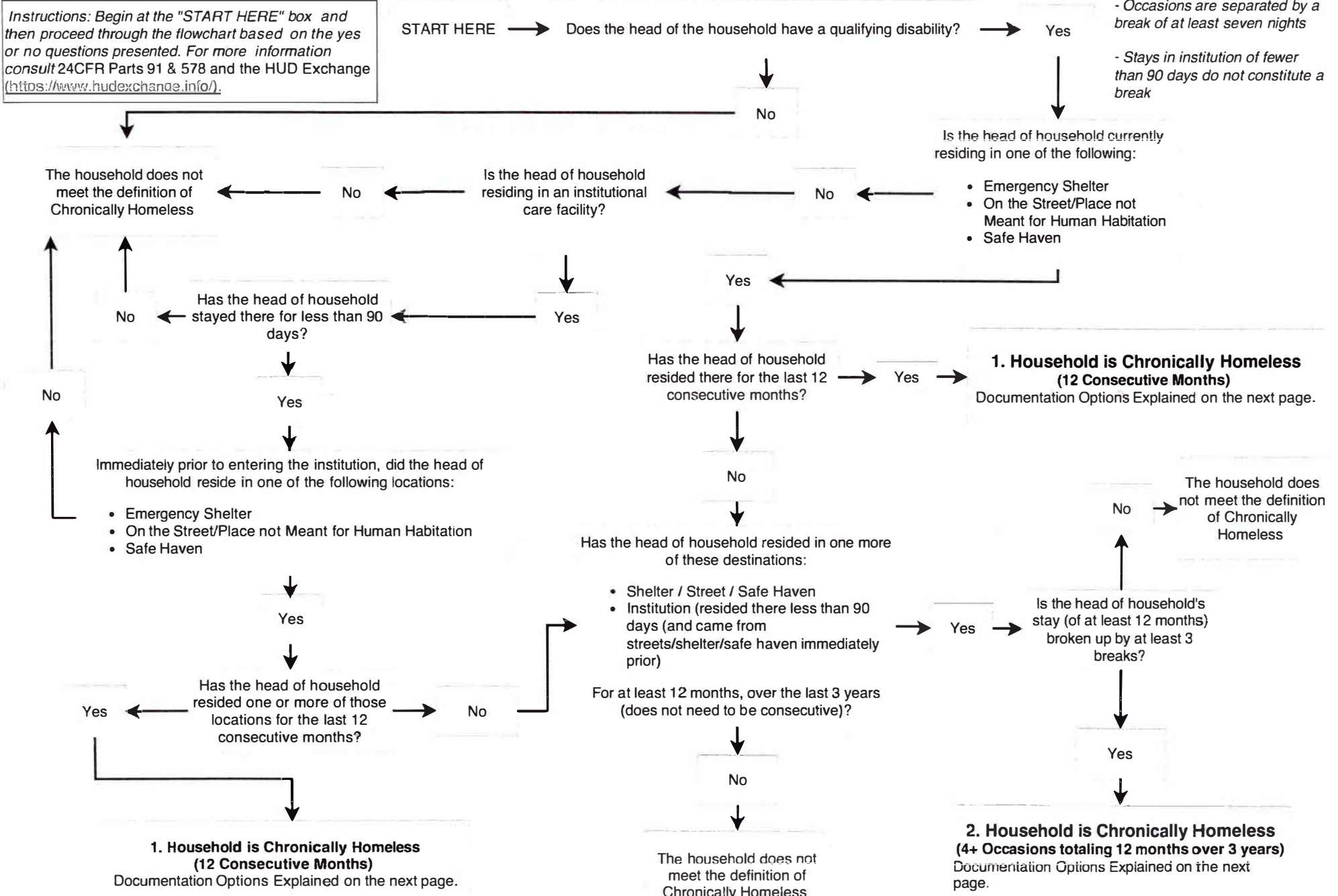
[www.familypromisemorris.org](http://www.familypromisemorris.org)



# Flowchart of HUD's Definition of Chronic Homelessness

Instructions: Begin at the "START HERE" box and then proceed through the flowchart based on the yes or no questions presented. For more information consult 24CFR Parts 91 & 578 and the HUD Exchange (<https://www.hudexchange.info/>).

**Remember:**  
- Occasions are separated by a break of at least seven nights  
- Stays in institution of fewer than 90 days do not constitute a break





# Documentation Standards for Chronic Homelessness

**Instructions:** Based on your navigation of the flowchart on the previous page, locate the appropriate numbered situation on this page and follow the documentation standards noted. This tool summarizes the criteria for the new Chronically Homeless Definition. To review the exact language, please refer to 24 CFR Parts 91 & 578 and the HUD Exchange (<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-chronic-homelessness/>)

Situation	Documentation of Homelessness	Documentation of Disability
<p>1. Household is Chronically Homeless  (12 Consecutive Months)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HMIS record or record from a comparable database; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written referral by another housing or service provider; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where the evidence above is unavailable, there must be a certification by the individual seeking assistance, accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain the evidence listed above.</li> </ul> <p>If the head of household is currently staying in an institution where they have been for less than 90 days (and were in a shelter/street/safe haven immediately prior) their Institutional Stay can be documented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral from a social worker or appropriate official of the institutional facility, with start/end dates of client's residence, or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where the evidence above is unavailable, there must be a certification by the individual seeking assistance, accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain the evidence listed above.</li> </ul>	<p>Documentation of the head of household's disability, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written verification of the disability from a licensed professional;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written verification from the Social Security Administration;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The receipt of a disability check; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intake staff-recorded observation of disability that, no later than 45 days from the application for assistance, accompanied by supporting evidence.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Household is Chronically Homeless  (4+ Occasions totaling 12 months over 3 years)*  *May include institution stays of &lt;90 days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HMIS record or record from a comparable database; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written referral by another housing or service provider; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral from a social worker or appropriate official of the institutional facility, with start/end dates of client's residence (for institutional stays of less than 90 days)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where the evidence above is unavailable, there must be a certification by the individual seeking assistance, accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain the evidence listed above.</li> </ul> <p>* Each separate occasion MUST be documented (minimum of 3 breaks). 100% of the breaks can be documented by self- report.</p>	<p>Documentation of the head of household's disability, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written verification of the disability from a licensed professional;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Written verification from the Social Security Administration;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The receipt of a disability check; or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intake staff-recorded observation of disability that, no later than 45 days from the application for assistance, accompanied by supporting evidence.</li> </ul>

**Important Notes:**

- o Each individual occasion needs to be fully documented.
- o Breaks can be documented by self-report.
- o For each Project:
  - o 100% of households served can use self-certification for 3 months of their 12 months,
  - o 75% of households served need to use 3<sup>rd</sup> Party documentation for 9 months of their 12 months, and
  - o 25% of households served can use self-certification as documentation for any and all months.