

Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras' HMIS End User Agreement

USER POLICY

The Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras' (HRCS) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a collaborative HMIS effort among partnering agencies to document client-level needs and characteristics through a coordinated system which aggregates common information at the agency and community levels.

The HMIS is a tool that can also assist agencies in focusing services and locating alternative resources to help homeless persons. Agency staff may use the Client information in the system to target services to the Client's needs.

The HMIS is an entirely web-based system. The system is accessed via the Internet by provider sites offering shelter, housing, and supportive services to homeless individuals and families.

Participating Agencies may choose to share information for provision of services to homeless persons through a networked infrastructure that establishes electronic communication among the Participating Agencies.

Partner Agencies shall at all times have rights to the data pertaining to their clients that they directly enter into the HMIS system. Partner Agencies shall be bound by all permissions and restrictions imposed by Clients pertaining to the use of personal data for which they have signed a HMIS Client Release of Information form.

All HMIS End Users are required to attend ServicePoint training sessions prior to using the system.

All HMIS End Users are required to have read and understand their Agency's Privacy Notice.

Data-Sharing and Release of Information

1. The Agency understands that informed client consent is required before any basic identifying client information is entered into the HMIS for the purposes of interagency sharing of information. Informed client consent will be documented by completion of an HMIS Client Release of Information form.
2. The Client Release of Information form authorizes basic identifying client data entered into the HMIS Profile screen to be shared among all HMIS Partner Agencies and other Assessment and Service information to be shared with select HMIS Partner Agencies, based on inter-agency sharing agreements.
3. If a client denies authorization to share Profile or other assessment information via the HMIS, the staff entering the information shall lock the impacted screen(s). This assures that client information is accessible only to the agency entering data into the program, therefore, precluding the ability to share information with other agencies. If the client's name represents an identification risk even if the record is completely closed and the name can only be seen by the entering Agency, the staff may use the "anonymous" client function.
4. A hard copy of the Client Release of Information form shall be obtained and filed as required by state and/or federal law.

The sharing of information on children under the age of 18, who are not accompanied by a legal guardian, will be governed by existing Agency policy regarding the age at which children under the age of 18 may authorize release of information.

USER RESPONSIBILITY

Your User ID and Password give you access and authority to use the HMIS. Initial each item below to indicate your understanding and acceptance of the proper use of your User ID and password. Failure to uphold the confidentiality standards set forth below is grounds for immediate termination of User privileges.

Please initial each item below to indicate your acceptance and understanding of the user responsibilities:

- _____ I have read and understand my Agency's Privacy Notice.
- _____ My User ID and Passwords must be kept secure and are not to be shared with anyone, including other staff members.
- _____ I understand that the only individuals who can view information in the HMIS are authorized users and the Client to whom the information pertains; and that not all users can view all information. HMIS End Users must respect the privacy and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of their use of the software system.
- _____ I will only view, obtain, disclose, or use the database information that is necessary to perform my job.
- _____ Client information should be accessed only in order to retrieve data relevant to a client requesting services from my agency.
- _____ I understand that in the event that I am terminated or leave my employment with this agency, my access to the HMIS will be revoked.
- _____ Clients have the right to see their information in the HMIS. If a client requests to see their information, the Partner Agency/End User who receives the request must review the information with the client.
- _____ I understand that failure to log off of the HMIS appropriately may result in a breach in client confidentiality and system security.
- _____ If I am logged into the HMIS and must leave the work area where the computer is located, I must log-off of, and close the browser window of the HMIS before leaving the work area.
- _____ I understand that my access to HMIS is limited to my designated work site unless I am given expressed written consent by my agency's Executive Director to access the system from other specified locations.
- _____ A computer that has the HMIS "open and running" shall never be left unattended.
- _____ A computer that has the HMIS "open and running" shall never be arranged so that unauthorized individuals may see the information on the screen.
- _____ Hard copies and downloads of information from the HMIS onto a hard drive or disk must be kept secure to ensure that only appropriate agency staff has access.
- _____ When hard copies and "downloads" of HMIS Client information are no longer needed, they must be properly destroyed as described in your agency's privacy and confidentiality policies.
- _____ If I notice or suspect a security breach, I must immediately notify my agency's HMIS Security Officer and/or the CHO Site Manager.
- _____ I understand that I am responsible for reporting any system malfunctions or "bugs" that I notice or suspect to the CHO Site Manager and other appropriate system support staff.
- _____ I agree to enter data into the HMIS in accordance to the policies of my agency and the standards of HMIS.

Code of Ethics

- A. HMIS End Users must treat Partner Agencies with respect, fairness and good faith.
- B. HMIS End Users must treat clients and potential clients of my agency and other agencies with respect, fairness and good faith.
- C. Each HMIS End User shall maintain high standards of professional conduct in his/her capacity as an HMIS End User.
- D. All HMIS End Users shall endorse and maintain the client’s rights related to privacy and confidentiality and shall adhere to HRCS’ HMIS Policies and Procedures.
- E. The HMIS End User has primary responsibility for his/her Client(s).
- F. The HMIS End Users will not misrepresent its client base in the HMIS system by entering knowingly inaccurate information (i.e. End User will not purposefully enter inaccurate information on a new record or to over-ride information entered by another agency.)
- G. Discriminatory comments based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, handicap, age, sex, and sexual orientation are not permitted in the HMIS system. This does not apply to the input of direct quotes by clients IF the Agency believes that it is essential to enter these comments for assessment, service and treatment purposes.
- H. The End User will not use the HMIS system with intent to defraud the federal, state, or local government or an individual entity; or to conduct any illegal activity.

I understand and agree to comply with all the statements listed above.

HMIS End User Signature

Date

CHO Site Manager Signature

Date

HMIS Administrator Signature

Date