



Homelessness Solutions in Alameda County

April 12, 2021

To: Members of the System Coordination Committee (SCC)

From: Marta Lutsky, Coordinated Entry Program Director

Re: Update and Next Steps re Coordinated Entry Relaunch

This memo updates the SCC on the actions that HCSA - OHCC has taken related to refining and relaunching Coordinated Entry and provides a summary of upcoming activities and anticipated next steps. Attachment A summarizes the actions and approvals the SCC has taken to date related to the Coordinated Entry refinement and relaunch.

1. Update

In August and September, the SCC received and approved reports from the Coordination Entry Working Group including a layout of the parameters and projected time frame for the rollout of a new Coordinated Entry approach and workflow. The new approach included a major focus on housing problem solving, a new workflow for CE including a Crisis and housing queue and using HMIS to support the new workflow.

Implementation of the CE Roll out was anticipated to occur between October and February but was delayed due to the end of the County's contract with Bitfocus and the time it took to get into contract again, as well as staff transitions at HCSA and the need for further work for Bitfocus to implement the changes.

During this time HCSA issued an RFP for Coordinated Entry Access Points to provide Housing Problem Solving and CE services across the county. Seven providers were selected and contracts with Access Point providers are in final approval stages.

The County has been meeting with Bitfocus weekly since February to finalize the authorized changes, provide additional guidance needed for implementation and test functionality. Next Steps with Bitfocus will include developing standard dashboards and reports.

OHCC has also hired regional coordinators to facilitate coordination between HRC/Access Points, housing navigation/HHIS providers, and Street Health Outreach Teams, and to provide regional support through regular meetings. The coordinators and the CE Program Director (Marta) will be co-hosting regional coordination meetings that replace the previous Case Conference/BNL meetings, starting in May.

HCSA has contracted with Aspire Consulting (Kathie Barkow) and Social Impact Wheel (Nic Ming) to develop and roll out training on the new Coordinated Entry approach and functions in HMIS. Trainings are scheduled from April 20 through May 4th and will include:

- Trainings on the overall approach and changes for a wide audience
- Training on Housing Problem Solving, including
- Training on the new assessment and program enrollment flow and matching functions

The roll out of automated matching and referrals in HMIS will be phased after the new assessment and prioritization approach is in place because this new module and approach will require providers to post openings in HMIS. While information to set up this function has been collected and Bitfocus is now programming for this, the process of training on it and operationalizing it is a significant shift for our community and will take additional preparation and training. It is likely to be piloted with some resources and in some communities, such as Berkeley (which previously operated in this way using Service Point), prior to rolling out fully.

2. Next Steps

OHCC's immediate next steps include:

April 14 - SCC receive this update and review and approve proposed Coordinated Entry Grievance Policy.

April 20 - May 4 – Training and launch of new CE system in HMIS and Housing Problem Solving.

May 5- Retirement of old assessment and use of new Crisis and Housing assessments begins; 90 day period in which both By Name List and Housing queue are functioning for matching.

May/June – Relaunch Implementation and Learning Community (ILC) for new and continuing Access Point and Housing Problem Solving providers.

June- August – HCSA bring proposed Coordinated Entry reports and dashboards to SCC or appropriate committee; HCSA bring revised policies for all aspects of Coordinated Entry after review at Implementation and Learning Community to SCC (or appropriate committee) for review, input and approval.

August 1 – By-Name List no longer in use; all previously prioritized persons either in process to housing, determined to be no longer reachable, and/or added to Housing queue.

Summer/Fall – Training and pilot process for implementing posting openings and matching in HMIS.

Our overall goal is to have all of the CE access, assessment and prioritization changes and new phased approach in place by summer and in time for the first HUD Annual Performance Report (APR) requiring the new CE data standards be in place. The matching and referral components will be developed and piloted by the Fall and in place in the coming year.

Attachment A: System Coordination Committee Actions related to Coordinated Entry (CE) in 2020

February	Approved the CE Assessment and Action Plan
April	Reviewed and approved the Housing Problem Solving policy and draft forms; seated ad-hoc CE Triage Committee to see if a quick refinement of CE could reduce current burden on providers and uncertainty for participants.
May	Approved recommendation from ad-hoc committee to seat a longer-term CE Working group of members of HMIS Oversight, CE funders and operators to finalize recommendations and ensure changes are accompanied by training. Made Recommendation to CoC Committee to approve HCSA as Management Entity.
July	Approved CE working group recommendation to authorize HCSA and Bitfocus to proceed with collection of eligibility criteria and program description information from selected program types to set up Coordinated Entry matching in HMIS.
August	<p>Approved CE working group recommendations to authorize HCSA, as CE Management Entity, and Bitfocus to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement the updated workflow for Coordinated Entry. 2. Establish Housing Problem Solving as a program in HMIS under the Coordinated Entry agency. 3. Create a Crisis Housing queue for participating shelter beds, transitional housing, and future designated crisis resources, with a threshold score approximately twice the number anticipated to be served within a year. 4. Create a Permanent Housing queue for housing types including enriched permanent supportive housing, PSH, dedicated affordable housing, shallow subsidy programs, and some rapid rehousing with a threshold score approximately twice the number of households anticipated to be served within a year. 5. Approved revisions to the CE assessment tool, including dividing into Crisis and Housing phases; adding certain non-scored questions for filtering and matching purposes, and approved moderate changes in scoring and wording based on feedback collected on the current CE assessment. <p>In addition, SCC authorized HCSA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To establish the threshold scores in consultation with the CE work group; b. To develop recommendations for transitioning from the current By-Name List to the Crisis Housing and Permanent Housing queues by January 2021; c. To make modifications to the System Manual to reflect these policy changes.
September	Received final report of CE Working Group including discussion of messaging for training on new system and proposed transition timeline with anticipated roll out in the Fall and transition to new system in February 2021. No SCC Action.