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ADVANCING SOLUTIONS TO HOMELESSNESS

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CES Evaluation Debrief

Alameda County Coordinated Entry System Evaluation
2024–2025 System Insights and Next Steps

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What this Evaluation Covers

This evaluation looks at how Alameda County's Coordinated Entry System Functions within the Alameda County Continuum of Care.

It reflects experiences shared:

- People with lived experience of homelessness
- Frontline staff across CES roles
- Providers and access points
- CE system data and equity analysis

The focus is on understanding how CES operates within this CoC and where continued refinement can strengthen access, clarity, and outcomes.

CES in Alameda County

CES provides a consistent way for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and helps the CoC prioritize limited housing placements based on need.

This evaluation focuses on how the CES functions within Alameda County's CoC, recognizing that progress depends on coordination across many partners.

In Alameda:

- The County serves as the CE Management Entity for the CoC
- CES includes outreach teams, shelters, 211, HRCs, providers, and specialized access points operating within the CoC – Although not all these functions are directly managed by the CES Management Entity
- CES functions through shared roles and coordinated workflows

How Information was Gathered

CE Entity Self Evaluation

A structured self-evaluation completed by the CE Management Entity, based on HUD guidance and local roles and responsibilities, and reviewed collaboratively with OAC.

Focus Groups

Focus groups conducted with distinct CES roles to understand how policies and workflows operate at different points in the system.

Community Survey

A community survey open to a broad range of stakeholders, intended to capture additional perspectives beyond focus group participants.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative HMIS data and an equity analysis conducted with Focus Strategies to examine assessment tools, prioritization, and potential disparities.

Overall System Picture

The evaluation shows a system that is:

- Actively improving
- Staffed by committed and skilled practitioners
- Increasingly intentional about equity and access
- Still navigating scale, demand, and complexity

Participants recognized progress since the last evaluation and provided input on how CES functions across the Alameda County CoC.

Housing Problem Solving Insights

Housing Problem Solving is widely viewed as a core strength of CES

What participants emphasized

- HPS helps resolve housing crises quickly
- Flexible supports make a meaningful difference
- Creative approaches support dignity and choice

Opportunities for growth focus on

- Client without phones or stable contact are falling through cracks
- Clarifying HPS as a core CES strategy
- Strengthening follow-up after initial problem-solving conversations
- Geographic review of HPS coverage

Assessment Experience Insights

Assessment is a key CES function, and several improvements are already in place

- Assessments and materials are available in threshold languages
- Mobile assessments expand access
- Trained staff report confidence using the tools

Participants also shared opportunities to strengthen the experience

- Clearer explanations of assessment purpose and next steps
- More consistent use of plain-language scripts
- Additional flexibility in when and where assessments occur

Staffing and Follow-Up

Staffing is central to how CES functions in practice

Strengths Identified

- Dedicated and compassionate frontline staff
- Strong peer and mobile roles
- Improved follow-up tools and templates

Ongoing system considerations include*

- High caseloads that affect continuity
- Turnover that disrupts relationships
- Desire for role-specific training and clearer communication channels

*These reflect system scale and demand rather than lack of commitment.

Grievance Process Insights

Progress has been made in strengthening grievance infrastructure

- Updated grievance policy and user guide
- Translation into threshold languages
- Clear escalation pathways

Participants identified opportunities to increase effectiveness*

- Greater visibility of the grievance process
- Clearer guidance for staff and clients
- Regular review of grievance themes to support system learning

Priority Areas for Equity

These areas offer the opportunity for the Evidence Based Solutions Committee to complement Outreach, Access, and Coordination Committee Work

Annual CE Policy Review

- Continued review of access rules through an equity lens
- Advocate for policies that increase equity within CE

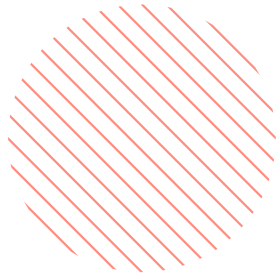
Training & Information Dissemination

- Identify channels through which to improve access to information on CE
- Advocate for PWLE co-design of CE training and materials

Questions and discussion



Contact us



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