NEW BEDFORD CONTINUUM OF CARE
HMIS GOVERNANCE CHARTER

Updated July 31.2019

HMIS Governance Charter
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NEW BEDFORD CONTINUUM OF CARE

HMIS Governance Charter

1. PURPOSE

1.1. Purpose of HMIS

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH), requires that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) ensure operation of community-wide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) with consistent participation by recipients and sub-recipients of applicable federal grants. The HMIS has many uses, including:

- ♯ Collecting unduplicated counts of individuals and families experiencing homelessness;
- ♯ Analyzing patterns of use of assistance provided in a community; and,
- ♯ Providing information to project sponsors and applicants for needs analyses and funding allocations.

Additionally, HMIS is essential to coordinate services, evaluate performance, ensure accountability in the use of public funds, and inform public policy. Ultimately, the HMIS serves as the foundation for all planning to prevent, reduce, and eliminate homelessness.

The City of New Bedford is the HMIS Lead Agency for the New Bedford Continuum of Care. In addition to administering the local HMIS, the HMIS Lead must develop written policies and procedures for all HMIS participating agencies in the CoC, execute participation agreements with each of these agencies and their system users, and monitor and enforce compliance by all participating agencies with the requirements set forth in the Agency Participation Agreement. The HMIS Lead is responsible for maintaining the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* manual and all related documents, training system users, and providing technical assistance. The HMIS Continuum of Care is responsible for reviewing and approving any changes and amendments to the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* manual.

The HMIS software vendor for New Bedford CoC is CaseWorthy, Inc. Accordingly, the HMIS system may be referred to as "CaseWorthy" in this document.

1.2. Purpose of HMIS Governance Charter

The HMIS Governance Charter is to establish the governance structure for the operation of the Homeless Management Information System (heretofore referred to as "HMIS") in a manner that supports the New Bedford Continuum of Care (CoC). The primary purpose of this Governance Charter is to articulate the New Bedford CoC's decision-making process for its HMIS.

HMIS is used to aggregate data about the extent and nature of homelessness over time; produce an unduplicated count of homeless persons; understand patterns of service use; and measure the effectiveness of homeless assistance projects and programs. Data produced is used for planning and education.

1.3. Key Terms

- <u>Agency HMIS Representative (Agency HMIS Rep):</u> The individual within a participating agency who has been identified by that agency as the administrative lead or, direct contact person between the HMIS Lead (City of New Bedford) and the Participating Agency. This individual is responsible for ensuring the training of users, the ongoing proficiency of HMIS Agency System Users, the prompt reporting of terminated users to the CoC's System Administrators, the timeliness of data entry and quality of data entered, data security and any other such tasks as articulated by the CoC and/or the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures.*

- <u>Agency System User:</u> The individual within a Participating Agency who has been trained, has demonstrated competency to the satisfaction of the Agency HMIS Administrative Lead and uses the HMIS as a function of their responsibilities within the agency.

- <u>Client:</u> A person who receives housing and/or services at an HMIS participating agency.

- <u>Continuum of Care</u>: a community-based collaborative that oversees homeless system planning and coordination, including the HMIS implementation. The CoC is known in New Bedford as the Homeless Service Providers Network (HSPN).

- <u>Exempt Agency</u>: any agency that is explicitly exempt from entering data into the HMIS by federal regulations. This includes victim services providers.

- <u>HMIS Data Committee:</u> A subcommittee of the local Continuum of Care responsible for oversight and troubleshooting of the HMIS for the CoC.

- <u>HMIS Lead</u>: The organization that administers and operates the overall HMIS on behalf of the New Bedford Continuum of Care. The City of New Bedford's Office of Housing & Community Development serves as the HMIS Lead.

- <u>Participating Agency</u>: any agency that contributes data or uses the HMIS.

- <u>Personally Identifiable Information (PII):</u> Defined in OMB M-07-16 as "...information which can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as their name, social security number, biometric records, etc., alone, or when combined with other personal or identifying information which is linked or linkable to a specific individual, such as date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, etc."

- <u>System Administrators:</u> Two individual staff members of the HMIS Lead who are granted full privileges and total access to the HMIS system are named as system administrators for the New Bedford CoC. These individuals work cooperatively with the two additional system administrators in each of the remaining two CoCs located within Bristol County. Each System Administrator is limited to system administration within their respective designating CoC. The exception to this is the one additional individual who oversees the CoC's Coordinated Entry System—designated as a System Administrator and responsible for oversight of the coordinated Entry System that overlaps all three Bristol County CoCs; however, this designated individual's System Administrator functions are limited to those tasks relative to the administration of the Coordinated Entry System.

- <u>Vendor:</u> CaseWorthy is the existing HMIS vendor effective as of the date of this revision.

2.0 STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.1 Planning and Software Selection					
HMIS Acquisition, Planning and Strategic Activities Approves the selection of an HMIS Software Vendor and ensures that activities related to HMIS growth and uses are developed, reviewed regularly, and in accordance with the CoC's goals.	X				
Administration and Monitoring Administers the contract and scope of services with the selected HMIS Vendor and evaluate performance of the HMIS Software.	X				
HMIS Program Milestones Development Identifies general milestones for project management, including training, expanded system functionality, etc.	X				
Universal Data Elements Oversees and ensures that the HMIS is able to manage the collection of each data variable and corresponding response categories for the Universal Data Elements as outlined in the HMIS Data and Technical Standards.				X	
Program Specific Data Elements Ensures that the HMIS is able to manage the collection of each data variable and corresponding response categories for the Program-specific data elements as outlined in the HMIS Data and Technical Standards as may be amended/updated.				X	
Unduplicated Client Records Ensures the HMIS is able to generate a summary report of the number of unduplicated client records that have been entered into the HMIS.				X	
APR Reporting Ensures the HMIS is consistently able to produce a reliable APR.				X	
HMIS Reports Ensures the HMIS generates other client served, utilization summary, system performance measures and demographic reports both at the system and program levels for the purpose of understanding the nature and extent of homelessness in the CoC and to ensure compliance with HUD requirements.	X			X	X

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.2 HMIS Management and Operations :: Governance & Management					
HMIS Governance Structure Ensures an HMIS governance model is active and functional between the HMIS Lead and the CoC. Ensures that a formal relationship exists ensuring management processes, responsibilities, decision-making structures and oversight of the HMIS project are undertaken.	x				x
HMIS Oversight Inclusive Participation Ensures the membership of the HMIS Data Committee is inclusive of decision makers representing a cross section of the CoC.	x	x			
HMIS Oversight Ensures periodic review of the HMIS system, troubleshooting, efficiencies and opportunities in support of the CoC's overall data collection efforts.	x	x			
HMIS Technical Support :: General Operation ▪ Ensures the HMIS design meets HUD HMIS Data Standards. ▪ Develop a manual and provide other documentation of programs created. ▪ Provides ongoing support to the HMIS Lead pertaining to the needs of end users to mine the database, generate reports and other interface needs. ▪ Administers the product servers, including web and database servers. ▪ Monitors access to HMIS through auditing. ▪ Monitors functionality, speed and database backup procedures. ▪ Provides backup and recovery of internal and external networks. ▪ Maintains the system twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. ▪ Communicates any planned or unplanned interruption of service to the HMIS Lead Agency and Participating Agencies. ▪ Take all steps needed to secure the system against breaches of security and system crashes.				x	
HMIS Technical Support Provides technical expertise commensurate with general HMIS program oversight; provides timely support on high level technical matters through the vendor Service Portal; reviews and authorizes HMIS software changes in response to the changing requirements of participating agencies and generally review s and authorizes special issues brought to it by participating agencies.	x			x	
HMIS Software Technical Support Provides technical expertise commensurate with the requirements of the HMIS software and/or system; provides timely support on software technical matters; is responsible for implementation of authorized changes to the HMIS software and processes; and generally implements resolutions to any special issues as addressed through the vendor Service Portal.	x			x	

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.2 HMIS Management and Operations :: Governance & Management, *Continued*					
HMIS Issue Tracking Accesses a list of all service/technical assistance requests/inquiries through the Service Portal as needed.	X			X	
HMIS Issue Monitoring (Community Level) Reviews HMIS System service requests and service issues. Provides authoritative support when necessary to expedite IT issue resolution.				X	
HMIS Software Training.1 Provides ongoing training on software usage, software and data security and data entry techniques through video tutorials and printed materials to ensure Agency System User competencies.				X	
HMIS Software Training.2 Provides guidance, updates and access to training materials to participating agencies. Monitors and insures system efficacy.	X				
HMIS System User Feedback Receives, manages and as warranted, acts upon feedback from Agency HMIS Representatives at Participating Agencies as to feedback from Agency System Users and those experiencing homelessness. Feedback includes impressions of system functionality and general HMIS operations as gathered through surveys, questionnaires, focus groups and ongoing use.	X				
System Operation.1 Responsible for the day to day use of the HMIS by Participating Agencies.	X		X	X	
System Operation.2 Responsible for setting up agencies, projects, assists users with lockouts, passwords, maintains HMIS contact list; works with participating agencies and HMIS Agency Representatives.	X				
HUD Funding Serves as the applicant to HUD for CoC grant funds to be used for HMIS activities for the New Bedford Continuum of Care, and enters into grant agreements with HUD to carry out the HUD-approved HMIS activities on the Continuum's behalf.	X				

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.3 HMIS Management and Operations :: Compliance Monitoring					
HMIS Management Issues Ensures that the HMIS is managed in accordance with CoC policies, protocols and goals, that the HMIS Lead enters into written HMIS Participation Agreements with Participating Agencies and ensures HMIS is administered in accordance with requirements prescribed by federal legislation and the CoC. For those agencies considered Exempt, the HMIS Lead shall work with them to secure accurate and timely de-identified reporting as consistent with HUD regulations.	X				

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.3 HMIS Management and Operations :: Compliance Monitoring, *Continued*					
HMIS Program Milestones Monitoring Monitors milestones and reports out to CoC membership.	x				
New Bedford CoC HMIS Monitoring Ensures the periodic monitoring of HMIS to ensure that all HMIS participating agencies consistently and correctly participate in HMIS, that the system is satisfying the requirements of all regulations and notices issued by HUD and that the HMIS Lead is fulfilling the obligations outlined in this Governance Charter as amended.	x	x			
Agency and Program HMIS Capacity Ensures that the HMIS is able to manage the collection of each data variable and corresponding response categories for the Universal Data Elements as outlined in the HMIS Data and Technical Standards.	x				
Program Specific Data Elements Regularly monitors program and agency level participation in HMIS (via comparison of point-in-time census of beds/slots versus clients served) and reports findings to CoC.	x				
HMIS Agency Participation Agreement Ensures execution of, and compliance with a written HMIS Participation Agreement which includes: ▪ Confidentiality in connection with its use of HMIS ▪ Compliance including the guarantee that Agency System Users are bound (individually) by the same restrictions and conditions in the Agency Participation Agreement. ▪ The indemnification of the New Bedford CoC, the HMIS Lead and other Participating Agencies against suits arising from the Participating Agency's violation of the agreement. ▪ A limitation of remedies in connection with the Agreement. ▪ The conditions of termination of the agreement, its interpretation, modification and relevant notifications related to modifications.	x		x		
Program Specific Data Elements Monitors program and agency level participation in HMIS via comparison of HIC beds versus clients served and reports findings to CoC.	x				
HUD Compliance Reporting Ensures participation in the AHAR (Annual Homeless Assessment Report), Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) or similar.	x				

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.3 HMIS Management and Operations :: Compliance Monitoring, *Continued*					
Reporting Ensures periodic, no less than annual, production of unduplicated client counts with an analysis as may be required. Additional reporting shall include, but not be limited to, the production of: ▪ Sheltered Point-In-Time (PIT) Count ▪ Housing Inventory Chart ▪ Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) ▪ Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) ▪ Annual Performance Reports (APRs) ▪ System Performance Measures (SPMs) ▪ Data Quality Monitoring Reports	x				
Client Consent Ensures the completion and documentation of client consent as appropriate and in keeping with the CoC's client consent policies and protocols. *(See also HMIS Policy Development and Oversight Section of this HMIS GovtCharter for additional ref).*			x		

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.4 HMIS Management and Operations :: Security					
Data and System Security :: Program Level Ensures adherence by Participating Agency staff with the HMIS data and system security protocols as outlined by the CoC and HUD HMIS Data and Technical Standards. Includes compliance with the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* and other policies and procedures developed by the HMIS Lead Agency, including data quality, privacy, and security plans.			x		
Data and System Security :: Oversight 1 Manages the selection, development, implementation and maintenance of security measures to protect HMIS information.	x				
Data and System Security :: Oversight 2 Retains copies of all contracts and agreements executed as part of the administration and management of the HMIS.	x				
Data and System Security :: Oversight 3 Conducts periodic security reviews to ensure appropriate implementation of security requirements.	x		x		

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.5 HMIS Management and Operations :: Data Quality					
Data Quality Standards Develops and enforces community level data quality plan and standards.					x
Universal Data Elements Ensures collection of each data variable/response categories specific to their project type on all clients served by McKinney Vento funding.			x		

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.5 HMIS Management and Operations :: Data Quality, *Continued*					
Data Quality Report.1 Regularly runs reports so as to ensure the quality of the data in the system for the Participating Agency.	X				
Data Quality Reports.2 Provides technical assistance and training to <u>participating programs</u> in response to data quality reports (indicating levels of data entry completion, consistency with program model and timeliness).	X				

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.6 HMIS Policy Development and Oversight					
HMIS Lead Designation Designates the HMIS Lead entity.					X
New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies & Procedures.1 Responsible for drafting any needed changes and amendments to the HMIS Policies and Procedures document or HMIS Governance Charter.	X				
New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies & Procedures.2 Responsible for the review and approval of any changes and amendments to the HMIS Policies and Procedures document or HMIS Governance Charter.					X
Client Confidentiality and Privacy Training Provides regular training on client confidentiality and privacy requirements to intake staff, data entry staff and reporting staff at participating agencies. Ensures all agencies have sufficient privacy policies and protocols.	X				
Oversight of System Periodically reviews the HMIS needs of the CoC, approves and acts on any necessary changes to the HMIS system.	X				
Performance Measurement Training Provides regular training and guidance on program performance measurement.	X			X	
Community Planning Goals and Objectives Reviews the progress of the continuum's goals and objectives through HMIS data that includes system performance measures.					X
Best Practices Training Provides training and guidance on best practices as may be needed to support CoC and HMIS policies including, but not limited to, ethics, strategies for communication, etc.	X				
Project Specific Training Provides training to all Agency System Users (Agency HMIS Reps			X		
Participating Agency Documentation Maintains documentation as to the Participating Agencies, designated Agency HMIS Reps and Agency System Users, ensuring that it is up to date.	X				

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.6 HMIS Policy Development and Oversight, *Continued*					
Participation Rates Regularly reviews and monitors the HMIS coverage rates of the CoC noting that if the coverage rates are at 75% or below, an explanation as to the barriers at specific agencies is documented. .	X				
Participation Rates Provides periodic reports on HMIS participation rates to the Data SubCommittee who then assesses the nature of agency specific barriers and develops potential solutions to increase HMIS participation.	X	X			
Policies and Procedures Review, revise, approve and ensure the use of the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* including: data quality, system confidentiality, user agreements, privacy notices, security plans and user feedback.	X	X			X
HMIS End-User Agreement Ensures and maintains a written agreement with each authorized user of the HMIS that defines participation protocols, including confidentiality, compliance, indemnity, limitation of remedies and termination protocols.	X				
Privacy Notice Ensures that the Privacy Notice provided within the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* is posted in a clear and conspicuous location visible to clients at intake. Said notice shall be posted in both English and Spanish formats.			X		
Client Release of Information.1 Ensures that the CoC and/or implementing jurisdiction geography of the HMIS grantee has a defined and documented client consent protocol and data release protocol for use as a baseline practice among all participating HMIS users.	X				
Client Release of Information.2 Ensures that every client entered into the HMIS executes a Client Release of Information form as stipulated in the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* and that said form is placed in the client file at the Participating Agency.			X		
Client Revocation of Consent Ensures that every client entered into the HMIS who rescinds/cancels their previously-granted client release executes the Client Revocation of Consent section on their Client Release of Information form as stipulated in the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* and that said form is returned to the client file at the Participating Agency.			X		
HMIS Grievances Provides the HMIS Grievance Form from the *New Bedford Continuum of Care HMIS Policies and Procedures* for all clients participating/asked to participate in the HMIS.			X		

	HMIS Lead	Data Com	Particip Agency	Vendor	CoC
2.7 Other State and/or Federal Requirements					
State Data Warehouse Ensures that the CoC is represented (member and alternate) on the statewide governance board for HMIS data sharing	X				X
State Data Warehouse Ensures that the CoC exports HMIS data on a periodic basis to the statewide data warehouse in accordance with accepted protocols and standards.	X				
Drug-Free Workplace The HMIS Grantee has adopted a drug-free workplace policy.	X		X		
Homeless Client Participation Ensures at least one person who is or has formerly experienced homelessness participates in policymaking which may include governing board leadership, advisory committees, staff positions, subcommittee positions, etc.	X		X		
Conflict of Interest A conflict of interest policy for all personnel using HMIS has been adopted by the HMIS grantee and each Participating Agency.	X		X		
Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy The HMIS Grantee and each Participating Agency has an adopted equal opportunity and non-discrimination policy.	X		X		

3.0 DECLARATION OF ROLES

The New Bedford CoC, (acting through the Homeless Service Provider's Network (HSPN)) is the primary decision-making body for HUD funded programs for those experiencing homelessness in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

The New Bedford CoC designates the City of New Bedford's Office of Housing & Community Development (OHCD) as the HMIS Lead to operate the New Bedford CoC's HMIS.

The CoC, through the OHCD, designated CaseWorthy as the official HMIS vendor for the New Bedford CoC with a go-live date having been in January 2019. Previous to this date, a period of data migration from its legacy system (previous vendors—HousingWorks HMIS, Inc. and SimTech) into its new software package and system training has occurred.

Should the HMIS Lead or Vendor be changed or modified in the future, this Governance Charter would require revision/updating.

4.0 COMPLIANCE WITH HOMELESS INFORMATION STANDARD SYSTEMS

The HMIS is operated in compliance with HUD HMIS Data and Technical Standards and any other applicable laws. The parties anticipate that HUD will periodically release revised HMIS Standards.

As such changes, or other circumstances of the New Bedford Continuum warrant, the parties agree to make changes to this HMIS Governance Charter, the HMIS Policies & Procedures, and other HMIS operational documents, to comply with the revised standards within the HUD-specified timeframe for such changes.

5.0 PERIOD OF AGREEMENT AND MODIFICATION/TERMINATION

5.1 Period of Operation and Termination. This HMIS Governance Charter supersedes the July 28, 2016 and July 19, 2018 New Bedford HMIS Governance Charters and will become effective upon the majority vote of the HSPN membership and signature of all parties. It shall remain in effect until terminated by the parties. Each party shall have the right to terminate this agreement as to itself only upon 30 days prior written notice to the HMIS Data Committee in care of the HMIS Lead Agency. Violation of any component may be grounds for immediate termination of this Agreement.

5.2 Amendments, including additions, deletions, or modifications to this HMIS Governance Charter must be agreed to by all parties to this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Governance Charter
in agreement on this 15th day of August, 2019.

NEW BEDFORD CONTINUUM OF CARE
HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDER NETWORK (HSPN)

_____ August 15.2019
The Rev. David Lima, Chair   **Date**
New Bedford Homeless Service Provider Network

HMIS LEAD – CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
OFFICE OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

_____ August 15.2019
Patrick J. Sullivan, Director   **Date**