



**Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County Continuum of Care
Coordinated Access for Adults
Recommendations for 2017 System Expansion**

Background

The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) requires Continuums of Care (CoC) to develop and implement a “coordinated access system” for projects that receive CoC and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding. The intent of coordinated access is to provide equitable access to housing and shelter interventions regardless of where someone first seeks services. Coordinated access systems across the country have aspects in common including: a coordinated and transparent process of intake; a standardized assessment and prioritization tool; and a mechanism for referring people to the resources they are eligible for, and that best meet their needs and preferences.

Our CoC has coordinated access processes in place for four populations: households fleeing domestic violence, unaccompanied youth, adults accompanied by children, and adults without children. “Adults without children” refers to unaccompanied adults, adults in couples, and households with children 18 and older.

A Coordinated Access for Adults (CAA) pilot launched in July 2015 and includes two CoC-funded Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects (HOPE and Project Haven). Between November 2016 and February 2017, the Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) convened a task force to inform the expansion of this system to include all 28 CoC-funded PSH projects, which represent approximately 1,100 units of housing.

Timeline for Expansion (2017)

February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment tool finalized • ROI finalized • Lead and partners selected for Mobile Navigation and Assessment Team (MNAT)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations presented to AHFE Coordinating Board for approval • Assessment tool training with adult and family providers • MNAT and assessing organizations begin conducting assessments • Meeting with all CoC-funded PSH providers to review system • MOU signed
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JOHS confirms eligibility criteria with each PSH project • Assessments completed for people on current CoC-funded PSH waitlists • Assessments updated for people on CAA pilot waitlist • First meeting of the CAA Leadership Team • First CAA Case Conferencing meeting
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations begin to take referrals from CAA list

March 1, 2017 Coordinating Board Meeting

Leadership

CAA will be supported by two teams: the Leadership Team and the Case Conferencing Team. The Leadership Team will lead ongoing system evaluation, process improvement, implementation and expansion. This team will meet monthly and include representation from CoC-funded PSH projects and other key stakeholders. The team will regularly review process and outcome data and use this information to help identify necessary system changes. The team will report periodically to the AHFE Coordinating Board. The Case Conferencing Team will meet biweekly to help ensure that the most vulnerable households are being prioritized and matched to a housing project that meets their needs and preferences. This team will also serve as a venue for cross-organizational collaboration and strategizing around how to best serve individual households.

Eligibility

In order to qualify for CoC-funded PSH, the head of household (HOH) must meet HUD's definition of homelessness and have a disabling condition. In addition, many of the PSH units in our CoC require that the HOH meet HUD's definition of chronic homelessness. Locally, another basic eligibility requirement is that the HOH meet a vulnerability score threshold. Individual PSH projects may have additional eligibility and target population criteria identified in their HUD grant.

Access

People will access the CAA system through an organization trained to conduct the assessment. These organizations will also be trained to direct people to other coordinated access processes and by-name lists through which they may be able to access services (i.e. those in place for survivors of domestic violence, youth, families with children, and Veterans). Many organizations across the CoC will provide assessments to participants of their programs, and a Mobile Navigation and Assessment Team will serve as the main referral point and conduct intentional outreach that is focused on improving racially and geographically equitable access.

Assessment

Coordinated access requires the use of a standardized assessment tool. CAA will use a locally tailored version of the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) for this purpose. This tool will be tailored to recognize vulnerabilities not captured by the standard tool, including vulnerabilities associated with the experience of racial discrimination, age, pregnancy, and disabilities that limit mobility. Acknowledging that there is no perfect tool, the JOHS and the Coordinated Access Leadership Team will continue to monitor the tool's efficacy, work to improve the overall assessment process, and explore other options over time.

Since the assessment tool may not provide all necessary information to determine prioritization and matching, assessing organizations will also have an opportunity to bring additional information to the Case Conferencing Team to inform this process.

Prioritization

Coordinated access requires a transparent and specific set of prioritization criteria. For the purpose of prioritization for CoC-funded PSH, our CoC will follow the prioritization guidelines set out in [HUD Notice CPD-16-11: Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing](#). These guidelines align with the [Community Program Guidelines](#) adopted by the A Home for Everyone Coordinating Board.

Our CoC will operationalize this by first limiting the waitlist to those who meet project-specific eligibility and target population criteria, and then sorting the waitlist in the following way:

- First by most severe service need (highest enhanced VI-SPDAT score)
- Second by longest period of time homeless (number of cumulative months over past 3 years)
- Third by oldest screening date

The JOHS will manage the prioritization process with support from the Case Conferencing Team.

Matching and Referral

The matching process will be managed by the JOHS and informed by a set of matching and eligibility questions asked at time of assessment along with additional information shared by providers at Case Conferencing Team meetings. The JOHS will make every effort to match each participant to the housing project that best meets their needs and preferences, given the available openings.

Before the referral takes place, the Mobile Navigation and Assessment Team will work with participants near the top of the prioritized waitlist to collect necessary documentation (i.e. photo ID, verification of income, verification of chronic homelessness, etc.) and provide support around reducing housing barriers. The team will maintain contact with people near the top of the list so that they can quickly be connected to a housing provider when a vacancy occurs. When someone is matched with a housing vacancy, the team will facilitate the connection between assessing organization and housing provider.

Intake & Denial

Housing providers are generally expected to accept a referral who meets the project eligibility criteria provided to the JOHS. When a housing provider denies a household for a non-eligibility related reason, they must inform the household and the JOHS about the denial including the reason for the determination. All households who are denied from a project will maintain their place on the waitlist. Households can also turn down offers of housing and maintain their place on the waitlist. The Case Conferencing Team will review denials and work with the JOHS to match the household to a program that can meet their needs. The Leadership Team will review the number of and reason for denials to help identify and respond to gaps in service.

Summary of Coordinated Access for Adults Recommendations for Approval by Coordinating Board on March 1, 2017

- 1) **Scope:** This expansion will coordinate access to all HUD-funded Permanent Supportive Housing (approximately 1100 units). Proposals to incorporate shelter and rapid re-housing services will come before the Coordinating Board at a later date.
- 2) **Leadership:** The system will be supported by a Leadership Team and a Case Conferencing Team that meet regularly. The Leadership Team will monitor system performance and identify necessary system changes. The Case Conferencing Team will support the prioritization and matching process.
- 3) **Access:** The system will use a decentralized model of assessment that includes multiple trained agencies as well as a Mobile Navigation and Assessment Team.
- 4) **Assessment:** The system will use a version of the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) that is locally tailored to recognize vulnerabilities not captured by the standard tool, including vulnerabilities associated with the experience of racial discrimination, age, pregnancy, and disabilities that limit mobility.
- 5) **Eligibility:** In addition to HUD-specified eligibility requirements, the system will use a vulnerability score threshold to help determine eligibility for Permanent Supportive Housing.
- 6) **Prioritization:** The system will adopt [HUD Notice CPD-16-11: Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing](#).
- 7) **Matching & Referral:** The matching and referral process will be managed by the Joint Office of Homeless Services with support from the Case Conferencing Team and the Mobile Navigation and Assessment Team.
- 8) **Intake & Denial:** Housing providers are generally expected to accept a referral who meets the project's eligibility criteria. The Leadership and Case Conferencing Teams will review denials for non-eligibility related reasons, and denied households will maintain their place on the waitlist. Households can also turn down offers of housing and maintain their place on the waitlist.

Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County Continuum of Care – List of CoC-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Projects

Organization	Project	Unit #*	Coordinated Access System(s)	Partners
Cascade AIDS Project	Housing Integration for Healthier Outcomes	20	Adult	
Cascadia	Special Needs Housing	2	Adult	
Cascadia	Royal Palm 2 PSH	30	Adult	
Cascadia	Special Needs Services	88	Adult, Family	
Cascadia	OTIH Project	28	Adult	
Central City Concern	Madrona Studios	42	Adult	JOIN, Northwest Pilot Project, Outside In (OI)
Central City Concern	HOPE	131	Adult, Family	Cascadia, JOIN, Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA), Transition Projects
Home Forward	Shelter Plus Care 4	20	Adult, Family	Cascadia, Multnomah County Developmental Disability Services
Home Forward	Shelter Plus Care 6	43	Adult, Family	Luke-Dorf
Home Forward	Shelter Plus Care CAP	48	Adult, Family	Cascade AIDS Project (CAP), Human Solutions
Home Forward	Shelter Plus Care ICH	212	Adult, Family	Central City Concern (CCC), JOIN
Home Forward	Shelter Plus Care VAC	50	Adult, Family	Cascadia, VA
Home Forward	Shelter Plus Care CPT	72	Adult	Cascadia
Human Solutions	Moving to Permanent Housing	5	Family	
Human Solutions	Safe Home	11	Adult	
Human Solutions	Safe Home Partnership	31	Adult, Family	Transition Projects
Human Solutions	Bridges to Housing	15	Family	Impact NW
JOIN	NOWHome	20	Adult, Family	
Luke-Dorf	The Clifford Apartments	15	Adult	
Multnomah County	OTIS Project	31	Adult	Cascadia, Transition Projects
Multnomah County	Pathways Youth Housing	2	Youth	New Avenues for Youth (NAFY)
New Avenues for Youth	Roads to Housing	9	Youth	
Outside In	Old Town Collaborative Homeless Housing Program	31	Adult, Youth	CCC, NARA
Salvation Army	Women's Housing Collaborative Expansion	10	DV	
Salvation Army	The Women's Housing Collaborative	30	Adult, DV	Salvation Army
Self Enhancement	Project HAVEN: PSH	50	Adult, Family	Urban League
Transition Projects	Collaboration	34	Adult, Youth	OI, CAP, NAFY
Transition Projects	Winter Housing: Targeted PSH for Women's Winter Shelter Residents	20	Adult	

*Unit numbers are based on the FY 2016 Grant Inventory Worksheet; those for scattered-site projects represent estimates based on funding amounts