



## **Chester County Decade to Doorways**

### **Homeless Verification Policy**

#### **July 30, 2018 – Policy #1**

In order to ensure that only the most vulnerable homeless individuals or families are considered for emergency shelter or other housing assistance; the Chester County Coordinated Entry Provider (ConnectPoints) must **confirm that these persons meet one of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definitions of homelessness as per the attached “Homeless Definition” form** before being placed on the Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) or Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) queues in the Chester County Client Information Management System (CCCIMS).

The following steps must be taken by ConnectPoints in order to make this determination:

- The “Homeless Eligibility Assessment” in CCCIMS must be completed. The assessment outlines all of the four definitions of homelessness as per HUD guidelines.
- In completing the Homeless Eligibility Assessment in CCCIMS, ConnectPoints staff will ask the individual or head of household specific questions to determine if they meet the criteria for homelessness as defined by HUD starting with category one. ConnectPoints staff will go through each category until it is determined that the individual or head of household meets the appropriate criteria.
  - If the individual or head of household meets a definition of homelessness, this part of the assessment will be completed in CCCIMS. ConnectPoints staff will select which category of homelessness they have met and move on to their standard assessment and complete a VI-SPDAT.
  - If the individual or head of household does not meet one of the four categories of homelessness as defined by HUD, they will **not** continue to the standard assessment or complete the VI-SPDAT. Instead they will be referred to the most appropriate resource for their situation (One of the five regional Information and Referral Providers in Chester County (can be found in the Chester County Community Resource Guide and on Refer Web) or Diversion activities will be conducted.
- If an individual or head of household is found to meet one of the four categories of homelessness as defined by HUD; ConnectPoints staff must collect documentation to confirm this status as per the “Recordkeeping Requirements” found on the attached “Homeless Definition” form. This documentation must be uploaded to CCCIMS. If the individual or head of household is unable to provide this information to ConnectPoints staff via fax, e-mail, or in person; it is expected that someone from ConnectPoints will meet with the client in the community within **one business day** of their initial call. Documentation confirming homelessness must be received prior to the individual or head of household being placed on the VI-SPDAT queue.

- Note: Anyone meeting category one (Literally Homeless) must have this status confirmed in person by ConnectPoints staff in addition to meeting the documentation requirements. **If the individual or head of household is working with a recognized non-profit organization, ConnectPoints may accept written third party confirmation of homelessness from them. This confirmation should be in on the agency's letterhead and faxed or e-mail to ConnectPoints.**
  
- The Chester County Decade to Doorways Crisis Response System Residency Guidelines (Out of County Policy) supersedes verification of homelessness. **Residency should be determined before any other information is collected from the individual or head of household.** If an individual or head of household is determined to not be a resident of Chester County, no assessment of any kind will be conducted.