

WHAT IS COORDINATED ENTRY:

Coordinated entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. Coordinated Entry simplifies the process for obtaining assistance, which has traditionally been difficult to decipher.

The primary goals for coordinated entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present. Coordinated entry processes help communities prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service needs to ensure that people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. Coordinated entry processes also provide information about service needs and gaps to help communities plan their assistance and identify needed resources.

Time Line

January 23, 2017 -HUD publishes mandate requiring Coordinated Entry implementation by January 23, 2018.

February 2017- January 2018 -UCP staff begins working with Texas Balance of State (CoC) in developing Coordinated Entry.

October 2017-HUD Agreement approved/signed by judge.

November 2017-Revised agreement approved by Steve Crane, Coordinated Entry implementation included in text.

January 2018- Deadline for Coordinated Entry, UCP needing final document for approval. The Coordinated Entry Planning Entity (CEPE) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) need CC approval to have UCP Director sign the (MOU). This is a standardized form by the (CoC).

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HUD Publishes Coordinated Entry Requirements and Checklist of Essential Elements

January 23, 2017

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On January 23, 2017, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published a Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care (CoC) Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System (the Notice) regarding the development and implementation of Coordinated Entry. HUD has also published a Checklist of Essential Elements (the Checklist) to provide communities with a comprehensive list of coordinated entry requirements outlined in the Notice as well as additional recommended and optional policy considerations.

The Notice (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5208/notice-establishing-additional-requirements-for-a-continuum-of-care-centralized-or-coordinated-assessment-system/>)

The Notice establishes new requirements that CoCs and recipients of CoC Program and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program funding must meet related to the development and use of a centralized or coordinated assessment system. It also provides guidance on additional policies that communities should consider incorporating into written policies and procedures to achieve improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. Each CoC is expected to establish or update its coordinated entry process in accordance with the interim rule and this Notice **by January 23, 2018**.

Critical components of the Notice (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5208/notice-establishing-additional-requirements-for-a-continuum-of-care-centralized-or-coordinated-assessment-system/>) include:

- **Core components remain unchanged** – The Notice adds additional requirements but does not change the core components of the coordinated entry requirements from the CoC Program interim rule. Coordinated entry processes must still cover the entire CoC, be easily accessible, well-advertised, and include standardized tools and processes. They must still cover access, assessment, and referral.
- **Definitions and additional requirements** – The Notice clarifies the definitions of a variety of terms, including assessment, scoring, prioritization, and determining eligibility, and adds additional requirements for the development and implementation of coordinated entry processes. The additional requirements are each written with specific elements that must be included by the CoC into coordinated entry policies and procedures. They cover every aspect of coordinated entry, from prevention, outreach, and emergency services, to prioritization, participant autonomy, staff training, data security, and ongoing planning.
- **Additional Policy Considerations** – The Notice includes several additional policy considerations that communities are encouraged but not required to consider. Topics include, implementing a person-centered approach, the importance of cultural and linguistic competencies, progressive and phased approaches to assessment tools and process, the incorporation of mainstream partners, data and using HMIS, and the role of waiting lists.

The Checklist (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5219/coordinated-entry-self-assessment/>) of Essential Elements

The Checklist identifies aspects of coordinated entry that are required, recommended as good practice but not required, and those that may be appropriate for some CoCs but are not universally applicable. It is designed to help your community:

- Identify key aspects of design, implementation, and management
- Compare the list against existing plans or practices
- Develop a set of policies and procedures to support processes and functions

HUD will be publishing additional guidance in the coming months to complement the Checklist. All Coordinated Entry Resources can be accessed from the **Coordinated Entry Landing Page** (<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/responsibilities-and-duties/#coordinated-entry>). If you have a question, please submit it to the HUD Exchange **Ask A Question (AAQ)** portal (<https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/my-question/>).

Tags: [CoC](#) [ESG](#) [Homelessness Assistance Programs](#)

Memorandum of Understanding between the Texas Homeless Network and _____

I. BACKGROUND

Provisions in HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) Program, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) interim rules require that all CoCs establish a coordinated entry system.

Coordinated Entry (CE) is a process that facilitates access to all homeless designated resources, identifying and assessing the needs of persons experiencing a housing crisis, and referring clients to the most appropriate service strategy or housing intervention. The Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care's (TX BoS CoC) framework for Coordinated Entry enables communities in the TX BoS CoC to more consistently and accurately document housing and service needs and ensure limited resources are allocated to achieve the most effective results.

Texas Homeless Network (THN) is the lead entity for the Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care (TX BoS CoC). The Coordinated Entry Planning Entity (CEPE) is the local body responsible for implementing Coordinated Entry in a community. The CEPE must be approved by the Local Homeless Coalition (LHC) through a vote.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE TEXAS BALANCE OF STATE COORDINATED ENTRY PROCESS

The following guiding principles are in alignment with the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards and were adopted by the TX BoS CoC Board. This MOU ensures that the local Coordinated Entry Planning Entity (CEPE) in _____ also agrees to adopt these guiding principles.

1. **Adopt statewide standards** but allow flexibility for local customization beyond baseline standard.
2. **Promote person-centered practices** –Every person should be treated with dignity and respect, which means providers should draw on people's expertise and strengths. Households should be made aware of all their options and offered a choice. Staff must help people in crisis regain a sense of control while focusing on the client's goals, choices, and preferences. This requires an unwavering respect for their strengths and reinforcement of progress, which are essential for empowerment.
3. **Operate under a crisis resolution system**–Homelessness is a housing crisis. Regaining housing resolves that particular crisis. Responses must include: rapid assessment and triaging; focus on personal safety as the first priority; de-escalation of the person's emotional reaction; definite

action steps the individual can successfully achieve; and returning the person to control over their own problem solving.

4. **Provide trauma informed services-** There is a high prevalence of trauma in the lives of people experiencing a housing crisis. Trauma can influence the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of individuals seeking services. Every provider should provide services in a manner that is welcoming and appropriate to the needs of those affected by trauma, i.e., with sensitivity to their lived experience. This require high levels of transparency and flexibility.
5. **Housing First-**Housing first prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and does not have service participation requirements or preconditions such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold. In order to be effective, the Coordinated Entry process must be Housing First oriented, such that people are housed quickly without preconditions or service participation requirements.
6. **Eliminate barriers to housing placement** – Identify system practices and individual project eligibility criteria which may contribute to excluding participants from services and work to eliminate those barriers. Barriers could include conditions such as income or sobriety as eligibility requirements for enrollment.
7. **Transparency** – Make thoughtful decisions and communicate directives openly and clearly.
8. **Exercise continuous quality improvement efforts** – Continually strive for effectiveness and efficiency and agree to make changes when those objectives are not achieved.
9. Promote **collaborative and inclusive** planning and decision making practices.
10. State and local communities will **use data generated by Coordinated Entry to analyze local and statewide housing needs** and create a diversity of housing options.

III. PURPOSE

While THN has established a statewide strategy for CE, that strategy also requires that each Coordinated Entry Planning Entity design and implement specific parts of the CE that reflects local community resources, client need, provider capacity, and unique geography characteristics to that coverage area.

In order to ensure the consistent implementation of CE across the TX BoS CoC, Texas Homeless Network has developed several documents, including this MOU, to establish standard local agreements for the implementation of Coordinated Entry. Additionally, this MOU ensures that all providers in each

local Coordinated Entry Planning Entity coverage area are using the coordinated entry system in a transparent and consistent way.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TX BOS COC

Texas Homeless Network will:

1. Be responsible for developing, updating, and distributing the standards for Coordinated Entry.
2. Support communities in the Texas Balance of State as they implement Coordinated Entry.
3. Update the Texas Balance of State CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards.
4. Review local materials developed by CEPE to ensure they are aligned with HUD and the TX BoS Standards for CE.
5. Provide, at least annually, a training to all staff dedicated to the local CE.
6. Attend Coordinated Entry process planning meetings virtually or in person, upon request and as available.
7. Provide guidance and feedback to CEPE.
8. Oversee the client or staff appeals of grievances or policies as related to the CE process.
9. Execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the TX BoS CoC and the CEPE.
10. Work with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) staff to maintain the CoC's implementation of HMIS.
11. Work with the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) staff to maintain the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry data elements in Osnum.
12. Provide HMIS access to CE staff in each CEPE coverage area upon completion of required trainings.
13. Evaluate the performance and progress of the local implementations of the Coordinated Entry processes monthly in accordance with the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards and recommend or require adjustments as necessary.

14. Conduct an in-depth evaluation of the statewide implementation of CE annually in accordance with the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards and make adjustments as necessary.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF COORDINATED ENTRY PLANNING ENTITY

_____ will:

- 1) Serve as support for the local Coordinated Entry process and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.
- 2) Participate in the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry planning and management activities as established by CoC leadership.
- 3) Ensure that their communities' policies and procedures adhere to the requirements in the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards and do not supersede the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards.
- 4) Develop Coordinated Entry Policies & Procedure, which must be submitted to the Systems Change Coordinator when complete and upon each update.
- 5) Market the local Coordinated Entry process.
- 6) Develop and have a system in place to maintain the Eligibility Matrix.
- 7) Maintain a community training and assessors list and submit monthly updates to the Systems Change Coordinator.
- 8) Address grievances according to the local Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures as they arise in their coverage area for Coordinated Entry.
- 9) Execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the CEPE and participating agencies.
- 10) Evaluate the performance and progress of the local Coordinated Entry process monthly in accordance with the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards and recommend or require adjustments as necessary.
- 11) Conduct an in-depth evaluation of the implementation of CE annually in accordance with the TX BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards and make adjustments as necessary.

VI. CONFIDENTIALITY

All parties agree that they shall be bound by and shall abide by all applicable Federal or State statutes or regulations pertaining to the confidentiality of client records or information, including volunteers. The parties shall not use or disclose any information about a recipient of the services provided under this agreement for any purpose connected with the parties' contract responsibilities, except with the written consent of such recipient, recipient's attorney, or recipient's parent or guardian.

VII. EQUAL ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

The Anti-Discrimination and Equal Access Policy was adopted by the CoC Board on November 8, 2017. The TX BoS CoC, represented by the CoC Board and Texas Homeless Network as the CoC Lead Agency, and the agencies receiving U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding are required to comply with all requirements regarding the HUD Equal Access Rule and all other all federal, state and local non-discrimination and privacy laws.

It is recommended that projects that do not receive funding from any federal source follow this policy to further the CoC's goals of transparency, equal access to quality projects, and service standardization. Following this policy will ensure that the project is using best practices.

VIII. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This MOU shall be effective upon adoption by each signatory agency and entity. Annually, this MOU will be reviewed and updated to incorporate changes and clarification of roles and responsibilities. Any part must provide written notice of change ninety (90) days before the annual termination date or it will be automatically renewed. Otherwise, this Agreement may be terminated in accordance with the section on Termination below.

Termination. Any party may terminate this MOU for any reason or no reason by giving the other parties ninety (90) days prior written notice. The party wishing to terminate this agreement for cause must provide a written intent to terminate notice to the party in breach or default. The notice will provide thirty (30) days for the party in breach or default to respond to said notice with an acceptable plan to cure cause for termination

Severability. If any provision of this Agreement is judged invalid by any court, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect and be interpreted, performed and enforced as if the invalid provisions were not part of this Agreement.

_____ Representative

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

TX Balance of State CoC Representative

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____