



Missoula Coordinated Entry System

Access Point and Partnering Agency Memorandum of Understanding

To coordinate and streamline access and prioritization of homeless housing resources, the Missoula At-Risk Housing Coalition has developed a Coordinated Entry System in partnership with community stakeholders.

There are two primary roles in which ARHC membership agencies can participate in this innovative system:

Access Points: Where households experiencing homelessness can meet with an intake professional in-person, via phone or through outreach workers on the street. Access Point staff are trained in a common intake, diversion approach and assessment processes that provide access to MCES and local homeless housing and service resources.

Partnering Agencies: Partnering Agencies do not facilitate the assessment process (triage, diversion, assessment tool) for MCES, but they are knowledgeable about the process and messaging. They attend Case Conferencing meetings on a regular basis, they refer eligible households to Access Points, and/or they are a homeless system provider receiving housing/service referrals directly from Coordinated Entry.

Specific Roles and Responsibilities for Access Points and Partnering Agencies are attached.

By signing this form, our agency agrees to participate in the ARHC Missoula Coordinated Entry System as a(n):

- Access Point (Advertised)
- Access Point (Non-Advertised)
- Partnering Agency

I confirm that my agency will adhere to the attached responsibilities and I will contact the MCES Lead Entity immediately if I have any questions or concerns.

Agency (or Program)

Agency Director and Title (Printed Name)

Signature

Date

MCES Lead Entity (Printed Name)

Signature

Date

Access Point and Partnering Agency Responsibilities:

- Read and understand the following:
 - [Notice CPD-17-01](#), the January 2017 HUD Notice establishing specific requirements of local coordinated entry systems.
 - [Montana CoC-HMIS & Coordinated Entry Release of Information / Data Entry Disclosure, Client Consent & Service Matching](#)
 - [Authorization for use only by HIPAA Covered Entities](#) (if applicable)
 - [HMIS Participation Agreement](#) (if applicable)
 - [HMIS Policies and Procedures](#) (if applicable)
 - [MCES Policies and Procedures](#)
 - [MT CoC Statewide CES Policies and Procedures](#)
 - [City of Missoula Housing and Community Development MCES HMIS Volunteer Agreement](#) (if applicable)
 - Your agency's confidentiality agreement/policy and privacy rights
 - The MCES Grievance Procedure (see MCES Policies and Procedures)
- Designate one point of contact for the MCES Lead Entity to communicate directly and a back-up person in their absence.
 - Primary Point of Contact (name and email) _____
 - Back Up Point of Contact (name and email) _____

Additional Access Point Responsibilities:

- Dedicate specific staff that are trained (up front and on an ongoing basis) in triage, diversion, phased assessment process, and data input into HMIS.
- Ensure staff are trained in the phased assessment approach for each population (families, single adults, transitional age youth) per the training expectations found in the MCES Policy and Procedure Manual.
- In the rare instance when an Access Point is unable to facilitate the full assessment process at the time a household/person shows up in person or calls for housing and service assistance, Access Point staff will facilitate a smooth transition ("warm handoff") to another assessor or Access Point. We absolutely want to avoid sending a household/person to another agency when we have not confirmed that there is actual help/assistance on the other end. It is also important that the referring person/agency provide the assessor/organization with pertinent information about the household/person. Examples of a warm handoff include:

- Offering the household/person an agency phone to call 2-1-1 or offer/provide private space for the household/person to call 2-1-1 with their phone.
- Calling the Poverello Center Homeless Outreach Team and see if they can come to your agency and meet with the household/person: 406-493-7955 (M-F, 9-5).
- If the phone is a perceived barrier and/or the HOT Team is unavailable, call another appropriate Access Point on the household/person's behalf or together and let them know you are going to refer a household/person to them. Ensure the household/person knows how to get to the specific agency and that the receiving agency knows that the household/person is on their way.
- Provide triage, diversion and assessment services for all eligible households experiencing homelessness who enter your organization, regardless of their eligibility for your specific program or services. The coordinated entry process must offer the same assessment approach at all access points and all access points must be usable by all people who may be experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness, per the January 2017 HUD Notice (CPD-17-01).
- Track diversion attempts and outcomes in HMIS. When not doing direct and immediate entry into HMIS, assessors must use the appropriate MCES paper assessments (not the versions found online) with real time data that is not based on memory. Data must be entered into HMIS within 48 hours. Assessments added after 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays will not be considered in that week's case conferencing.
- Commit to the importance of data quality and record the most accurate, consistent and timely information in HMIS.
- Attend monthly Access Point meetings coordinated by MCES Lead Entity to ensure consistency of triage, diversion and assessment services at all access points.
- Subscribe to MCES messaging as determined by the MCES Implementation Group and Access Points, ensuring households and stakeholders hear the same information and receive equal access to diversion and assessment services, regardless of the access point they enter.
- Commit to bringing challenges/concerns to monthly Access Point meetings, and address them as a community team.
- Be nimble and adaptable as we learn what processes and procedures are most effective in our CoC Geographic Region; change may be frequent, based on local learning/experience and is always consumer driven. All Access Points are responsible for adapting to changes.

Additional Advertised Access Point Responsibility:

- Consent to broad advertisement of your organization as an access point for people experiencing homelessness to access when in need of housing/services.

Agencies receiving MCES housing and service referrals agree to the following:

- Commit to ensuring the community meets the requirements as outlined by HUD:

- Homelessness prevention services. Persons must be able to access homelessness prevention services funded with ESG Program Funds through the coordinated entry process. The coordinated entry process may include separate access point(s) for homelessness prevention so that people at risk of homelessness can receive urgent services when and where they are needed, e.g. on-site at a courthouse or hospital, provided that the separate access point(s) meet all requirements in II.B.2 of this Notice.
- Commitment to referral success. CoCs should include a commitment to successfully completing the referral process once a referral decision has been made through coordinated entry, including supporting the safe transition of participants from an access point or emergency shelter to housing, and supporting participants in identifying and accessing an alternate suitable project in the rare instance of an eligible participant being rejected by a participating project.

Revocation:

If an Access Point or Partnering agency is determined by a consensus of case conferencing participants to be in non-compliance with any of the above policies, MCES reserves the right to revoke Access Point or Partnering Agency status from that agency.

Access Point and Partnering agencies also are able to self-revoke if they find they are unable to comply with the above standards/policies. The MCES Lead Entity requires 30 days written notice of the choice to revoke.