

BFZ Community Workshopped Policy Example

This policy was selected because it is a real example of how a community approached the task of developing an inactive policy. BFZ data coaching staff adapted some elements to make it more transferable and annotated it to highlight the key components from the guide and suggestions for continuous improvement. These policies may help you overcome the dreaded writer's block as you start thinking about structure and language for your policy. These examples are available as inspiration or sample text in conjunction with the guide. Feel free to copy language if it's relevant to your community.

Approved for use by the community in October 2024.

Community Context:

This workshopped inactive policy was based on the Detroit CoC. Classified as a "Major City" by HUD, Detroit has a metro area population of over 4 million. Joining the BFZ network in 2015, the Detroit CoC, led by HAND, has been working toward reaching functional zero for Veterans, reducing their by-name list of Veterans who are actively homeless from over 300 to around 150. Detroit uses the Wellsky Servicepoint HMIS.

Continuous Improvement Suggestions:

While this workshopped policy covers the major recommendations offered in the [BFZ Inactive Policy Guide](#), we offer the following additional recommendations if your community seeks to build yours using this example:

- Consider adding an introduction that describes why it is important to know who is actively homeless; who drafted and approved your policy and how, when and by whom changes will be made, as well as feedback loops.
- Consider a section that more clearly articulates how someone is determined to be active and how definitions of homelessness apply to specific populations or subpopulations.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for managing and monitoring moves to inactive status
- Involve people with lived expertise and front-line staff to create your policy and procedures

Reviewing the BFZ Inactive Policy Guide fully will help you to create comprehensive inactive policies and procedures that align with the BFZ quality data standards.

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is explaining where and how they are determining who is inactive due to loss of contact.

POLICY: BNL Inactive - Loss of Contact: Follow-up Policy

An individual is considered to be Inactive Unknown/Missing when they are no longer in contact with our system and HMIS reflects no active engagement or a change in status. The *Inactive –loss of contact* designation indicates that there has been no documented contact over 90 consecutive days after

continual attempts by the assigned case manager to contact the individual. People remain on the Inactive List indefinitely, unless they are known to return to homelessness.

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Business rules to determine Date of ID when an individual has a break in a shelter/TH/CR stay:

1. Exits to unknown, homeless, or institutional settings: if an individual returns within less than 90 days, then use original ID date. If 90 days or more, reset ID date to indicate new episode. Assumption being that the episode is continuing if return in less than 90 days, since last exit data indicates or could suggest the individual was still literally homeless at exit.
 - a. For any individual in an unknown or homeless situation, follow the contact procedure below.
 - b. For any individual exiting to an institutional setting for 90 days or less, they remain on the active list. For more than 90 days, they should be moved to inactive status. Note if there is an expected discharge date for future planning for discharge between the institution and the coordinated entry system.
2. Exits to PH or non-homeless temporary situations (e.g., friends/family-temporary): if Individual returns within 7 days or less, then use original ID date. If Individual returns in more than 7 days, reset and use new ID date. Assumption being that last homeless episode ended at exit and after 7 days, another homeless occurrence = new episode, consistent with chronic homeless definition.
 - a. For any individual with an exit to a non-homeless temporary situation, follow the contact procedure below.
3. Exits due to a person moving out of the CoC area: Individual should be moved to inactive immediately without following the contact procedure below.
4. Exits due to the unfortunate situation where a person has passed away: Individual should be removed from the active list and follow the protocol for indicating that they are deceased.

Determining Activity Section: the community is describing a situation where households remain active

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is describing the process to measure the number of days without contact, how they are defining inactive and how this applies in institutional settings

Determining Activity Section: the community is describing how temporary exits & destinations tie to active episodes.

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is describing immediate moves to inactivity.

CONTACT PROCEDURE:

The assigned case manager will attempt to make contact the individual using the following procedures:

- **3 weeks out of contact:** at least 2 calls **and** the staff responsible for the individual reaches out to the BNL Coordinator to determine whether the individual is connected somewhere else in the system. If the individual has no contact with any person, program or agency within the homeless response system, the individual will be added to the Outreach list to request support to locate. In addition to calling the individual, a call or letter to the individual's emergency contact shall be made, and the staff person will bring up the individual for review at the Case Conferencing Meeting to inform the community of the need to locate the individual.

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is describing expectations around attempts to contact and locate before moving to inactive and the process for reviewing and managing contact attempts during case conferencing

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- *4-12 weeks out of contact*: at least 1 distinct contact attempt every 30 days, plus ongoing outreach efforts, review at case conferencing and attempting to reach emergency contact again.
- After 90 days with no successful contact, the individual is moved to Inactive status.
- This list will be reviewed during the Case Conferencing meeting and providers will be reminded of protocols around engagement.

Once an individual with Inactive Status is found or re-engaged, and they are still experiencing homelessness, they are immediately reactivated on the BNL to receive support in pursuing permanent housing. If the individual was matched to a Housing resource prior to becoming inactive, the last case manager will be notified of the recent activity and will proceed with engaging individual so long as that provider has capacity to do so; otherwise, the individual will be matched to another Case Manager by the BNL Coordinator based on eligibility and availability.

Determining Activity Section: the community is including how a person who has been moved off the active list is reactivated