

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 Shreveport, Bossier/Northwest Louisiana CoC inactive policy. Classified as an "other largely urban" area by HUD, this CoC includes midsize cities and several surrounding parishes and has a metro area population of over 300,000. They joined the BFZ network in 2021 and have been working toward quality data to reduce their Chronic population with a by-name list between 50-100 single adults who are actively homeless. Northwest Louisiana uses Wellsky Community Services as their HMIS vendor.

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:

- Involve people with lived expertise and front-line staff to create your policy and procedures
- Describe who drafted and approved your policy and how, when and by whom changes will be made, as well as feedback loops.
- Explicitly state if your policy only applies to specific populations or subpopulations

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.

Background

The inactive policy is a critical component of maintaining a real-time By-Name List to end episodes of homelessness as quickly as possible. To maintain an accurate By-Name List and Housing Placement List, it is important to ensure that the Coordinated Assessment Program (CAP) and the Street Outreach Team, emergency shelters, transitional housing, day shelters, and other homeless service agencies make timely entries and exits in the HMIS system. Without this policy the system can become overburdened and experience delays in its

This is the "Introduction" in which the community explains why it is important to know who is actively homeless. In addition, we recommend including a description of how your community defines who is "actively" homeless.

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referral procedures by attempting to assist those who no longer need or qualify for assistance.

Policy

It is the policy of the CoC to maintain three lists related to tracking those experiencing homelessness. These lists can only be accurately maintained by having a schedule of timelines and people to ensure that inactivity is tracked accurately.

Determining Activity Section: the community is explaining where and how they are determining who is actively homeless. [Green highlights]

- By-Name List (BNL) includes all people currently experiencing homelessness
- Housing Placement List including all people who have been assessed through the Coordinated Assessment and are waiting for housing

- Inactive List of those who were on either of the previous lists but cannot be contacted, located, or have exited to an inactive destination such as moving out of the jurisdiction, or are in an institution for more than 90-days, as well as clients who are deceased.

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is explaining where and how they are determining who is moved to inactive. [Red highlights]

The By-Name List is automatically populated by an open HMIS entry by the Street Outreach Team, emergency shelters, transitional housing, day shelters, or any other homeless service agency. The BNL also captures exits to an inactive destination as well as exits to permanent housing placements. The By-Name List is managed by the HMIS Data Specialist along with input from the Coordinated Assessment Manager and the Client Programs Manager.

Clients who refuse services will remain on the By-Name List as long as they can be verified as homeless by the Street Outreach Team, emergency shelters, transitional housing, day shelters, or any other homeless service agency. Refusal of housing and/or other services does not exclude a client from the By-Name List. If clients do not want to be named the Street Outreach Team allows them to be entered anonymously or under an alias.

The Housing Placement List is automatically populated by clients who have an open HMIS entry by the Coordinated Assessment staff, have been fully assessed, and have scored in the range of needing assistance with housing and are document ready. The Housing Placement List is managed by the Coordinated Assessment Manager. **The Coordinated Assessment Manager utilizes the coordinated Entry Event section in HMIS to document and track referrals for each client. The appropriate response in the Coordinated Entry Event (as per section 4.20 Data Elements Fields and Responses of the HMIS Data Standards Manual) will be selected to indicate the client's current BNL placement status.**

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Flagging/Follow Up

The By-Name List and the Housing Placement List will be reviewed weekly and flagged when clients have not been seen for **60 days** as per their most recent entry date or contact (**NOTE: The “Current Living Situation” section in HMIS is used to log/ document contacts made with clients**) by Coordinated Assessment, the Street Outreach Team, and/or any other homeless service agency

(including emergency shelter), in the CoC Region. The Street Outreach Team will attempt to reverify flagged clients and the Coordinated Assessment staff will attempt to contact flagged clients via 3 phone calls to the client or the client’s emergency contact. Reverifications and contact attempts will be documented in the notes section of HMIS.

Determining Inactivity Section:
tracking inactivity due to loss of contact and expectations for attempting to contact & locate when there is no activity for 60 days

Determining Inactivity Section:
updating and monitoring status to determine potential inactivity due to loss of contact, immediate situations to move to inactive, + institutional stays, including roles & responsibilities.

Clients that are flagged will be closely monitored for any activity with other known geographic locations, jails, hospitals, death, etc. by CAP and the Street Outreach Team.

The CAP staff and Client Engagement Programs Manager will review the Housing Placement List weekly to ensure clients have the correct status based on known information.

As Per section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria of this definition before entering that facility will maintain their homeless status upon exiting the facility; An individual residing in an institutional care facility does not constitute a break in homelessness unless the stay is more than 90 days regardless of the homeless status prior to entering the facility.

Determining Inactivity Section: tracking related to institutional stays

Changing List Status

Households will be removed from the By-Name List and/or the Housing Placement List and placed on the Inactive By-Name List in the following circumstances:

- If CAP or Street Outreach have attempted to contact or locate the household three times and had no contact with for 90 days AND they have had no services or shelter stays at any homeless service agency in HIMS for the past 90 days.
- If verifiable information is obtained of a situation that warrants an earlier exit include but not limited to: death, relocation to another region, or long-term institutionalization situations such as foster care

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is summarizing all three reasons for moves to inactivity

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or group home, long term hospitalizations or psychiatric facilities or long term nursing care facilities.

If a household on the Inactive By-Name List is verified as homeless by the Street Outreach Team, emergency shelters, transitional housing, day shelters, or any other homeless service agency in the NWLA Region; they are removed from the Inactive By-Name List and placed on the By-Name List. At this point the person is considered fully reengaged with the system and may be re-assessed by the Coordinated Assessment Program.

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

Monitoring and Upkeep

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is summarizing roles + responsibilities

The HMIS System Administrator, HMIS Data Specialist, Coordinated Assessment Manager and the Client Programs Manager will all have access to all three lists. The lists will be closely monitored by the team listed above on a regular basis to ensure all components are working and the information is translating between lists appropriately.

Technical Aspect

A script has been created in HMIS Business Objects to capture the inactive / active status of a client based on the exit destination. The determination of an active / inactive status was carefully determined by Wellsky staff, Community Solutions staff and the HMIS System Administrator to ensure the appropriate response is captured for each exit destination. This script will be carefully monitored by the HMIS System Administrator, the HMIS Data Specialist, Coordinated Assessment Manager, and the Client Engagement Programs Manager to ensure that the current and exit destination responses are correct and that the client is documented on the correct list. We will convene bi-annually (or as needed) to discuss any changes that may need to be made to the script.

Determining Inactivity Section: the community is describing the process to indicate "moves to inactive" to report this monthly metric