

Coordinated Entry (CE) is a process that matches people experiencing homelessness with housing units that are funded by the Continuum of Care (CoC) grant when there is a vacancy. Coordinated Entry identifies eligible applicants and promotes fairness and easy access for homeless individuals and families. The process makes use of an assessment tool to make decisions about who is placed in the unit based on vulnerability and severity of service needs and thereby ensures that people who have the greatest need are housed first. Coordinated Entry is required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is overseen by Somerset County's Continuum of Care Committee (CoC). The Committee uses an assessment called the **Housing Prioritization Tool (HPT)** to determine the needs of households that apply for CoC-funded housing units. The tool creates a composite score for all applicants and identifies the applicant that is the most vulnerable, and therefore, has the greatest housing need. The CE process is activated every time there is a CoC-funded housing opportunity via an announcement that is sent out by the Community Development (CD) Office.

Following are some definitions related to Coordinated Entry.

CE LEAD: Point of contact at an agency that receives notice of CoC-funded vacancies. Shares said notice with CE Assessors. Collects **HPTs** for individual applicants, summarizes scores in one **HPSS** and submits to the CD Office by deadline.

CE ASSESSOR: Agency staff who work with households seeking housing and other forms of assistance. In addition to helping clients identify resources, they complete HPTs when a CoC-funded unit is available and send the results to the agency's CE Lead.

CoC DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS- living in emergency shelter, in a location not meant for human habitation or a hotel that is being paid for by a social service provider

HOUSING INTERVIEWER- A staff member at organization with CoC-funded unit that completes intake and screening process for prospective applicants.

HOUSING PRIORITIZATION LIST (HPL)- Continuum-wide summary of all of the applicants for a vacant unit.

HOUSING PRIORITIZATION SUMMARY SHEET (HPSS)- an Excel-based spreadsheet that contains the unique identifier and composite scores for each client that completed an HPT.

HOUSING PRIORITIZATION TOOL (HPT): An Excel-based assessment containing questions that collect information about various health and social needs affecting vulnerability and level of services needed. The tool also measures housing barriers such as income, employment potential, credit information, and tenant history. Each question is assigned a score and the higher the point value, the more difficulty the client will face in their housing search. The higher the overall score, the greater priority the client will have as a potential occupant of the vacant unit.

Note: There may be instances when housing units that are not CoC-funded use the CE Process to identify applicants with the greatest need. In those cases, the process remains the same, though some factors in the HPT and the assigned point value may change based on the funding stream and corresponding eligibility criteria.

