



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES



RHY-HMIS PROGRAM MANUAL

A GUIDE FOR RHY-HMIS USERS AND SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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ALIGNS WITH FY 2024 HMIS DATA STANDARDS

Table of Contents

RHY-HMIS Data Guide.....	3
Introduction to RHY-HMIS	3
Document Purpose and Audience	3
RHY Resources for RHY Grant Recipients.....	3
Data Collection Instructions for RHY Grant Recipients.....	3
About this RHY-HMIS Manual	4
Universal Data Elements.....	4
Common Program Data Elements	11
4.02 Income and Sources	11
4.03 Non-Cash Benefits.....	11
4.04 Health Insurance	11
4.05, 4.06, 4.07, 4.09, 4.10 Special Needs	11
4.12 Current Living Situation	12
4.13 Date of Engagement	12
RHY Program Data Elements.....	13
R1 Referral Sources	13
R2 RHY - BCP Status	13
R3 Sexual Orientation	14
R4 Last Grade Completed	14
R5 School Status.....	14
R6 Employment Status.....	15
R7, R8, R9 Health Status.....	15
R10 Pregnancy Status.....	15
R11 Formerly a Ward of Child Welfare/Foster Care Agency	16
R12 Formerly a Ward of Juvenile Justice System.....	16
R13 Family Critical Issues	16
R14 RHY Service Connections	16
R15 Commercial Sexual Exploitation/Sex Trafficking	18
R16 Labor Exploitation/Trafficking	18
R17 Project Completion Status	19
R18 Counseling.....	20
R19 Safe and Appropriate Exit	20
R20 Aftercare	21

RHY-HMIS Data Guide

Introduction to RHY-HMIS

Welcome to the Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Program RHY-HMIS Manual. As you know, the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) made it a requirement for RHY funded grant recipients to coordinate with their local Continuums of Care (CoC), funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to use the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

The Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Program funding streams of Street Outreach (SOP), Basic Center (BCP), Transitional Living (TLP), Maternity Group Homes (MGH), and Demonstration (DEMO) programs are legislatively required to capture and report data to the ACF by the Runaway Homeless Youth Act (RHYA; P.L. 110-378 which was reauthorized through 2008 and more recently reauthorized by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act through FY 2019. Continuums of Care (CoC) establish local Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) to ensure the accurate, timely, and complete collection of data required for RHY-HMIS participation.

Document Purpose and Audience

This guidance is provided to all RHY grant recipients, HMIS Leads, CoC Leadership, and other interested parties to ensure data collected by RHY grant recipients in local RHY-HMIS software is accurate, timely, and complete. This guidance aligns with the HUD's HMIS Data Standards for Federal Fiscal Year 2024 and becomes effective on October 1, 2023. This guidance will be updated as HUD and Federal Funding Partners, such as RHY, implement changes to the HMIS Data Standards.

RHY Resources for RHY Grant Recipients

If you are looking for additional resources that extend beyond the scope of this manual intended to explain RHY-HMIS Data Collection Instructions for RHY grant recipients, please see the following websites:

- If you are looking for additional grant information and funding for runaway and homeless youth services, please visit: [Family & Youth Services Bureau](#)
- If you are looking for additional information about administering the RHY Program in your community, please visit: [Runaway and Homeless Youth Training & Technical Assistance Center](#)
- If you are a runaway or homeless youth seeking assistance, please contact the National Runaway Safe Line at 1-800-RUNAWAY/1-800-7862929 or 1800runaway.org.
- If you need any additional information or support related to your RHY-HMIS, please enter a Service Desk ticket for the RHY-HMIS Online Service Desk at rhymisservicedesk.atlassian.net. You will need to create a username and password the first time you log on.

Data Collection Instructions for RHY Grant Recipients

There are several Federal Partners who inform data collection guidance for their funded programs. As such, the HMIS Data Standards are structured according to how broad or narrow the collection requirements for those data elements are across all Federal Partners. All Universal Data Elements are required, by all federally funded programs, to be collected in HMIS. Common Program Elements are not required by every federally funded program, but are widely collected by most funded programs, including the RHY Program. Finally, the RHY Program Data Elements are not widely collected by most funded programs, but are collected by RHY Program funding streams, where required. For a complete list of data elements required by RHY Programs, refer to page 13 of the [RHY Program HMIS Manual](#).

About this RHY-HMIS Manual

This RHY-HMIS Manual is intended to serve as a reference tool to provide basic guidance on data collection for the FYSB's RHY Program grant recipients that are required to use the RHY-HMIS data system to capture youth data, and is used as the primary means for reporting information about the needs, critical issues, and support received by participants served by the RHY Program. The RHYA governs the basic requirements for this data collection, stating that grant recipients:

"Shall keep adequate statistical records profiling the youth and family members whom it serves (including youth who are not referred to out-of-home shelter services), except that records maintained on individual runaway and homeless youth shall not be disclosed without the consent of the individual youth and parent or legal guardian to anyone other than another agency compiling statistical records or a government agency involved in the disposition of criminal charges against an individual runaway and homeless youth, and reports or other documents based on such statistical records shall not disclose the identity of individual runaway and homeless youth. 34 U.S.C. § 11212."

Data are collected quarterly from all RHY funded grant recipients.

Universal Data Elements

For additional rationale, response descriptions, and data type information, please refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

3.01 Name

Youth records for Basic Center Program and Transitional Living Programs (TLP, MGH, Demonstration) cannot be submitted anonymously. RHY expects all youth records will contain the full name of the youth being served unless the youth has refused to provide the information, in which case at least a partial name in RHY-HMIS is expected to be entered.

Street Outreach Program grant recipients are expected to capture as much information as possible at the initial interaction with the youth. However, given the nature of street outreach, RHY SOP, like all other street outreach projects in HMIS may gather and enter/edit much of the information over multiple interactions or contacts. Grant recipients should enter and edit the data as they become aware of it. Initial name records may, for example, be "Youth in blue baseball cap." Upon further interactions, the case manager might be able to fully engage the youth to create a full named record in RHY-HMIS. As expected, after an initial interaction, SOP projects can enter all information gathered into RHY-HMIS and be able to save the information. Information can be saved each time more information about the youth is gathered.

RHY-HMIS records should use a client's full and accurate name whenever possible. If the client doesn't associate with their legal name, the name entered into RHY-HMIS should reflect the name the client identifies with. RHY does not require that information provided matches legal documents, and HMIS records are not expected to include "dead names" or otherwise unused legal names.

General Collection information:

- "Full name reported" should be selected for Name Data Quality if complete, full first and last names have been recorded as reported by the client. To avoid duplicate record creation, the full names should be used (e.g., James vs. Jim).
- Select "Partial, street name, or code name reported" if a name other than the full name is recorded. This may include a place holder name such as a street name or code name for street outreach clients or a name modification made for security reasons.

- Select “Client doesn’t know” when client does not know their name. Use “Client doesn’t know” vs. “Partial, street name or code name reported” if the client did not know or was unable to provide their name. Do not make up a false name if the client doesn’t know their name.
- Select “Client prefers not to answer” when client chooses not to provide their name. Use “Client prefers not to answer” instead of “Partial street name or code name reported” if the client chooses not to tell you their name. Do not make up a false name if the client refused to provide you a name.

3.02 Social Security Number

Collecting Social Security Numbers (SSN) supports the unique identification of each person served. RHY expects SSN to be collected for all youth. Use the following guidance to determine the most appropriate way to record the social security number. The federal statute at 5 U.S.C. § 552a prohibits a government agency from denying shelter or services to clients who refuse to provide their SSN. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

- Full SSN Reported: A complete and valid 9-digit SSN is provided.
- Approximate or partial SSN reported: Any SSN other than a complete and valid 9-digit SSN, regardless of the reason, is provided.
- Client doesn't know: A client does not know or does not have a SSN.
- Client prefers not to answer: A client prefers not to provide any part of their SSN, regardless of the reason.
- Data not collected: No attempt was made to collect an SSN for the client.

3.03 Date of Birth

Date of Birth (DOB) is used to calculate the age of persons served at the time of the start of RHY program entry, and to ensure that youth served are within the age ranges allowed under RHY program delivery.

RHY expects a full DOB is collected. However, if only the year or the month and year are known, follow the instructions for local HMIS data entry. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#). If the client cannot remember their birth year, it may be estimated by asking the youth’s age and calculating the approximate year of birth. If a client cannot remember the month or day of birth, record an approximate date of ‘01’ for month and ‘01’ for day. CoCs that already have a policy of entering another approximate date may continue to use their existing policy. Select ‘approximate or partial date of birth’ in the case of estimating a youth’s age using a year of birth.

- Full DOB reported: A complete date of birth is provided.
- Approximate or partial DOB reported: The client cannot provide their full or exact date of birth but is able to provide their age within one year.
- Client doesn’t know: Use “Client doesn’t know” rather than “Approximate or partial DOB reported” when the client does not know their date of birth within one year. “Client doesn’t know” is not valid in conjunction with a full or approximate date entered in ‘Date of Birth’.
- Client prefers not to answer: Use “Client prefers not to answer” if the client prefers not to provide their date of birth or their age for staff to approximate. “Client prefers not to answer” is not valid in conjunction with a full or approximate date entered in ‘Date of Birth’.
- Data not collected: No attempt was made to collect DOB for the client.

3.04 Race and Ethnicity

Race and Ethnicity indicates a client's self-identification with one or more different racial and/or ethnic categories. This data supports system planning and local and national understanding of who is experiencing homelessness.

In the October 30, 1997 issue of the [Federal Register \(62 FR 58782\)](#), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published "Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity." All existing federal recordkeeping and report requirements must be in compliance with these Standards as of January 1, 2003. These data standards follow the OMB guidelines.

For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

3.06 Gender

Gender indicates a client's self-identification with one or more of the gender categories. Supports system planning, and local and national understanding of who is experiencing homelessness.

For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

3.07 Veteran Status

Veteran status is used to count the number of clients who are Veterans of the United States armed forces.

Veteran status is only applicable to TLP, MGH and Demonstration projects based on age requirements. BCP shelter projects should automatically set Veteran status to "no." It may not be possible to enter Veteran status in some HMIS software unless the youth being served is age 18 or older, as data collection is only required for adults. If the RHY youth turns 18 during their project stay, some HMIS systems will automatically enter "no" for the youth for Veteran Status, while other HMIS systems will require the grant recipient to manually enter the data. Check with your HMIS Lead on your systems functionality for Veteran status to know if you will need to update the record manually. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the HMIS Data Standards Manual.

3.08 Disabling Condition

Disabling condition is used to count the number of clients who have a disabling condition at project entry. A disabling condition combined with the length of time homeless determines if the individual is chronically homeless for HUD eligibility purposes. It is collected at project entry and then edited as necessary to reflect new information about the client.

A RHY-HMIS may be programmed to automatically determine if a client has a disabling condition based on the responses provided under [special needs](#) or the user may be required to record whether the client has a disabling condition based on one or more of the following:

- A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that:
 1. Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration;
 2. Substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently; and
 3. Could be improved by the provision of more suitable shelter/housing conditions.
- A developmental disability, as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. §15002); or
- The disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any condition arising from the etiologic agency for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV).

A client receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) should be noted as “Yes” for Disabling Condition. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

3.10 Project Start Date

The project start date is used to determine the start of a youth’s period of participation with a RHY project. All RHY projects need this data element for reporting; residential continuum projects need it to measure lengths of stay, and services-only continuum projects need it to determine the amount of time spent participating in the project.

- BCP – Emergency Shelter – The project start date is the night the youth first stayed in the shelter for the consecutive shelter period from entry to exit.
- BCP – Homelessness Prevention - The project start date is the date the youth first receives out-of-shelter services.
- TLP, MGH and Demonstration projects with residential components - The project start date is the date of the first night of residence for the youth in the project.
- SOP – The Project start date is the date of first contact with the client. (Note: SOP projects must also record the “Current Living Situation” at the time of first contact. All subsequent contacts should be captured in the “Current Living Situation” field and the project start date should remain the date of initial contact).

3.11 Project Exit Date

The purpose of the RHY project exit date is to determine the end of a youth’s period of participation with a project. All RHY projects require this data element for reporting; residential continuum projects need it to measure lengths of stay, and other projects need it to determine the amount of time spent participating in the project.

RHY Specific Instruction:

For BCP Emergency Shelter, the exit date would represent the last day of continuous stay in the shelter before the client transfers to another residential project or otherwise stops residing in the project, regardless of funding source. For example, if a person checked has a project entry into an overnight shelter on January 30, 2021, stayed overnight and left in the morning, the exit date for that shelter stay would be January 31, 2021.

The RHY Act allows youth to receive up to 21 days of emergency shelter through BCP programs with RHY funding. Alternative funds may be used to support the youth after the limit of FYSB funding has been reached. The RHY project exit date should indicate when the youth actually exited the shelter, rather than when the youth reaches the allowable RHY limit under FYSB funds. A change in program status should be noted in the case notes for the youth. This will allow for a more accurate account for how long the youth remains in care and the destination outcomes.

For TLP, MGH, and TLP Demonstration Projects, the exit date would represent the last day of continuous stay in the RHY project before the client transfers to another residential project or otherwise stops residing in the project.

The RHY Act allows up to 18 months of shelter and services through the Transitional Living and Maternity Group Homes (up to 21 months in certain cases). Alternative funds may be used to support the youth after the limit of FYSB funding has been reached for up to 21 months. The project exit date should indicate when the youth actually exited the project, rather than when the youth reaches the allowable RHY limit. This will allow for a more accurate account of how long the youth remains in care and the destination outcomes.

For BCP Homelessness Prevention, the exit date should represent the last day a service was provided. The exit date should coincide with the date the youth is no longer considered a project participant. Projects must have a clear and consistently applied procedure for determining when a youth who is receiving services is no longer considered a client. For example, if a youth is dropping in regularly to connect with a worker and receive advice/support as part of an ongoing effort to prevent their homelessness, the last date of service is the date of the last client contact or when the worker is able to close the case. If a client uses a service for just one day (i.e., starts and stops before midnight of same day), then the *Project Exit Date* may be the same as the *Project Start Date*.

For SOP, the exit date should be the date in which the Street Outreach worker is able to transfer the case to another youth provider case worker (shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing) or no longer needs to provide services to the youth. In the rare case of a youth with an open record (i.e., project start without a project exit) without any contacts recorded for a community-defined extensive length of time may be either automatically exited from the project or may be flagged for HMIS end user intervention and exit, depending on the functionality the HMIS supports and agreements made between the CoC and the RHY grant recipient. The CoC must be involved in the determination of “extended length of time” and to which projects the solution is to be applied and the auto-exit date should be the last day a contact was made.

3.12 Destination

The purpose is to identify where a youth will stay just after exiting a project for purposes of tracking and outcome measurement.

Select the response category that best describes where the youth will be living after the date on which they exit the project. For BCP – Homelessness Prevention, this may be the same as the place where the youth was living during project participation.

Below is a crosswalk of common destination situations and the appropriate HMIS responses for those situations. This list is not exhaustive, and response options for ‘Destination’ have been modified from prior years; please pay close attention to the response list to ensure an accurate destination is captured for each client. *For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).*

New for FY 2024, if a ‘Destination’ response of “Rental by Client, with ongoing housing” is selected, the Rental Subsidy Type should be additionally identified.

Common Destination Situations	HMIS Destination Response
Youth has reunified with family and is permanently returning to the home of a parent or legal guardian	Staying or living with family, permanent tenure
Youth is exiting to a RHY funded Host Home shelter or other crisis-based host home	Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher or RHY-funded Host Home shelter
Youth is exiting to a RHY funded non-crisis host home or other non-crisis host home	Host home (non-crisis)
Youth is exiting to a TLP funded or other transitional housing project	Transitional Housing

3.15 Relationship to Head of Household

This element enables HMIS users to identify one person to whom all other household members can be linked at the time they enter a project. This facilitates the identification and enumeration of households. In addition, specifying the relationship of household members to the head of household facilitates reporting on household composition.

There must be exactly one head of household for each household. It is expected that both the Head of Household and the household member (which for RHY would be the child(ren) who enter with the parenting youth) are always in the database together, in the same household, at a particular project.

Children born during a residential project enrollment who are expected to live with the residential youth should be entered into the HMIS as of their birth date and then identified as a relative to the head of household through this element.

For projects funded by RHY where two or more people under age 18 present at a project together (where none of the people presenting are the child of the youth being served by a project), each person should be entered as their own record in their own household. Entering them separately must not be a barrier to or impact future interventions.

Please remember the following

- Each unaccompanied youth is a Head of Household (“Self”)
- Youth with child(ren): The youth is a Head of Household (“Self”) and the child(ren) is(are) “Head of Household’s Child”
- Youth coming together would each be considered their own Head of Household (this includes youth who are married or siblings)

The intention is to capture the outcomes for all youth experiencing homelessness for each youth (even if married or siblings).

For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

3.16 Enrollment CoC

The Enrollment CoC (using a code required by HUD) is used to link RHY project youth data to the relevant CoC in which the assisting project operates and is necessary for projects that operate across multiple CoCs for data export purposes and to ensure accurate counts of persons who are served within a CoC.

An HMIS may automatically populate this field for projects that operate in only one CoC. If there is not an automatic population function in the HMIS or the RHY project may serve youth in multiple CoCs, select or enter the CoC code assigned to the geographic area for the project site where the head of household is being served.

A Street Outreach Program should populate this field with the CoC code of the project site that the projected is funded to operate in. It is not necessary for workers to change the CoC code when street outreach clients near CoC boundaries cross regularly between boundaries.

For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

3.917 Prior Living Situation

Element 3.917A is to be used for all youth entering a Street Outreach Program or BCP – Emergency Shelter and 3.917B is to be used for youth entering TLP, MGH, BCP – Homelessness Prevention.

Although documentation is required by some funders for programs targeting chronic homeless persons, **completing the data fields in HMIS does not require documentation** - a client’s responses are all that is

required. Different project types have different realities they are working in when it comes to interviewing clients. Some high-volume shelters may simply ask people to quickly “ballpark” their responses to the required fields. Other project types can have more complex intake processes that allow staff to sit with the client and get a clearer picture of the client’s housing history and their official “breaks” in homelessness, according to the definition of chronic homelessness. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects are going to be spending time with clients’ HMIS records and files to get information for documentation purposes, which they can use to improve data quality in this field. All these strategies are acceptable, and HUD anticipates that the data quality will vary from project type to project type. This data element is intended to provide a consistent way to capture information about individuals who are likely experiencing chronic homelessness in the HMIS for HUD and CoCs to use for planning purposes.

The local HMIS should be set up to walk an HMIS user through the following steps:

The prior living situation responses are intended to reflect from the client’s last living situation *immediately prior to the Project Start Date*. For projects that do not provide lodging, the ‘prior’ living situation may be the same as the client’s current living situation.

1. Select the ‘Prior Living Situation’ that *most closely matches* where the youth was living prior to project start. Siblings or other youth may have different prior living situations.
2. Record the length of time the client was residing in their previous place of stay.
 - a. (3.917B) If the client is entering MCH, TLP, or BCP-HP **from an institutional setting**:
 - Indicate if the client was in the institution for **fewer than 90 days** and if so, indicate if the client’s living situation **immediately prior** to entering the institution was on the streets, in an emergency shelter or a safe haven.
 - If ‘Yes’ to both, proceed to step 3. If ‘No’ to either, stop collecting data for this element.
 - b. (3.917B) If the client is entering MGH, TLP, or BCP-HP **from any type of transitional or permanent housing**:
 - Indicate if the client was in the transitional or permanent housing situation for **fewer than 7 nights** and if so, indicate if their living situation **immediately prior** to entering the transitional or permanent housing was on the streets, in an emergency shelter or a safe haven.
 - If ‘Yes’ to both, proceed to step 3. If ‘No’ to either, stop.
 - c. If the client is entering Emergency Shelter or Street Outreach, proceed to step 3.
3. Record the **actual or approximate date** the current homeless situation began (i.e. the beginning of the continuous period of homelessness on the streets, in emergency shelters, in safe havens, or moving back and forth between those places).
4. Record the **number of times** the client has been on the streets, in emergency shelters, or in safe havens in the past three years, including today.
5. Record the cumulative **total number of months** the client has been homeless on the streets, in emergency shelters, or in safe havens in the past three years.

Response Category Descriptions:

“The streets” is being used as short-hand for any place unfit for human habitation (a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground).

For clients that are being served in projects targeted for persons “at-risk of homelessness” such as homelessness prevention, the client would be residing in a housing situation and unless they were

residing in that situation for a very short time (less than 7 nights), and immediately prior to that they were homeless, then the questions on length of time on the streets, in ES or SH should not be asked/recorded.

No documentation is required for RHY to document the length of time the youth has been homeless.

For the **Street Outreach Program**, the length of time spent homeless is determined by the length of time the youth has spent on the streets or in another place not meant for human habitation. For youth who are couch-surfing or doubled-up in precarious situations, for the purposes of this element, the first month would be counted upon starting in the SOP.

For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

Common Program Data Elements

For additional rationale, response descriptions, and data type information, please refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#)

4.02 Income and Sources

Income and sources of income are important for determining service needs of people at the time of project start, determining whether they are accessing all income sources for which they are eligible, describing the characteristics of the population experiencing homelessness, and allowing analysis of changes in the composition of income between start and exit from the project and annual changes prior to project exit.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: MGH, TLP, DEMO

RHY Specific Instruction: None. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

4.03 Non-Cash Benefits

Non-cash benefits are important to determine whether clients are accessing all mainstream program benefits for which they may be eligible and to develop a more thorough picture of their economic circumstances.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

RHY Specific Instruction: None. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

4.04 Health Insurance

Health insurance information is important to determine whether clients currently have health insurance coverage and are accessing all mainstream project medical assistance benefits for which they may be eligible, and to ascertain a more complete picture of their economic circumstances.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP, BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

RHY Specific Instruction: None. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

4.05, 4.06, 4.07, 4.09, 4.10 Special Needs

4.05 Physical Disability

4.06 Developmental Disability

4.07 Chronic Health Condition

4.09 Mental Health Disorder

4.10 Substance Use Disorder

Special needs are used to identify the special conditions of runaway and homeless youth.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP, BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

RHY Specific Instruction: Projects should be especially sensitive to the collection of disability information from clients under the age of 18. In households with children accompanied by an adult 18 and over, children's disabilities should be determined based on an interview with the adult in the household.

RHY does not require documentation of disability on file for any of their projects. For general data collection information on any of the special needs, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

4.12 Current Living Situation

Formerly named "Contact," all street outreach and other service projects should record each contact with people experiencing homelessness in order to provide information on the number of contacts required to engage the client and to document a current living situation as needed in any applicable project. Each contact a client has with an outreach worker should be recorded in HMIS by recording the client's 'Current Living Situation.'

All street outreach projects are expected to record every contact made with each client, including when the *Project Start Date* or *Date of Engagement* is recorded on the same day. There may or may not be a contact made at project exit. Each SOP contact should be recorded in the client record, the first contact should be the same date as the Project Start Date.

Contacts that require the collection of 'Current Living Situation' include activities such as a conversation between a street outreach worker and client about the client's well-being or needs, an office visit to discuss their housing plan, or a referral to another community service provider.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP

RHY Specific Instruction: None. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

4.13 Date of Engagement

All street outreach projects record the date of engagement to count the number of homeless persons who are engaged by the project. Only one date of engagement is allowed between project start and project exit.

Date of engagement is defined as the date on which an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment or beginning of a case plan. The date of engagement should be entered into RHY-HMIS at the point that the client has been engaged. It may be on or after the project start date and prior to project exit. If the client exits without becoming engaged the engagement date should be left blank.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP

RHY Specific Instruction: RHY grant recipients should keep in mind that only records of clients with a date of engagement are evaluated for data completeness and quality during the quarterly upload period to FYSB.

Focus on data quality to ensure that the Date of Engagement is on or after the Project Start Date and before or on the Project Exit Date. For general data collection information on this element, refer to the [HMIS Data Standards Manual](#).

RHY Program Data Elements

R1 Referral Sources

Referral sources indicate the person, place or organization that referred the youth to the project they are entering.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Enter one referral source that most closely matches the youth's answer for each head of household. For example, for youth referred by a TLP or MGH program, the referral source would be "Residential Project." If more than one organization provided a referral, enter only one that most closely matches the referral source. If entering from an outreach project, also enter the number of times approached by outreach prior to entering the project.

R2 RHY - BCP Status

This element serves a three-fold purpose:

- A. Enables a BCP emergency shelter to record a youth that is not eligible under the FYSB-RHY program and collect information about them. Upon reporting to RHY for the federal transfer, RHY is then able to remove these youth from their program and congressional reports.
- B. Facilitates the local CoC and HMIS to utilize participation in BCP as part of their point-in-time and other counts and measures.
- C. Identifies the number of runaway youth.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es

The RHY-BCP status occurs on the date when eligibility for RHY Services has been determined. The RHY-BCP date of status determination may be on or after the project start date. If the status is identified as "No," the worker must select one of the following reasons for not being able to fund services using RHY funding. The project can continue to provide services to youth not eligible for RHY, as long as the funding does not come from the RHY grant.

1. "Out of Age Range": refers to youth who have reached the age of 18 or another age identified by the RHY grant recipient's state laws, as applicable, and are thereby ineligible for Basic Center Program shelter per RHY program regulations or state law.
2. "Ward of the State": pertains to youth who are currently the responsibility of child welfare or foster care services.
3. "Ward of the Criminal Justice system": defines youth who are currently under a court order to attend a residential juvenile facility.
4. "Other": youth who are not eligible for Basic Center Program shelter services for reasons not covered by other responses.

If the status is identified as "Yes," then identify if the youth is a runaway, meaning an individual under 18 years of age who absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of a parent or legal guardian. 42 U.S.C. §5701 et seq.

R3 Sexual Orientation

The purpose is to identify the sexual orientation of all heads of household and adults served in RHY programs.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP, BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

The response options include: Heterosexual, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Questioning/Unsure, Other, Client doesn't know, and Client prefers not to answer. Any questions regarding a client's sexual orientation must be voluntary and clients must be informed prior to responding of the voluntary nature of the question and that their choice to not respond will not result in a denial of services. It is important that this measure be updated if a youth discloses this information at a later time when a trusting relationship is established. In the case of "pansexual" or "asexual" or other options that may not be listed, RHY grant recipients are instructed to select the "Other" and to describe the "Other" response in a separate text response option should the client choose to provide a response to this question.

R4 Last Grade Completed

The purpose is to identify the educational attainment of youth served in RHY projects as well as, when appropriate, measure a change in education from project start to project exit for all head of households and youth.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Choose one response category describing the last grade level completed by the client at the time of project start. At project exit, indicate the last grade completed by the client as of the date of exit. For option #14, 'Vocational certification' this includes any technical certification as well.

R5 School Status

The purpose is to identify the educational status of youth served in RHY projects as well as, when appropriate, measure a change in school status from project start to project exit for all head of households and youth.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Choose one response category describing the client's school status. If the client is currently in school and school is not in session at the time of the client's project start, this question pertains to the prior school year.

1. *"Attending School Regularly"*- The youth is enrolled in an educational program and attends classes regularly, without extended absenteeism.
2. *"Attending School Irregularly"* - The youth is enrolled in an educational program and attends classes 1-3 days per week on average.
3. *"Graduated High School"* - The youth has earned a high school diploma.
4. *"Obtained GED"* – The youth has earned a GED.
5. *"Dropped Out"* - The youth has formally withdrawn from school prior to completing the course of study.
6. *"Suspended"* - The youth has been temporarily removed from school through official school action.
7. *"Expelled"* - The youth has been permanently removed from school through official school action.
8. *"Client Doesn't Know"* – The client did not know about their school status.
9. *"Client prefers not to answer"* – The client prefers not to answer to answer the question.

R6 Employment Status

The purpose is to assess a client's employment status and need for employment services as well as, when appropriate, measure a change in employment from project start to project exit for all head of households and adults.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Enter the date that the information was collected from the client or to which the information is relevant. For example, if information is collected several days after project entry, it may be entered using an *Information date* that is the same as the start date as long as the information accurately reflects the client's income as of the start date. Select the response category that most accurately reflects the client's employment status.

Response Category Descriptions:

1. *"Full-time"* – Youth is employed full-time.
2. *"Part-time"* – Youth is employed part-time.
3. *"Seasonal/sporadic (including day labor)"* – Youth is employed occasionally, with periods of unemployment interspersed with employment. This includes summer or holiday-specific employment.
4. *"Looking for work"* – Youth is not employed and is actively looking for work.
5. *"Unable to work"* – Youth is not employed because he or she is unable to work due to a physical disability, a developmental disability, or an illness.
6. *"Not looking for work"* – Youth is not employed and is not looking for employment. This would include persons who are not looking for work because of full-time education, under-age, etc.

R7, R8, R9 Health Status

R7 General Health Status

R8 Dental Health Status

R9 Mental Health Status

Information on health status (general health, dental health, and mental health) is a first step to identifying what types of health services a client may need. This element permits comparison between homeless youth to other youth their age as well as measure a change in status from project start to project exit for all heads of household and adults.

The general health status is a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is excellent and 5 is poor. Thus, a lower health score at exit actually indicates an increase in well-being, and a higher score at exit indicates a decline in well-being.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Ask the youth to select the response which best describes their health: excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, client doesn't know, or client prefers not to answer.

R10 Pregnancy Status

The purpose is to determine the number of people entering projects while pregnant and to determine eligibility for benefits and need for services.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP, BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Indicate if any adult in the household, or minor head of household (i.e. the head of household (any age) and/or youth (age 18+)) is pregnant and, if so, the expected due date. If the expected due date is unknown, projects are encouraged to record as much of the date as known. Default to January, the first day of the month, and current year for any part of the expected due date not known. If a youth becomes pregnant during their project stay, update the information to record the pregnancy.

R11 Formerly a Ward of Child Welfare/Foster Care Agency

The purpose is to identify clients with child welfare or foster care histories.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Choose the response category that indicates whether the client was formerly the responsibility of the child welfare or foster care agency at or before project start: no, yes, Client doesn't know, or Client prefers not to answer.

R12 Formerly a Ward of Juvenile Justice System

The purpose is to identify clients with juvenile justice system responsibility histories.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Choose the response category to indicate whether the client was formerly the responsibility of the juvenile justice system at or any time before project start: no, yes, Client doesn't know, or Client prefers not to answer.

R13 Family Critical Issues

The purpose is to identify specific family issues faced by youth in RHY programs that may have contributed to the youth's homelessness or is a factor in family reunification.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Choose appropriate response categories to identify the family issues, as identified by staff and the young person for each head of household and adult. These issues should be those of other family members in the household the youth absented, not of the youth themselves or of any of the youth's children.

Response Category Descriptions:

1. *"Unemployment"* – Issues associated with the inability to of an adult member in the youth's family to find and secure steady employment.
2. *"Mental Health Disorder"* – Issues related to a family member's mental health disorder.
3. *"Physical Disability"* - Issues related to a family member's physical disability or impairment.
4. *"Alcohol or Substance Use Disorder"* – Any misuse of alcohol, or legal or illegal drugs within the household.
5. *"Insufficient Income to support youth"* – Issues related to insufficient incomes of the parents/legal guardians to support the basic needs of the youth (e.g., food, clothing, and shelter).
6. *"Incarcerated Parent"* – Issues related to the incarceration of a parent or legal guardian.

R14 RHY Service Connections

The RHY service connections enable projects to report on the services that they either directly provided youth through their project or at their organization or which they facilitated being provided by another provider during the project stay for all heads of household and adults.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, and DEMO

Record the date of the initial service connection in the date field and indicate the type of service. Services which require repeat visits for the same kind of service (e.g. community service/learning, pre-natal care, etc.) are only required to enter the first service of the type (i.e. not one entry for each pre-natal care visit).

The following chart indicates which projects collect which service connections:

RHY Service Connections	BCP-p	BCP-es	TLP& MGH	DEMO
Community service/service learning (CSL)			X	X
Criminal justice /legal services	X	X	X	X
Education	X	X	X	X
Employment and/or training services			X	X
Health/medical care	X	X	X	X
Home-based Services	X			
Life skills training	X	X	X	X
Parenting education for youth with children	X	X	X	X
Post-natal newborn care (wellness exams; immunizations)			X	X
Post-natal care for client (person who gave birth)			X	X
Pre-natal care			X	X
STD Testing	X	X		
Street-based Services	X			
Substance Use Disorder treatment	X	X	X	X
Substance Use Disorder Ed/Prevention Services	X	X	X	X

Response Category Descriptions:

1. “Community service/service learning (CSL)”: Activities that involve youth in helping others or the community.
2. “Criminal justice/legal services”: Legal services or guidance provided through an attorney or an attorney-supervised paralegal.
3. “Education”: Includes learning disability assessment, tutoring, GED preparation, local school enrollment, vocational education, etc.
4. “Employment and training services”: Includes services related to helping young people obtain and retain employment, such as assessment, coaching, filling out applications, interviewing, practicing and conducting job searches, referrals, and job maintenance skills.
5. “Health/medical care”: Provision of general health care or surgical services by licensed medical practitioners.
6. “Home-based services”: Includes any range of services offered at home, usually aimed at keeping a youth from running away or the family stabilized.
7. “Life skills training”: Includes formal and informal coaching and training in communications skills, health promotion, conflict/anger management, assertiveness, goal setting, budgeting, life planning, nutrition, hygiene, etc.

8. "Parenting education for youth with children": Services designed to build improved parenting skills for RHY clients with children.
9. "Post-natal newborn care": Services and healthcare provided to the baby after birth, including wellness exams and immunizations.
10. "Post-natal care for client (person who gave birth)": Services and healthcare provided to the mother after birth, including wellness exams and immunizations.
11. "Pre-natal care": Services and healthcare provided to expectant clients to ensure a healthy pregnancy, labor, and delivery.
12. "STD testing": Procedures to test for a range of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
13. "Street-based Services": Services provided to youth on the street, including gateway services, assessment, harm reduction, crisis stabilization, and continuum service linkages.
14. "Substance Use Disorder Treatment": Any research-based youth treatment service aimed at stopping substance use disorders and related problems.
15. "Substance Use Disorder Ed/Prevention Services": Comprehensive assessment of an individual's current or past involvement with alcohol and/or drugs and/or provision of treatment, including screening, aimed at stopping their substance use disorder.

R15 Commercial Sexual Exploitation/Sex Trafficking

The purpose is to assess the extent of sexual exploitation among homeless youth.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP, BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

RHY grant recipients are encouraged to use the following language to collect the fields in this data element:

Field Name	RHY preferred wording
Ever received anything in exchange for sex (e.g. money, food, drugs, shelter)	"Have you ever received anything in exchange for having sexual relations with another person, such as money, food, drugs, or shelter?"
If yes to 1 - In the last three months	If they say "yes" to the question above, then ask "Has it been in the past three months?"
If yes to 1 - How many times	"How many times have you received something in exchange for having sexual relations with another person, such as money, food, drugs, or shelter?"
If yes to 1 - Ever made/persuaded to have sex in exchange for something	"Did someone ever make you or persuade you to have sex with anyone else in exchange for something, such as money, food, drugs or shelter?"
If yes to Dependent C – In the last three months?	If they say "yes" to the question above, then ask "Has it been in the past three months?"

R16 Labor Exploitation/Trafficking

The purpose is to assess the extent of labor exploitation among homeless youth.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: SOP, BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

RHY grant recipients are encouraged to use the following language to collect the fields in this data element:

Field Name	RHY preferred wording
Ever afraid to quit/leave work due to threats of violence to yourself, family, or friends	“Have you ever been afraid to leave or quit a work situation due to fears of violence or other threats of harm to yourself, family or friends?”
Ever promised work where work or payment different than you expected	“Have you ever been promised work where the work or payment ended up being different from what you expected?”
If yes to 1 – Felt forced, pressured or tricked into continuing the job	“Did you feel forced, pressured or tricked into continuing this job?”
If yes to 1 – In the last 3 months	“Have you had any jobs like these in the last 3 months?”

R17 Project Completion Status

The purpose is to identify whether the client completed the project or exited without completion. This data is only collected on heads of household and adults at project exit.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Choose one response category that describes the client’s project completion status. If the client, was expelled or was otherwise involuntarily discharged from the project, choose the major reason for leaving.

Response Category Descriptions:

1. “Completed project” – The client completed the project.
2. “Client voluntarily left early” – The client voluntarily terminated from the project to pursue other opportunities. These could include: a safe appropriate independent living situation an educational or vocational opportunity; military service or any other positive disposition.
3. “Client was expelled or otherwise involuntarily discharged from project” – The client was involuntarily terminated from the project with no plan or invitation to return.
 - *Criminal activity/Destruction of Property/Violence* – Client left for displaying behavior that was a threat to safety to themselves, others, or property.
 - *Non-compliance with Project Rules* – Client refused to follow program rules or participate in activities as outlined in their plan.
 - *Non-payment of Rent/Occupancy Charge* – Client failed to make full or partial payments for their accommodations per rental or lease agreement.
 - *Reached Maximum Time Allowed by Projects* – Client reached maximum time allowed by the project without completing goals as out lined in their goal plan.
 - *Project Terminated* – Client required to exit the project prematurely as a result of a closure of the program or facility.
 - *Unknown/Disappeared* – Client was exited from the project after absenting themselves without developing an exit plan or providing notification of destination.

Note: A youth who is exited from a program because of their disappearance without advanced planning or notice, should be accurately reflected in Data Element 3.12 Destination, as “No exit interview.”

R18 Counseling

The purpose of this element is to identify the type and amount of counseling received by adults and heads of households enrolled in RHY projects.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, Demo

Counseling per the RHY Rule [45 CFR §1351] means the provision of guidance, support, referrals for services including, but not limited to, health services, and advice to runaway or otherwise homeless youth and their families, as well as to youth and families when a young person is at risk of running away, as appropriate. These services are provided in consultation with clients and are designed to alleviate the problems that have put the youth at risk of running away or contributed to his or her running away or being homeless. Any treatment or referral to treatment that aims to change someone's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression is prohibited.

Indicate if the client received counseling during their project say and the primary type of counseling received: individual, family, or group counseling. Group counseling may include topical counseling (e.g. substance abuse) and/or peer counseling.

For each client that received counseling, indicate the total number of sessions the client received between project start and exit. Also, indicate the number of sessions planned for in the client's treatment or service plan, and whether a plan is in place to either start or to continue counseling after project exit.

R19 Safe and Appropriate Exit

The purpose of this element is to determine the number of youth who exited to safe and appropriate destinations as determined by the youth (head of household and adult) themselves and as determined by the project/caseworker.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-es, MGH, TLP, Demo

Safe and Appropriate Exits per the RHY Rule [45 CFR §1351] means settings that reflect achievement of the intended purposes of the Basic Center and Transitional Living Programs as outlined in section 382(a) of the Act. Examples of Safe and Appropriate Exits are exits to:

1. Private residence of a parent, guardian, another adult relative, or another adult that has the youth's best interest in mind and can provide a stable arrangement, or
2. Another residential program if the youth's transition to the other residential program is consistent with the youth's needs, or
3. Independent living if consistent with the youth's needs and abilities.

Safe and appropriate exits are not exits to:

1. The streets;
2. Locked correctional institute or detention center if the youth became involved in activities that lead to this exit after entering the program;
3. Another residential program if the youth's transition to the other residential program is inconsistent with the youth's needs; or
4. An unknown or unspecified other living situation.

45 C.F.R. §1351.1

For each youth, identify if the exit destination is safe (as defined above); if the youth has a permanent positive adult connection outside of the RHY project; and if the youth has permanent positive community connections outside of the RHY project.

If the youth exits without completing this information, the worker is required to answer the question “Exit destination safe – as determined by the client” with “data not collected” and complete the remaining worker-based responses.

The worker response should be provided by the primary staff person/case worker for the youth served or the staff person the youth most engaged with in the project. The worker’s responses should be based on their knowledge of the youth and their situation and be reflective of the workers best professional judgement. Where workers have not engaged with youth enough to feel comfortable with their knowledge of the young person to render an opinion, they may enter “worker does not know”.

R20 Aftercare

The purpose is to identify the extent of aftercare plans which were executed post-exit from the project.

RHY Projects Requiring Collection: BCP-p, BCP-es, MGH, TLP, DEMO

Aftercare per the RHY Rule [45 CFR §1351] means additional services provided beyond the period of residential stay that offer continuity and supportive follow-up to youth served by the program. Aftercare entries that will be considered are those entered from the date of project exit for a minimum of 3 months after the date of exit. Each client must have at least one Aftercare record entered indicating if aftercare was provided (yes/no/client prefers not to answer). If no aftercare was provided enter the information date as the date of project exit and “no” to aftercare was provided.

For each type of aftercare provided the information date should be the date of the first provision of aftercare service. Then indicate the method of aftercare provision as either:

- Via email or social media contact
- Via telephone
- In person – one-on-one contact
- In person – where the youth participated in a group

A record of each type of aftercare service should be made if a youth receives more than one type. Although after care services can be ongoing, this element only seeks to record the immediate provision of aftercare services. FYSB does not require the creation of a new project to track services beyond 180 days to clients offered after they leave an RHY-funded program.