

Uploading RHY-HMIS Data Frequently Asked Questions

October 2019

Family & Youth Services Bureau: Runaway & Homeless Youth Program



Family & Youth
Services Bureau

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1.0 Usernames, Passwords and Logging on to RHYPoint

1. I never received login information. What do I do?

By default, the authorized user identified for your RHY grant-funded project (in Grant Solutions) receives RHYPoint account login information. At the start of a grant cycle, the authorized user is often your organization's CEO or Executive Director. Please check with that person to see if they received the login information (sent October 17, 2019 from no-replyRHYMIS@air.org). Only the authorized user can designate a new authorized user, and there is only one authorized user per project who will be allowed to upload RHY data. (Other staff at your agency can be authorized to receive the automated Data Quality Report that is generated with each upload.)

The authorized user for RHY project X who wishes to designate a different authorized user to upload RHY data for project X can do so by submitting a request to the on-line RHY-HMIS Service Desk at www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net. Once authorized user A designates a new authorized user B, only authorized user B will be able to log in to RHYPoint to upload RHY data for project X. Once such a change is requested, person B will receive the necessary login information to access RHYPoint.

For this submission period, each RHY grantee will receive an email request in October to confirm that we have the names and contact information for the person(s) who will be the authorized RHYPoint user for each of your RHY grants. Once that information is confirmed, the username(s) and password(s) will be sent October 17 to the authorized user for each RHY grant for the purpose of uploading RHY project data covering the period October 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019/September 30, 2019.

Here is the procedure to follow if an authorized user wishes to designate a different person to become the authorized user:

- Log into www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net using the login and password you received
- Click on "User Accounts & Passwords,"
- Then to the right, click on "User Management"
- Next click in the box under the field "Type of User Management Issue" and options will appear.
- Click on "Add or change users (one per project)."
- Then in the blank box below enter a note saying you'd like to change the authorized user who uploads the data (one per project allowed). For example, "Instead of Judy Jones [assuming she gives permission and wants you to upload the data] we would like Stan Smith to be the authorized user."
- In that same box, the person designating a new authorized user can also indicate that they and/or other persons in their organization wish to receive the automated Data Quality Report that is generated with each upload. They can also add the names and emails of other persons who should receive that automated Data Quality Report.

Going forward, if the authorized user wishes to add the names and email addresses of other persons who should receive the automated Data Quality Report, they can follow this same procedure to add the recipient names and emails.

2. My CEO received a username and Password for RHY-HMIS. I upload the data, can I get a username and password too?

Please read the answer to Question 1 (above) and explain to your CEO how to log in to the RHY-HMIS Service Desk (www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net) so that s/he can designate you as the authorized user. Note that she can continue to receive the automated Data Quality Report that is generated each time RHY data is uploaded.

3. I need a password/the account to be reset.

New passwords were emailed to current authorized users and other additional users that are added via the RHY-HMIS Service Desk (URL: www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net). That email was sent October 2019. If you need an additional password reset, please submit a ticket at www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net.

4. How does the data submission process work?

RHY data is collected as you enter information into your HMIS. When the time comes to submit your RHY data, use your HMIS to extract RHY data. The data you will be uploading in October/November 2019 covers clients receiving services during the reporting period October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019. Your HMIS should generate data files using HMIS CSV Format Specifications Version FY2020 1.1. In generating these data files, your HMIS will automatically hash the Name and Social Security fields for all clients whose data are included in the RHY upload files.

Your HMIS will generate a set of CSV files for each of your RHY projects and will package those files into a .ZIP file corresponding to each project. That is, your HMIS will generate one .ZIP file for each RHY project. Once your HMIS has generated an RHY .ZIP file, you can log into RHYPoint and upload that .ZIP file. You'll receive a message on the screen indicating success and/or critical or non-critical errors. The file will be successfully uploaded if there are no critical errors. Non-critical errors will not stop the upload.

If the upload was done before 5pm Central time, you should receive a Data Quality Report the next morning via email (it could possibly take longer if uploading traffic on the server is particularly high). If the upload was done after 5pm, the report may arrive two days after uploading.

5. Will all existing users be given a new password? When will this new password be given out to old users? What do we do if we don't get the new password?

All existing users are given a new password. The new password was sent to all users in the system on October 17, 2019. It came from the email address no-ReplyRHY-HMIS@air.org. If you didn't receive a new password, you can request one via the RHY-HMIS On-line Service Desk (www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net).

6. If we logged in during previous years, do we need a new log-in & password this year, or will what we used last year still work?

A username/password was sent out in October 17, 2019. If you logged in during previous years it is likely that the same username will work, but the password is different. Your password will have come from the email address no-Reply@RHY-HMIS@air.org. If you didn't receive a new password, you can request one through the RHY-HMIS On-line Service Desk (www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net).

2.0 Logistics and Dates

7. When is the current upload period?

The RHYPoint portal (www.rhymis.net) is open to RHY grantees October 28, 2019 – November 15, 2019. As a reminder, please continue to update your data in HMIS so that maintaining completeness and accuracy (data quality) is an ongoing process.

8. Is the HMIS Vendor the same as the HMIS Lead?

No. The vendor is the company that developed your HMIS software. The HMIS Lead is the entity in your CoC who is responsible for HMIS in your community. All HMIS software questions should go to your HMIS Lead.

9. When is/was the testing period for uploads?

The most recent testing period for HMIS vendors was October 11-24, 2019. If RHY upload files were not tested at that time, and if there are any structural issues with the data you upload, you will receive a note as to what is wrong. Please share with your HMIS Lead immediately.

10. What is the date range that I should use for this submission period?

Use October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019 as the date range for the report. That means you are including all data for all clients who were active at some point during that period.

11. Who is required to submit data?

All RHY grantees that were active (received RHY funding and had at least one client enrolled) in FY 2019 are required to submit data for this submission period.

12. Does a grantee whose grant ended in 2018 have to resubmit data that was submitted in the last federal transfer period?

If the grantee had no client activity subsequent to September 30, 2018, they should not submit.

13. Does the date range for the data I submit for this submission period depend on whether I had a chance to upload or improve data in the prior submission period?

You are required to submit data from October 28, 2018 through November 15, 2019. The date range of activity, again, for this submission is October 1, 2018 through September 2019, whether or not you uploaded data during the springtime submission period. However, since the current 12-month data upload replaces data from the prior six-month upload, the data quality of your submission will clearly be higher if you have taken steps to improve the accuracy and completeness of the data contained in that previously upload.

14. My first grant for the project ended in September 2018 and then I received another grant which began in October 2018. Do I submit a CSV file – hashed for RHY for each grant -- even if some clients are the same?

Please submit data into RHYPoint only for the grant that began in October 2018.

15. What are the key changes in this submission period vs. the previous submission periods?

There are no key changes for this period that significantly affect RHY grantees. Moving forward after October 1, 2019 there are changes to be aware of regarding BCP-Emergency Shelter Host Homes, and for the SOP programs, the change of the “Contact” field name to “Current Living Situation.”

16. I understand upload steps from RHYPoint; however, where do we go to obtain the initial CSV file?

For each RHY project, you will be uploading an HMIS-generated .ZIP file to RHYPoint. That .ZIP file will consist of a set of HMIS-generated project-specific CSV files. Your HMIS Lead can show you how to generate the .ZIP file for your project. Once a .ZIP file is created you should upload that .ZIP file into RHYPoint at www.RHYMIS.net. For a step-by-step explanation of the upload process, download the “*Uploading RHY-HMIS Data User Guide*,” available at <https://www.rhyttac.net/rhy-hmis>.

17. Was there an open pilot week to make sure that uploads were working correctly?

HMIS vendors had a testing window in October 2019 to ensure that files are being imported correctly. We especially wanted to test any issues pertaining to changes in the new CSV specs and HMIS standards.

18. Will there be a 'Sandbox' environment to test data before submission?

At present, there is not be a ‘Sandbox’ environment for grantees. However, HMIS vendors had the opportunity to test data files in October 2019. As always, however, you will get appropriate feedback if there are structural errors in your data. If the structure of your data is good, you will receive a data quality report describing issues with missing or inconsistent data. If the structure of your data is problematic, you will receive an explanation of that problem, which you should quickly forward to your HMIS Lead, who can work with your HMIS vendor to correct the problem.

3.0 Technical Assistance with RHY-HMIS

19. How do we access TA?

All TA requests regarding RHY-HMIS should come through the on-line RHY-HMIS TA Service Desk (www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net). Phone and e-mail may be used to follow-up with RHY-HMIS TA staff, but only after a TA Question or “ticket” is generated in www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net.

Click this link to see a short video on TA options for RHY-HMIS, “[How to Access RHY-HMIS Resources](#)”

20. What is the response time for on-line service desk to provide you with an answer?

Twenty-four (24) hours at most to get back to you. Usually it is much sooner.

4.0 Multiple Projects

21. Should I upload one bundled file for multiple projects or one file per project?

For SOP, TLP, and MGH projects, grantees generally need to upload one .ZIP file per grant. However, if your grant supports multiple programs which are recorded as separate projects in HMIS, you will need to request a RHYPoint dropdown menu option for each project, so that a separate .ZIP file can be uploaded for each project.

For example, BCP programs should be set up to upload separate .ZIP files for (a) data pertaining to the shelter-based portion of the program and (b) data pertaining to the portion of the program delivering “prevention” services to youth in an out-of-shelter setting. Services provided to youth staying in the shelter should be recorded and reported in the BCP emergency shelter HMIS project, and services provided to youth who are not staying in the shelter should be recorded and reported in the BCP homelessness prevention project in HMIS. Each of these projects should appear on the grant dropdown menu separately. Here’s what the options might look like in your grant dropdown menu in RHYPoint:

ChildrensWay_BCP-ES_90YO8234_2019 (indicates the emergency shelter project for youth served in the shelter)

ChildrensWay_BCP-HP_90YO8234_2019 (indicates the homelessness prevention project for youth served out-of-shelter)

Note that the shelter project and the prevention project must each designate an authorized user; there can be a single authorized user for both projects, or a different authorized user for each project.

See Questions 22 and 23 below for more about grants supporting programs recorded as separate projects.

22. I have one grant that supports multiple programs. In HMIS they are set up as separate projects. How do I report on them using RHYPoint?

If you have an RHY grant that funds a single project (e.g., a TLP), you will upload one .ZIP file for that project. If you have a grant that funds multiple programs (e.g., a shelter and a homelessness prevention program funded by a single BCP grant), you will need to upload a separate .ZIP file for each project. In order to do that, you will need to request a separate dropdown menu option in RHYPoint for each project, so that RHYPoint will know to associate all of the project-specific .ZIP files that are uploaded with the correct grant number. To request an additional dropdown menu option, create a ticket at www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net.

Note of Caution: *Do not submit the projects separately to RHYPoint without getting the special project dropdown. A new file submitted using the same dropdown option will overwrite the old file. Also, do not try to open the CSV file and cut and paste another project’s CSV into it. This will likely cause critical errors in the file and your entire submission will be rejected.*

23. I have one grant that supports programs in two different CoCs with two different HMIS implementations (either different software or the data are on different servers). How do I report them to FYSB?

This situation requires a similar response to the situation described in Question 22 above. For example, if an RHY grant funds a street outreach program (SOP) that operates in two CoCs, and that collects project data in two HMIS systems, it will be necessary to contact RHY-HMIS TA staff via the on-line

www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net to request the creation of separate RHYPoint project dropdown menu options corresponding to each CoC's share of the street outreach program. When the time comes for the semi-annual RHYPoint upload, you will upload two .ZIP files – one for each CoC's share of the client/program data – but RHYPoint will know to associate both files with the same RHY grant number.

24. We have multiple projects. Does each project require separate passwords?

You can only have one authorized user *per project*, so if your grant funds multiple projects (e.g., shelter and prevention, or a project that operates in multiple CoCs), you may have multiple users *per grant* (if the different projects have different authorized users). Additionally, you may have additional people that receive the Data Quality Report by email after each successful submission in RHYPoint. You can request that via www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net.

25. Can an agency maintain a youth in both a SOP and BCP RHY-HMIS simultaneously?

No. A grantee cannot maintain a single youth in both SOP and BCP simultaneously. If a youth is in an SOP and decides to enter shelter, an exit date for SOP should be documented indicating the transfer of the case to shelter (with applicable start date) and the youth should be tracked/coded in RHY-HMIS under BCP Emergency Shelter.

26. If we added multiple users or data quality report recipients in the previous upload period, do these need to be added again?

No. If added last upload period they will carry over. Also, you may have designated additional people that receive the Data Quality Report by email after each successful submission in RHYPoint. That will carry over too.

27. How do I handle uploading data for a single Basic Center Program (BCP) when the HMIS has the grant split into Emergency Shelter and Homelessness Prevention?

See the answers to Questions 21 and 22, above.

28. Can I put my BCP, SOP, MGH and TLP projects all in one CSV?

No. Please keep project types separate. Generate and upload one .ZIP file per project.

29. I have two grants that fund the same project, but for slightly different populations. There is only one project set up in my HMIS. What do I do?

Please submit data into RHYPoint for both grants. RHYPoint will unduplicate the clients on the back end and you do not need to worry about double reporting.

5.0 Technical Issues (CSV Specs, Data Standards, etc.)

30. I'm having issues extracting data in my HMIS.

For the upcoming upload period (October 28-November 15, 2019), you need to extract an HMIS CSV FY2020 1.1 report – hashed for RHY (i.e., with the Name and Social Security Number fields de-identified). Please contact your HMIS Lead so they can advise you on how to use your HMIS software to generate a CSV 2020 1.1 report.

31. What version of the HMIS CSV Specifications are required for uploading into RHYPoint?

For this October/November 2019 RHY-HMIS submission period, RHYPoint is programmed to accept upload files that follow the HMIS CSV Format Specifications 2020 v1.1. Upload files based on previous versions of HMIS CSV specifications will not be accepted.

32. We were informed that RHY recipients should only record services and outgoing referrals once per enrollment instead of each time a service or referral is given. Is that correct?

This is correct. We only require that services and referrals are noted once per enrollment. You should still record the details of each service or referral in your case notes.

33. Where can we access the new data standards?

Click here to access the [HMIS Data Standards Version 1.3 \(April 2018\)](#). The latest Data Dictionary is here: [HMIS Data Dictionary Version 1.3 \(March 2018\)](#).

34. I wanted to know who receives information about the new HUD standards. I did not know that services needed to be entered only once.

Information about the release of new standards comes from HUD via the HUD Exchange Mailing List. Often HMIS Leads will also provide information about new standards and requirements. You can be added to that mailing list by signing up at [HUD Exchange Mailing List](#).

35. What if the HMIS Lead has not set up my project correctly and the data set is missing elements?

You should work with your HMIS Lead to make sure that your program is set up with the right project types, correct HHS grant number, and the right elements, as described in the [HMIS Data Dictionary \(v1.3\)](#). If you need additional technical assistance regarding missing or superfluous elements, contact the [HUD Ask a Question](#).

6.0 RHY Program Specific Questions (BCP, TLP, SOP)

36. How should programs document prevention services and aftercare in RHY-HMIS? In particular, how should programs document: (a) services provided to homeless youth who have been discharged from a Basic Center Program-Emergency Shelter (BCP-ES) program and who are living on the street or some other unstable situation; and (b) services provided to homeless youth who move back and forth between a BCP emergency shelter program and the street or another unstable situation?

Every CoC has a designated HMIS Lead. The HMIS Lead is the person or entity responsible for, among other things, RHY-HMIS project setup. This includes setting up RHY-HMIS so that each BCP has two components: BCP-ES and BCP-P (Prevention). It also includes making sure the RHY-HMIS has an Aftercare Plans field. This data element is used to describe Aftercare Plans executed after the youth's exit from the BCP project. Aftercare Plans are required for all RHY programs, except SOP, and should cover a period of a minimum of 90 days after exit from the RHY project. Grantees are expected to begin discharge planning at intake to minimize youth leaving the project to unsafe situations. Case planning, even over the course of 24 hours, should focus on anticipated shelter needs, potential referrals, and aftercare planning.

So, specifically answering the questions above: (a) grantees should document Aftercare services provided to homeless youth who have been discharged from a BCP-ES program and are living on the street or some other unstable situation in their aftercare notes. Every time aftercare is provided, grantees should enter "Aftercare Plans" data into RHY-HMIS: this includes the fact that it was provided, the dates aftercare was provided, and the method in which it was provided. Aftercare Plans data should be entered for up to 90 days. If the youth goes back into a BCP-ES program, a new Project Entry date should be reflected; (b) grantees should document services provided to homeless youth who move back and forth between a BCP-ES program and the street or another unstable situation in the same way. After exiting the BCP-ES, any aftercare should be recorded in case records. In RHY-HMIS Aftercare Plans should be documented for a period of a minimum of 90 days.

37. What is the distinction between Shelter and Prevention?

Over the course of their participation in a BCP program, a youth may receive **either** BCP-P or BCP-ES or **both** BCP-P and BCP-ES services, but not simultaneously. Since BCP-ES services can be provided within the shelter building or in other locations, the following guidance may be helpful in determining whether services provided outside the actual shelter constitute BCP-P services or BCP-ES services for youth staying in a BCP emergency shelter.

- If a youth receives BCP services but is **not** staying in a BCP-ES or other RHY residential programs, data about the youth's status and services would be entered into the BCP-P RHY-HMIS project.
- If a youth who is eligible for the BCP program, has been receiving BCP-P services makes the decision to enter a BCP-ES, the youth should be exited from the BCP-P RHY-HMIS project as of the date they entered the shelter, and the youth should then be enrolled in the BCP-ES

- RHY-HMIS project effective the date the youth entered the shelter. It is acceptable, if the RHY-HMIS has such capacity, to automate the exit from the BCP-P project when such a youth is enrolled in the BCP-ES project.
- If a youth is staying in the BCP-ES, data about the youth’s status and services would be entered into the BCP-ES RHY-HMIS project.
 - If an unsheltered youth is eligible for the BCP program, and begins receiving BCP services and decides to enter the shelter that same night, data about all the services the youth received that day can be entered into the BCP-ES RHY-HMIS project, and there is no need to enroll the youth in the BCP-P RHY-HMIS project.
 - As stated above, if a youth exits a BCP-ES RHY-HMIS project, that is, they leave the shelter, they should be exited from BCP-ES. If they continue to receive services, those services are considered aftercare services for at least 90 days. If aftercare services end, and there is no contact with the youth, and the youth later needs shelter or prevention services, they would then be re-entered into BCP-ES (if shelter is provided) or BCP-P, as appropriate.

38. What is the distinction between Aftercare and Prevention?

Aftercare services are provided after a youth is exited entirely from the BCP program. If the youth is discharged from the BCP-ES and the minimum of 90 days of aftercare is provided, then the youth begins to receive BCP-P services, the youth should be re-enrolled in the BCP-P RHY-HMIS project, and the youth's status and ongoing services should be tracked in that project.

Aftercare Plans information may be entered only after a youth has been exited/discharged from the BCP-ES and cannot be recorded before the youth has been exited from the appropriate RHY-HMIS project. Each RHY-HMIS system may handle aftercare plans differently, but must project set up should include the following for Aftercare: 1) enter whether aftercare was collected (yes/no/refused), 2) the date information was collected, and 3) the primary way service was provided (e.g., telephone, in-person: one-on-one). In addition to Aftercare Plans data being entered into RHY-HMIS, grantees should document the nature of the aftercare service provided in the youth’s case notes.

39. What is the clarification of the following RHY-HMIS elements and how best to document?

- a. **BCP-P: Prevention** services only (no shelter stay), on their own, before residential stay or after aftercare period once the client has been out of contact.
- b. **BCP-ES: Emergency** shelter stays. Exit date should be the last date of stay (and may go beyond FYSB-funded portion of 21 days).
- c. **BCP-Host Home Shelter: Emergency** shelter stay where the model is a host family home. Exit dates should be last date of stay (and may go beyond FYSB-funded portion of 21 days).
 - i. Make sure you use both projects, as appropriate.
 - ii. If you do not have a prevention project, please ask your HMIS Lead to set it up in your RHY-HMIS to track youth who are receiving services only, and not staying in an RHY BCP-ES.
- d. **Aftercare Plans**
 - i. The Aftercare Plans field is for all RHY Programs (except Street Outreach Programs).

- ii. Aftercare is entered only **after** a client has been exited from the RHY program and cannot be entered into the RHY-HMIS before the client has exited from the RHY program.
- iii. Required for clients for up to a minimum of 90 days after exit.
- iv. Each HMIS system may handle aftercare differently in its system, but must enter whether aftercare was collected (yes/no/client refused), the date information was collected, and the primary way services were provided.
- v. If unsure, talk to your HMIS Lead.

e. Date of engagement versus date of contact for Street Outreach Program (SOP)

A **contact** (data element 4.12) is an interaction between an outreach worker and an individual youth. Record a contact each time a youth is encountered by grantee outreach staff.

Note: *Beginning October 1, 2019, the revised HMIS Data Standards have changed the name of this field to “4.12 Current Living Situation.” This does not affect the Fall 2019 RHY-HMIS Data Submission since this data upload period will cover data and activity through September 30, 2019.*

The **date of engagement** (data element 4.13) is the date when a deliberate youth assessment or the beginning of a case plan occurs. There can be no more than one date of engagement per SOP program enrollment.

- The date of engagement can be left blank if the SOP worker did not engage with the youth at a level that merits recording a date of engagement.
- If a date of engagement is recorded, it should be on or after the project entry date (enrollment date) and before the project exit date. However, in any given reporting period, there may or may not be a date of engagement recorded for a particular youth.

40. BCP: How do we know if we have to submit BCP prevention data? Is this only if we receive BCP prevention funding?

If you provide BCP grant-funded services for youth who are not staying in shelter or who have exited shelter prior to receiving those services, you should record those services in the BCP-homelessness prevention project.

41. BCP: The slide for the BCP Prevention and Shelter programs was unclear - we only have a shelter program in HMIS. The slide made it sound like Prevention is the default when for us, the default is Shelter. It would be a huge burden to back-track hundreds of clients to do an entry/exit on the same day for Prevention.

Usually, BCP grants fund both in-shelter and out-of-shelter services. If your BCP grant funds both, then you need to record data about youth that are served in shelter under an Emergency Shelter project and youth who receive out-of-shelter services in a Homelessness Prevention project. Both projects are necessary to get an accurate count and scope of the work of your program.

If your BCP grant only funds shelter services and does not fund out-of-shelter services, the out-of-shelter services do not need to be uploaded in the national upload. However, we still recommend using your HMIS to record the out-of-shelter services to youth that you provide. Recording information about these out-of-shelter youth and the services they receive may help your Continuum of Care better understand the youth homeless population, and the number and the types of services that you provide to youth.

42. BCP: Our BCP emergency shelter program was recently told that if youth receive shelter services for 3 days or less, these services would be considered prevention. Is this information accurate?

Yes. A short stay of up to three days can be entered into a prevention project. However, we would prefer that you record youth staying in the shelter for any amount of time in the HMIS Emergency Shelter project.

43. BCP: Regarding the question of 3 days' shelter or less, it sounds like you are saying that it can count as either prevention OR shelter. Is that correct?

If a client receives any service in your BCP program but does not stay at least one night in shelter, then the services are considered BCP – Prevention and the client should be entered as such in HMIS. As soon as shelter is provided, the client should be exited out of BCP-Prevention and entered into BCP-Emergency Shelter. ***Please remember shelter stays are limited to 21 days, and any BCP client must be under 18 years of age.***

44. BCP: What if a BCP participant goes from prevention to shelter and then back to prevention?

If the youth first receives prevention services, they should be entered into the prevention project. Upon entry into the shelter, they should be exited out of the prevention project and entered into the shelter project (that is, the project exit date in the prevention project will be the same as the project entry date in the shelter project). When they leave the shelter, they should be exited out of the shelter project and entered into the prevention project, so that the exit date in the shelter project is the same as the entry date in the prevention project.

45. BCP: Wouldn't BCP-Emergency Shelter apply only to truly homeless youth?

The RHY program uses the definition of “homeless youth” found in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. 42 U.S.C. 5732(a)(3). For BCP, a “homeless youth” is an individual under the age of 18, for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment, and who has no other safe alternative living arrangement. Youth served in either the prevention or emergency shelter components of BCP would thus be considered homeless under the RHY Act. The goal of out-of-shelter services is to identify a safe and appropriate place for the youth to go to, which in some cases may be reunification, and in other cases may be alternative housing options.

46. BCP: What is the definition of a BCP-Emergency Shelter youth?

The definition of “homeless youth” is governed by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (Question 44) and is the same regardless of whether the youth is staying in emergency shelter or is homeless in an out-of-shelter situation (and thus a prevention project client). The two projects (emergency shelter and

homelessness prevention) are used to differentiate between the youth that stay in the shelter versus youth for whom only out-of-shelter services are provided.

47. BCP: Currently we have been putting these prevention individuals under SOP; should we ask our HMIS lead to create a prevention project in the HMIS where we can enter data about clients receiving out-of-shelter services? We also have a program in HMIS that also is used for non-residential/drop-in services; should we change this to list it as something different, based on what's actually happening?

If the services are being provided by SOP grant-funded staff, then the youth and the services they receive should be recorded in the SOP HMIS project. If services for unsheltered youth are being provided by BCP grant-funded staff, then you should be entering data pertaining to those youth and the services they are receiving into the BCP-prevention HMIS project. If the correct HMIS projects have not been set up, I would encourage you to work with your HMIS Lead to make the necessary changes in the project set-up in HMIS as soon as possible.

48. BCP: If a grantee didn't have the prevention project set up prior to this upload, how should they get that information once the HMIS Lead sets it up? Will they need to go back and enter all that data?

Please contact your HMIS Lead as soon as possible. We realize that back-entering data for an entire year might be burdensome, but we do expect you to correctly record data about out-of-shelter youth who receive services from BCP-prevention project.

49. BCP: Is the 21-day BCP shelter stay limit 21 days at a time or 21 days ever?

Neither the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act nor the rule provide clarity on this issue. But RHY clients can receive shelter for up to 21 days, and this is an episodic limit.

50. BCP: When a client who is under 18 years of age comes into the emergency shelter, how do you address the head of household questions?

Youth under 18 served in a BCP project are considered to be the head of household. Siblings under 18 are considered to be separate heads of households.

51. How should BCP staff use RHY-HMIS to document the transition of a runaway and homeless youth from FYSB-funded shelter services into non-FYSB-funded services, after they reach the 21-day FYSB shelter limit?

BCP staff do not need to do anything to document this transition. But staff should make sure that the shelter entry and actual (physical) exit dates are entered into the RHY-HMIS, even if the exit date is after the 21-day limit governing RHY reimbursement for BCP-ES services. In its RHY reporting, FYSB will automatically only include data about the use of RHY funding for the first 21 days of the client's stay in shelter. BCP staff will need to work with their HMIS Lead to ensure they can use/enter youth into a different funding stream beyond the use of RHY funds/21 days.

52. Are services beyond 90 days of aftercare considered “prevention?” If so, should a new prevention case be opened in RHY-HMIS for youth receiving such extended aftercare?

Services beyond the minimum of 90 days of aftercare can be considered aftercare, but Aftercare Plans (date collected, way aftercare was provided) do not have to be entered into RHY-HMIS. This information should be documented in the case files. If after the 90 days of aftercare, and there is no further contact with the youth, and the youth then re-engages with the BCP, then this new set of services can be viewed as BCP-P or BCP-ES and a new record should be started.

53. We understand that we only need to enter services or referrals once per enrollment. What would happen if we recorded a service or referral each time that we offered it?

Recording multiple services or referrals will not impact the upload of the data nor will it impact the data completeness or quality. You are encouraged to only record services and referrals once per enrollment to ease the burden of data entry.

54. Is there a way for data related to street outreach programs (SOPs) to be entered incrementally as more information about the youth becomes available?

Yes, FYSB understands that building a relationship with a youth on the street is very important, requires patience, and takes priority over data collection. An incremental process of data entry is encouraged. For example, a record may be created in RHY-HMIS that has “Name” equal to “boy with red backpack.” As a relationship is built over time, more information may be provided by the youth and added to the record/case notes. SOP project set up should reflect incremental data entry; this may include working with the HMIS lead for correct project set up.

55. SOP: Can you expand on what a street outreach "Contact" is/looks like? Provide example.

A contact is defined as an interaction between a worker and a client. Contacts may range from simple (e.g., a verbal conversation between the street outreach worker and the client about the client’s well-being or needs), or may be a referral to service. A contact may happen on the street, at a service setting, or at another location. A contact could also be a one-on-one phone call or interaction via texting, instant messaging, or another electronic communication method, as long as a Street Outreach worker is addressing one youth at a time. A contact date should be recorded each time a Street Outreach staff member has contact with a youth.

Important Note: **A contact is not a group interaction**, such as passing out flyers to a group of youth, or conducting a training or workshop.

56. As of October 1, 2019, the “Contact” field is now called “Current Living Situation” field as outlined in the FY2020 HMIS Data Standards. SOP: If we only get a nickname, another worker may encounter the youth, not knowing this is the same person. How do we prevent duplication in such cases?

It will help to put any information you receive from the youth (nickname, descriptive feature, etc.) in the records. Your program should have an established information sharing procedure to make sure that different workers are able to build on the information gathered by their colleagues and avoid the duplication of records. If you find that you have created duplicate clients, contact your HMIS Lead to find out how to merge them.

57. SOP: Does SOP have a required exit date?

No, you do not have to exit youth in SOP out of HMIS, but your Continuum of Care (CoC) might have standards as to when clients should be exited out of a program after a period of no contact. You should ask your HMIS Lead about the practice used in your CoC.

58. TLP: Regarding the services: if something like clothing is provided to someone in a TLP more than once during program stay, does only one date need to be noted?

Correct. Note the date when the service first occurred for that client during their stay.

7.0 Data Quality and Data Quality Reports

59. How do I read a data quality report?

A [data quality report user manual](#) can be found at <https://www.rhyttac.net/rhy-hmis>.

60. If a grantee fixes data and resubmits in RHYPoint, does the grantee receive another DQ report with the findings?

Yes.

61. Is the 75% threshold a requirement or just a suggestion?

For this upload period, the 75% data quality threshold is not a requirement; however, we encourage you to review the data quality report, make any improvements and corrections you can, and do a resubmission (two days before the data submission deadline) if your data quality falls below the threshold.

62. How long will the Data Quality report be?

It will be 2-4 pages long.

63. Where do we find a list of services we have to track?

These are available in the latest HMIS Data Standards manual found at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3824/hmis-data-dictionary/>.

64. The data quality expectations are not possible for many contacts made in Street Outreach who may never participate long enough to get this info.

We understand that answering each element for every client in SOP may be burdensome. Recording entries in SOP is meant to be an iterative process, meaning that you may only ask a few questions (such as name and age) during the first interaction, and ask additional questions once you have established trust and rapport with the youth. The 75% data completeness metric does not apply to SOPs, but we encourage you to strive for the highest level of completeness possible, given the nature of your work.

65. Why does the quality of data reports vary so much across vendors?

The RHY-HMIS Data Completeness – Data Quality Report is the same for all RHY grantees. This report is generated based on the RHY data uploaded by each RHY grantee into RHYPoint. Although all HMIS vendors must follow the guidelines set forth in the HMIS Data Standards, each HMIS vendor may have slightly different data quality reports that are unique to their system. Variations may also result from different methodologies in each vendor’s report.

The RHY-HMIS Data Completeness – Data Quality Report Manual can be found on the RHYTTAC website at <https://www.rhyttac.net/assets/docs/RHY-HMIS/RHY-HMIS Data Completeness Data Quality USER MANUAL 10-2019 FINAL.pdf>.

66. We have an HMIS system for the county, and one for the state for certain projects only. Will we be uploading from both system?

If you report different data in each system, you might need to use both systems to generate a HMIS CSV FY2020 1.1 report – hashed for RHY. For example, if you record all of your SOP data in a statewide HMIS and your TLP data in your countywide HMIS, then you would generate a SOP report in the statewide HMIS and a TLP report in the countywide HMIS, and separately upload each project’s .ZIP file to RHYPoint.

67. When is the Licensing Fee due? Is an invoice sent to the agency for this fee?

This invoice is usually managed by your CoC. Check with your HMIS Lead for information about your local HMIS fees.

68. What is considered an unreasonable license fee?

It depends on the percentage of your administrative budget that is dedicated to using HMIS. If it's a major issue, contact FYSB at rhymis@acf.hhs.gov.

69. If our HMIS Lead wants to pay our licensing fee is that allowed?

Yes, as long as you as a RHY grantee and the Continuum of Care have a mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each HMIS user.

70. Will future RHY grants include a line item for HMIS costs, like there is for CoC and ESG grants (i.e., user fees)?

We have not yet made a determination as to whether future RHY Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) will include HMIS costs as a line item.

71. Is there a PowerPoint (PPT) for the latest webinar?

Yes. The most recent webinar recording and supplemental materials (including the PPT slides) are posted at <https://www.rhyttac.net/rhy-hmis>.

72. Does HMIS have a secure server that protects data?

In most Continuums of Care, the HMIS data is stored in secure servers maintained by the HMIS vendor. There may be a smaller number of CoCs that store data in their own secure servers. All HMIS Leads must comply with HUD's HMIS Technical Standards and related requirements pertaining to data security. HMIS users in your agency who have permission to access data about individual clients and groups of clients on their computers are likewise subject to strict requirements pertaining to data security, whether those data are displayed and stored in their computers or printed and stored in paper files. Your CoC's HMIS Lead and your agency's HMIS lead are responsible for ensuring that your agency's systems for accessing and storing data meet or exceed HUD's data security and privacy standards.

73. Is "client doesn't know" a legitimate response to the "What is the youth's Social Security number?"

Yes, if that is the most accurate answer. Both "client doesn't know" and "client refused to answer" are legitimate responses, as long as you ask the question. These options may not be used as responses to a question that you did not ask. You may also enter a partial SS# and of course the full SS#. This field is hashed before it is uploaded to RHYPoint and is not accepted if not hashed. These answers will not have a negative impact on the score generated by the RHY-HMIS Data Quality report.

74. If information is not available, is it best to answer not collected or skip over it?

If staff did not attempt to collect data, it is best to leave the field blank. If you attempted to collect the information from the client and were unable to obtain an answer, you should enter "client doesn't know" or "client refused to answer," as appropriate.

75. We were told to enter each youth entering our Emergency Shelter as a Head of Household. Is this correct?

Yes, each youth is usually considered as "Head of Household." Children of youth staying at an emergency shelter or a maternity group home should be entered as "Head of Household's Child." Youth coming together should be considered their own Head of Household (this includes youth who are married or siblings).

8.0 Privacy Protection

76. How should we handle getting permission to share personal information from our client children?

You must acquire the consent of a parent or legal guardian for clients under 18 years old to share data with other providers within HMIS (clients age 18 or older can give or refuse their own consent). However, if you are simply collecting data without sharing, you do not need consent to collect and enter data into HMIS.

77. What is the benefit of collecting data that we may not be able to upload or share?

All data can be uploaded, whether or not you have permission to share it. Collecting and uploading the data provides your CoC with important information about the size of the youth homelessness problem and the work that you are doing to address it.

When your data are aggregated with data from other programs, it helps inform our understanding of youth homelessness at the state and national levels.

We encourage you to obtain consent prior to collecting it, so that you may share it.

78. Do you need any special consents for the HMIS Administrators/Lead to be able to view the data?

Each grantee should already have agreements or MOUs in place with your HMIS Lead.

9.0 Miscellaneous

79. Who is the HMIS Lead? Are you talking about the CoC System Administrator?

The HMIS Lead is the entity that is charged by the CoC with maintaining and administering the CoC's HMIS on the CoC's behalf. The CoC HMIS System Administrator usually works for or is directed by the HMIS Lead.

80. As an HMIS Lead, I would like to ensure I am receiving the emails for these types of webinars, so that I can support my RHY Agencies. Where can I register my email address for all RHY related trainings/webinars?

Please send the information via a question/"ticket" to the RHY-HMIS On-line Service Desk at www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net. Also, an HMIS Lead or any grantee who need to add/update their contacts should complete the form as part of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center (RHYTTAC) at www.rhyttac.net/rhy-hmis-contact-update.

81. Is Domestic Violence (DV) one of the required elements for youth providers?

Not specifically DV. But the field "Young Person's Critical issues" is required for BCP-ES, BCP-P, MGH, and TLP programs (it is not required of SOP programs). Within the Critical Issues Data Elements are "Abuse and Neglect – Youth" and "Abuse and Neglect – Family Member." These elements may get at issues of domestic violence.

82. The data quality report was fairly cumbersome in the past. Are you doing anything to create the opportunity to do quality checks (have reports available) outside of the upload period?

Currently, it is left to the discretion of your HMIS Lead as to whether and how to offer users the opportunity to check data quality prior to submission of your RHY data (e.g., using special reports created by either the HMIS Lead or the vendor).

10.0 For More Information

To find more information, including information on data transfer, data quality reports, and to see these FAQ's on line, visit: <https://www.rhyttac.net/rhy-hmis>.

If you are a grantee with additional questions or need technical assistance, please submit a question/ticket at the RHY-HMIS On-line Service Desk: www.RHYMISServiceDesk.net.

If you have RHY program questions, please contact FYSB staff at rhy-hmis@acf.hhs.gov.

If have questions related to the use of HMIS, please contact [HUD Exchange: Ask A Question HMIS Desk](#).