

their intake within the first 24 hours of entering the shelter but must be within 3 days (in the event of weekend/holiday entry).

In the event of a Domestic Violence (DV), the DV agency will have the ability to keep a client's name and address anonymous if they feel it is necessary for safety reasons. However, in the case of clients who do need housing, they should still be sent to the SPOE as soon as possible, not when they are approaching their out date.

Clients that present as "Imminently at-risk of Homelessness" will be sent to "Shelter Diversion" programs if they are available which will stop them from becoming literally homeless.

Those living with friends/family will not have an intake done but can be referred for shelter services if eligible (for example, pregnant or parenting girls under 21 would be referred to MELD) even if they are with friends/family.

Outreach:

SPOE staff in conjunction with RRHC partner agencies have created the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). Staff from the SPOE will act as the group lead and will coordinate the group who shall perform street outreach at a minimum of one time per week. They will also go out on an "as-needed" basis and can perform outreach anywhere in Boone and Winnebago Counties. This group will also work in cooperation with the local police and paramedics. When police/paramedics find newly identified homeless persons, they will notify this group.

It is believed that all necessary partners are involved with the HOT team. At this time, members include staff from the Veteran's Administration, Rosecrance/PATH, Health Care for the Homeless, St. Elizabeth Center, Rockford Rescue Mission, Community Action, Rockford Fire, Rockford Police, Park District Police and Shelter Care Ministries. In addition, we have a number of agencies who do not do street outreach but who collaborate with these efforts. This includes all three local hospitals, the VAMC, all three emergency shelter providers (including our domestic violence shelter), our two youth shelters, multiple law enforcement agencies, multiple fire departments, Code enforcement, property owners, the downtown business owners association and staff who work with "general" homeless populations.

Other RRHC agencies will provide outreach and in-reach of their own. The PATH team from Rosecrance provides in-reach to all shelters, jubilee center, and other drop-in centers/homeless programs at a minimum of weekly (usually more). Crusader Community Clinic also does weekly in-reach and outreach to known locations. The Veteran's Administration also does outreach and in-reach as needed when veterans are identified.

When newly homeless individuals/families are located, they should be informed about the SPOE and about the opportunities for housing that are available. They will also be made aware of mainstream benefits, basic needs, and socialization opportunities. If individuals are willing to come to the SPOE office for an intake, they should be brought or directed there for an intake (or given the hotline number). HOT team members are able to do intakes in the field, if that is necessary. If persons are unwilling to come in or to complete an application, if they are determined to be a veteran or chronic, they will be added to the appropriate by-name lists at the time of location. Then the outreach teams will continue to engage them and may collect data (using paper intake forms and HMIS consents).

In the event that persons experiencing homelessness decline housing services, outreach staff will continue to attempt engagement with that individual and still offer them housing at least once a week. Outreach staff is encouraged to be creative in their attempts at engagement (will a different outreach worker have better luck; is there something the person likes such as coffee or candy; do they like baseball or something that they could watch if they were in an apartment with a TV) and continue to move them toward permanent housing.

HMIS:

In general, it will be the SPOE's responsibility to enter all data elements into the HMIS system. Staff will conduct a full intake, including a VI-SPDAT and referral to the by-name list.

In the event that a new individual or family does interact with a shelter or outreach staff first, it is possible that they would have access to the system to complete the universal data elements that are required. If this occurs, the SPOE still has the responsibility of updating any info and completing the VI-SPDAT and referral to the list. No other agency has those functions in HMIS. All projects providing housing services to persons experiencing homelessness (except DV providers) must be entering data into the HMIS system.

Complete HMIS policies have been agreed upon and provided to each agency and should be adhered to.

