

Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HOME) Policy

The Central Virginia Continuum of Care (CVCoC) lead agency, Miriam’s House, in partnership with Community Access Network (CAN) has created the Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HOME) program to provide engagement and housing focused case management to literally homeless, unsheltered households. While engaging them in services, housing focused conversations will attempt to divert the household from the homeless response system to alternative housing options including live with family or friends. For those who cannot be diverted, the street outreach program works to shorten the length of time the household experiences homelessness by expediting access to shelter and housing. The outreach worker assesses vulnerability and housing barriers, and reports each priority subpopulation (chronic, youth, family, and veteran) households to the by-name list of the homeless persons within the CVCoC to ensure access to permanent housing interventions. The program has no barriers and targets the most vulnerable persons within the CVCoC geographic areas of Lynchburg City and the Counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell. A voluntary service model informed by harm reduction strategies is employed. The street outreach worker will continue to engage and build rapport with unsheltered individuals even if they decline housing and other services.

This program is fully integrated into the CVCoC’s coordinated entry system. HOME serves as an access point of the Coordinated Homeless Intake and Access to target unsheltered persons, including those who do not traditionally seek out assistance. The CVCoC’s standard assessments are used as part of coordinated entry in order to facilitate access to emergency shelter, housing, and essential services. HOME’s staff is the point person for unsheltered clients, to ensure access to homeless interventions and is responsible for reporting any unsheltered household within the CVCoC’s priority subpopulations to the CVCoC’s by-name list administrator. HOME’s staff presents those households twice a month at Community Case Review for placement in permanent housing interventions.

HOME program staff receive training in best practice that promote housing attainment such as motivational interviewing, conflict resolution, harm reduction, critical time intervention, and housing-focused case management strategies. Street outreach facilitates the intake of unsheltered persons into permanent housing interventions such as rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing. The street outreach working works with these programs to expedite housing location and provide a warm hand-off to hosing locators through these other interventions. The staff is knowledgeable about local affordable and subsidized housing resources and will assist in completing applications, gathering documents including identifications, attending landlord interviews, and lease signings.