**Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HOME)**

The HOME Program offers outreach and engagement services to unsheltered individuals in the Central Virginia region. These services are aimed at assisting the most vulnerable homeless individuals to access shelter, housing and other critical resources to provide safety and stability.

HOME Objectives:

* To reduce the number of unsheltered persons in the Central Virginia Continuum of Care
* To provide unsheltered persons with essential services to meet their immediate needs
* To connect unsheltered persons to the homeless crisis response system and permanent housing options

HOME Eligibility Policy

Policy:

It is the policy of HOME to serve unsheltered individuals or families with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation including but not limited to a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground. There are no additional eligibility requirements.

 Procedure:

1. HOME clients must have their unsheltered homeless status verified.
	1. To the extent feasible, unsheltered status should be verified visually during an on-site outreach visit. Outreach worker must document location, date, and time the individual was observed sleeping in such accommodations. Observation of indicators that the individual sleeps in the location is also acceptable (such as a tent, sleeping bag, personal belongings, etc.).
	2. Third party verification can be accepted from a reliable source such as a case worker or police officer who has observed the person sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation.
	3. Self-certification can only be accepted as a last resort after attempts have been made to obtain visual evidence or documentation from a third party.
2. Written documentation of homelessness is required for every client case file.
3. To the extent feasible, outreach worker should re-verify homeless status every 30 days.

HOME Outreach and Identification Policy

It is the policy of HOME to proactively seek all unsheltered people within the Central Virginia CoC’s geographic region. Engagement efforts are not limited to serving only persons seeking assistance.

Procedure:

1. HOME outreach worker will conduct regular visits to known service sites where unsheltered persons seek assistance, such as soup kitchens, libraries and health clinics.
2. HOME outreach worker will coordinate with other systems, including law enforcement, hospitals and emergency departments, corrections, libraries, parks and recreation staff, and job centers to identify unsheltered persons.
3. HOME outreach worker will conduct regular visits to encampments, congregate sites, parks, and other places persons experiencing homelessness are known to stay.
4. HOME outreach worker will participate in and/or lead the unsheltered PIT count.
5. HOME outreach worker will regularly communicate with Coordinated Homeless Intake and Access to ensure that unsheltered persons are quickly located.
6. HOME personnel will not disturb sleeping persons unless the person is in imminent danger (i.e. weather conditions, fire, etc.).
7. Outreach to counties will be conducted as needed.

HOME Services Policy

It is the policy of the HOME program to actively engage the unsheltered homeless population for the purposes of providing immediate support, interventions and connections with homeless assistance programs and/or mainstream social services and housing programs.

Procedure:

HOME staff will offer engagement and housing-focused case management services that are person-centered and emphasize building rapport and trust. Services offered will include:

* Locating, identifying and building relationships with unsheltered households;
* Connecting with the CVCoC’s coordinated assessment system;
* Actively connecting and providing information and referrals to programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness and mainstream social services and housing programs;
* Conducting and documenting an initial assessment of needs and eligibility;
* Providing crisis counseling;
* Addressing urgent physical needs;
* Completing a strength-based housing barriers assessment and corresponding individualized housing and service plans;
* Assisting a program participant in overcoming immediate barriers to obtaining housing; and
* Monitoring and evaluating program participant progress.

Provision of items such as bus passes, hygiene products, canned food, clothing and other necessities will be based on availability of donations to Miriam’s House. Otherwise, these needs will be met through referral to partner agencies in the community.

Access to the Central Virginia CoC’s Coordinated Entry System

Policy:

It is the policy of HOME to serve as an access point for the Central Virginia CoC’s coordinated entry system.

Procedure:

1. Outreach worker will provide standard assessments to all unsheltered households in the HOME program in order to facilitate referral to emergency shelter, as space allows and with client consent.
2. Outreach worker will complete prioritization assessments for all households belonging to a priority subpopulation in order to facilitate placement on the CVCoC By-Name List.