

	THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF LAMBTON			
	Department:	Homelessness Prevention and Social Planning		
	Topic:	<i>Operations' Policy & Procedure</i>	Section A11	Policy # 222
	Subject:	Homelessness Coordinated Access System, Timely and Accurate Data in HIFIS		
	Effective Date:	April 1 2022	<i>Approved By:</i> Ian Hanney	
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1 SUBJECT

Homelessness Coordinated Access System, Timely & Accurate Data Policy in the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS).

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish and clearly define the process by which client information is entered into HIFIS in a timely and accurate manner.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

The County of Lambton is committed to preventing and ending Homelessness using the principles of “Housing First”. As part of this commitment, the Timely & Accurate Data Policy is a critical component of maintaining Lambton County’s real-time By-Name List (LCBNL) and a robust Coordinated Access system.

4 SCOPE

The outlined procedures will be followed by agencies within the Lambton County Homelessness System of Care (LCHSC) on a regular basis. This applies to all clients accessing services within the LCHSC.

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 Access Point

Per Reaching Home: “The engagement point for the individual or family experiencing a housing crisis. This may include emergency shelters, mobile outreach teams, day centres, other community-based organizations and hotlines.”
[Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy Directives - Canada.ca](https://www24.intelcom.ca/ReachingHome/ReachingHome.aspx)

5.2 Client

A client is a consumer of a service provider’s resources; this excludes HIFIS users and staff members.

5.3 Client Information

Client Information includes, but is not limited to, a client's name, gender, age, address, marital status, family status, family size, financial information, educational history, contact information, nationality, citizenship, bank accounts, housing history, dietary restrictions, employment status, employment history, details and factors affecting services, and client photo.

5.4 Employee

An "employee" is defined in this policy as someone who is working for or affiliated with the County of Lambton, Homelessness Prevention and Social Planning Department. All employees shall comply with this policy and all applicable privacy legislation as it relates to their particular employment responsibilities.

5.5 HIFIS

Per Government of Canada: *The Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) is a comprehensive data collection and case management system designed to better understand what is happening in our community and to work collaboratively.* * Note: It is a type of Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS). <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/hifis.html>

5.6 HIFIS User

An individual who has an account for using the HIFIS application.

5.7 HIFIS Intake Documentation

Intake Documentation includes, but is not limited to, HIFIS Consent Form, Client Intake Form, and Diversion Questionnaire.

5.8 HIFIS Service-Related Module Information

Includes, but is not limited, to admissions, calls and visits log, case management sessions, client follow-ups, goods and services, housing placements, service restrictions, SPDAT, and turnaways.

5.9 Homelessness

Per the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: "Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it..." [Canadian Definition Of Homelessness](#)

5.10 Homelessness Service Provider

Organizations in the housing and homelessness response system that have staff who directly interact with clients to help them address their housing challenges.

5.11 Housing First

Per Government of Canada: “Housing First involves moving people experiencing homelessness —particularly people experiencing chronic homelessness—rapidly from the street or emergency shelters into stable and long-term housing, with supports. Stable housing provides a platform to deliver services to address issues frequently faced among the chronically and episodically homeless. The goal is to encourage housing stability and improved quality of life for persons served by Housing First and, to the extent possible, foster self-sufficiency.”

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/resources/housing-first.html>

6 BACKGROUND

HIFIS is a comprehensive data collection and case management system designed to better understand what is happening in our community and to enhance collaboration between service providers. In Lambton County, HIFIS is utilized by agencies within the LCHSC.

The LCHSC is composed of various community organizations who provide services to persons who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness. The LCHSC includes agencies such as the County of Lambton, emergency shelter providers, transitional housing providers, and street outreach providers.

A Unique Identifier List (also known as a By-Name List or BNL) is a real-time list of all known people experiencing homelessness in our community. It includes a robust set of data points that support coordinated access and prioritization at a household level and an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow at a system level.
<https://bfzcanada.ca/by-name-lists/>

7 RESPONSIBILITIES

All Employees and Homelessness Service Providers are responsible to comply with this policy and all applicable policies, laws, and regulations regarding the Homelessness Coordinated Access System.

7.1 HIFIS Front-Line Staff / User

- Complete Intake Documentation with clients at defined frequencies.
- Create accurate and complete client profiles in HIFIS using information collected on the Intake Documentation.
- Update client information and service-related information on HIFIS on an ongoing basis.

7.2 Homelessness System Coordinator – County of Lambton

- Extract data quality reports from HIFIS on a regular basis for distribution to Management or Staff as assigned.
- Monitor the completeness of client information and service-related information by analyzing the By-Name List.

7.3 Staff as Assigned - County of Lambton

- Monitor the accuracy and completeness of client information and service-related information on a weekly basis.
- Notify relevant staff if there is any information that is inaccurate and/or incomplete.

8 PROCEDURE

8.1 Intake Documentation

All HIFIS Front-Line Staff / Users will ensure that the Intake Documentation is completed with every client at the following frequencies:

- a) HIFIS Consent Form must be reviewed and signed (if applicable) when a client seeks services from an agency within the LCHSC for the first time; and reviewed every two (2) years.
- b) Client Intake Form must be completed and reviewed with the client every time they are seeking to obtain services from an agency within the LCHSC.
- c) Diversion Questionnaire must be completed with the client upon the client expressing housing precarity and crisis services such as emergency housing being sought.

8.2 Timeframe

8.2.1 Daily

- All community organizations within the LCHSC will ensure that client updates in HIFIS are completed daily, within 24 hours of changes. (e.g., an Intake)
- Any updates that need to be made to the BNL should be made directly in HIFIS via the Client Information and Client Management menus.
- Each Service Provider is accountable for ensuring this policy is followed at their agency.

8.2.2 Monthly

- The Homelessness System Coordinator (HSC) and Social Planners verify client information and service provider information on a monthly basis.
- The HSC shares the relevant priority lists that qualify for individual programs upon vacancies with Leadership, assigned Case Management teams, and respective Service Providers on a monthly basis.

8.2.3 As Needed

- The Homelessness System Coordinator and BNL Leadership connect with HIFIS Front-Line Staff / Users on an as needed basis.

9 DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is confidential and all records shall be maintained by the Service Providers and County of Lambton staff.

10 EVALUATION

As part of Quality Improvement, the Homelessness Prevention and Social Planning Department shall conduct an annual review to focus on key indicators and potential gaps in service to ensure everyone has a home in Lambton County.

11 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

a) A11.221 Coordinated Access – Inactivity Policy

12 POLICY HISTORY

<i>Revised By</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Prepared By</i>
• Policy created.	• April 1, 2022	• Nancy Kalbfleisch