**Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition**

**Coordinated Intake & Assessment Procedure**

**(UPDATED: 7/1/2021)**

The Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition (formerly known as the Rock River Homeless Coalition & the Mayors’ Task Force on Homelessness) will implement a Coordinated Intake & Assessment (CI/A) system effective January 2, 2015. This system will be utilized for persons/families that are homeless and in need of housing in Winnebago, Boone, and Dekalb Counties.

This system will be comprised of a Single Point of Entry (SPOE) location. This location will be at the office of the Community Action Agency located at 612 N. Church Street in Rockford, IL. This location will be open from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm on Monday-Thursday excluding recognized holidays. Friday will be reserved only for those individuals/families that are unsheltered/unsafe. An after-hours “Hotline” will be available for 24 hour contact. For those clients in Boone County, contact can be made through the “Hotline”. **The number to contact (24/7) is 844-710-6919 Extension 5 for assistance.** If you are in DeKalb County, you should call Hope Haven at 815-758-5765 or in person at 1145 Rushmoore Dr, DeKalb.

The SPOE will conduct initial screening and assessments, which will allow for service matching and referral to appropriate housing options. The SPOE will also be responsible for maintaining a Centralized By Name List. Immediate placements into permanent housing are not likely but temporary placements will be offered based on a case by case basis.

All Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition (NIHC) member agencies that operate any housing programs including Permanent/Permanent Supportive Housing (PH), Transitional Housing (TH), Emergency Shelters (ES), Rapid-Rehousing, or Homeless Prevention for the homeless will be asked to operate by this procedure in order to better serve the homeless population. This does include both CoC/ESG funded agencies and those funded through other means. The NIHC will also be seeking collaborations with other key stakeholders in order to make this a community-wide effort to end homelessness in Winnebago, Boone, and DeKalb Counties.

**Intake:**

The SPOE will conduct an initial assessment with a client to determine his/her homeless status. These statuses include:

**1) Literally Homeless**: individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence which includes a primary nighttime residence of:

\*Place not meant for human habitation such as cars, abandoned buildings, bus/trains, camping, etc.

\*Publicly operated shelters or transitional housing (when appropriate), including hotel/motel paid for by an agency

\*A person that is being discharged from an institution where he or she has been a resident for 90 days or less and the person resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering the institution.

**2) Imminently at-risk of Homelessness:** Individual or family is being evicted within 14 days from their primary nighttime residence (including exits from transitional housing programs) and:

\*No subsequent residence has been identified

\*The household lacks (and can verify) the resources or supportnetworks (i.e. family, friends, faith-based or other social networks) needed to obtain other permanent housing

**3) Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence:** Any individual or family who:

\*Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, DV,

\*Has no other residence;

\*Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

\*The SPOE cannot require person to have a police report or order of protection. A self-declaration can be accepted as proof.

An intake and assessment will be conducted on each literally homeless individual or family (including those that are fleeing domestic violence) who enter the facility or call the hotline . Initial intakes will collect data required by HUD, enter the client into ServicePoint, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and conduct a Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assessment Tool (VI-SPDAT) assessment to ensure they meet the definition of homeless and to prioritize, and make referrals to appropriate programs.

For those entering the system who are not at the shelters who have no verification of their situation, their name will be added to an outreach list. Outreach staff will verify the living situation. Once that is complete, the name will be added to the “active” homeless list using their initial intake date. If the applicant has a history of homeless shown in HMIS record or court records, they will immediately be added to the active list as well as the outreach list.

For after-hours/weekend calls and other special circumstances, phone intakes can be done on an as needed basis. On the following business day, a referral will be sent to the receiving agency.

If a client presents in person at an agency that is not the SPOE, they should inform the client of the site location. Again, entry into the system through a “side-door” will not be allowed, everyone must go through the SPOE. However, persons may enter the Emergency Shelters without a referral but agencies must inform the client of the SPOE and provide necessary resources to the degree possible to ensure the client connects either in person or by phone at the SPOE. It is recommended that persons complete 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 Domestic Violence, the DV agency will not provide any client or survivor’s person identifying information without the expressed written time-limited consent to the SPOE. All clients or survivors who express housing needs will be referred the SPOE as soon as possible to avoid any housing delays or crisis.

Clients that present as “Imminently at-risk of Homelessness” will be referred to a homeless prevention/diversion programs if they are available which will stop them from becoming literally homeless. \*\*Add in language from “unstably housed” list.

Per HUD’s definitions, an individual or family is at risk of homelessness if they:

1. Have an annual income below 30% of median family income for the area; AND
2. Does not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place defined in Category 1 of the “homeless” definition; AND
3. Meets one of the following conditions:
	1. Has moved because of economic reasons 2 or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for assistance; OR
	2. Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; OR
	3. Has been notified that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance; OR
	4. Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost is not paid for by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals; OR
	5. Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care

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 NIHC 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 DeKalb, 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, Rockford Rescue Mission, Community Action, Rockford Fire, Rockford Police, Park District Police, Veterans Path to Hope, 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 NIHC 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) and outreach weekly also. 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 complete the “coordinated entry” portion of 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, they 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, sexual assault, sex trafficking 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.

Agency-ES, outreach, etc.

Homeless person/family enters

CES/SPOE HMIS intake—(can be conducted at office, during outreach, or on phone)

**Prioritization:**

Each individual or family will be assessed using an initial questionnaire and VI-SPDAT. The VI-SPDAT will generate a score. In addition to the score that is received from the VI-SPDAT, clients with verified residency in Winnebago/Boone/DeKalb counties for the previous 45 days will earn 20 points for a “Local Preference”. Individual applicants will be responsible for verifying residence. Verification can include a local ID (that is over 45 days old), HMIS system data, agency verification, public aid documentation, or school records for their children. If verification is not provided, they will automatically receive the points once they have been actively on the list for 45 days. Chronically homeless and veterans will also receive 5 extra points (with verification). Domestic violence victims and youth (under age 24) will each receive an extra 4 points. Beginning January 1, 2019, families with children will become a priority population also. Households in this category will also receive 4 priority points when placed onto the list.

In accordance with the Housing First Model, those with the highest score will be directed to Permanent Housing options first (including supportive and non-supportive housing options) followed by Transitional Housing and Emergency Shelters. By conducting the above assessment, a score will be assigned which will assist in determining which program type the client should be referred to.

In accordance with NIHC policy on chronic homelessness priorities for CoC PSH funded projects, prioritization is as follows:

1. Chronically homeless individuals & families with the longest history of homelessness and with the most severe service needs
2. Chronically homeless individuals & families with the longest history of homelessness.
3. Chronically homeless individuals & families with the most severe service needs
4. All other chronically homeless individuals & families.

**Referrals:**

After the intake is complete and the assessment has been conducted, the SPOE will send a referral to the most appropriate place with beds available. When an agency has a housing vacancy, they will send a vacancy notice and requests new referrals from the SPOE. SPOE staff will send 3 referrals for each opening. The receiving agency should attempt to contact them in order of priority. However, if they are not able to contact the first person, they are able to move on to the second and then the third. The first person to respond and get everything completed, will get the unit that is available. After 14 days, all referrals that were unable to be contacted or did not begin the process will be considered void. This referral does include a basic release of information statement which allows the SPOE to give and receive housing related information to the referral agency unless prohibited by the specific agency such as the case for domestic violence, sexual assault and commercial sex trafficking programs.

All persons that are unsheltered will be referred to the appropriate shelter for temporary stays. If the clients leave the shelter for temporary housing situations and are no longer literally homeless, they do risk being removed from the By Name List.

This policy does acknowledge that households fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, commercial sex trafficking, may have different needs than those who are solely living as homeless or risk of living as homeless. Providers will be trained on vulnerability and safety risks due to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or commercial sex trafficking including as these concerns relate to homelessness. In addition, the HMIS data of victims will continue to be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, and a person who identifies as a victim data is not shared with other providers. In the case that the DV provider does not have available beds, the SPOE will look for other options that would provide a safe place for the clients such as use of temporary hoteling, a domestic violence program shelter within another county and/or use of the statewide domestic violence hotline.

All single individuals (or un-married couples) with little to no income will be referred to Rockford Township for a possible rental subsidy of $325 which they can use alone or with up to two roommates. All homeless individuals/families will also be referred to both housing authorities to apply and get their names entered onto the waiting lists. If the SPOE has knowledge of the homeless situations, they may provide a homeless verification letter to allow them additional preferences for housing. Applications must be completed at the respective housing authorities to get on to their waiting list. Veterans will be referred to the Veteran’s Administration.

If the SPOE encounters an individual who is experiencing or at risk of homelessness whom they believe has a disability which they are not receiving Social Security payments for, they will refer them to the for the SOAR Program.

What is SOAR?

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) are disability income benefits administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) that also provide Medicaid and/or Medicare health insurance to eligible individuals.

For people who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness or who are returning to the community from institutions (jails, prisons, or hospitals), access to these programs can be extremely challenging. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) developed the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) model to address this critical need.   The NIHC has providers who are SOAR-trained case managers.  These case managers identify adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness who may be eligible for Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits.

SOAR is designed to serve individuals who are able to apply for disability benefits as an adult under SSA rules. This includes persons 18 years of age or older as well as individuals who are within one month (180 days for youth who are aging out of the foster care system) of their 18th birthday. Individuals age 65 or over with low income and resources may be eligible for SSI based on age or be eligible for retirement benefits based on their work history (Individuals age 62-67 (depending on year of birth) may be eligible for early retirement benefits).

When the SPOE encounters an individual who is experiencing or at risk of homelessness whom they believe may be a good candidate for SOAR the individual will be referred to the most appropriate agency who has a SOAR trained case manager using the standard referral form along with a general release of information to determine eligibility for SOAR.

**By Name List:**

There are currently two By Name Lists. One is kept and maintained by the SPOE in Rockford and covers both Winnebago and Boone Counties. Another list is kept by Hope Haven in DeKalb and covers all of DeKalb county . At the time of this review, the NIHC is in the process of merging the BNL of DeKalb County with that of Winnebago/Boone County. So this policy currently reflects the Winnebago/Boone County Programs.

The By-Name List (BNL) will act as a “master list” for any intakes that have been completed. There will be 5 different lists maintained. Those five will be Singles (or adult only households), Families (adult(s) w/Children), Youth (unaccompanied 16-24 year olds and pregnant/parenting youth), Chronic, and Veterans. The lists are updated in real time and information is updated at the time in which it is reported. Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and commercial sex trafficking will not be specifically identified on the BNL.

Clients should be placed on the list according to their score and the date and time that they applied for services. When a housing option becomes available, the person at the top of the list will be contacted. As long as they meet any special population requirements for the specific agency/program, the said housing agency should proceed with housing them.

Each client that is assessed and placed onto a by name list will have the responsibility to contact the SPOE at least weekly to keep his or her application active. Clients can update their file in person at the SPOE office or by phone at 844-710-6919. If they are part of a program, their case manager can also do the check in for them. A written policy will be provided to each client that signs up for services. Although clients are asked to check in weekly, they will only be moved to inactive after until after they have been out of contact with all agencies for 90 days.

Any clients that have not been heard from or have not had any documented contact with the SPOE (or partner agencies) within 90 days will be considered inactive. If 3 attempts have been made to offer housing to an individual/family and there has been no contact in return, staff should check the following: HMIS database, jail/court records, obituaries, EMS pickups, or information from partners to ensure all efforts have been made to reach the client. Anyone that returns to the SPOE or partners, can be re-activated. The score should be updated as needed and the entry date will be revised to the date in which they returned. If it has been more than 30 days since their removal from the by name list (or since their closure in HMIS), they will need to do a new entry into the HMIS system.

Clients who have been assessed will be referred for Emergency Shelter (ES) when no other permanent housing options are available. In the event of no ES beds available, clients might be sent to a motel if funding is available. Because staying in an ES or motel still qualifies someone as Literally Homeless, a client in ES/motel will not be removed from the by name list. The client will be able to keep his/her place on the by name list and will still be offered a more permanent option when it comes available. Clients will be required to abide by the hotel policies provided by the agency providing the voucher and the rules of the hotel itself.

Persons who enter transitional housing will remain on the list but the person or a program caseworker should continue to update info and complete the weekly check-ins. If someone is entering an institution for less than 90 days, they will also remain on the list if the SPOE is aware of the situation. They should still check-in if possible or have someone check-in on their behalf. If this is not possible, the by name list note should be updated to reflect the absence so that they are not removed.

In the event that applicants on the list check in and are no longer “literally homeless” (generally staying with friends/family) they have 14 days of check-ins for us to monitor the situation.  If after 14 days they are still not “literally homeless”, they will be removed from the list.

If a person was on the list and removed within the last 60 days because they were no longer “literally homeless”, they must be literally homeless for 14 consecutive days before being added back to the waiting list.  Upon being placed back onto the by name list, the current entry date will be used and a new score may be calculated.

In the event that we have knowledge of a homeless individual or family who is unwilling to apply for the SPOE services, they can still be added to the list using their basic information. It is recommended that outreach be conducted to collect as much information as possible (even to complete a mobile version of the VI-SPDAT, if the client will comply).

Using the reported date that clients report becoming homeless, the SPOE will also track those persons who are close to timing into chronic homelessness. The list will be checked on a weekly basis to ensure that no individuals are within 30 days of chronicity; if they are approaching the time, they will be referred to the Built for Zero committee

**Case conferencing:**

Each person experiencing homelessness who signs a HMIS consent form to share data will also be asked to sign a general Case Conferencing release of information that will allow them to have their name or name and situation discussed during case conferencing Committee meetings. It is understood that programs primarily serving domestic violence, sexual assault and commercial sex trafficking victims will need their own agency release of information completed prior to participating in a case staffing. The groups’ purpose is to look at persons on the list to try to determine appropriate placement options for them. This group also helps to ensure that those on the list are not getting close to “timing in” to chronicity.

As of January 2021, there are several active case conferencing committees.

1. The Built for Zero Committee (formerly two separate committees: the Zero: 2016 Veterans Committee and the Zero: 2017 Chronic Committee) - provides case conferencing on any individuals/families who are deemed to be chronic or veterans. In addition, this group may review any individuals that have been found to be within 30 days to timing into chronicity and work to ensure they can be housed in a timely manner before moving into the chronic category OR anyone who is unsheltered.
2. The Youth BFZ committee--provides the case conferencing for any unaccompanied youth (16-24) and work to house them all within 30 days of entry.
3. The Family BFZ Committee— provides the case conferencing for any family with children. This group started in late 2019 but halted during the COVID pandemic. Plans are to get the meetings started again, prior to the fall of 2021.
4. In DeKalb, the Shelter Plus Care Stakeholder meeting is held to provide case conferencing.

As our community moves on to focusing on other groups, it will likely form new committees to address those specific populations. The group meets and looks at persons on the list to try to determine appropriate placement options for them. This group also helps to ensure that those on the list are not getting close to “timing in” to chronicity. The group also discusses “homeless status” of the people on the lists. As we know, homeless verification is needed for HUD/CoC funded programs.

**Homeless Verification:**

Documentation will need to be supplied or collected based upon the following hierarchy and order of priority:

1. Third party documentation
2. Observation by the intake worker or Homeless Outreach Providers
3. Self-declaration from the individual or family seeking assistance

Acceptable evidence of third party documentation includes:

* Records contained in an HMIS database; or
* Comparable database used by victim service or legal service providers;
* Written observations by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual or family was living;
* A referral from a publicly or privately operated shelter;
* Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral from a social worker, case manager, or other appropriate official of an institution stating the beginning and end dates of the time residing in the institution.
* All oral statements must be recorded by the intake worker

**Program vacancies:**

Emergency shelters should be reporting vacancies to the SPOE each evening by 8 pm, Phone/text: 779-208-0710, email: csbgadministration@rockfordil.gov or fax: 888-433-6927) to report their availability for the night in case of any after-hours emergencies. These “emergencies” will usually be brought to the attention of the SPOE by the hospitals, Police or Fire Departments.

The SPOE will refer people to the shelters at the time of intake unless they have reported being full which is why it is vital for each agency to report their numbers daily.

For transitional/permanent housing, referrals will not be sent immediately when the individual/family does their intake. Those programs are responsible for contacting the SPOE as soon as they know a unit is going to be vacated. This will also include Shelter Care Ministries’ family shelter units. A Vacancy Notice form will be used which each agency can complete and fax to the SPOE at 888-433-6927. The SPOE will then look at the by name list and ensure that an eligible person will be ready to be sent to that program. Referrals will be sent only after the programs have reported vacancies.

Once the SPOE has been notified of an opening, they will have 48 hours to send referrals for the opening. The referrals will be for the person/family who is highest on the by name list and qualified for the unit. If possible, the SPOE will send at least two eligible households for each opening to ensure that the receiving agency can reach someone. The SPOE will not always notify the client ahead of time, so it is assumed that the receiving agency will make contact with them. The receiving agency is responsible for verifying all information such as chronic status.

Please be reminded that all vacant units must be filled by the SPOE and agencies may not decline referrals unless there is a program specific eligibility issue.

**Acceptance of clients:**

Programs will accept all clients provided that they meet the requirements for the specific programs. They will take those persons that have the highest prioritization score. The NIHC did vote to make the Housing First Model the recommended practice for all members. Therefore, according to the Housing First Model, clients will be taken as they are and not required to be involved in services prior to obtain housing.

As mentioned above, SPOE staff will send three referrals for each opening. The receiving agency should attempt to contact them in order of priority. However, if they are not able to contact the first person, they are able to move on to the second and then the third. The first person to respond and get everything completed will get the unit that is available. After 14 days, all referrals that were unable to be contacted or did not begin the process will be considered void. If none of the referrals are accepted or responds, referral forms should be sent back to SPOE and new referrals will be sent.

NIHC Members should adhere to all fair housing laws. Programs, including emergency shelter programs, shall not discriminate against any individuals or families based on race, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, income, national origin, citizenship status or any other characteristic protected under federal or state law.

For shelter programs who are serving families in addition to single persons, it is the policy of the SPOE to keep all families intact and if unable, refer and connect the family to a program where they may stay together. Additionally, if a program separates participants by gender, it is the policy of the SPOE to adhere to HUD guidelines and ensure an individual is sheltered or housed based upon gender identity as opposed to sex assigned at birth. CoC funded programs are required to adhere to the HUD equal access rule and if a shelter is unable to accommodate someone based on gender, a referral should be sent back to SPOE for alternate placement.

Persons who are living as homeless but who are also registered sex offenders will not be denied for services however placement in housing programs will be determined based on the safety and legal parameters. Other services may be offered in the event that there is not a suitable housing placement or available resources. Please refer to the NIHC policy for sex offenders.

Chronically homeless individuals will be housed as quickly as possible. If there is a chronically homeless individual who is not sheltered but ready to be housed, they can be sheltered temporarily using a hotel voucher for short durations. In the event that the delay will be longer, rapid rehousing may be used as bridge housing or as an actual permanent housing option.

**Termination from Housing Programs:**

**For Shelter Programs:**

As mentioned above, the NIHC has approved the Housing First Model as the recommended practice to all service providers. This means that all shelters are asked to eliminate as many barriers as possible when housing individuals/families experiencing homelessness and only exit persons in extreme circumstances.

If a shelter is discharging someone from their program, they should notify the SPOE, notwithstanding confidentiality obligations and safety, as to the discharge date and reason for discharge to allow SPOE to better follow up with services. If the discharge is for a specified amount of time, please indicate that also. The referral form that the SPOE send to the agencies initially does contain a release of information for housing information however this release of information does not meet the confidentiality obligations for programs specifically serving individuals who identify as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and commercial sex trafficking. Each situation will be assessed individually and the SPOE will assist based on the circumstances and availability of other services. Hotel vouchers or Rapid-rehousing may be used as a bridge until other permanent housing options are available.

**For Transitional/Permanent Program**:

Upon entry into a TH/PH program, all clients should be given the termination policy to read and sign. An agency may terminate assistance to a program participant who violates their lease agreement or occupancy agreement. Termination under this section does not prohibit the agency from providing further assistance later to the same individual or family.

It is the case managers’ duty to provide eviction prevention services with clients. This involves follow up services with the client to ensure that they are following the rules and paying their rent (if that is required). They should be involved with the property owners/landlords to ensure there are no issues that could lead to an eviction. If there are problems, the case managers should be addressing the issues with the clients in order to prevent the eviction from occurring.

Property owners are being encouraged to reach out to the case managers in the event of any difficulties to limit the number of evictions that occur.

For the Hard to House Population and those agencies that are providing Permanent Supportive Housing, the agencies will be required to exercise judgment and examine all extenuating circumstances in determining when violations are serious enough to warrant termination so that the program participant’s assistance is terminated only in the most severe cases.

If a client is being terminated from a program, the terminating agency should ensure that the client is referred back to the SPOE if they have not identified another housing option. At that point, the SPOE will attempt to locate a different housing option for the individual/family to reduce the chance that they will return to homelessness.

**Due Process:**

In terminating assistance to a program participant, the agency must provide a formal process that recognizes the rights of individuals receiving assistance under the due process of law. This process, at a minimum, must consist of:

\*Providing the program participant with a written copy of the lease or occupancy agreement and the termination process before the participant begins to receive assistance

\*Written notice to the program participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination

\*A client has the right to request a review of the decision in writing within 30 days to the terminating agency. The program participant will have the opportunity to present written or oral objections to the termination.

\*Prompt written notice of the final decision to the program participant.

**Emergency Contingency Plan:**

In the event of an emergency, which prevents regular office operations, you may still call 844-710-6919 (or 815-758-5765 in DeKalb) and communications can be handled via phone, video conference, or email/fax. Check the website or Facebook to find out when these procedures have been enacted.

**NIHC Goals:**

In accordance with the federal Opening Doors federal strategy to prevent and end homelessness, the NIHC will adopt the same goals.

* Prevent and end homelessness among [**Veterans**](https://www.usich.gov/goals/veterans) in 2015
	+ Completed goal 12/15/2015—New objective: to sustain the end of veteran homelessness on an ongoing basis
* Finish the job of ending [**chronic homelessness**](https://www.usich.gov/goals/chronic) in 2016
	+ Certified by USICH on 10/15/2017
* End youth homelessness by December 31, 2021
* End family homelessness by December 31, 2021
* End ALL homelessness by December 31, 2022

**What Does Ending Homelessness Mean?**

An [end to homelessness means](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf#page=12) that our community will have a systematic response in place that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it cannot be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience. , our community will have the capacity to:

* Quickly identify and engage people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.
* Intervene to prevent the loss of housing and divert people from entering the homelessness services system.
* When homelessness does occur, provide immediate access to shelter and crisis services, without barriers to entry, while permanent stable housing and appropriate supports are being secured, and quickly connect people to housing assistance and services—tailored to their unique needs and strengths—to help them achieve and maintain stable housing.
* Re-house everyone within 30 days of identification

**Revised 7/1/2021**

**Approved by CoC 7/15/2021**

**Current Participating Agency (updated: 7/1/2021)**

**Homeless/Shelter Prevention or Rapid-Rehousing Programs**

Rockford Township (prevention & re-housing)

City of Rockford Community Action Agency (prevention & rehousing)

YSN/MELD (prevention & rehousing)

Veteran’s Path to Hope (prevention & rehousing)

Shelter Care Ministries (rapid rehousing)

Hope Haven

**Emergency Shelter Programs:**

Rockford Rescue Mission

Remedies Renewing Lives

YSN-MELD/Bridge

Shelter Care Ministries

Hope Haven (DeKalb)

Safe Passages (DeKalb)

**Transitional Housing Programs:**

Carpenter’s Place

MELD

Shelter Care Ministries

Salvation Army- Woman’s Restorative Justice Program

Rosecrance Grant per Diem (Veterans)

**Permanent Supportive Housing**

Carpenter’s Place

Shelter Care Ministries

Rosecrance

Zion Development

Housing Authority of DeKalb County (S+C/PSH)

**Permanent (subsidized) Housing (Partners)**

Rockford Housing Authority

Winnebago County Housing Authority (Boone County Housing Authority)

Housing Authority of DeKalb County

Veteran’s Administration-HUD VASH (RHA, WCHA, BCHA, HACD)

**Non-Housing Community Partners**

Local government officials

CDBG/HOME/ESG Entitlement Jurisdictions

Law Enforcement

Local Jails

Hospitals

EMS/Crisis Response team

Mental Health Organizations

Substance abuse providers

Affordable housing developers

Disability advocates

Non CoC Funded Youth Homeless Organizations