

HMIS USER AGREEMENT and CODE OF ETHICS

HMIS users: All HMIS users are approved by the organization they work for and complete HMIS training before getting access to HMIS. HMIS access will be removed when requested by the organization. Users must only view or work with records for these business purposes:

- View or enter data only for people or families you work with or work directly with your organization.
- View data to make sure people you work with are matched to appropriate housing or services or to prove they qualify for your organization's housing or services.
- Review data needed to provide supervision, oversight, or audit this organization's programs or projects.
- Provide reports or data needed by federal, state, and local funders.
- Use data for specific and clearly connected analysis or research.

HMIS data can be used to:

- Provide quality services.
- Coordinate and document referrals for housing or services such as food, utility help, counseling, etc.
- Reduce the need for people or families to repeat their story to every service provider.
- Make sure programs are helping people/families as planned.
- Report program and community performance and work to improve services and outcomes.
- Understand and improve homelessness and housing assistance services across the community.

Data sharing in HMIS: The Cincinnati/Hamilton County CoC Board (locally known as the Homeless Clearinghouse) allows sharing data about program services and people receiving those services between organizations who enter data.

Caracole and the YWCA will not share data with other organizations because the people and families they serve require extra privacy. Each HMIS user must know how to make any reference to Caracole or the YWCA private, so it is not shared outside of the organization who entered the data and Strategies to End Homelessness.

Participant choice to share data: People and families allow data sharing by signing the HMIS Privacy Notice and Client Consent Form and. They may still request that enrollment information (enrollment, exit details) or particular services, notes, or assessments entered be set to private. Each HMIS user must review specific data entered with people and families they work with and know how and to set different types of data to private when requested or if Caracole or the YWCA are referenced.

Some people and families may choose not to sign the HMIS Privacy Notice and Client Consent Form. Data must still be entered into HMIS. However, each user must know how to make the whole record private.

Services cannot be refused based on if a person or family refuses to consent to share information or refuses to have their information entered into HMIS.

More permission: Some organizations require more data permission forms or privacy practices. Each HMIS user must know when, how, and why the needed forms or practices must be signed/used for their organization.

Security and privacy: Keeping HMIS data secure and private is important. While using HMIS users should access it in areas where their screen is not easily viewed. Computers used in public areas must be locked (password protected) or logged off when HMIS is not actively being used or when the HMIS screens can be viewed by others. HMIS should only be accessed from password protected networks. Users need to log out of HMIS system when not in use.

Complete and correct data: Users need to enter complete and correct data based on information given by the people they interview, or services provided by their organization. Data entered must be professional and respectful of the people the data is entered about.

Policies and Procedures: HMIS users should read the full HMIS policy and procedures manual available online: <https://www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org/what-we-do/data/hmis-transition/>.

User Responsibility

Carefully read each item. Place a checkmark next to each item to confirm you understand and commit to maintaining these responsibilities.

- I confirm I have completed the proper HMIS training.
- I will *not* share my username and password** with anyone for any reason and will keep it secure so it can't be found and used by others.
- I will never log into HMIS and let someone work under my account.
- I will review and explain the HMIS Privacy Notice and Client Consent Form with each person/family I work with at least every 7 years they remain active in HMIS.
- I will document each person/family's permission to share information with other HMIS organizations in HMIS.
- I will only view, access, use, or share HMIS records or information necessary to complete my job duties, whether entered by my organization or entered by another organization.
- I understand individuals may request some or all of their data not be shared in HMIS, and it is my responsibility to know how to set specific or all data to private, so it is not shared outside my organization and with Strategies to End Homelessness. I will contact HMIS Support if I need assistance with setting records to private.
- I will set any reference to Caracole or the YWCA to private.
- I will keep HMIS data secure.
- I will log off HMIS when not actively using it.
- I will keep printouts or papers with HMIS data in a locked location, and shred or otherwise properly destroy when no longer needed.
- I will alert STEH HMIS staff right away if I am aware of or suspect that HMIS data is being handled in an unsecure way.
- I understand the refusal to share data in HMIS or refusal to have data entered into HMIS will never be used to refuse or limit services.

User Code of Ethics

Carefully read each item. Place a checkmark next to each item to confirm you understand and commit to maintaining the user code of ethics.

- I will enter data in an ethical way as described in the Ethical Data Entry policy in the Comprehensive HMIS Policies and Procedures Manual and HMIS training courses.
- I will enter correct and truthful data. I will not enter data that includes insulting, rumored, discriminatory, cursing, or degrading comments.
- I will not use HMIS with the intent to cheat the federal, state, or local government or an individual business or organization; or to conduct any illegal activity; or for personal gain.
- I will behave in a professional manner and treat all HMIS participating organizations and people and families who need services with respect, fairness, and good faith.
- I will handle HMIS data securely and responsibly and in the way the people/families who gave the data want it handled.
- I will not enter negative comments based on race, color, religion, national origin, family history, handicap, age, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression in HMIS.
- I will follow the rules and guidelines listed in this document, the HMIS Privacy Notice and Client Consent Form, and the Comprehensive HMIS Policies and Procedures Manual.

Signature: By signing you confirm that you understand the rules and guidelines listed in this document and agree to follow them.

{SIGNATURES.0}

{SIGNED_DATE}