The Maine Coordinated Entry System (MCES) Update

Issue 5, November 2020

After receiving specific feedback on the MCES from providers engaged in the system, it was requested that the CoC provide more structured information on the current CES implementation and progress. The MCES Update is one way the CES Subcommittee is trying to meet this request by publishing these updates.

**What is the committee up to?**

Earlier this fall, the CES committee began working with the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC). This technical assistance was approved by HUD and is helping the committee to fine tune the proposed CES process. Ashley Mann-McLellan of TAC has been leading the committee through a series of 5 meetings in which processes for each of the four sections of coordinated entry – access, assessment, prioritization, and referral – are discussed and approved. The process is meant to be interactive and seeks the feedback of all members of the committee.

#### **What is Coordinated Entry?**

A Statewide System mandated by HUD that requires the CoC to establish a centralized and coordinated process for persons who are at risk of becoming homeless, or who are homeless, to gain access to housing or supportive services. The Coordinated Entry System (CES) has been established with the goal of increasing the efficiency of local crisis response systems and improving fairness and ease of access to resources for Maine’s homeless residents. Both the CoC and ESG Program interim rules require the use of the CoC’s coordinated entry process.

What is the current timeline?

HUD’s Notice, released January of 2017, outlined the requirements around Coordinated Entry that CoCs must have been able to meet by January 23, 2018. The MCoC chose to pause the Maine CES process on November 9, 2018 to re-evaluate their system. The committee is continuing to work toward implementing a new design.

### Update on the October 1st, 2020 Deadline for entering CES data in to HMIS

Many people have been asking about the October 1st Coordinated Entry deadline. The CES Committee would like to clarify what that deadline was, and what it was not. The HUD deadline of October 1, 2020 had to do with entering data into certain fields in HMIS. There are three new fields that are linked to Coordinated Entry. CoC’s were required to start entering data into those fields at the beginning of October.

To satisfy this requirement, Maine HMIS has been working with a small group of shelters to develop the workflow for data entry. Those shelters that helped with the workflow will be the initial rollout of data entry for those fields. As we gather information and best practices, the workflow will be rolled out to more agencies. We have spoken to HUD TA about this process; HUD understands that the rollout of these workflows will be a gradual process, due to COVID.

However, October 1st was not an implementation deadline. MCOC has not implemented the new Coordinated Entry System yet. When the time comes, we will inform all involved agencies about the process for training and implementation. Don’t worry, your agency isn’t missing out or falling behind! If you have any other questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to the CES Committee Chairs, or Mike Shaughnessy at MaineHousing.

 **We have two new chairs!**

This summer, Rachel Prentiss (née Boyce) (Preble Street) stepped down as co-chair of the committee. In her place, the committee decided to create a tri-chair structure for the committee leadership. Kate Easter (MCDEV) and Giff Jamison (Tedford) were elected to fill these positions. Erin Kelly (Preble Street) will continue to stay on as the third chair.

**Next Steps:**

*Workflow Working Documents –* The committee is working to complete a draft of the workflow documents.

*Approval of Policies & Procedures -* The committee will use the workflow documents to help inform the policies and procedures. Once drafted, they will go through the Board and the full MCoC for approval.

*Training and Implementation -* There’ll be training coming your way soon! Please keep your eye out for more information.

*Continuous Improvement* – Nothing’s ever perfect right from the start! We look forward to your feedback and your help to keep the CES constantly improving.

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