

Western PA CoC Written Standards Training 2025


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What are the Written Standards?

- Provide guidance for CoC and ESG programs related to service delivery
- Ensure that all programs are operating in a consistent, coordinated way that is compliant with HUD and CoC standards
- Required by HUD

Structure of Written Standards

- Standards for all project types
 - Includes recordkeeping and case management standards
- Standards by project type – specific standards that must be followed if you are operating PSH, RRH, etc.
- Appendices
- Optional Forms and Templates – separate document. Not required, but available as a resource



Standards for Street Outreach (SO)

Goals

- Provide essential services necessary to reach out to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
- Connect people with ES, housing, or critical services
- Reach people who might not otherwise seek assistance or come to the attention of the homelessness service system

Access

- Outreach workers are able to enroll households across the community, outside office walls, engaging with participants early and often.
- provide the access, diversion, assessment, prioritization, and referral phases of CE, as described in the CE Policies and Procedures
- provide the Prevention phase of CE only to the extent necessary to determine that a participant is not experiencing literal homelessness and refer them to an appropriate service provider

Access

- If SO projects are funded to provide the Prevention and Rapid Exit phases of CE,
- they must use a progressive engagement approach that incorporates Housing Problem Solving (HPS) Prevention techniques to serve households with case management, supportive services, and financial assistance, including one-time payments and short-term housing assistance, to identify the lightest-touch method to successfully re-establish each households into safe, stable permanent housing.

Eligibility

- Literally Homeless (Cat. 1) or Fleeing/Attempting to Flee DV (Cat. 4)
AND
- Individuals and families must be living on the streets (or other places not meant for human habitation) and be unwilling or unable to access services in ES.

Prioritization

Anyone who is unsheltered is prioritized for SO.

Documentation (SO Specific)

- SO programs should work with participants to obtain their necessary documentation (i.e., Social Security cards, birth certificates, chronic status verification, etc.). These efforts should be documented in the case files along with any additional case notes.
- *See Documentation for All Project Types for additional requirements*

Duration and Amounts

- There should be repeated attempts to assist, respecting participant choice.
- No one is terminated from this project type unless:
 - They are placed in housing of their choice,
 - They indicate that they no longer need our services and request that their case be closed, or
 - They pose a serious threat of harm to the outreach staff or other participants

SO-Specific Standards

- Housing focused; emphasize safety and reduce harm; systematic, coordinated, and comprehensive
- ESG-funded street outreach staff/teams must participate in and/or lead the unsheltered PIT count in their community.

SO-Specific Case Management

- Establish trust, focusing on building positive relationships
- Initial assessment of needs, prioritizing safety and urgent health needs
- To the greatest extent possible, outreach staff completes the CE Assessment “out in the field”

SO-Specific Case Management

- Link unsheltered individuals to a place to get warm, address/provide basic survival items, and provide assistance with accessing benefits, services, and housing
- Participants should be linked to housing and services (RRH, PSH) by way of a warm hand off.
- Services should be targeted to assisting households achieve housing stability as quickly as possible.

Duration and Amounts

- enroll for as long as needed (if that is the participant's choice)

Performance Measures

- **At least 84% of households** served under a SO Project will exit to housing of their choice .

Next Steps

- All CoC- and ESG- funded programs sign off by April 30, 2025 that their program(s) have reviewed the WS, understand them, will implement them, have watched the training recording, and will ensure that all new hires review the standards and recorded CoC trainings within 60 days of hire: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8216721/Western-PA-CoC-Written-Standards-Acknowledgment-Form-2025>
- If there are standards that programs are not implementing, make a plan to implement those standards by June 30, 2025.
- Feedback on the standards is welcome year-round: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7127925/Western-PA-CoC-Written-Standards-Annual-Feedback>