



This document will provide guidance on completing the Homeless History Interview as part of your assessments.

Introduction

When completing the interview, the client's answers to these questions may change as they transition through various projects within your CoC. What they answered for a shelter stay may not apply to an RRH project entry a week later. For this reason, you should review and update the responses to these questions at each entry.

Prior Living Situation

For this question, you should document the living situation that the client was in immediately prior to entering the project.

If the client is entering an Emergency Shelter or Rapid Re-Housing project, then they are considered literally homeless and this question should reflect a literally homeless living situation such as the following:

- Place not meant for habitation
- Emergency shelter, including hotel/motel paid for with ES voucher, or RHY-funded Host Home shelter

Approximate Date Homelessness Started

For this question, you should document the date that the client began their current homeless situation (staying in an unsheltered location or in an Emergency Shelter).

Please note that this question should not reflect the date that the client's overall housing instability began, it should only reflect the current episode.

Have the client look back at the last time they had a place to sleep other than the streets, an Emergency Shelter, or a Safe Haven. If the client knows the month and year but not the day, you may substitute the day of the month with the same day of the month as project entry.

A break in homelessness is considered to be one of the following:

- 90 or more consecutive days in an institution such as a jail or hospital
- Seven or more consecutive nights in a temporary or permanent housing situation

For additional guidance, refer to the [Determining Approximate Date of Homelessness](#) document on the HMIS Learning Center.

Number of Episodes of Homelessness in the Last Three Years

For this question, you should document the number of times that the client has been homeless in the last three years.

As the client looks back, there may be breaks in their stay on the streets, Emergency Shelters, or Safe Havens. A break in homelessness is considered to be one of the following:

- 90 or more consecutive days in an institution such as a jail or hospital
- Seven or more consecutive nights in a temporary or permanent housing situation

If the client was previously in an institution, ask them the following question:

- Did you stay for less than 90 days in jail, a hospital, or another institution?

If the client was not previously in an institution, ask them the following question:

- Did you stay for less than seven nights in temporary or permanent housing?

If you answered "Yes" to either of the questions above, include all of those days in the client's total number of days homeless and continue back to the next break in homelessness.

Number of Months of Homelessness in the Last Three Years

For this question, you should document the total number of months that the client spent on the street or in an Emergency Shelter in the last three years.

If the client reports that they were homeless for one or more days in a given month, then you should count that month when calculating the total. For example, if a client was homeless beginning in November but they do not remember the exact starting date and are still homeless in January, this person would have experienced homelessness for three months.