

Iowa Quality Standards:

Supporting a Statewide System of Homelessness Services

User Handbook

June 2015

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About the Iowa Quality Standards

Welcome to the *Iowa Quality Standards: Supporting a Statewide System of Homelessness Services*.

Since late 2013, volunteers from local organizations serving those experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless have worked together in an exciting project: peer-developed standards for quality programs. In Spring 2015, the group put the final touches on the 44 standards and we are eager to share them with organizations and programs across Iowa. You can find much more detail about this process later in this handbook, but first, some basics you will want to know about these standards.

- Use of the standards by any organization or program is voluntary.
- The standards are practical and designed to identify what is necessary in quality organizations and programs.
- The standards cover governance, operations, services, and performance.
- They apply to all kinds of services: outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, Rapid Rehousing, Housing First, and prevention.
- They apply to all kinds of organizations and programs, regardless of size or structure: nonprofit, faith-based, or private.
- They work equally well for established and start-up organizations or programs.
- They apply regardless of the source or type of funding that supports the organization or program. In other words, they are not designed specifically for federally funded programs.
- The standards are valid and valuable in every part of Iowa.

This handbook is all you need to use the standards in your organization and programs. It is designed as a self-appraisal, and not only lists the standards, but explains them, identifies measures (so you will know whether you meet the standard), and suggests resource materials and web sites you can use if you need to work on a particular standard.

The feedback we have received over the past year is that organizations already meet many of the standards – and that is good. This tool gives you a barometer of where your organization excels and where you may want to focus additional efforts.

What's behind this effort? Simply, the Iowa Council on Homelessness wants to eliminate homelessness in Iowa. The Council decided the best way to make progress toward that goal is to create a strong, connected system of quality services all across the state. The Council has invested in a peer-driven process to gather stakeholder experience and develop the standards and these supporting materials as a solid foundation for ongoing activities to build and strengthen Iowa's statewide system of homelessness services.

If you're ready to dig a bit deeper, take a look at the Checklist of Standards on the next page to see the standards at a glance – and, perhaps, get started on completing the self-appraisal!

Legal Disclaimer

The materials available in this handbook and in any related documents are for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular issue or problem.

Checklist of Standards

“Standard” is an element of a homelessness program’s governance, operations, services, or performance, that is necessary for a quality program and meets funder requirements.

Use this checklist with your organization or program. The remainder of this handbook provides additional explanation and suggestions for how a standard may be met.

Governance

- 1. **An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...**

 - 1.1. [have articles of incorporation and by-laws.](#)
 - 1.2. [have current documentation of Board of Directors structure and activity.](#)
 - 1.3. [have an employer identification number \(EIN\).](#)
 - 1.4. [have records of filing the Biennial Report with the Iowa Secretary of State.](#)
 - 1.5. [have a Data Universal Numbering System \(DUNS\) number.](#)
 - 1.6. [have written policies and procedures regarding record retention and destruction, including but not limited to:](#)
 - Corporate records
 - Accounting and agency tax records
 - Bank records
 - Payroll and employment tax records
 - Employee records
 - Donor and grant records
 - Press releases and public filings
 - Legal, insurance, and safety records
 - Electronic documents and records
 - Documents containing protected health information
 - 1.7. [have written financial policies and procedures. This includes the following:](#)

- Document and demonstrate compliance with grant requirements and funder policies, if applicable
- Track matched and leveraged funds, if applicable
- Have written procedures in place for document retention based on best practices for each specific type of document
- Internal controls

1.8. [have a budget approved by the Board of Directors.](#)

1.9. [complete annual federal and state tax reporting.](#)

1.10. [have an audit or an independent review of financial statements by a CPA.](#)

1.11. [have a written employee manual or personnel policy and procedure manual. The manual should include, at minimum:](#)

- A conflict of interest policy that applies to Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers
- A written policy for confidentiality and informed consent that is signed by each Board member, staff, and volunteer
- A written policy promoting a drug-free workplace for all staff and volunteers.
- A written whistleblower policy
- A written policy on accident/incident reporting
- A written policy on the use and handling of the information from background checks conducted on employees and volunteers
- A written Code of Ethics for employees and volunteers

1.12. [comply with current human resources postings including federal, state, and other mandatory postings, including but not limited to:](#)

- Equal opportunity employer
- Nondiscrimination

1.13. [comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.](#)

1.14. [provide required and/or necessary insurance coverage as determined by the Board or the Board's authorized representative. This includes but is not limited to:](#)

- Insurance coverage commensurate with the services provided by the organization
- Workers' compensation insurance
- Unemployment insurance
- Liability insurance
- Directors and officers coverage
- Professional liability

Operations

2. **An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...**
-
- 2.1. comply with federal, state, and local rules and regulations regarding building codes, inspections, and certifications.
-
- 2.2. have a current emergency preparedness plan.
-
- 2.3. use Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or a comparable system approved by your Continuum of Care.
-
- 2.4. have written policies and procedures for client information and record confidentiality, retention, and destruction.
-
- 2.5. complete background checks including criminal history, child abuse, dependent-adult abuse, and sex offender registry for:
- All employees
 - Volunteers who provide direct services
-
- 2.6. have written, determined minimum staffing requirements that are appropriate for the type of program and ensure a safe environment.
- In an emergency shelter, at a minimum, one staff person or volunteer should be present during hours of operation.
 - For other programs, at minimum, one staff person or volunteer should be available during the hours of operation.
-
- 2.7. provide training, at minimum, for all staff and for volunteers who provide direct services, in the following topics:
- Safety
 - Ethics
 - Confidentiality
 - First Aid (includes blood-borne pathogens), CPR, and AED training, if applicable
 - Required OSHA trainings
-
- 2.8. provide additional training, as applicable, for staff and for volunteers who provide direct services.
-
- 2.9. provide emergency preparedness training for employees, volunteers, and clients (if applicable), which includes, at minimum:
- Conduct regular drills
 - Maintain written, documented, posted evacuation routes

- 2.10. have written notices of client rights. Client rights include but are not limited to:
- Grievance procedure
 - Right to informed consent
 - Dignity and respect
 - Review of services
 - Termination policy
 - Discharge
 - Allow, limit, or refuse release of personal information
 - Allow or refuse use of identity and images for publicity purposes
 - Notification that their information will be aggregated and used for reporting purposes

Services

3. **An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...**
-
- 3.1. have regular, published, and consistent hours of operation and/or a reliable point of contact.
-
- 3.2. clearly identify the services provided and the populations served.
-
- 3.3. implement a reading level standard for materials provided to clients.
-
- 3.4. have a written and publicly-available policy specifying that program eligibility does not discriminate by age, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability.
-
- 3.5. have written and publicly-available eligibility criteria for each program offered.
-
- 3.6. have a written policy which is shared with clients identifying the type, amount, and duration of assistance.
-
- 3.7. have written and publicly-available policy describing how assistance is prioritized within each program.
-
- 3.8. have a written policy that clearly explains the appeal process for denial, removal, or termination of services.
-
- 3.9. make each client aware and provide client access to the appeal, denial, removal, and termination of services process. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Grievance procedure
 - Right to informed consent
 - Dignity and respect

- Review of services
- Termination policy
- Discharge
- Allow, limit, or refuse release of personal information
- Allow or refuse use of identity and images for publicity purposes
- Notification that their information will be aggregated and used for reporting purposes

3.10. [participate in the coordinated assessment approved by the applicable Continuum of Care.](#)

3.11. [recognize diversity of culture, language, and ability, and have a plan to meet individual needs should it be necessary.](#)

3.12. [work with other community resources, agencies, and networks to appropriately coordinate services and/or refer a client.](#)

Performance

4. **An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...**

4.1. [ensure that clients are offered the opportunity to choose to be off the street.](#)

4.2. [ensure that clients have basic needs met, e.g., food, shelter, clothing, safety.](#)

4.3. [ensure that clients have the opportunity to connect with non-cash resources, which includes but are not limited to: health care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\), and legal services.](#)

4.4. [ensure that clients have the opportunity to connect with resources to increase income.](#)

4.5. [ensure that clients have the opportunity to pursue earned income through employment.](#)

4.6. [support clients in their progress toward clients' identified goals.](#)

4.7. [assist clients in managing identified barriers to obtaining and/or sustaining housing.](#)

4.8. [support clients in making progress towards housing stability.](#)

Development of the Standards

Iowa Council on Homelessness: Prioritizing System Building

People are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in all parts of Iowa. The array of Iowans requiring services is diverse. Homelessness is frequently a byproduct of economic hardship or health issues. There are rural, suburban, and urban homeless. Children and youth, families, veterans, people with behavioral health issues, people escaping intimate partner violence, and ex-offenders are among the temporary or chronically homeless.

In many cases, these individuals and families are invisible amid the overall activity of a community. Services, programs, and organizations have emerged over time to work locally in support of those individuals who are homeless or facing homelessness in efforts to keep them safe and assist them in obtaining permanent housing.

Like many other services and programs, homelessness has been addressed over the decades in Iowa as the need occurred. Informal programs were provided by service organizations and faith-based organizations. Local governments developed services as homeless populations increased in cities.

Understandably, as the issue of homelessness became visible, early local efforts sought to meet the immediate need. Those efforts often were provided independent of other efforts in the same community. Thus, a disconnected set of services naturally evolved over time. The more that homelessness was identified and discussed, the opportunities to link together for efficiencies, communication, and collaboration developed. Service providers remain largely independent in programs offered, with guidance provided by local leaders as well as any federal, state, and local funding regulations. Access to services is not equitable across the state. The public policy issues tied to homelessness have not typically been a high priority at the state or federal levels.

Funding for programs serving people experiencing or at risk of homelessness comes from federal, state, and local sources. Often nonprofit organizations provide charity services when they see an individual need. Over time there have been providers coming together in local or regional networks and councils to seek ways to better meet the needs and to best apply funds available to them. Local planning groups and funders alike are coping with meeting higher needs and expectations with fewer financial resources.

The natural shift toward collaboration and networks of service providers is a reflection of similar needs of service providers, regardless of funding sources. Privately funded or publicly funded organizations and programs addressing homelessness all seek to demonstrate quality and are working to end homelessness in Iowa. These shared goals are foundational to each standard.

These standards align with the way federal funds now are granted for coordinated services. Emphasis is on development of standards and achieving performance goals consistent with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding requirements. Funders at all levels are focusing on ensuring quality programs and expecting standards to be developed as part of the Continuum of Care Program requirements and eligibility.

Driven by new HUD regulations and increased coordination among service providers, the Iowa Council on Homelessness (ICH) sought to develop and strengthen a statewide system of providers of services to people who are or at risk of homelessness. Central to a statewide system is working from a common set of expectations and standards. In 2013, the Council established the State Planning Advisory Committee to lead this complex work and engage stakeholders in development of recommended standards. As part of this process, State Public Policy Group, Inc. (SPPG) was engaged contractually, through a competitive request for proposals process, as facilitator of the State Planning Advisory Committee's work.

The ICH provided a charge to the Committee to focus and guide its work:

The State Planning Advisory Committee will recommend standards for outreach programs, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing (including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, homelessness prevention, and Housing First). Standards will cover:

- Performance
- Service
- Operations

The scope of the standards-development process during the first year was identified by the ICH: identify planning regions for the state, conduct meetings in regions, and convene a State Planning Advisory Committee to develop common standards in operations, services, and performance. In addition, SPPG was also charged with working with Iowa's HMIS provider to develop a strategy for tracking and reporting on the performance standards.

A priority for the process was to provide opportunity for all interested parties to be informed and participate as they chose. To promote transparency and receive feedback, three rounds of statewide outreach meetings occurred throughout the phases of development of these standards. Additionally, all materials were posted on the ICH website and distributed to ICH lists and others assembled by SPPG. SPPG provided regular updates at the ICH and Executive Committee meetings as well as providing a monthly written progress report.

The standards recommended to the ICH were developed as the culmination of a broad, statewide outreach effort to inform, engage, and hear from stakeholders toward that strategic end.

ICH invested two years towards focused activities that would support development of a statewide system of homelessness services. During State Fiscal Year 2014, the State Planning Advisory Committee of the ICH developed an initial set of standards for programs providing services to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. At the end of State Fiscal Year 2014, standards addressed operations, services, and performance.

The work continued during State Fiscal Year 2015 with the State Planning Advisory Committee continuing its work and deliberations informed by input from stakeholders across the state. Stemming from such stakeholder input, the standards were rearranged to include governance as a category of standard, in addition to operations, services, and performance. SPPG was

again retained to facilitate and manage the process leading to a clearly defined set of standards, measures, and a handbook for local organizations that choose to utilize the standards.

Peer-Driven Development Process

These standards are the result of a true peer development approach. The Council and the Committee recognized that building a system must have engagement and genuine acceptance from providers, across the state and across the types of services provided. To be successful in building a statewide system, the standards must meet the needs of service providers. Therefore, in developing the standards, it was critical to hear directly from providers, and frequently. Feedback was regularly sought from service providers across the state and all suggestions were reviewed by the State Planning Advisory Committee. Individuals serving on the Committee are, themselves, leaders and experts from service organizations across the state. The standards were created and developed by Iowa homelessness service providers, for Iowa homelessness service providers.

The standards-development process included rounds of engagement with providers across the state. From participants in the outreach meetings and additional emailed requests, suggestions were sought statewide for participation on the State Planning Advisory Committee. From the suggestions received, the designated Committee co-chairs and ICH staff worked with SPPG to identify statewide representation of all types of homelessness services organizations.

The work was cumulative, beginning with a November 22, 2013, webinar open to all interested stakeholders across the state. This introduced the Council's initiative and provided information about the outreach and Advisory Committee process to come. More than 40 individuals representing homeless-serving organizations of all types participated in the webinar.

The webinar was followed by five outreach meetings in Sioux City, Council Bluffs, Iowa City, Waverly, and Des Moines, held between December 5 and December 18, 2013. These sessions were open to any interested homelessness services provider or other stakeholder. Scheduled for two-and-a-half hours each, the meetings followed a common agenda and were facilitated discussions to elicit information about regional needs, characteristics of homeless populations served, the strengths/weaknesses, and opportunities/threats in the region based upon participants' experience. The outreach sessions included consensus agreement on five regions statewide based upon natural affinities. A summary report was developed and utilized in Advisory Committee discussions of possible standards.

Prior to finalizing the recommendations of the first year, additional statewide engagement and feedback was sought through a questionnaire distributed broadly to homelessness services organizations and other stakeholders. The purpose of the questionnaire was to provide examples of the standards to inform the stakeholders as well as to learn how organizations may already be meeting them. In addition, Committee members presented at a general session of the Iowa Peer-to-Peer Symposium on Homelessness in June 2014.

The State Planning Advisory Committee reconvened in the fall of 2014 to further consider the standards and develop an implementation effort. By early December 2014 the Committee had

reviewed the standards, providing clarification and rationale for each. To introduce these refined standards to organizations statewide and identify how best to support providers in using the standards, five outreach sessions were conducted in Waverly, Sioux City, West Des Moines, Council Bluffs, and North Liberty.

The input received from the December 2014 outreach was considered by the Committee in making final adjustments to the standards, developing this handbook, and formulating a strategy for the final round of statewide outreach in May and June 2015. This outreach occurred as a breakout session at the Peer-to-Peer Homelessness Symposium on June 3 as well as in Sioux City, Dubuque, Des Moines, Waverly, and Iowa City. Sessions focused on inviting organizations or programs to utilize the handbook and implement the standards.

Client-Focused Development Process

Both the Council and the Committee recognized the need for input from clients, understanding the valuable insight they could provide in developing client-focused standards and a client-focused system. Committee members were able to work in their communities to schedule two focus groups, both involving adults. Committee members coordinated the arrangements and invited clients. These small group discussions, facilitated by SPPG, focused on the consumers' experiences with services and the needs they see within the system. No providers were present during these discussions to ensure that clients felt comfortable being forthcoming. Non-attributable notes were taken by SPPG and summaries were provided to the Committee for consideration in developing the standards.

Maintaining the Standards Over Time

The State Planning Advisory Committee recognized the importance of periodically reviewing standards and updating them as the system develops or changes. They realize there is a balance that will need to be reached so that standards are regularly reviewed with input from users and other stakeholders, yet are not changing so frequently that their effectiveness can't be measured and users can't keep up with the changes. The Committee will provide recommendations to the Council regarding evaluation and periodic updates. The Council will determine a process to maintain the standards through an established review and update process.

Acknowledgements

The State Planning Advisory Committee worked steadily for nineteen months to develop the standards and the supporting materials. Members represented an array of programs and provided geographic diversity. Their commitment to monthly, day-long work sessions was exemplary.

- Julie Bockenstedt, Iowa Council on Homelessness, Iowa City
- Michelle Brown, Opening Doors, Dubuque
- Jim Cain, Family Promise of Greater Des Moines, Des Moines
- Crissy Canganelli, Shelter House, Iowa City; Policy & Planning Committee Co-Chair, Iowa Council on Homelessness

- Ronelle Clark, YWCA Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Resource Center and Transitional Housing Program, Clinton
- Carrie Dunnwald, Cedar Valley Friends of the Family, Waverly; Iowa Council on Homelessness
- Heather Harney, HACAP, Hiawatha
- Jeannie Kingery, Northern Lights Shelter for Men & Trinity House of Hope Shelter for Women, Mason City
- Susan McGuire, Center for Siouxland, Sioux City
- Nicole Rethman, Domestic/Sexual Assault Outreach Center, Fort Dodge
- Mark Sertterh, Shelter House, Iowa City
- Tony Timm, Central Iowa Shelter & Services, Des Moines; Policy & Planning Committee Co-Chair, Iowa Council on Homelessness

Iowa Legal Aid provided expertise and advice with representatives Michelle Hoyt-Swanstrom of Ottumwa, and Jan Rutledge of Iowa City. Julie Eberbach and the HMIS staff at the Institute for Community Alliances supported the Committee's work to identify available data.

Additionally, the Committee benefitted from additional support and expertise through the participation of two designated Iowa Finance Authority staff. Amber Lewis, Homeless Programs Coordinator, assisted with communication and coordination as well as technical support. Carolann Jensen, Chief Administrative Officer, provided insight into organizational, grant, and financial considerations related to standards development and use.

Process design, facilitation, and development of the Committee's documents were completed under a services contract with State Public Policy Group, Inc. (www.sppg.com).

How to Use This Handbook

Providing a tool, for service providers, to support quality programs is the intent of this handbook. All organizations and programs delivering homelessness services share two common goals: providing quality programming and services to clients, and aspiring to end homelessness in the State of Iowa. This handbook is the common tool that all providers, regardless of geography, funding sources, or type of service provided, can utilize for self-improvement.

This handbook was developed primarily as a tool for implementing the standards and to assist organizations or programs at all stages of development in identifying their own needs. It is intended that organizations or programs be introspective and honest, with this handbook serving as a means of self-appraisal and improvement. Leaders, boards, staff, and those wishing to start programs, will all find value by providing new ideas, connections, or resources.

Provided with the standards in this handbook are detailed explanations, measures, and lists of resources to assist organizations in meeting each specific standard. Together, this delivers a thorough understanding of the need for such quality standards and provides flexibility in accomplishing it. Through this handbook, organizations and programs will be able to contribute to the success of the statewide system while maintaining focus on their mission and the needs in their community.

It is recommended that all providers begin by conducting a self-appraisal; first, evaluating your program and how it measures up to the standards. Then identify the strengths and weakness and use them to determine which areas should be focused on. It is important for both staff and the Board to be engaged in this process. These standards work for all types of programs, regardless of location, funding sources, or longevity of program.

Considerations in Beginning New Programs or Organizations

It is strongly suggested that organizers of new programs are engaged in early activities to confirm that a new program or organization is needed in the community. For newly formed organizations or for individuals or groups who are considering starting a new program or organization, it is critical to participate in the local Continuum of Care, to demonstrate the need for a new program, to seek input and support from the community, and to include at least one business-oriented individual in the development of a new program or organization serving those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Essential Standards for New Programs

“I’m just starting a program and this is overwhelming! I want to use the standards, but where do I start?”

For new programs or for individuals considering creating a new program, there are certain standards that should be prioritized and focused on first. While it may still seem overwhelming, there is simply a lot of up-front work to be done to establish quality programs. To assist those

who have documented a service need and worked with their local Continuum of Care, this handbook recognizes that first things come first when getting established.

The standards critical for new programs are indicated in this handbook using the “start-up icon”, as shown here:



In the sections that follow, this icon denotes the high priority standards for new and start-up programs.

Types of Standards

“Standard” is an element of a homelessness program’s governance, operations, services, or performance that is necessary for a quality program and meets funder requirements. The standards apply at the organization level, not at a Continuum of Care or community level. The standards are clearly and simply stated, and are intentionally not extremely detailed or prescriptive. Recognizing this as the initial effort for developing standards for all homelessness service providers statewide, the decision was made to present them in a practical, common-sense tone that would foster understanding of the intent of the standard.

Other types of programs provide services statewide to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness that are not housing-focused services. These may include schools, food pantries, and Legal Aid. In these cases, there are existing guidelines in place within these organizations that direct how services will be provided and the standards to which those programs will be held. These are critical elements of the overall homelessness services system in the state, and they have existing structures governing their programs and services. These non-housing programs are not covered by the new standards developed in this initiative to address housing-focused programs.

The standards presented here lead each organization to identify how best to demonstrate that it meets each standard. The standard simply states what is expected in a quality program. This differs from a performance measure, which states how much of a specific variable must be achieved over a period of time to show change.

Some organizations may exceed many of these standards, and that is to be commended. The same organizations may see that they fall short in some standards, which allows the organization to focus on areas in which improvements can be made. An organization may have additional governance, operational, service, or performance practices and goals as well.

In developing this set of standards for an organization’s use in self-appraisal, a primary strategy was to make them practical and reasonable for use at the local level. To help in that strategy, the standards are organized according to the function they support.

Governance – Governance is a crucial part of any organization. Having a strong and clear governance structure allows the organization to function effectively and easily, making it easier to focus on clients and programs. The governance structure encompasses not only the Board and organizational structure, but many of the key practices inherent to a quality organization.

Operations – The general workings of the organization are found in the operations section. These standards provide the foundation for quality and consistent expectations for ongoing operations that comply with all laws, regulations, and best practice, and lead to better-served clients.

Services – These standards provide the fundamental expectations of services to be provided for the benefit of clients or directly for clients. Services standards emphasize consistency and transparency in policy and practice.

Performance – These standards are focused on the outcomes of the client, not on activities of the organization. They clearly reflect the principle of client self-direction and choice. They include the program or organization’s role in ensuring choice and in tracking outcomes. Client success translates to program success; it is a mutual benefit through mutual work.

Detailed Standards with Resources

GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

1.1 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have articles of incorporation and by-laws.

Explanation: This standard is important because it creates a legitimate business under which to operate and also shows compliance under the law. These are the two specific documents that need to be developed by the organization and submitted to the Secretary of State's office. They include information about the purpose of the organization and how it will operate.

Measures: Articles of incorporation and by-laws

Resources:

- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center for information on starting a nonprofit: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu>
- Iowa Secretary of State for information on starting a business or nonprofit and for on-line document filing and reporting: <https://sos.iowa.gov>

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1.2 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have current documentation of Board of Directors structure and activity.

Explanation: This proves that there is a working Board, as well as it indicates the organization has oversight. The intent of the standard is to determine that the responsibilities of the Board are being completed, as well as to prove to funders that the board is actively engaged in governance.

Measures: Board list, governance structure stated in your by-laws, and Board meeting minutes

Resources:

- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center for information on starting a nonprofit: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu>

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 **1.3 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have an employer identification number (EIN).**

Explanation: An EIN is an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) number that identifies the organization. Having an IRS-issued EIN is necessary for tax and government filings and for providing legal employment. Application may be made online, by fax, over the telephone, or by mail.

Measures: Government document or filing document showing EIN assignment

Resources:

- IRS Tax Information: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Unrelated-Business-Income-Tax>
- IRS Filing Requirements: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Churches-&-Religious-Organizations/Filing-Requirements>
- Applying for EIN: [http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/Apply-for-an-Employer-Identification-Number-\(EIN\)-Online](http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/Apply-for-an-Employer-Identification-Number-(EIN)-Online)
- Applying for 501(c)(3) Designation: <https://www.irs.gov/uac/About-Form-1023>

Helpful Suggestion:

- An organization may not file IRS Form 1023 (application for federal designation of nonprofit status) unless it already has an Employer Identification Number (EIN).

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 **1.4 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have records of filing the Biennial Report with the Iowa Secretary of State.**

Explanation: All corporations are required by state law to report on their status through a simple online or paper form every other year (biennially).

Measure: Current Biennial Report

Resources:

- Iowa Secretary of State site to file Biennial Report: <https://sos.iowa.gov/file/br/login.aspx>

[Return to Checklist of Standards](#)

1.5 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.

Explanation: If you should wish to contract with the federal government, such as through a grant, you must have a DUNS number for registration purposes. The DUNS number verifies the legal name, address, and tradestyle of each location. The number is randomly issued and the nine-digit number is specific to your site only. Having a DUNS number is appealing to funders, provides credibility, and provides an overall picture of an organization's viability. Financially, it shows a quality program.

Measures: DUNS registration and number

Resources:

- Register for DUNS Number: <http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html>
- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu/>

Helpful Suggestion:

- A DUNS number does not expire.

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1.6 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have written policies and procedures regarding record retention and destruction, including but not limited to:

- Corporate records
- Accounting and agency tax records
- Bank records
- Payroll and employment tax records
- Employee records
- Donor and grant records
- Press releases and public filings
- Legal, insurance, and safety records
- Electronic documents and records
- Documents containing protected health information

Explanation: This standard requires written procedures be in place for which documents you keep and for how long. Requirements may come from such sources as the law (for example, IRS and State of Iowa), funder contract terms, or organizational Board decisions. This is important because it not only demonstrates compliance with external requirements, but also demonstrates your organization can show a history of sound organizational governance. It also shows that the organization capably tracks funds and is financially accountable and transparent. This is one component of an organization's financial soundness, which is typically considered by funders.

Measure: Written document stating the organization's record retention and destruction policy

Resources:

- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu>
- [Sample Document Retention and Destruction Policy](#) in Appendix

[Return to Checklist of Standards](#)



1.7 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have written financial policies and procedures. This includes the following:

- Document and demonstrate compliance with grant requirements and funder policies, if applicable
- Track matched and leveraged funds, if applicable
- Have written procedures in place for document retention based on best practices for each specific type of document
- Internal controls

Explanation: This standard requires the creation of written procedures in place for finances. This is important because it not only demonstrates compliance with grant requirements your organization might receive, but also demonstrates you are capable of soundly tracking money and that your organization practices financial accountability and transparency. This further proves your organization's financial soundness, which is appealing to funders.

Measure: Written document stating the organization's financial policies and procedures

Resources:

- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu/>
- HUD Financial Management Video: <http://www.hudexchange.info/training-events/courses/introduction-to-financial-management-video/>
- Fiscal Policies Guide from CompassPoint Nonprofit Services: <https://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/documents/Guide%20to%20Fiscal%20Policies%20and%20%20Procedures.pdf>
- Sample Templates available from Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://www.nprcenter.org/models-samples-templates>

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 **1.8 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a budget approved by the Board of Directors.**

Explanation: Having an annual budget for the entire organization is important, but it is also crucial to have the budget approved by the Board of Directors. Budgets are a primary tool for managing the overall “health” of an organization and its programs. An approved budget helps demonstrate appropriate governance, transparency, accountability, and stability. Also, remember it is important that an annual budget for the entire organization be approved, not simply a budget for a specific program.

Measures: The current, written budget and Board minutes documenting the approval of the current budget

Resources:

- Council of Nonprofits Financial Management Resources: <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources-categories/financial-management>
- Nonprofit Budgeting Process: <http://www.nonprofitaccountingbasics.org/reporting-operations/budgeting-process>
- Program-Based Budget Template: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Resources-for-Financial-Management/Pages/Program-Based-Budget-Template.aspx>
- HUD Financial Management Video: <https://www.hudexchange.info/training-events/courses/introduction-to-financial-management-video/>

Helpful Suggestion:

- Actively involve the Board in developing the budget.

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1.9 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should complete annual federal and state tax reporting.

Explanation: It is required by state and federal law that you submit your tax returns every year, as applicable.

Measure: Federal and state tax reports are filed and records maintained according to your financial policies and procedures.

Resources:

- IRS Tax Information: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Unrelated-Business-Income-Tax>
- IRS Filing Requirements: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Churches-&-Religious-Organizations/Filing-Requirements>
- [Types of Year-End Financial Statements](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- Nonprofits are not exempt from sales tax.
- Contact the county assessor for information about any property tax on property the organization may own.
- Consult your attorney, accountant, or tax advisor for advice regarding your specific situation.

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 **1.10 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have an audit or an independent review of financial statements by a CPA.**

Explanation: Annual audits or an independent review of financial statements by a certified public accountant (CPA) should be considered a best practice to ensure fiduciary responsibility. Most grants require an audit of the organization and/or program funded with the grant. Realistically, it should be done annually. To avoid conflict of interest, the audit or independent review should be completed by a board-certified CPA who is not involved in the organization, including serving on the Board of Directors.

Measures: Completed, most recent audit or independent review report

Resources:

- Iowa CPA: <https://www.iacpa.org/Resources>
- U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 covers requirements for audits of states, local governments, and nonprofit organizations: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/circulars/a133/a133.pdf>

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1.11 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a written employee manual or personnel policy and procedure manual. The manual should include, at minimum:

- A conflict of interest policy that applies to Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers
- A written policy for confidentiality that is signed by each Board member, staff, and volunteer
- A written policy promoting a drug-free workplace for all staff and volunteers
- A written whistleblower policy
- A written policy on accident/incident reporting
- A written policy on the use and handling of the information from background checks conducted on employees and volunteers
- A written Code of Ethics for employees and volunteers

Explanation: This provides all those within the organization with clear and consistent guidance as to their role and behavior on the job. This protects the integrity of the organization and assists in ensuring client services are delivered consistently as well.

Measures: A current written employee manual or personnel policy and procedure manual

Resources:

- IowaWORKS Required Posters: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/required-employer-posters>
- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu/>
- Society for Human Resources Management: www.shrm.org
- Iowa Legal Aid can provide some advice; find your local office here: <http://www.iowalegalaid.org/find-legal-help>

Helpful Suggestions:

- For policies and procedures on accident/incident reporting, you can ask your insurance carrier to review and provide feedback.
- Consult a human resources firm or legal counsel.
- Consult an attorney regarding policy on what background check sources should be used and what consistent action to take based on the findings of background checks.
- Consider including an attorney or human resources professional on the Board of Directors.

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 **1.12 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should comply with current human resources postings including federal, state, and other mandatory postings, including but not limited to:**

- Equal opportunity employer
- Nondiscrimination

Explanation: There are certain posting requirements that are required by state and federal law.

Measure: Postings are posted, current, and in an easily accessed location.

Resources:

- IowaWORKS source of required posters:
<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/required-employer-posters>

Helpful Suggestions:

- Posters are available from a number of public sources for no cost. Be on the alert for offers from private companies to sell you posters.
- If your organization uses an external payroll vendor, you may have no-cost access to these postings as part of their service.

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1.13 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Explanation: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) assures all people have equitable access to services regardless of ability. This underscores the requirement to provide quality services in compliance with this federal law. Organizations cannot turn someone away because of a disability, but can identify reasonable accommodations to allow services to be provided. Meeting this standard demonstrates awareness and accommodation consistent with ADA, Fair Housing, and local authority laws.

Measure: A plan for ADA compliance in the organization's policies and procedures manual

Resources:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): http://www.ada.gov/ada_intro.htm
- Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness section on reasonable accommodations, including policies, practices, and forms: http://www.community-partnership.org/providers/policy_documents#ra
- Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless document on reasonable accommodations in shelters: <http://www.dlc-ma.org/resources/Housing/HOU36%20Shelter%20Accommodations.pdf>
- HUD/DOJ Joint Statement on Reasonable Accommodations under Fair Housing: <http://www.fairhousingnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/HUD-DOJ-Joint-Statement-on-RA.pdf>
- IowaWORKS is Iowa Workforce Development's regional services structure where you may find assistance with ADA and other employer requirements: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/iowaworks-centers>
- The Iowa Civil Rights Commission website includes downloadable publications and links on ADA, Fair Housing, and other relevant topics: <https://icrc.iowa.gov/resources>
- Resource person for presentations, advice, and referrals (but **not** for legal representation):

Len Sandler
Clinical Professor of Law
Director, Law and Policy In Action Projects
University of Iowa College of Law
Clinical Law Programs
380F Boyd Law Building
Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1113
319-335-9030 (phone)
319-353-5445 (fax)
www.uiowa.edu/legalclinic

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1.14 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should provide required and/or necessary insurance coverage as determined by the Board or the Board's authorized representative. This includes but is not limited to:

- Insurance coverage commensurate with the services provided by the organization
- Workers' compensation insurance
- Unemployment insurance
- Liability insurance
- Directors and officers coverage
- Professional liability

Explanation: This standard is crucial for the protection of the organization as well as complying with federal and state law.

Measure: Proof of insurance

Resources:

- Unemployment insurance is paid to the state through the payroll process: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/my-iowa-unemployment-insurance-employers-and-agents>
- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu/>

Helpful Suggestion:

- Contact a local commercial insurance agent for workers compensation, liability, directors and officers, and professional liability insurance.

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OPERATIONS STANDARDS

2.1 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should comply with federal, state, and local rules and regulations regarding building codes, inspections, and certifications.

Explanation: This standard ensures the organization or program stays in compliance with the law. Rules and regulations come from various levels of government, so it can require some extra efforts to be sure all requirements are met.

Measure: Maintain documentation of all inspections and certifications.

Helpful Suggestions:

- Check grant or other funder agreements to ensure compliance with any building code, inspections, and certifications requirements.
- Check with the state fire marshal and county and local building inspectors for requirements.
- Remember to regularly maintain fire extinguishers, alarms, and other safety equipment and systems.
- Work with the fire department on keysafe requirements for fire department access to the building.
- One resource is Knox Box: <http://www.knoxbox.com/> (This is provided only as information and is not a promotion or endorsement of any vendor.)

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2.2 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a current emergency preparedness plan.

Explanation: This standard is critical to ensure an organization or program is able to safeguard clients, employees, and volunteers. The emergency preparedness plan may include plans relating to fire drills, evacuation, disaster preparedness, bomb threats, active shooter training, weather events, or public health emergencies.

Measure: Copy of current plan

Resources:

- American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Resources:
<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/workplace>
- Disaster Plan Template from the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York is free and customizable for any organization:
http://www.npccny.org/info/disaster_plan.htm
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Disaster Planning Manual:
<http://www.rhyttac.net/resources/document/ready-anything-disaster-planning-manual-rhy-programs-0>
- Ready.gov preparedness and business continuity planning:
<http://www.ready.gov/business>

Helpful Suggestions:

- Contact your County Emergency Management Coordinator who will be willing to share information on planning. Each county is served by a local EMC. A list of the current county directors is at
http://homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/documents/county/coord_public_list.pdf.
- Local public safety and fire department officials may also be able to help with a plan or training for your organization.

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2.3 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should use Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or a comparable system approved by your Continuum of Care.

Explanation: There is increasing value in having accurate and consistent data about the services provided to and impact had on clients at the organizational and aggregated levels. A common system and set of data also allows a local community to collect client-level data about the extent and nature of homelessness over time. Specifically, an HMIS can be used to produce an unduplicated count of homeless persons, show patterns of service use, and measure the effectiveness of homeless programs. For individual clients who choose to do so, there is an opt-out to having one's information included.

Measures: Copy of the agreement authorizing use of HMIS or a comparable system, and an example of current aggregate report

Resources:

- U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HMIS information: <https://www.hudexchange.info/hmis/>
- Institute for Community Alliances, provider of HMIS services in Iowa: <http://icalliances.org/>

Helpful Suggestion:

- Consult your local Continuum of Care or other local providers.

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2.4 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have written policies and procedures for client information and record confidentiality, retention, and destruction.

Explanation: This standard is critical to the protection of information and the organization or program. These written policies and procedures are important from both an ethical and a funding standpoint.

Measure: Copy of the written policy

Resources:

- HUD Housing Handbook: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/hudclips/handbooks/hsgh/7610.1/76101HSGH.pdf>
- Society for Human Resources Management: www.shrm.org

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2.5 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should complete background checks including criminal history, child abuse, dependent-adult abuse, and sex offender registry for:

- All employees
- Volunteers who provide direct services

Explanation: This applies to the entire organization, not just the program providing services. “Direct services” is defined by the agency. This standard serves to protect the organization as well as the individuals within the organization, such as staff, clients, or volunteers.

Measure: Follow background check record retention procedures as required in your personnel policy and procedure manual.

Resources:

- The Iowa Department of Human Services forms to request background checks for dependent adult abuse and child abuse: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/dhsforms>
- National Sex Offender Public Website, U.S. Department of Justice: www.nsopw.gov
- Iowa Sex Offender Registry: <http://www.iowasexoffender.com/>
- National sex offender search by name: www.familywatchdog.us
- Iowa Courts Online (only includes crimes committed in Iowa): <https://www.iowacourts.state.ia.us/ESAWebApp/DefaultFrame?in=1>
- SING – Combined sex offender registry and criminal history search – Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (fees apply): <https://www.iowaonline.state.ia.us/SING/>
- Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (fees apply): <http://www.dps.state.ia.us/DCI/index.shtml>
- Background checks: www.CriminalWatchdog.com (fees apply)
- Background checks: www.RecordsCheck.net (fees apply)

Helpful Suggestions:

- Check with your local police department, which can be especially helpful for information about clients.
- Consult your attorney. It is highly recommended that an attorney be consulted in regard to any plans such as these and all use of such documents.

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2.6 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have written, determined minimum staffing requirements that are appropriate for the type of program and ensure a safe environment.

- In an emergency shelter, at a minimum, one staff person or volunteer should be present during hours of operation.
- For other programs, at minimum, one staff person or volunteer should be available during the hours of operation.

Explanation: This standard ensures safety, accountability, and accessibility. Depending on the program, there are no minimum standard legal requirements.

Measures: Policies are documented in the personnel policies and procedures manual.

Resources:

- Youth programs or residential facilities in the community
- One Iowa: <http://oneiowa.org/>

Helpful Suggestions:

- Review staffing requirements annually.
- Provide staffing by both genders if services are provided to both genders (or the gender a client identifies with).

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 **2.7 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should provide training, at minimum, for all staff and for volunteers who provide direct services, in the following topics:**

- Safety
- Ethics
- Confidentiality
- First Aid (includes blood-borne pathogens), CPR, and AED training, if applicable
- Required OSHA trainings

Explanation: This ensures basic protections and common knowledge to safeguard clients, employees, and volunteers. “Direct services” is defined by the agency.

Measure: Proof of training is included in staff and volunteer files. It should document the name of training, date, and summary of training.

Resources:

- OSHA Training Publications: <https://www.osha.gov/dte/index.html>
- Hazardous Materials Training: <http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/fstb/newclasses.shtml>
- Center for Nonprofit Excellence for Ethics training: <http://www.cnpe.org/learning>
- National Association of Social Workers trainings: <https://www.socialworkers.org/nasw/ethics/educationtraining.asp>
- Local/County Health Department
- Alcoholic/Drug Treatment facilities have some ethics training
 - NAMI: <http://www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-Programs>
 - DHS – Mental Health First Aid: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds-providers/tools-trainings-and-resources/mental-health-first-aid>
 - Youth Mental Health First Aid: <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>
- [Sample Code of Ethics Acknowledgment](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Confidentiality Agreement](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Indirect Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Contact the Red Cross regarding First Aid training.

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2.8 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should provide additional training, as applicable, for staff and for volunteers who provide direct services.

Explanation: This standard will ensure support for staff and volunteers, and protection and safeguarding of the clients. The suggested topics for trainings (listed in resources) are to help ensure that organizations and programs provide appropriately trained staff and volunteers to work with clients and have an understanding of what the clients are going through. Not all suggested topics for trainings will apply to all programs. Trainings can occur in several ways, including through webinars.

Measure: Proof of training is included in staff and volunteer files. It should document the name of training, date, and summary of training.

Resources:

Some suggested training topics:

- Case management (e.g. Healthy boundaries, self-care, de-escalation, motivational interviewing, mental health first aid, or Trauma Informed Care)
 - Local AEAs: <http://www.iowaaea.org/>
 - NAMI: <http://www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-Programs>
 - DHS – Mental Health First Aid: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds-providers/tools-trainings-and-resources/mental-health-first-aid>
 - Youth Mental Health First Aid: <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>
- Mandatory reporting
 - Iowa Code: <http://coolice.legis.iowa.gov/Cool-ICE/default.asp?category=billinfo&service=IowaCode&input=232.69>
 - Mandatory reporting through DHS: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/Comm164.pdf>
 - IDPH mandatory reporting training: https://www.idph.state.ia.us/bh/abuse_ed_review.asp
 - Childcare development centers or daycare centers
 - AEAs: <http://www.iowaaea.org/>
 - Local fire and police departments
 - Child advocacy center: <http://www.nationalcac.org/>
 - Iowa Area Agencies on Aging: <https://www.iowaaging.gov/area-agencies-aging>
- Human trafficking
 - Iowa Attorney General's Office: <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/for-crime-victims/fighting-human-trafficking/>
- Substance abuse education
 - Local treatment centers
 - IDPH Bureau of Substance Abuse: <http://www.idph.iowa.gov/substance-abuse>

- Poverty awareness
 - Bridges Out of Poverty; Gettin' Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World webinar: <http://www.ahaprocess.com/>
- Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
 - Local Human Rights Commission: <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/index.html>
 - HUD: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_op
 - Iowa Finance Authority: <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/>
- Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Local Human Rights Commission: <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/index.html>
 - Iowa Finance Authority: <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/>
- Cultural awareness and understanding
 - Local Human Rights Commission: <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/index.html>
 - Limited English Proficiency guidance: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/specialtopics/lep/index.html>
 - Multicultural centers in communities or the state
- Immigration status
 - Iowa Legal Aid: <http://www.iowalegalaid.org/>
 - Immigration Rights Network of Iowa: <http://irnofiowa.org/>
 - Immigration Advocates Network: www.immigrationadvocates.org
- Training for SOAR: <http://soarworks.prainc.com/course/ssissdi-outreach-access-and-recovery-soar-online-training>
- [*Case Management Information*](#) in Appendix
- [*Case Planning Guide*](#) in Appendix
- [*Child Abuse Guide for Mandatory Reporters*](#) in Appendix
- [*Codified Child Abuse Reporting and Assessment*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Notes*](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Local community colleges, colleges, and universities may offer resources or training opportunities.

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 **2.9 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should provide emergency preparedness training for employees, volunteers, and clients (if applicable), which includes, at minimum:**

- Conduct regular drills
- Maintain written, documented, posted evacuation routes

Explanation: This standard seeks to minimize trauma and injury in case of an emergency. In addition to safeguarding people, this also fulfills funder requirements.

Measure: Retain records of the drills and the posted evacuation routes.

Helpful Suggestions:

- Police and firefighters will provide training free of charge.
- Insurance companies often provide trainings to their clients.
- Contact your County Emergency Management office.
- Take into consideration Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations for your organization, such as alternative plans or routes for non-ambulatory persons.
- Include drills at a variety of times of the day and year, depending on the facility policy.

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2.10 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have written notices of client rights. Client rights include but are not limited to:

- Grievance procedure
- Right to informed consent
- Dignity and respect
- Review of services
- Termination policy
- Discharge
- Allow, limit, or refuse release of personal information
- Allow or refuse use of identity and images for publicity purposes
- Notification that their information will be aggregated and used for reporting purposes

Explanation: This standard ensures protection of both the organization and the client.

Measure: Documents notifying of client rights with signature line

Resources:

- University of Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu/>
- National Network to End Domestic Violence templates: (<http://nnedv.org/resources/transitional-housing.html>)
- Center for Nonprofit Excellence Templates: www.thecne.org
- Iowa Legal Aid: <http://www.iowalegalaid.org/>
- McKinney-Vento Act: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/homelessassistanceactamendedbyhearth.pdf>
- [Sample Client Notice of Rights Form](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Review frequently and note the date of the review.

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SERVICES STANDARDS

3.1 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have regular, published, and consistent hours of operation and/or a reliable point of contact.

Explanation: This ensures dependable and consistent access to services. This standard also shows the community that you are a reliable service provider.

Measures: Posted hours of operation and/or point of contact

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3.2 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should clearly identify the services provided and the populations served.

Explanation: This standard helps with identifying within the local network what services are provided, where, and by whom. It is also important to make this known to the public to ensure the community and clients are aware of the availability of services from your organization/program. This information will be useful for clients, potential clients, and partners.

Measures: Documentation of published information, website, materials, and/or community services directory.

Helpful Suggestions:

- Use the vision and mission of your organization to guide your services. Services you offer should be consistent with your mission and vision.
- Publish the services provided by the organization/program, and include the populations that are served.
- Use a variety of appropriate means to share the information, such as posting on the organization's website and listing in the organization's marketing materials, pamphlets, and hand-outs.
- Communicate the services provided and populations served with other community resources to support referrals and collaboration.

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3.3 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should implement a reading level standard for materials provided to clients.

Explanation: Organizations/programs need to address non-language or other readers. This is necessary if a client does not read or does not read English. Your policy should state how the organization/program will make sure the individual receives the information. This standard is very important to ensure all clients understand the materials provided to them.

Measure: An example of what is shared with clients

Helpful Suggestions:

- A fifth- to eighth-grade reading level is ideal.
- Utilize Microsoft Word or similar software to check or modify reading level. Microsoft Word has a “readability” feature within its software that shows reading level of selected text or an entire document.
- High school educational programs or community college programs use guides to set reading levels. Contact one of these institutions for advice or assistance.

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 **3.4 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a written and publicly-available policy specifying that program eligibility does not discriminate by age, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability.**

Explanation: These practices are required by federal and state law. Local jurisdictions may have additional requirements. Check with your own jurisdiction for additional requirements.

Measure: An example of the written policy that is shared with clients and posted

Resources:

- HUD Fair Housing Laws: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/FLaws
- HUD Fair Housing – Disability Rights in Housing: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/disabilities/inhousing
- Iowa Fair Housing Laws: <https://icrc.iowa.gov/publications/housing>
- Local Human Rights Commission
- Iowa Department of Human Rights: <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/>

Helpful Suggestion:

- Check your local regulations as policies and requirements may vary by jurisdiction.

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 **3.5 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have written and publicly-available eligibility criteria for each program offered.**

Explanation: When eligibility requirements for programs are clear to all stakeholders, it also ensures referrals are appropriate. This also helps identify gaps in services for the organization and in the community. Making this information available to the public makes the community and clients aware of services and the eligibility requirements.

Measure: An example of the written eligibility criteria for each program

Resources:

- Emergency Solutions Grant Information: <https://www.hudexchange.info/esg/>
- Shelter Assistance Fund Information: <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Public/Pages/PC84LN13>
- [*HUD Criteria for Defining At-Risk-Of-Homelessness*](#) in Appendix
- [*HUD Criteria for Defining Homeless and Recordkeeping Requirements*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample One Operating Manual*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Resident Selection Plan*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Two Operating Manual*](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- Contact your federal partner or funding source to check for any funder-required eligibility requirements.
- For the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program, the most basic criteria is that an individual has to qualify as homeless or at-risk of homelessness under HUD's definition. For most types of ESG assistance, an individual has to qualify under one of the four categories of homelessness. For Homelessness Prevention assistance under ESG, they could also qualify under one of the three categories of At-Risk. Another eligibility requirement under ESG applies only to Homelessness Prevention assistance (in most cases), and it is about income: a household must earn no more than 30% of the Area Median Income. Those are the most important client eligibility criteria, although there are a few others and some nuances. There is another set of criteria for whether a particular unit qualifies for receiving certain types of assistance.
- The Shelter Assistance Fund (SAF) program is mostly about emergency shelter, and an individual has to qualify under one of HUD's four categories of homelessness referenced above.

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 **3.6 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a written policy which is shared with clients identifying the type, amount, and duration of assistance.**

Explanation: This practice ensures that clients are aware of the specific information about services available to them and the terms of those services. This information should be shared with clients, consistently applied, and consistent with funder requirements.

Measure: Written policy to be provided to clients identifying type, amount, and duration of assistance, as well as the determination process.

Resources:

- [Sample Assistance Plan](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Shelter Policies](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Policies will vary by program type.

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 **3.7 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a written and publicly-available policy describing how assistance is prioritized within each program.**

Explanation: Making this information available helps organizations and programs identify who is able to receive services based on capacity. It is valuable in coordinated assessment because it lets providers know where to refer a person or family in need of services. In many cases, this practice is also required by a funder for the reasons described here.

Measures: Policy outlining how assistance is prioritized for each program and is available publicly

Resources:

- National Network to End Domestic Violence, transitional housing: <http://nnedv.org/resources/transitional-housing.html>
- [*Sample Prioritizing Assistance Policy*](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- The policy should be shared with clients, consistently applied, and consistent with funder requirements, if any.

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 **3.8 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should have a written policy that clearly explains the appeal process for denial, removal, or termination of services.**

Explanation: This provides legal protection for the organization. It also makes sure that the client is made aware of the appeal process.

Measure: Copy of the policy

Resources:

- [*Sample Appeal Process*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Appeal Process for Denial of Services*](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Seek legal advice to review the organization's/program's policy.

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3.9 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should make each client aware and provide client access to the appeal, denial, removal, and termination of services process. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Grievance procedure
- Right to informed consent
- Dignity and respect
- Review of services
- Termination policy
- Discharge
- Allow, limit, or refuse release of personal information
- Allow or refuse use of identity and images for publicity purposes
- Notification that their information will be aggregated and used for reporting purposes

Explanation: This provides the client with knowledge to make the most educated decisions for her/his situation. Providing this information helps prevent challenges later and supports informed decision making on the part of the client. Means of providing this information could include postings around the facility and/or documents given to clients.

Measure: An example of what is posted or provided to client

Resource:

- [Sample Appeal Receipt and Forms](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- There are some benefits of providing this information prior to providing services. It helps clients make decisions about what to expect and their options.
- Organizations/programs are encouraged to develop this information utilizing resources such as legal advice from the organization's attorney, funder requirements and assistance, HMIS options, and others.

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3.10 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should participate in the coordinated assessment approved by the applicable Continuum of Care.

Explanation: The coordinated assessment aims and achieves better use of services and better services to clients. Increasingly, funders are required to participate in coordinated assessment, and it is a central element in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act.

Measure: Documentation of participation in the coordinated assessment approved by the applicable Continuum of Care

Resources:

- National Alliance to End Homelessness: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/>
- Iowa Council on Homelessness: <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Topics/TopicIowaCouncilOnHomelessness>
- [*Iowa Continuum of Care Contacts*](#) in Appendix
- [*Iowa Housing Planning Groups*](#) in Appendix

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3.11 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should recognize diversity of culture, language, and ability, and have a plan to meet individual needs should it be necessary.

Explanation: This standard places nondiscrimination language into effect; it shows inclusion through action. For example, clients have the right to practice their religion, and organizations have the obligation to provide a reasonable accommodation and to create a written plan to meet those needs. Examples of meeting common types of needs seen by organizations/programs include language interpreters, use of a language line, foods to reflect cultural differences, personal care items, religious holidays, and assistance with ambulatory needs (walker, crutches, or cane).

Measures: Written organizational operating procedures, copies of agreements with partners that can meet the need, and/or staff trainings

Resources:

- Legal Services NJ, Working with Interpreters: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVm27HLLiiQ>
- Language Line Solutions: <http://www.languageline.com/>
- Google Translate: <https://translate.google.com/>
- Communicating With and About People with Disabilities: http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/pdf/disabilityposter_photos.pdf
- General Information About People with Disabilities: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/types.html>
- National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors – Language Guidelines: http://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/NASMHPD_OPD_Language_Guidelines_Final_5.16.14.pdf
- Examples of people-first language: http://www.inclusionproject.org/nip_userfiles/file/People%20First%20Chart.pdf
- Iowa Department of Human Rights: <http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: <https://www.nami.org/>
- [*Iowa Continuum of Care Contacts*](#) in Appendix
- [*Iowa Housing Planning Groups*](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- Contact local community colleges, colleges, and universities for assistance with translation, interpretation, diversity training, and cultural understanding training.
- Examples of cultural and/or religious differences one may see among clients include such practices as burning of sage or dietary restrictions.
- Many communities with diverse cultures and practices have informal or formal leaders within those cultural communities. To access information, advice, and to

better understand the cultures, build and maintain relationships with local community leaders in that culture to act as a liaison in many aspects of community life.

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 **3.12 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should work with other community resources, agencies, and networks to appropriately coordinate services and/or refer a client.**

Explanation: This is an important strategy for effectiveness of services in a dynamic field. This standard allows the organization to be more successful in meeting performance standards. In addition, hearing from and working with those other agencies is worthwhile to ensure efficiency. Coordination and collaboration is necessary no matter the funding source of the agency. This standard is fundamental to developing a statewide system of services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Measures: Memorandum of understanding (MOU) or letter of support from your local homeless planning board

Resources:

- Iowa Council on Homelessness:
<http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Topics/TopicIowaCouncilOnHomelessness>
- United Way: <http://www.unitedway.org/>
- Local homeless boards, continuums, community alliances, and others
 - Balance of State Continuum of Care website:
<http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Home/DocumentSubCategory/107>
 - Polk County Continuum of Care website: <http://polkcococ.org/>
 - Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (Omaha) website:
<http://www.endhomelessnesstoday.org/>
 - Sioux City Continuum of Care website: <http://www.siouxlandhomeless.org>
- Iowa Community Action Agencies: <http://iowacomunityaction.org/>
- Specialized partners
 - Iowa Legal Aid: <http://www.iowalegalaid.org/>
 - Credit Counseling Agencies:
http://www.justice.gov/ust/eo/bapcpa/ccde/CC_Files/CC_Approved_Agencies_HTML/cc_iowa/cc_iowa.htm
- [*Iowa Continuum of Care Contacts*](#) in Appendix
- [*Iowa Housing Planning Groups*](#) in Appendix

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PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

4.1 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should ensure that clients are offered the opportunity to choose to be off the street.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. This performance standard recognizes that the choice is ultimately up to the individual, and that organizations and programs have an obligation to present an individual with that choice.

Based on the client's choice, the client will be connected with available services contingent on programming, community capacity, and availability.

"Opportunity to choose" means not being pressured to accept a particular service or any service. An organization or program cannot force a client to come off the street.

Choices to remain on the street will not impact whether the organization or program meets the standard; whether the choice is provided is the key, regardless of whether the program staff encountering the client directly provides the client with shelter or other programs.

Measures: The number of clients that have been offered the opportunity to choose to be off the street or that have been offered information on shelter and housing options

Resources:

- Include a question on the initial required assessment (coordinated assessment) asking, "Given the opportunity, would you choose to be off the street and be in alternate housing/shelter?"
- [Comprehensive Assessment Intake Tool](#) in Appendix

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4.2 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should ensure that clients have basic needs met, e.g., food, shelter, clothing, safety.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. This does not necessarily mean that the organization can provide those services directly, but can connect and make available to the individual programs or services to have their basic needs met.

Meeting basic needs is the foundation of assisting an individual to move out of homelessness.

Measures: Document that all clients have been offered essential services through the organization itself, or demonstrate targeted partnerships with community organizations providing said services and necessary referrals made.

Verify relevant staff has sufficient and current knowledge of community resources and contacts.

Resources:

- Iowa DHS Application for Emergency Food: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/how-to-apply>
- Statewide resources like 211: http://fcfhiowa.bowmansystems.com/index.php?option=com_cpx
- Community Action Agencies: <http://iowacommunityaction.org/>
- Identify service providers within your community, points of access, gather contact information.
- Contact local churches for additional resources or information.
- [Case Planning Guide](#) in Appendix
- [Comprehensive Assessment Intake Tool](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- Develop a local resource list including local planning bodies.
- Develop an emergency providers list.

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4.3 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should ensure that clients have the opportunity to connect with non-cash resources which includes but are not limited to: health care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and legal services.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. These are non-cash assistance. The expectation is that the connections be made for the individual, not necessarily that the organization provides those services.

Mainstream resources and the listed services are those that may be available to an individual, but without the organization providing the connections, the individual may not know about or how to access those services.

Measures: Demonstrate through client assessments and case notes that all clients are offered relevant services for which they qualify, assistance in applying for services, and the ability to follow through with staff support, either at the organization itself or with targeted partner(s).

Verify relevant staff has sufficient and current knowledge of community, state, and federal resources, applications, and contacts.

Resources:

- ServicePoint and Apricot (or other database)
- Iowa Legal Aid: <http://www.iowalegalaid.org/>
- Consumer Credit Counseling Programs: http://www.justice.gov/ust/eo/bapcpa/ccde/CC_Files/CC_Approved_Agencies_HTML/cc_iowa/cc_iowa.htm
- National Foundation for Consumer Credit (NFCC): <https://www.nfcc.org/>
- Financial Counseling Association of America (FCAA): <http://www.fcaa.org/>
- Iowa DHS Application for Emergency Food: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/how-to-apply>
- Statewide resources like 211: http://fcfh Iowa.bowmansystems.com/index.php?option=com_cpx
- Community mental health centers and providers: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/Regional-Contacts.pdf>
- County VA offices and VA medical centers: <http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?State=IA&dnum=ALL>
- Veterans CBOC (Community Based Outpatient Centers): <http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?STATE=IA&dnum=ALL>
- Healthcare for Homeless Veterans Outreach: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv.asp>
- [*Case Planning Guide*](#) in Appendix
- [*Comprehensive Assessment Intake Tool*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management to Maintain Employment*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management to Obtain Employment*](#) in Appendix

- [Sample Case Management to Increase Income](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- Identify service providers within your community, points of access, and gather contact information.
- Develop a local resource list including local planning bodies.
- Develop an emergency providers list.

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4.4 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should ensure that clients have the opportunity to connect with resources to increase income.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. This standard addresses unearned income, which includes but is not limited to: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Family Investment Program (FIP), child support, and veteran's benefits.

This standard distinguishes between unearned and earned income opportunities to recognize that all people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness may access unearned income sources that are critical to their stability.

Measures: Demonstrate through client assessments and case notes that all clients are offered relevant services for which they qualify, assistance in applying for services, and the ability to follow through with staff support, either at the organization itself or with targeted partner(s).

Verify relevant staff has sufficient and current knowledge of community, state, and federal resources, applications, and contacts.

Resources:

- Iowa Department of Human Services Application for Unearned Income (medical, child care, food stamps, and more): <http://dhs.iowa.gov/how-to-apply>
- Disability Services Application: <https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi/>
- ServicePoint and Apricot (or other database) to document in case notes
- Local child support recovery unit: <https://secureapp.dhs.state.ia.us/CustomWeb/>
- Unemployment through IWD (regional workforce offices): <http://www.iowaworkforce.org/ui/>
- Temporary workforce options: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/iowaworks-centers>
- Community colleges for workforce training: <http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/WorkforceTraining/employeetraining>
- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery – SOAR: <http://soarworks.prainc.com/course/ssissdi-outreach-access-and-recovery-soar-online-training>
- [*Case Planning Guide*](#) in Appendix
- [*Comprehensive Assessment Intake Tool*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management for Income*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management for Income, Housing Stability*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management to Maintain Employment*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management to Obtain Employment*](#) in Appendix
- [*Sample Case Management to Increase Income*](#) in Appendix

- [Sample Case Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#) in Appendix

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4.5 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should ensure that clients have the opportunity to pursue earned income through employment.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. Recognizing a client's ability to choose, this standard serves to provide an opportunity to work, not a mandate/requirement to be employed. The expectation is that the connections be made for the individual, not necessarily that the organization provides employment services.

Providing the opportunity should be available, while recognizing that employment is the client's choice and that employment may not always be possible or appropriate for the individual.

Measures: Demonstrate through client case plans and notes that internal organizational barriers are minimized for all clients in accessing and maintaining employment (i.e., criminal history, credit history, curfew, etc.)

Demonstrate through client case plans and notes that all clients are offered relevant support and assistance in applying for and maintaining employment either through appropriate staff support within the organization or targeted partners (such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Iowa Workforce Development, Goodwill Industries, or temporary employment agencies).

Verify relevant staff has sufficient and current knowledge of local employment opportunities and resources.

Verify client access to phone, computer, and Internet services.

Resources:

- ServicePoint and Apricot (or other database)
- Disability Services Application: <https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi/>
- County VA offices and VA medical centers:
<http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?State=IA&dnum=ALL>
- Iowa Workforce Development: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov>
- Vocational Rehab: <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/>
- Job training through United Way, Goodwill, Salvation Army
 - Goodwill: <http://www.goodwill.org/find-jobs-and-services/find-a-job/>
 - Check with your local Salvation Army.
 - Check with your local United Way.
- Temporary employment placement agencies
- Getting Ahead Programs: <http://www.ahaprocess.com/>
- Assurance phone program through Virgin Mobile:
<http://www.assurancewireless.com/Public/Welcome.aspx>
- [*Case Planning Guide*](#) in Appendix

- [Comprehensive Assessment Intake Tool](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management for Employment Income](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management for Income](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management for Income, Housing Stability](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management to Maintain Employment](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management to Obtain Employment](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestions:

- Case Managers will work with clients on resume building and mock interviewing.
- Available jobs will be posted at each facility.
- Job search forms need to be utilized by each client to determine if they are actively looking for work.
- Referrals will be made to Vocational Rehab, Iowa Workforce Development, etc., as needed.

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4.6 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should support clients in their progress toward clients' identified goals.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. This standard addresses supporting progress toward the individual's goals, even though they may not be the same as the organization's goals for the client.

Clients may set goals for themselves that may not be achievable at the time, or they may not be the same goals an organization and case manager may see as priorities or the organization may not be able to provide. Nonetheless, this respects individual choice toward a goal the client sees as important.

Measures: Demonstrate through client assessment and goal planning that client input is sought and relevant support is provided, as feasible, either within the organization or through targeted partnerships.

Resources:

- [Case Planning Guide](#) in Appendix
- [Housing Stability Assessment and Plan](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Apricot Goal-Setting Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#) in Appendix
- [Self-Sufficiency Matrix and Scoring Tool for Case Managers](#) in Appendix
- [Spending Plan](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Connect clients with various client education programs that align with their goals, such as financial literacy, RentWise, and goal setting.

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4.7 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should assist clients in managing identified barriers to obtaining and/or sustaining housing.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. This standard applies to organizations/programs with case management. Examples of other barriers may include past evictions, criminal background, and credit history.

It is important to acknowledge the barriers that may prevent clients from obtaining or sustaining housing to make it easier to address them.

Measures: Demonstrate through client case plans and notes that internal organizational barriers are minimized for all clients.

Demonstrate through client assessments and case notes that all clients are offered relevant services for which they qualify, assistance in applying for services, and the ability to follow through with staff support, either at the organization itself or with targeted partner(s).

Verify relevant staff has sufficient and current knowledge of community, state, and federal resources, applications, and contacts.

Resources:

- Local subsidized, low-income housing
- Community Housing Initiatives (CHI): <http://www.chihousing.com/>
- Mercy Housing: <http://www.mercyhousing.org/>
- Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral Centers (CCR&R): <http://iowaccrr.org/>
- Iowa Legal Aid: <http://iowalegalaid.org/>
- Public Transportation Schedule: http://www.iowadot.gov/transit/interactive_map.html
- Consumer Credit Counseling Programs: http://www.justice.gov/ust/eo/bapcpa/ccde/CC_Files/CC_Approved_Agencies_HTML/cc_iowa/cc_iowa.htm
- Iowa Department of Human Services list of child care providers: <http://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/clientportal/providersearch.aspx>
- Headstart: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/head-start>
- Local housing authorities: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/iowa/renting/hawebsites>
- [*Case Planning Guide*](#) in Appendix

Helpful Suggestion:

- Consider serving as a reference for a client.

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4.8 An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should support clients in making progress towards housing stability.

Explanation: All performance standards are focused on the outcomes for the client. This standard primarily applies to organizations/programs with case management. The expectation is that the connections be made for the individual, not necessarily that the organization provides those services.

This standard focuses on working toward a permanent housing solution. It is important to recognize that stability may take various forms.

Measures: Demonstrate through client case plans and notes that all clients are offered relevant support and assistance in housing searches, applying for, and maintaining housing either through appropriate staff support within the organization or targeted partner(s).

Verify relevant staff has sufficient and current knowledge of local housing opportunities and resources.

Verify client access to phone, computer, and Internet services.

Verify client success by documenting and reporting permanent housing placements.

Resources:

- Iowa Legal Aid: <http://iowalegalaid.org/>
- Consumer Credit Counseling Programs: http://www.justice.gov/ust/eo/bapcpa/ccde/CC_Files/CC_Approved_Agencies_HTML/cc_iowa/cc_iowa.htm
- National Foundation for Credit Counseling – NFCC: <https://www.nfcc.org/>
- Association of Independent Consumer Credit Counseling Agencies – AICCCA: <http://www.aiccca.org/>
- General assistance through county offices
- Community Action Agencies: <http://iowacommunityaction.org/>
- Section 8, housing stability: <http://www.section8programs.com/iowa.html>
- Local housing authority: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/iowa/renting/hawebsites>
- Local subsidized, low-income housing
- Community Housing Initiatives (CHI): <http://www.chihousing.com/>
- Mercy Housing: <http://www.mercyhousing.org/>
- Section 515, subsidy within the rural housing program. Project for rural housing: http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rhed/gateway/pdf/515_RuralRental.pdf
- Iowa Housing Search: www.iowahousingsearch.org
- State Housing Trust Funds (and there are local housing trust funds): <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Public/Links/PC80>

- [Case Planning Guide](#) in Appendix
- [Housing Stability Assessment and Plan](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management for Housing Stability](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Management for Income, Housing Stability](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Case Notes](#) in Appendix
- [Sample Self-Sufficiency Matrix](#) in Appendix
- [Self-Sufficiency Matrix and Scoring Tool for Case Managers](#) in Appendix

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Contact Information

Amber Lewis, *Iowa Finance Authority*
Iowa Council on Homelessness, Homeless Programs Coordinator
Des Moines, Iowa
<http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Topics/TopicIowaCouncilOnHomelessness>

Crissy Canganelli, *Shelter House*
Iowa Council on Homelessness, Policy and Planning Committee Co-Chair
Iowa City, Iowa
<http://www.shelterhouseiowa.org>

Tony Timm, *Central Iowa Shelter & Services*
Iowa Council on Homelessness, Policy and Planning Committee Co-Chair
Des Moines, Iowa
www.centraliowashelter.org

Julie Bockenstedt, *Iowa Council on Homelessness*
Iowa City, Iowa
<http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Home/DocumentSubCategory/110>

Michelle Brown, *Opening Doors*
Dubuque, Iowa
<http://www.openingdoorsdbq.org>

Jim Cain, *Family Promise of Greater Des Moines*
Des Moines, Iowa
www.familypromisedm.org

Ronelle Clark, *YWCA Housing Services*
Clinton, Iowa
<http://www.ywcaclinton.org>

Carrie Dunnwald, *Cedar Valley Friends of the Family*
Iowa Council on Homelessness
Waverly, Iowa
www.cvfriendedsofthefamily.org

Heather Harney, *HACAP*
Hiawatha, Iowa
<http://www.hacap.org>

Jeannie Kingery, *Northern Lights Shelter for Men and Trinity House of Hope Shelter for Women*
Mason City, Iowa
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/New-Beginnings-House-of-Hope/466771516759816>

Susan McGuire, *Center for Siouxland*
Sioux City, Iowa
www.centerforsiouxland.org

Nicole Rethman, *Domestic/Sexual Assault Outreach Center*
Fort Dodge, Iowa

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/DomesticSexual-Assault-Outreach-Center/89329294294>

Mark Sertterh, *Shelter House*
Iowa City, Iowa

<http://www.shelterhouseiowa.org>

General Resources

The links below provide a variety of information for a quick first reference for many types of information. These were selected to be listed here (as well as with standards to which they apply) because they are commonly used and reliable sources of information for organizations providing services to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Iowa Finance Authority: <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/>

Institute for Community Alliances: <http://icalliances.org/>

Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center: <http://inrc.law.uiowa.edu/>

Iowa Legal Aid: <http://www.iowalegalaid.org/>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Exchange, Homelessness Assistance: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/>