

OHIO BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM OF CARE Coordinated Entry At-a-Glance

Coordinated Entry

Coordinated Entry (CE), also known as coordinated intake or coordinated assessment, is a system that allows for CE into a local homeless services system, as well as coordinated movement within and ultimately exit from the system. Coordinated Entry increases the efficiency of a homeless assistance system by standardizing access to homeless services and coordinating program referrals. As part of the HEARTH regulations that govern Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires all CoCs across the United States to implement CE.

According to HUD guidance, key elements of CE systems include:

- **Access:** ensures the entire CoC area is covered and that service entry points are easily accessible and well advertised
- **Assessment:** standardizes information gathering on service needs, housing barriers, and vulnerabilities
- **Prioritization:** matches the output of the assessment tool to the community priorities based on severity of need, and establishes a priority rank for available housing and services, and
- **Referral:** coordinates the connection of individuals to the appropriate and available housing and service intervention

Coordinated Entry in the Ohio Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoSCoC)

The Ohio BoSCoC began Coordinated Entry (CE) systems work in 2012. We divided our 80 counties into 18 Homeless Planning Regions (HPRs) and each created and began implementation of their CE system. These systems generally use multiple front doors for homeless system entry and region-wide common screening and assessment tools/referral processes.

Although regions have made progress in the initial implementation of their CE systems, these systems now need to be evaluated and updated in order to achieve the efficiency and effectiveness that is required of high-performing CE systems. Therefore, in 2015, the Ohio BoSCoC convened a workgroup to evaluate and revise our CE systems in order to achieve our goals of helping households quickly access appropriate services to address housing crises, increasing exits to housing, decreasing length of time homeless, and reducing returns to homelessness. The CE workgroup has begun to develop CE System Standards to provide guidance to HPRs as they continue to develop CE systems. The CE System Standards cover the following components:

- Outreach, Advertising and Marketing of CE System
- Inventory of Available Projects and Community Resources
- Identification of Entry Points
- Diversion Screening
- Entry into Emergency Shelter or Crisis Response System
- Assessment of Client Need
- Determining and Making Referrals
- PSH Prioritization and Centralized Waitlists
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Coordinated Entry in the Ohio Balance of State Continuum of Care Moving Forward

Over the next three years COHHIO staff, in coordination with ODSA, will implement CE systems on the BoSCoC level as well as on the regional level. Regarding staffing, there are currently two full-time coordinated entry systems specialist. CoC and CE staff will provide training and technical assistance, initially, to a regional pilot CE initiative. Following the successful pilot of CE in a chosen region, CE staff will continue to facilitate the advancement of CE throughout the Ohio BoSCoC.

