

PSH Eligibility Verification Guide

Chronic Homeless Definition Explained

The Term “Chronically Homeless” means a person or head of household with a disability who has lived in any of the following places for 12 or more months in the last 3 years:

- emergency shelter or safe haven (our CoC does not have safe havens)
- place not meant for human habitation
- institutional care facility for 89 days or less and entered directly from streets/emergency shelter.

The person must have been living in any of the above situations either

- continuously for at least 12 months or
- with 4 separate episodes in the last 3 years that total 12 months.




**The 12 months of homelessness must have taken place within our CoC*

Each period separating an episode is called a break in homelessness. A break includes either

- 7 nights or more in non-homeless settings (ie: self-pay hotel, doubled-up, residential treatment programs, transitional housing) or
- 90 days or more in institutional care facilities (ie: jail, hospital, mental health facility.)

Recordkeeping Documentation Options Explained

HUD requires 3rd party documentation of the homeless history from reliable sources. At least 9 months must be documented by 3rd party service providers. In the event that 3rd party verification is unavailable, the person seeking assistance can self-certify for up to 3 months. All documentation must be tracked in the HMIS.

<p>What can be used as 3rd Party Documentation to verify a person’s homeless history?</p>	 <p>HMIS Records from <u>exclusive</u> homeless providers (Emergency Shelter entry/exits, Street Outreach contacts, showers or laundry services from Homeless Drop-In Centers)</p>	 <p>Written observation by outreach workers or other service providers noting specific months they <i>encountered the person while they were homeless & while working in their professional capacity.</i> Or community member who <i>physically observed</i> where the person was residing.</p>	 <p>Documentation from institutional care facilities (jails, hospitals, etc.) <i>*Records must include entry/exit dates (discharge paperwork or written certification from facility.)</i></p>
<p>Self-Certification</p>	<p>Signed certification by the person seeking assistance describing their living situation with dates, accompanied by the outreach worker’s documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain evidence to support it. <i>*No more than 3 months of self-cert.</i></p>		
<p>When do you need 3rd party documentation? Needed to document any time spent on streets, shelters, or in institutional care facilities where person entered from streets/shelters and remained 89 days or less. Not needed to document breaks in homelessness, as these can be based on person’s self-report.</p>			

PSH Referral Checklist

The following is a guide for Navigators working with chronically homeless persons to gather documentation for a referral to PSH.

Client Name/ID:

Ensure the standard assessment has been completed in HMIS from an Access Point (shelter, outreach, HUB, etc)

- HMIS ROI (from Assessing agency)
- CoC Entry (from Assessing agency)
- VI-SPDAT (8+)

Navigator's HMIS data entry

- HMIS ROI from Navigator agency (if different than Assessing agency)
- CoC Entry from Navigator project (if different than Assessor project)
 - Navigator's Project Entry accurately reflects current income, disability, insurance, living situation, etc.
- Case notes documenting progress
- Navigation Summary for Warm Handoff uploaded in file attachments

Chronic status is uploaded or documented in HMIS profile

- 12 months of Chronic Homelessness has been verified:
 - consecutive or cumulative with 4 episodes over 3 years
- Qualifying Disability has been certified:
 - SSDI award letter or SSI Award letter reflecting Disabled code
 - Disability Certification completed by licensed medical staff
 - Disability Certification completed by Red Shirts (CRA fund only)Disability type(s) verified by Medical Staff or as noted in HMIS entry: _____

Verify additional documentation is uploaded in HMIS profile

- Valid Photo ID (all 18+)
- Social Security Card, or proof of recent application (all household members)
- Proof of Income uploaded (all 18+) **Ensure HMIS Entry data reflects docs uploaded*
 - Current SSI/SSDI award letter \$ _____
 - No-Income Certification \$ _____
 - Last 30 days of paystubs \$ _____
 - Letter from Employer \$ _____
 - Other: \$ _____
 - TOTAL GROSS Household Income: \$ _____
 - Total gross household income is at or below [50% AMI](#)

*Pending approval and match to a program, Navigator will be tasked with helping participant connect to program, including helping obtain any additional documents required by leasing at Single Site PSH programs.

Example A: Homeless history Documented – Consecutive Months

# of Episodes	Month/Yr	# of Months	Where did person reside	County	Agency Verifying	Documentation Type	Notes
1	9/2019	1	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	HMIS Records	
	8/2019	2	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	7/2019	3	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	6/2019	4	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	HMIS Records	
	5/2019	5	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	HMIS Records	
	4/2019	6	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	3/2019	7	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	2/2019	8	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	HMIS Records	
	1/2019	9	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	HMIS Records	
	12/2018	10	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	Self-Certification	
	11/2018	11	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	Self-Certification	
	10/2018	12	Streets	Seminole	Sanford Hope Team	Self-Certification	

Example B: Homeless history Documented – 4 episodes within 3 years

# of Episodes	Month/Yr	# of Months	Where did client reside	County	Agency Verifying	Documentation Type	Notes
1	9/2019	1	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	8/2019	2	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	7/2019	3	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
BREAK			<i>housed</i>	Orange	<i>Self-report by individual</i>	<i>None needed</i>	<i>Couch-surfed w/ friend for 5 months</i>
2	2/2019	4	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	1/2019	5	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	12/2018	6	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
BREAK			<i>Transitional Housing</i>	Orange	<i>Self-report by individual</i>	<i>None needed</i>	<i>Resided in a TH program for over 1 yr</i>
3	10/2017	7	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	9/2017	8	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	8/2017	9	Shelter	Orange	Coalition	HMIS Records	
	7/2017	10	Streets	Orange	Sanford Hope Team	Self-Certification	
BREAK			<i>jail</i>	Orange	<i>Self-report by individual</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>In jail for over 90 days</i>
4	1/2017	11	Streets	Orange	Sanford Hope Team	Self-Certification	
	12/2016	12	Streets	Orange	Sanford Hope Team	Self-Certification	

Documenting Chronic Homelessness FAQ

Q: [What can count towards someone's homelessness for the purpose of qualifying as Chronically homeless?](#)

A: Homelessness includes living on the streets, emergency shelters, or Safe Havens; or time in institutional care facilities (jail, hospital, mental health facility) if entering from streets/ES & stayed less than 90 days.

Q: [What are acceptable forms of 3rd party documentation for documenting someone's homelessness?](#)

A: 1) HMIS records of emergency shelter stays or PATH/outreach contacts. 2) Written observation from outreach encounters with person, with a description of the conditions where the person was living. 3) Written observation from a community member who physically observed where the person is/was living. 4) Written observation from another housing or service provider who encountered the person while working in their professional capacity.

Q: [Can someone verify homelessness for months that they did not physically encounter the person, but instead based on the person's self-report to them that they were homeless?](#)

A: No. Anyone certifying to a person's homelessness can only verify the specific months in which they physically encountered the person.

Q: [Do self-pay hotels, doubled up, residential treatment or transitional housing programs count as homeless?](#)

A: Once someone stays 7 nights or more in any of these settings, they are not considered homeless but residing in a housed situation. This is considered a BREAK.

Q: [Can a community member like a business owner, church worker, shopkeeper or resident verify homelessness?](#)

A: Only if the community member *physically observed where the person is/has been residing*. They must indicate which specific months they physically observed the person residing in a place not meant for human habitation. Intake workers must use their professional judgement to determine reliability of the source.

Q: [Can housing or other service providers verify homelessness?](#)

A: Yes, as long as the worker encountered the individual on more than one occasion while working in their official capacity at the time they observed the homelessness. These providers include shelter staff, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, an educator, etc.

Q: [Can an outreach worker verify homelessness based on only 1 encounter with the person?](#)

A: No. Where outreach/intake workers only encounter is at the current point in which assistance is being requested, it would not qualify as 3rd party verification.

Q: [Does HMIS need to reflect 365 days of homeless verification?](#)

A: No. A single "touch" per month is sufficient to verify the person was homeless for the entire month, unless there is clear evidence of a break in an HMIS record (ie: TH stays, notes recording an exit to housing).

Q: [Can outreach or Navigators obtain verbal statements from any of the above sources?](#)

A: Yes, outreach can obtain oral statements from service providers or community members certifying to someone's homelessness as long as they abide by the guidelines noted above.

Q: [What counts as a disability for the purpose of qualifying for PSH?](#)

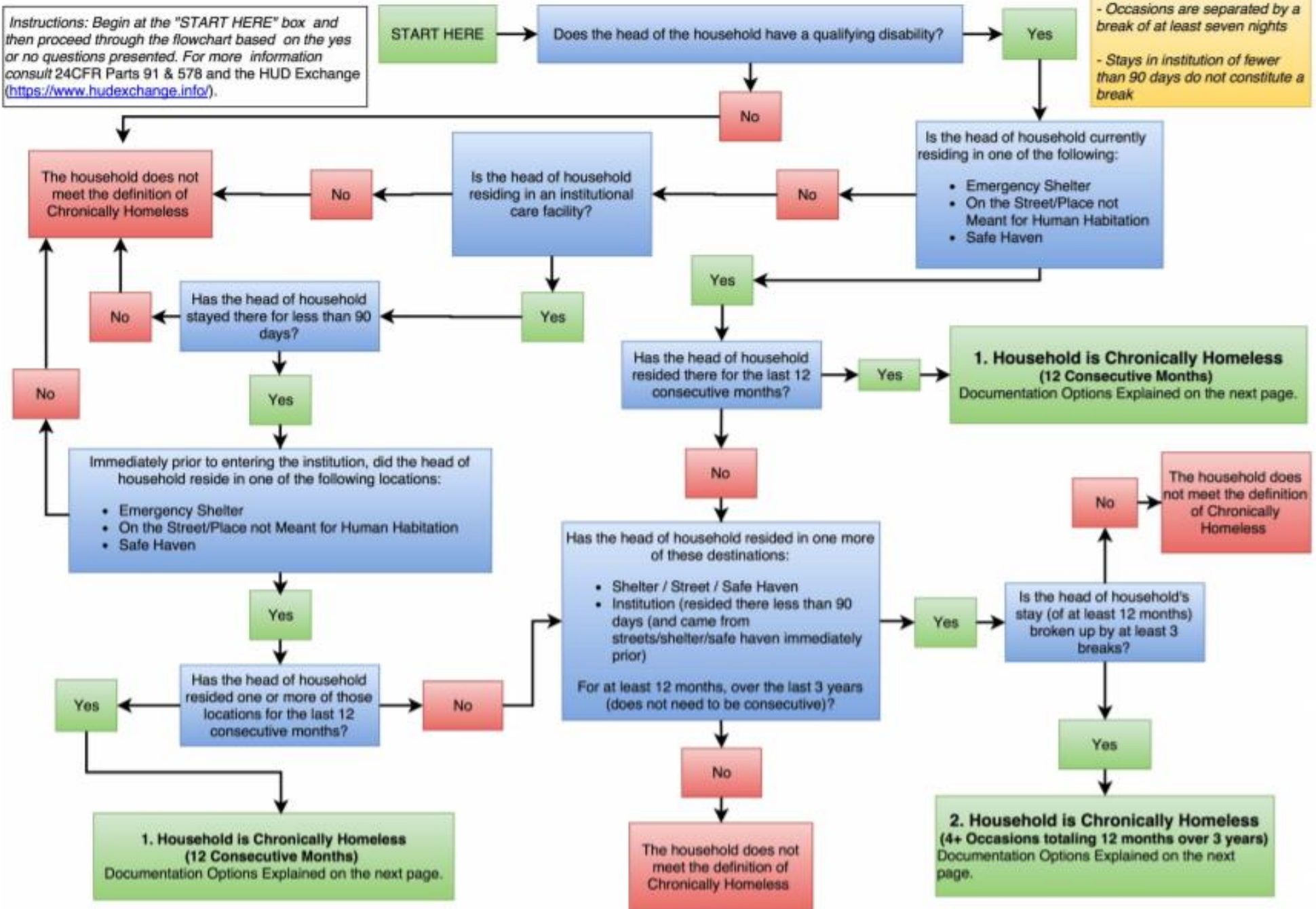
A: The condition must be severe and debilitating to the point that it substantially impedes their ability to live independently and is expected to last at least 12 months. Conditions include *severe* mental illness, chronic medical, physical, developmental, cognitive impairments from brain injury, HIV/AIDS, Substance Use Disorders.



Flowchart of HUD's Definition of Chronic Homelessness

Instructions: Begin at the "START HERE" box and then proceed through the flowchart based on the yes or no questions presented. For more information consult 24CFR Parts 91 & 578 and the HUD Exchange (<https://www.hudexchange.info/>).

Remember:
- Occasions are separated by a break of at least seven nights
- Stays in institution of fewer than 90 days do not constitute a break





Documentation Standards for Chronic Homelessness

Instructions: Based on your navigation of the flowchart on the previous page, locate the appropriate numbered situation on this page and follow the documentation standards noted. This tool summarizes the criteria for the new Chronically Homeless Definition. To review the exact language, please refer to 24 CFR Parts 91 & 578 and the HUD Exchange (<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-chronic-homelessness/>)

Situation	Documentation of Homelessness	Documentation of Disability
<p>1. Household is Chronically Homeless (12 Consecutive Months)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> HMIS record or record from a comparable database; or <input type="checkbox"/> Written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living; or <input type="checkbox"/> Written referral by another housing or service provider; or <input type="checkbox"/> Where the evidence above is unavailable, there must be a certification by the individual seeking assistance, accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain the evidence listed above. <p>If the head of household is currently staying in an institution where they have been for less than 90 days (and were in a shelter/street/safe haven immediately prior) their Institutional Stay can be documented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral from a social worker or appropriate official of the institutional facility, with start/end dates of client's residence, or <input type="checkbox"/> Where the evidence above is unavailable, there must be a certification by the individual seeking assistance, accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain the evidence listed above. 	<p>Documentation of the head of household's disability, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written verification of the disability from a licensed professional; <input type="checkbox"/> Written verification from the Social Security Administration; <input type="checkbox"/> The receipt of a disability check; or <input type="checkbox"/> Intake staff-recorded observation of disability that, no later than 45 days from the application for assistance, accompanied by supporting evidence.
<p>2. Household is Chronically Homeless (4+ Occasions totaling 12 months over 3 years)* <i>*May include institution stays of <90 days</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> HMIS record or record from a comparable database; or <input type="checkbox"/> Written observation by an outreach worker of the conditions where the individual was living; or <input type="checkbox"/> Written referral by another housing or service provider; or <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge paperwork or written/oral referral from a social worker or appropriate official of the institutional facility, with start/end dates of client's residence (for institutional stays of less than 90 days) <input type="checkbox"/> Where the evidence above is unavailable, there must be a certification by the individual seeking assistance, accompanied by the intake worker's documentation of the living situation and the steps taken to obtain the evidence listed above. <p><i>* Each separate occasion MUST be documented (minimum of 3 breaks). 100% of the breaks can be documented by self-report.</i></p>	<p>Documentation of the head of household's disability, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written verification of the disability from a licensed professional; <input type="checkbox"/> Written verification from the Social Security Administration; <input type="checkbox"/> The receipt of a disability check; or <input type="checkbox"/> Intake staff-recorded observation of disability that, no later than 45 days from the application for assistance, accompanied by supporting evidence.

Important Notes:

- Each individual occasion needs to be fully documented.
- Breaks can be documented by self-report.
- For each Project:
 - 100% of households served can use self-certification for 3 months of their 12 months,
 - 75% of households served need to use 3rd Party documentation for 9 months of their 12 months, and
 - 25% of households served can use self-certification as documentation for any and all months.