COVID-19 Temporary Procedures for Obtaining Verbal Consent for Recording and Sharing Entry Point Progress Tracker

To minimize exposure to COVID-19 and reduce risks to the health of clients and agency staff, you may obtain verbal consent to record client information within the Entry Point Progress Tracker. The verbal consent for engaging the client in the Coordinated Entry (CE) process works in concert with the general HMIS verbal consent exception outlined in the COVID-19 Temporary Procedures for Obtaining Verbal HMIS Consent. With verbal consent, the Coordinated Entry process may continue during the current crisis, while taking the necessary precautions for social distancing.

- The purpose of verbal consent, using the statement below, is to inform the client that they will be asked questions about their health and housing history, inform them of their rights, and identify how their information will be used. It is not a review of all disclosures that permit full data-sharing.

- These procedures are not intended to replace the completion of the Entry Point Assessment and VI-SPDAT Consent, which will still need to be obtained by the Sending Agency as early in the process as feasible. Once it is safe to meet with the client, the standard CE VI-SPDAT consent should be reviewed, signed and recorded in the HMIS. The signed consent form should be uploaded to the client’s HMIS record, whenever possible.

- Initial verbal consent from the client is necessary for recording information in the Progress Tracker, and a second verbal consent is required for sharing additional information to the Receiving Agency, if written consent has not yet been obtained.

- Verbal consent must be obtained every time there is a significant change to a client’s information that results in an update to the Progress Tracker assessment. This is no longer required once written consent is obtained.

- The Progress Tracker Assessment has been updated to record the dates when verbal consent to conduct the VI-SPDAT was obtained, written consent was obtained (even if the signed CE VISPDAT Consent has not been uploaded to the HMIS), and verbal consent to share the Tracker with the Receiving Agency, when appropriate.

Please note that the updated procedures for obtaining CE VI-SPDAT consent are effective until the point when concerns for COVID-19 exposure have been mitigated.

In lieu of reviewing the CE Entry Point Assessment and VI-SPDAT Consent, you will need to state the following to the client when conducting the VI-SPDAT Survey and Entry Point Assessment by phone:

“Before I proceed, I need to explain that I will be entering your information into the computerized Homeless Management Information System or HMIS. The information you provide will be shared with social service agencies that may be able to assist you. Also, it is my responsibility to make sure you are aware of how your information may be used and your rights to privacy. You can find a copy of the HMIS Privacy Policy at suburbancook.org/privacy, or I can send it to you via email or text.

- May I have your consent to share the information you provide?”
Recording Verbal Consent Information in the Entry Point Assessment Progress Tracker

1. Once verbal consent has been obtained, you may start the **Entry Point Assessment Progress Tracker**.

   Record the date the client gave verbal consent to conduct the VI-SPDAT assessment. Answer the **CE VI-SPDAT question**; select "Not yet—verbal consent obtained during COVID-19 crisis". Skip the Written Consent question, until the point you have obtained written consent (see Step 3).

2. An additional verbal consent must be obtained by the Sending Agency to share uploaded documentation with the Receiving Agency, if written consent has not yet been obtained.

   Record the date the client gave verbal consent to share information with the Receiving Agency, unless you have obtained written consent.

3. As soon as you can obtain written consent, update the Progress Tracker to reflect this change.

   3a. When written consent is obtained, but you have not been able to upload the completed form to HMIS, record the date written consent was obtained. Update the **CE VI-SPDAT question**; select "Not yet—written consent obtained but NOT UPLOADED during COVID-19 crisis".

   3b. When written consent is obtained, and you have uploaded the completed form to HMIS, record the date written consent was obtained. Update the **CE VI-SPDAT question**; select "Yes".