



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

24 CFR Parts 91 and 578

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RIN 2506-AC37

Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Defining “Chronically Homeless”

From the Federal Register / Vol. 80, No. 233 / Friday, December 4, 2015 / Rules and Regulations / Page 75792 / *Summary of Major Provisions:*

A “chronically homeless” individual is defined to mean a homeless individual with a diagnosable disability who lives either in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, or in an institutional care facility if the individual has been living in the facility for fewer than 90 days and had been living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter (*literally homeless*) immediately before entering the institutional care facility.

In order to meet the “chronically homeless” definition, the individual must have been living as described above continuously for at least 12 months, or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the combined occasions total at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least 7 nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven.

If the client is coming from an institutional care facility where they resided for less than 90 days and were *literally homeless* immediately prior to entering then their time spent in the institutional care facility would be included in their total time spent homeless.

Institutional care facilities include:

1. Foster care homes or foster care group homes
2. Hospitals or other residential medical facilities
3. Jails, prisons or juvenile detention facilities
4. Long-term care facilities or nursing homes
5. Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facilities
6. Substance abuse treatment facilities or detox centers

Chronically homeless families are families with adult heads of households who meet the definition of a chronically homeless individual. If there is no adult in the family, the family would still be considered chronically homeless if a minor head of household meets all the criteria of a chronically homeless

individual. A chronically homeless family includes those whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

Recipients and sub-recipients of HUD Continuum of Care Program funds are required to maintain and follow written intake procedures to ensure compliance with the “chronically homeless” definition. The procedures must establish the order of priority for obtaining evidence as third-party documentation first, intake worker observations second, and certification from the individual seeking assistance third.

To sum up, in order for a client to be considered “chronically homeless” they must:

1. Be a single individual or the head of household of a family with a diagnosable disability AND
2. Been living in a *literally homeless* situation continuously for at least 12 months OR on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined total equals 12 months and each break separating the occasions is at least 7 nights.

For further information please see the HUD Chronic Homelessness Flowchart on our website at www.community-partnership.org under For Providers > HMIS > HMIS New User Guides

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