



Housing First Policy Assessment Tool

Purpose:

The Housing First Policy Assessment Tool was created for use in training programs that include the eleven Core Components of Housing First as listed in the California Welfare & Institutions Code 8255(d)(1)). It allows program leaders to assess the alignment of their internal policies against each of the Core Components to identify those policies that should be modified or developed.

How to Use:

Each of the eleven Core Components of Housing First are clustered into three categories: Housing Navigation, Financial Assistance, and Support Services. For each, component assessors indicate how well their current policies are aligned with the Core Component by checking the appropriate box “Very aligned,” “Somewhat Aligned,” or “Not aligned.” Those marked with the latter two descriptions are policies that could form the work plan for policy review and modification.

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CHANGEWELLPROJECT

PARTNERING TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

ADVANCING HOUSING FIRST

How well do our policies align with the intent of the Housing First Core Components?

Put an X in the box that most represents your policies in this area.

	HOUSING FIRST CORE COMPONENT HOUSING NAVIGATION	Very aligned	Somewhat aligned	Not aligned
1.	Tenant screening and selection practices that promote accepting applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment, or participation in services			
	NOTES:			
2.	Applicants are not rejected on the basis of poor credit or financial history, poor or lack of rental history, criminal convictions unrelated to tenancy, or behaviors that indicate a lack of “housing readiness.”			

	NOTES:			
3.	Acceptance of referrals directly from shelters, street outreach, drop-in centers, and other parts of crisis response systems frequented by vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.			
	NOTES:			
8.	In communities with coordinated assessment and entry systems, incentives for funding promotes tenant selection plans for supportive housing that prioritize eligible tenants based on criteria other than “first-come-first serve,” including, but not limited to, the duration or chronicity of homelessness, vulnerability to early mortality, or high utilization of crisis services. Prioritization may include triage tools, developed through local data, to identify high-cost, high-need homeless residents.			
	NOTES:			

11.	The project and specific apartment may include special physical features that accommodate disabilities, reduce harm, and promote health and community and independence among tenants.			
	NOTES:			
	HOUSING FIRST CORE COMPONENT RENTAL ASSISTANCE	Very aligned	Somewhat aligned	Not aligned
6.	Tenants have a lease and all the rights and responsibilities of tenancy, as outlined in California’s Civil, Health and Safety, and Government codes.			
	NOTES:			
7.	The use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself, without other lease violations, is not a reason for eviction.			
	NOTES:			

	HOUSING FIRST CORE COMPONENT SUPPORT SERVICES	Very aligned	Somewhat aligned	Not aligned
5.	Participation in services or program compliance is not a condition of permanent housing tenancy.			
	NOTES:			
4.	Supportive services that emphasize engagement and problem solving over therapeutic goals and service plans that are highly tenant-driven without predetermined goals.			
	NOTES:			
9.	Case managers and service coordinators who are trained in and actively employ evidence-based practices for client engagement, including, but not limited to, motivational interviewing and client-centered counseling.			
	NOTES:			

10.	<p>Services are informed by a harm-reduction philosophy that recognizes drug and alcohol use and addiction as a part of tenants’ lives, where tenants are engaged in nonjudgmental communication regarding drug and alcohol use, and where tenants are offered education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors and engage in safer practices, as well as connected to evidence-based treatment if the tenant so chooses.</p>			
	NOTES:			
	<p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL SCORE IN EACH COLUMN</p>	<p>Very Aligned</p>	<p>Somewhat aligned</p>	<p>Not aligned</p>