



Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County Continuum of Care (CoC)

Connector Services MOU Between Covered Homeless Organization and Housing for Health Partnership

The Policy Board of the Housing for Health Partnership (H4HP) has tasked the County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department Housing for Health Division (H4H) to implement a redesigned Coordinated Entry System (CES) for the Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County Continuum of Care (CoC). As part of this redesigned CES, specific Covered Homeless Organizations (CHOs) will designate staff as "H4HP Connectors". H4HP Connectors will play a primary role in the new CES by assisting people experiencing homelessness to identify opportunities that will help them in their search for stable and affordable housing. H4HP Connectors will work with participants to complete a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and develop a Housing Action Plan (HAP) to identify specific steps towards securing housing and meeting other identified needs. The HNA is also used to determine eligibility for the limited permanent housing resources within the H4HP Response System. H4HP Connectors may work as part of an outreach team, drop-in center, or multi-service program, so long as they are able to meet with participants to help them connect to resources to meet their needs and support them in securing permanent housing.

The signature of the Executive Director of the CHO indicates agreement with the terms set forth below. Executive Director approval is required before the CHO and its staff members engage in Connector services associated with the Watsonville/Santa Cruz CoC CES.

I. Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into between [CHO] and the Santa Cruz County Housing for Health Partnership (H4HP). The H4H Division, with input from the H4HP Operations Committee and Policy Board, have developed this MOU to define roles and responsibilities of the H4H Division, CHO, and staff serving as H4HP Connectors for the CES.

II. Responsibilities of the H4H Division

- a. Develop and implement CES policies and procedures that address the process and approach for H4HP Connectors to interact and work with participants experiencing homelessness.

- b. Provide ongoing training and learning opportunities to support H4HP Connectors' successful implementation of the CES policies and procedures through hosting a regularly scheduled Connector's Learning Collaborative.
- c. Notify H4HP Connectors within one business day when a participant has been placed on the Housing Queue or receives a Housing referral.
- d. Follow the CES policies and procedures for referring participants to housing programs, making every effort to maintain a threshold that allows at least one referral within six months of queue placement.
- e. Maintain the prioritization list for CoC housing resources.
- f. Monitor provider and participant experience for continuous improvement.

III. Responsibilities of CHO

- a. Designate specific staff to serve as H4HP Connectors and agree that each provides at least the minimum number of hours identified in the addendum to this MOU in the Connector role.
- b. Adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in the CES Policy and Procedure Manual.
- c. Provide support and supervision to H4HP Connectors within the Organization.
- d. Ensure CHO is maintaining expected staff/participant ratios which may vary depending on the hours per week that Connectors are available per the addendum to this MOU.
- e. Ensure Connectors adhere to the expectations regarding HMIS data collection for privacy, security, timeliness, accuracy, completeness, and quality.
- f. Ensure Connectors regularly attend the monthly Connector's Learning Collaborative.
- g. Provide ongoing feedback to H4H to support provider and participant experience continuous improvement.
- h. Immediately notify the H4H Division of any staffing changes to the H4HP Connectors including any decrease or increase in availability.

IV. Responsibilities of H4HP Connectors

- a. Adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in the CES Policy and Procedure Manual and in any relevant guidance provided by H4H.
- b. Identify individuals experiencing homelessness and build rapport.

- c. Conduct initial triage and safety screenings and direct participants to crisis assistance if needed.
- d. Engage participants in ongoing meetings to complete the Housing Needs Assessment and problem-solving process.
- e. Support participants to identify housing outside of the H4HP Response System.
- f. Create a Housing Action Plan (HAP) with participants who choose to do so; identify priorities to work on that move participants toward housing.
- g. Support the participant in making connections that assist participant achievement of HAP priorities.
- h. Connect with participants an average of one time per week while they remain active (estimated to be over about 90 days) regarding their HAP and revise as needed.
- i. Support participants prioritized for a referral to a housing program. For participants who receive referrals to housing programs that do not provide case management support, Connectors will help with the housing search and move-in process, including securing required documents completing applications, and securing housing. For housing programs that offer case management support to help participants enter the program, Connectors will help only with securing required documents.
- j. Maintain expected staff: participant ratios which may vary depending on the hours per week a Connector is expected to engage in this role, but no more than 15-20 participants at a time for a full-time Connector.
- k. Participate in ongoing training, professional development, and the monthly scheduled Connector Learning Collaborative.
- l. Provide ongoing feedback to the H4H Division to support continuous improvement of the Connector Role and CES process.
- m. Collect data in HMIS according to established privacy and security standards that is timely, accurate, complete, and high quality. Data collection expectations include:
 - i. Enroll participants in the CE HMIS program and collect all participant data (including a profile if one does not exist, , HMIS Consumer Information Sharing Authorization, Program Enrollment, Contact/location information, and Current Living Situation Assessment)
 - ii. Complete the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA).

- iii. Complete a Housing Action Plan (HAP) with participants that want to prepare one. For Connectors primarily working in other systems of care such as Health or Behavioral Health other goal-setting tools may be used in lieu of the HAP, provided they cover the same or similar domains including housing, income and health, include Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) goals and have clear expectations for who is responsible for completing tasks, These plans should be uploaded into HMIS and updated regularly.
- iv. Record referrals and services, including flexible funding assistance.
- v. Update required assessments every 90 days (Current Living Situation. Status Updates, Contact/location information HNA, HAP)
- vi. Record participant exit information when a participant is no longer active in services or has been enrolled to another program.

V. Terms and Conditions

- a. This MOU shall be in-force until revoked in writing by either party.
- b. This MOU may be terminated with 30 days written notice.

Number of H4HP Connectors Assigned by CHO _____

Number of hours/week dedicated to Connector Services _____

The signature below constitutes acceptance of the CHO and H4HP Connector Services MOU:

Executive Director Signature

Date

Executive Director Printed Name

CHO Name



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Addendum**

Active H4HP Connectors: The following individuals are identified as active H4HP Connectors performing duties on behalf of [CHO].

Connector Name & Title	Connector Email	Connector Phone	Supervisor Name & Phone	Expected Hours / Week	HMIS Status ¹	Only People From Own Org	Population Served

¹ Indicate whether the Connector is a (1) Current User of HMIS or (2) New User that needs New User training and an HMIS license.