



# KYH MIS

Kentucky Homeless Management Information System



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# Understanding the Prior Living Situation Workflow

## Purpose

To better understand how to approach the Prior Living Situation questions it is important to understand the different scenarios a client may present with. For the purposes of this guidance document the two different scenarios shall be known as either a **Continuous Episode of homelessness** or a **Non-continuous episode of homelessness**.

- **Continuous Episode of Homelessness-** A continuous episode of homelessness means the client has been continuously homeless for a period of time. In other words, if they have only had the one episode of homelessness (*not staying in a temporary or permanent housing situation for 7 days or longer*), but they could still have moved back and forth between homeless situations (Emergency Shelters or Place not meant for habitation).
- **Non-continuous Episode of Homeless-** A non-continuous episode of homelessness means the client has multiple episodes of homelessness. In other words, a client could move back and forth between homeless situations and temporary or permanent situations.

## Prior Living Situation

The Prior Living Situation is the location (from the drop-down menu that makes the most sense), of the client the night before they enter (Project Start Date) your Project.

The image shows a screenshot of a web form with a drop-down menu open. The form has several fields with labels and instructions. The drop-down menu is currently open, showing a list of housing situations categorized into HOMELESS SITUATIONS, INSTITUTIONAL SITUATIONS, TEMPORARY HOUSING SITUATIONS, and PERMANENT HOUSING SITUATIONS. The 'Select' option is highlighted at the top of the menu.

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside) (HUD) ▾
Length of Stay in Previous Place	Select
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside) (HUD) Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher, Host Home shelter (HUD) Safe Haven (HUD)
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years	INSTITUTIONAL SITUATIONS ---- Foster care home or foster care group home (HUD) Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility (HUD) Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility (HUD) Long-term care facility or nursing home (HUD) Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility (HUD) Substance abuse treatment facility or detox center (HUD)
Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	TEMPORARY HOUSING SITUATIONS ---- Transitional housing for homeless persons (including homeless youth) (HUD) Residential project or halfway house with no homeless criteria (HUD) Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher (HUD) Host Home (non-crisis) (HUD)
If you selected, "more than 12 months," then select the exact number of months.	Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment, or house (HUD) Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment, or house (HUD) PERMANENT HOUSING SITUATIONS ----

**Example:** Client Project Start Date is 9/16/2022, which means when you enter the Prior Living Situation, you are asking the client where they stayed on the night of 9/15/2022.

## Length of Stay in Previous Place

The Length of Stay in Previous Place is the amount of time (from the options on the drop-down menu) for the time spent in the Prior Living Situation that you selected above.

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an e
Length of Stay in Previous Place	90 days or more, but less than one year
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	-Select-
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	One night or less Two to six nights One week or more, but less than one month One month or more, but less than 90 days 90 days or more, but less than one year One year or longer Client doesn't know Client prefers not to answer Data not collected
Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	client prefers not to answer (hud) data not collected (hud) one year or longer (hud) client doesn't know (hud)
If you selected, "more than 12 months," then select the	

**Example:** A client reports a Prior Living Situation of 'Place not meant for habitation' and they report staying there for 15 days. You would select the closest option on the drop-down menu (*One week or more, but less than one month*).

### Approximate date this episode of homelessness started

The Approximate date homelessness started should be the **Most Recent** episode of homelessness, in other words, when they most recently lost their permanent or temporary housing situation).

If your client moved around to different homeless situations (place not meant for human habitation or Emergency Shelter) but was continuously homeless, their approximate date homelessness started would be when they lost their most recent permanent or temporary housing (encompassing all different literally homeless situations). The length of stay in prior living situation would be the time they were in their most recent living situation (ex. emergency shelter)

**Example:** You have asked a client about when they lost housing and where they have been since, and they mention that:

- they started living in their car about a year ago.
- went to a warming shelter that a church opened for a night.
- went and slept in the woods for a few days.
- then went to an emergency shelter one town over for a week.
- now they are entering your project.

Their Prior Living Situation would be an emergency shelter, their Length of Stay in Previous Place would be one week, and their Approximate Date Homelessness Started would be one year ago.

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned b
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One week or more, but less than one month
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	09 / 01 / 2022

**Example:** Our client's Project Start date is 9/16/2022, they reported their Prior Living Situation (where they stayed on 9/15/2022) as 'Place note meant for habitation'. They also reported they have slept in this location for 15 days. Thus, their Approximate date homelessness started is 9/1/2022.

**Important Note:** You as the Case Manager, HMIS user, Street Outreach worker etc. may have to do some mental calculations to help the client get to the date when their homelessness started. You may have to explain or re-word the question for the client to understand what you are asking to help them get to the date their homelessness started.

## Number of times (in last 3 years)

The next question: Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today, you will want to ask the client how many different episodes of homelessness they experienced within the past 3 years. In other words, count the number of times the client(s) was homeless (*living in ES or on the streets/place not meant for habitation*), then ask if the client(s) became housed (*staying with family/friends, couch surfing etc.*), and then became homeless again (*living in an ES or Place not meant for habitation*).

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One week or more, but less than one month <input type="checkbox"/> G
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	09 / 01 / 2022 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> G
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	Three times (HUD) <input type="checkbox"/> G

**Example:** A client says they were in a shelter (**1 episode**) for a few nights but then they went to stay with friends for a few weeks, but then they were kicked out and ended up on the streets, living in a tent (**2<sup>nd</sup> episode**). After a few days on the street, they were able to stay with another friend for a few weeks, but then had to leave and ended up at another shelter (**3<sup>rd</sup> episode**). This example shows that the client's number of times homeless was 3 times (3 episodes).

**Example:** Let's say that your client has had 5 distinct instances of homelessness in the past 5 years, when answering the question about the number of times homeless we want to ensure that we are only answering how many times they were homeless *in the past 3 years*. If 2 of their 5 homeless instances happened 4 years ago, this would not count towards their total. They would have been homeless 3 times in the past 3 years.

**Important Note:** You as the Case Manager, HMIS user, Street Outreach worker etc. may have to explain what an episode of homelessness is and how that calculates into their Chronic Homeless status. The HUD Data Standards state *"The look back time would not be broken by a stay of less than 7 consecutive nights in any permanent or temporary housing situation nor would it be broken by an institutional stay of less than 90 days (i.e., jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility)."* The clients need to know that if they go and stay with family, friends, or are couch surfing, that HUD does not consider that to be a homeless situation. This means those gaps within an actual homeless stay, help determine the different episodes of homelessness, number of times homeless and total number of months homeless.

## Total number of months homeless (in last 3 years)

The **Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years** also helps determine Chronic Homeless status.

If homeless one day you would mark one month on the drop-down, (if a client is homeless less than 30 days, it is still considered one month for HMIS purposes).

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an ab
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One week or more, but less than one month
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	09 / 01 / 2022
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	Three times (HUD)
Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	3

**Example:** From the example we used above, the client has 3 episodes of homelessness. Below tracks their living situations for the past few years before entering your project.

- A few days in the shelter in May 2021 would equal 1 month (Episode 1)
- They moved back in with their parents for 2 weeks then...
- They lived in a tent on the streets for 2 weeks. That two weeks on the streets equals another month (Episode 2)
- After living in a tent, they slept on a friends couch for a month.
- Lastly, their current episode of homelessness is 16 days in a place not meant for human habitation, which equals another month. (Episode 3)
- Therefore, the total number of months homeless would equal 3 months.

**Important Note:** You as the Case Manager, HMIS user, Street Outreach worker etc. may have to do some mental calculating and math, and you may have to get more detail to be able to obtain the correct and most accurate number of months homeless.

## Prior Living Situation and Emergency Shelter Projects

For Emergency Shelter projects, regardless of the client's Prior Living Situation, the homeless history questions (including the 'approximate date this episode of homelessness started') should be completed.

**Example:** If a client enters an Emergency Shelter on 1/1/24, with a Prior Living Situation of Staying with friends or family and this instance of homelessness is the first time homeless. The HMIS user will mark the 'approximate date this episode of homelessness started' as the day they enter the shelter (1/1/24). Following this example: The 'Number of times homeless' would be 'One Time' and the 'Number of months homeless' would be 'One Month (this is the first month)'.

## Data Quality, Data Accuracy and Data Completeness

It is important to make sure your data is not only good, but also accurate and complete and makes logical sense. If any of the Prior Living Situation questions are missing or inaccurate, then that could negatively affect the client. The Prior Living Situation questions are used in determining a client's Chronically Homeless status and is also used in prioritizing the client for Coordinated Entry.

## Accuracy of your data

Below is an example of inaccurate data for the Prior Living Situation section, and how to correct.

PRIOR LIVING SITUATION	
Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/ai
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One month or more, but less than 90 days ▼ G
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	09 / 01 / 2018 📅 🔄 🗓️ G
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	Three times (HUD) ▼ G
Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	11 ▼ G

Figure 1: Inaccurate Prior Living Situation

### Scenario I- Non-continuous Homeless Episodes

Referring to Figure 1, let's pretend that this project start date is 10/12/2023 and the client shown above was in their place not meant for habitation (their car) for one month or more but less than 90 days. They mention to you that before they were sleeping in their car, they had stayed with a friend for about a month. This would tell us that their Approximate date this episode of homelessness started should be anywhere from 07/14/2023 -09/12/2023.

Therefore, Prior Living Situation section represented in Figure 2 would be correct:

PRIOR LIVING SITUATION	
Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One month or more, but less than 90 days ▼ G
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	07 / 31 / 2023 📅 🔄 🗓️ G
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	Three times (HUD) ▼ G
Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	11 ▼ G

Figure 2: Accurate Prior Living Situation Section Based on Non-Continuous Episodes

### Example:

See Figure 5 for another example of a Non-Continuous Scenario: Let's pretend that your client mentions they left their friends house one month ago and started sleeping at a bus station. In this scenario, the information reflected in Figure 5 is incorrect. Since this is their first time homeless in the past 3 years, their Approximate Date this Episode of Homelessness Started (I) should be one month ago.

**CLIENT HISTORY**  
**PRIOR LIVING SITUATION**

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside) (HUD)
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One month or more, but less than 90 days
1 Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	07 / 23 / 2019
2 Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	One time (HUD)
3 Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	One month (this time is the first month) (HUD)

Based on this

One of these doesn't make logical sense

Figure 3: Example of Invalid Homelessness Start Date/Number of Months Homeless (as flagged in Eva warnings)

**Scenario 2- Continuous Homeless Episode**

Using the same example shown in Figure 1, this client's approximate date this episode of homelessness started is marked as being 2018. This would tell us that this person has been homeless *continuously* for the past 5 years. If they have only had the one episode of homelessness (not staying in a temporary or permanent housing situation for 7 days or longer) then the answer to the question Regardless of where they stayed last night – Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past 3 years including today should be one time. Working from the logic that the client has been continuously homeless since 2018, the number of months on the street, in ES or SH in the past 3 years would be 3 years (or more than 12 months).

**Important Note:** Reference the Number of Times (in the past 3 years) section (pg. 5) above for more information on filling out the Number of Times Homeless and continuous homeless episodes.

Therefore Figure 3 would be a more accurate reflection of Scenario 2:

**PRIOR LIVING SITUATION**

Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside) (HUD)
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One month or more, but less than 90 days
Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	09 / 01 / 2018
Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	One time (HUD)
Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	More than 12 months (HUD)

Figure 4: Accurate Prior Living Situation Section Based on a Continuous Episode



### Example:

See Figure 4 for another example of a continuous homeless episode: Looking at this example below, we can see that because their Approximate Date This Episode of Homelessness Started (1) is over 3 years ago, the Number of Times Homeless (2) needs to be 1, and the Number of Months Homeless (3) needs to be more than 12 months. If one of these answer choices is not correct, please check with your client to verify information again.

PRIOR LIVING SITUATION	
Prior Living Situation	Emergency shelter, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher, Host Home shelter
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One week or more, but less than one month G
1 Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	02 / 01 / 2017 G ← Since this is over 3 years + ...
2 Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	Four or more times (HUD) G ← # of times homeless needs to be 1 and Total # of Months needs to be more than 12 months.
3 Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	More than 12 months (HUD) G ←

Figure 5: Example of *Homelessness Start Date Conflicts with Living Situation Data* (as flagged in Eva warnings)

### Example:

See Figure 5 for another example of a Continuous Scenario: Let's pretend that your client mentions they have been homeless since 2019 but have moved around to different emergency shelters without a permanent or temporary housing situation. In this scenario, Figure 5 is incorrect because the Total Number of Months Homeless (3) should reflect the multiple yearlong homelessness episode. Therefore, the Total Number of Months Homeless (3) should be "More than 12 Months."

CLIENT HISTORY	
PRIOR LIVING SITUATION	
Prior Living Situation	Place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside) (HUD) G
Length of Stay in Previous Place	One month or more, but less than 90 days G
1 Approximate date this episode of homelessness started	07 / 23 / 2019 G ← Based on this
2 Regardless of where they stayed last night - Number of times the client has been on the streets, in ES, or SH in the past three years including today	One time (HUD) G ← One of these doesn't make logical sense
3 Total number of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years	One month (this time is the first month) (HUD) G ←

Figure 6: Example of *Invalid Homelessness Start Date/Number of Months Homeless* (as flagged in Eva warnings)

As a reminder, the Approximate date this episode of homelessness started field, should be the **Most Recent** episode of homelessness, in other words, starting from the last time the client was in a temporary or permanent housing situation for longer than 7 days. Even if bouncing around from Emergency Shelters to a Place not meant for human habitation, the Approximate Date this episode of

Homelessness Started would be the most recent *continuous* episode of homelessness regardless of their homeless living situation.

Many times, people confuse the Approximate date this episode of homelessness started with first time homeless overall, and that is not correct. It is looking for the homeless date for the most recent Homelessness episode.

To fix these errors, you may need to look in your client file or ask your client for more detail.

### Conflicting/Multiple Values (History Bar):

In some cases, there may be multiple values showing. To view those, you can click on the colored bar next to the question and look at the History screen. If you see a 'Date Effective' that is the same date but different 'Values', then this data conflicts and will flag an error for DQ.

Note: If unable to delete an incorrect value, please submit an [HCA Partner Agency Portal ticket](#) and someone from KHC can assist with deleting any incorrect value fields.

Date Effective	User Adding	Provider Adding	Value
11/01/2021 8:40:41 AM	Kayla Sexton	ZZZ-INACTIVE 7/1/2021-AVOL-COMP HOPWA-CV-STRMU-PREV-BOS	
10/29/2021 3:42:45 PM	Margaret Ann Smith	ZZZ-INACTIVE 9/30/22-Centerstone of TN-VA-SSVF-RRH-BOS	Two times (HUD)
01/19/2021 11:31:14 AM	Lindsay Anderson	BOS-Coordinated Entry Project	Two times (HUD)
01/01/2021 8:00:00 AM	Lindsay Anderson	BOS-Coordinated Entry Project	One time (HUD)
12/14/2020 3:14:31 PM	Lindsay Anderson	BOS-Coordinated Entry Project	
12/14/2020 3:14:31 PM	Lindsay Anderson	BOS-Coordinated Entry Project	
11/02/2020 4:15:09 PM	Lindsay Anderson	BOS-Coordinated Entry Project	Two times (HUD)
05/20/2019 9:53:10 AM	Danielle Humes	ZZZ-INACTIVE 10/31/2020-Bluegrass LPC Coordinated Entry-OTH-BOS	Two times (HUD)

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