



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

AHAR Update: August 2009

Prepared by the AHAR Team

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New AHAR Registration Link on the AHAR Exchange

Starting this year, the AHAR Exchange has been enhanced to include a registration link for **new** communities interested in submitting data to the AHAR. The registration link, available on the AHAR Exchange home page (ahar.hmis.info), allows communities to register for the next AHAR by instantly creating a username and password for submitting data.

Communities should be advised that only **one** username and password will be issued per community—typically assigned to the person (e.g., HMIS administrator) who will be responsible for submitting data to the AHAR. Persons who are responsible for submitting data on behalf of multiple communities should register for each community separately.

To register for the 2009 AHAR, please visit: ahar.hmis.info

Counting Veterans in the 2009 AHAR

The 2009 AHAR will feature a supplemental report on homeless veterans. The report will provide information on the demographic characteristics of sheltered veterans and information about their service-use patterns. Below are a few introductory questions and answers about the supplemental report:

1. Who is considered a veteran?

A veteran is any person who has served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was called up to active duty.

2. What are reporting requirements for the supplemental report on homeless veterans?

The reporting requirements for the supplemental report will match the four reporting categories

currently used in the AHAR—emergency shelters for individuals (ES-IND), emergency shelters for persons in families (ES-FAM), transitional housing for individuals (TH-IND), and transitional housing for persons in families (TH-FAM). As a result, communities will be able to use their existing HMIS software queries and preprogrammed (or “canned”) AHAR reports to generate the information. However, prior to using existing queries or canned reports, communities should filter their HMIS data to exclude non-veterans.

3. What is the data collection time period for the supplemental report on homeless veterans?

For the 2009 AHAR, any veteran served from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009 should be included in the supplemental report. The reporting period is the same as the period for the regular AHAR data submission.

4. What is the deadline for submitting data on homeless veterans to the supplemental report?

The deadline for submitting draft data on homeless veterans is February 1, 2010. The deadline for submitting final data to the supplemental report is March 1, 2010. Data are considered final when (1) both the community and the AHAR team have reviewed the data for quality and (2) a community has done everything it can to resolve any data-quality issues. (Note: the deadline for draft data on all sheltered persons is November 15, 2009; the deadline for final data is December 15, 2009.)

5. Because a person's veteran status can change, how should communities identify someone as a veteran?

For each adult client, communities should use the "Veteran Status" data element (a universal data element in HUD's HMIS Data Standards) to identify a veteran. If a client has multiple service records *during the AHAR reporting period*, communities should review all records and if any of those records indicate that the person is a veteran, then include the person in the supplemental report.

6. For veterans in families, should all members of the household be included in the ES-FAM or TH-FAM reporting categories?

No. For veterans in families, communities should report on the veteran(s) only and exclude anyone in the household that is not a veteran. Nonetheless, any veteran in a family should be reported in the family (FAM) reporting categories. Some information in the family reporting categories for veterans (e.g., household size and information pertaining to children) will not be reported in the supplemental report.

7. How will data on homeless veterans be reported to the AHAR?

The AHAR Exchange—the online data collection tool designed specifically for the AHAR—is being enhanced to incorporate a new reporting module for veterans only. The module will be based on the four reporting categories that are currently used in the AHAR. Also, communities will be able to upload data on veterans using the same AHAR XML Schema as they use for all sheltered persons. The AHAR XML Schema will be the same for 2009 as it was for 2008, except that one additional data element is being added to specify whether the file represents all sheltered persons or veterans. This new version of the AHAR XML Schema will be released by September 2009.

8. Will participation in the supplemental report on homeless veterans affect a community's score on its CoC funding application?

HUD defines AHAR participation as the submission of useable data on at least one of the standard AHAR reporting categories (i.e., ES-IND, ES-FAM, TH-IND, and TH-FAM). CoCs that submit data for the supplemental (veteran) reporting categories only will not be considered AHAR participants. For CoCs that complete one or more standard reporting categories, HUD will consider the total number of reporting categories—standard and supplemental—in scoring AHAR participation in the annual CoC competition.

9. Will there be training sessions on reporting data to the 2009 AHAR?

Yes. A series of trainings will be held in September 2009 to help communities participate in the AHAR. The trainings will demonstrate how to submit data via the AHAR Exchange. Please stay tuned for more details.

Contacting the AHAR Research Team

If you have any questions, please call (1-877-789-2427) or e-mail the AHAR research team (AHAR@abtassoc.com).