FY2026 HMIS Data Standards

System Updates and Planning

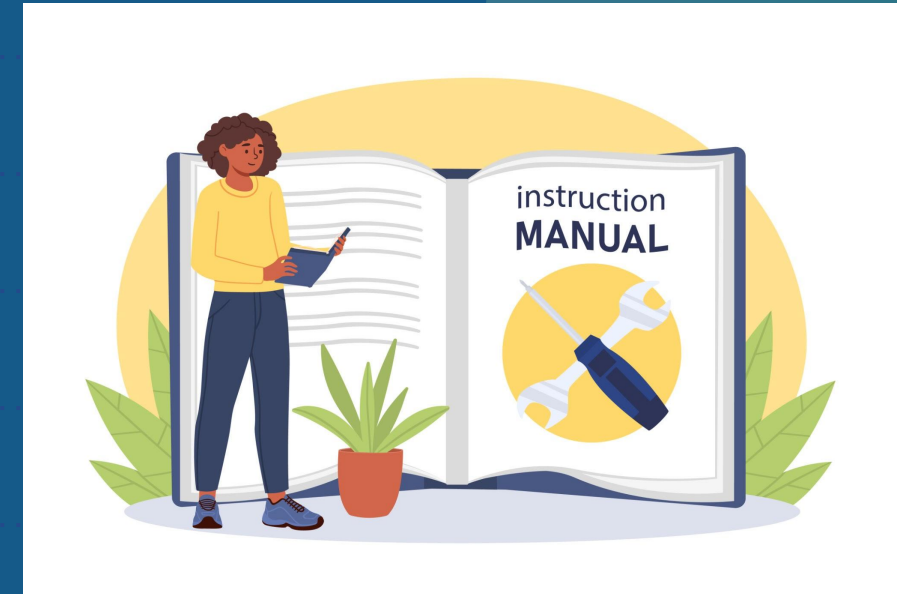Homeless **Alliance**™
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What are the HMIS Data Standards?

The HMIS Data Standards are a joint effort between HUD, HHS, and the VA to allow for standardized data collection across systems used by organizations that serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness. They document the requirements for the programming of all HMIS and comparable databases.

The HMIS Data Standards are updated annually and any changes officially take effect on October 1st. These changes are categorized as either "Minor" or "Major". The FY2026 update is considered a "Minor" update.

The FY2027 update is anticipated to be a "Major" update. This means more new or revised data elements with focuses on Street Outreach and CE.

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What are the HMIS Data Standards?

There are two main forms of the HMIS Data Standards:

- **The HMIS Manual** is designed to provide context and understanding behind data collection. Written in plain text.
- **The HMIS Data Dictionary** is designed to provide technical information, structure, and system logic.

There are also different categories of "Data Elements":

- **Project Descriptor Elements**
  - Typically backend elements that identify funding, geography, project types, inventories, and HMIS/CE participation. Managed by HAWNY.
- **Universal Data Elements**
  - Required to be collected by all projects in HMIS. These elements help in producing unduplicated counts, basic demographics, and patterns of service.
- **Program Specific Data Elements**
  - Client level elements that are required by specific federal programs or project types.

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Summary of Changes

Review and next steps

Overview Of Changes (Part 1)

Backend Updates:
- Geography/Zip code updates
- Funding sources updates
- APR/CAPER/HMIS Exports will be updated along with repositories such as SAGE, PATH, VA, and RHY.

General Data Collection/Guidance/Language Updates:
- Date of Engagement now required for YHDP
- VA funded projects have updated guidance on several data elements. (R4, R6, R7, 4.05-4.10)
- Expanded picklist for Family Critical Issues (R13)
- Expanded VA Services Provided (V2)
- Added Date Field for VA element (V3)
- Updated wording for VA HP Element (V7)
- Updated wording to Race/Ethnicity (3.04)
- Add new element (V10)

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Overview Of Changes (Part 2)

Gender, Sex, and Sexual Orientation:
- **Gender and Sexual Orientation will be "Retired" as of October 1st, 2025** to comply with recent Executive Orders. This means they will no longer be part of any required data collection.
  - These fields will still be available in our system from Wellsky but they will switch from being a required universal data element to a local element.
- **Gender will be replaced with a new element, 4.21 Sex.**
  - Sex will be recorded at client record creation instead of intake and will be a required data element.
  - Values for Sex will be Male, Female, Client prefers not to answer, Client doesn't know, or Data Not Collected.
- **Gender will NOT be mapped over to Sex.**
  - Per HUD (and Wellsky), there will be no mapping of data from Gender to the new field of Sex as the EO definition of Sex doesn't match the definition of Gender.
    - Gender was was previously defined by HUD as a field meant "To indicate client's self identification with one or more of the gender categories".
    - The January 2025 Executive Orders define Sex as "an individual's immutable biological classification as either Male or Female".
  - This means that (unfortunately) as of October 1st, 2025 <u>all active and new clients will need this data collected and added to HMIS.</u>

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Recap

Wrap Up & FAQ

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FAQ's

- **When do these changes go live?**
  - October 1st, 2025.
- **Will there be a more in-depth review?**
  - Yes. HAWNY will be hosting webinars in September 2025 to review these changes at length. Please also feel free to contact us about any questions you may have.
- **Will HUD or Wellsky remove Gender from HMIS?**
  - No, this will still be available in HMIS.
- **Can we keep collecting retired elements?**
  - Yes, we have the option of collecting retired data elements if useful for local planning purposes.
- **Will Wellsky be able to copy over a client's response from the Gender field to the Sex field?**
  - No. As per HUD and Wellsky, since the two fields have different definitions they will not be copying over that data and this will have to be done manually by HMIS users.
- **Will the APR/CAPER still report on Gender?**
  - No, Gender will be removed from all HUD reports.

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Thank you