

OPENING SCRIPT

I am a Skilled Assessor for the Coordinated Entry System (CES) in Chicago and I am going to complete a housing assessment with you so you can be considered for housing programs for people facing homelessness. The assessment usually takes about 30 to 45 minutes to complete. Most questions only require a "yes" or "no" answer and some questions require a one-word answer. There is no right or wrong answer and it is very important to give accurate information and answering all questions will help us find the best supports for you. If at any point you don't understand what I am asking, please let me know and I will explain.

Once you complete the assessment, I will enter it into a database called the Homeless Management Information System or HMIS. The CES team will use your assessment information to identify the level of your needs and eligibility. The team will then use this information to match you to an appropriate housing opportunity when it becomes available. **[Explain the HMIS consent and ask Applicant to sign it. *Only proceed if the applicant signs consent and chooses option A or B*].**

If you have any documents such as your ID, social security card, and proof of income or disability, I can copy them and attach them to your assessment. I will upload these documents to HMIS so the housing provider will be able to download them when you are matched to a housing opportunity. **[Scan documents and upload to HMIS. Complete the housing assessment. PLEASE REMEMBER TO COMPLETE an appropriate Vulnerability Index (VI) assessment]**

It's important to have the most current information to be able to get in touch with you if there is a housing opportunity that becomes available. Please let me know if any information changes or you can visit an Access Point and ask them to update your information. **[Provide your contact information and information on CES Access Points]**

SCRIPT FOR HMIS CONSENT

Your assessment will go into a database called the Homeless Management Information System or HMIS for short. **In order for us to use this information to consider you for housing opportunities in Chicago, you need to sign a consent to share this information with HMIS.** You have three options for consenting. Every agency in HMIS is trained and required to protect your privacy and to comply with state and federal practices regarding the security of your information.

Option A means that your record is viewable by almost any agency within the city of Chicago borders, though this does not include the housing assessment, case notes, or details outside of program involvement. For example, if you stay in a shelter, your record will show you are connected to that shelter but not any information you discuss with a case manager at that shelter. If you are a little uncomfortable with that, you can choose

Option B, which means only people actively working to house you would be able to see you have a profile on HMIS. The purpose of having an open file is to help providers who serve you connect with each other as necessary, with your permission, on your behalf.

Keep in mind, that if you choose **Option C or D**, and **do not share**, we will need to stop this assessment since you are indicating to us that we cannot share any of your information to anyone at all, even folks working to potential match you to housing.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What should I expect when the housing program contacts me?

When you are matched to housing, the housing program will reach out to you to schedule a meeting. They will ask you to bring documents such as your ID, social security card, birth certificate, and proof of income and disability. The housing program will also ask you about your history of homelessness and your health conditions to verify whether you are eligible for the housing program.

If you work with an outreach worker or another homeless services provider, it is important to stay engaged with them after you complete the assessment because they can verify your homelessness when you are matched to housing.

If you have a disability, it will be very helpful if you can work towards documenting this disability such as an award letter for SSI/SSDI or meeting with a doctor, nurse practitioner, licensed clinical social worker, or someone who can put into writing that you have a disability. If you have this documentation and share it with me, I will safely upload this into a part of your assessment only seen by the matching partners and the housing provider after you are matched to housing.

What is Coordinated Entry System (CES)?

In the past, housing agencies had their own waiting lists or they housed people referred to them by other agencies. Now, most housing agencies in Chicago receive referrals only from the Coordinated Entry System (CES). This means that you will only need to fill out the CES housing assessment once and you will be considered for most housing programs in Chicago once they become available.

What happened to my assessment on the Central Referral System (CRS)?

As of April 2017, the Central Referral System (CRS) is no longer being used to help people find housing. You can now apply to get connected to housing through the Coordinated Entry System (CES). Even if you were previously in CRS, you must complete a CES housing assessment to be eligible for housing.

Who is eligible for the CES housing assessment?

If you are 18 to 24 years old, and

- experiencing homelessness and spent the last night at an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation such as car, park, train, street, or an abandoned building; OR
- unstably housed and forced to live with other people such as friends or extended family because you have nowhere else to go.

If you are 25 years old or older, and

- spent the last night at an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation such as car, park, train, street, or an abandoned building; OR
- exiting jail, prison, hospital, or nursing home; stayed there for less than 90 days; and were staying at an emergency shelter or living in a place not meant for human habitation prior to that (e.g. park, train, street, or an abandoned building).

Do I need to update my assessment?

It is very important for you to maintain contact with your Skilled Assessor and let them know if your contact information changes. Please also let your Skilled Assessor know if you have major life changes, for example, new episodes of homelessness, if you gained income, or if your family composition changes. Please also notify your Assessor if you no longer need housing or move out of state.

If you cannot reach your Skilled Assessor, you can go to any Access Point and ask them to update your information. The list of Access Points is available at <https://www.csh.org/chicagoces/>

If you receive services from a homeless provider such as outreach or emergency shelter, you only need to update your assessment when important changes need to be made.

If you do not receive services from a homeless provider such as outreach or emergency shelter, please contact your Skilled Assessor or visit an Access Point monthly if you are still experiencing homelessness. They will update your assessment and keep you active within CES. If you do not update your information within a 30-day period, you will be removed from CES and will no longer be considered for housing.

How do I check my application status in the Coordinated Entry System?

At this time, we are not able to tell you your application status because this is not a waiting list. The Coordinated Entry System matches applicants to housing opportunities based on their eligibility and when these opportunities become available. Please also note that applications are prioritized based on vulnerability and length of homelessness.

How long will it take me to get matched to housing?

At this time, we are not able to tell you how much time it will take us to match you to housing because it depends on your eligibility, level of needs, and housing opportunities available at the moment. Please keep in mind that the housing assessment does not guarantee housing because housing resources are limited in Chicago.

What happens when I am matched to housing?

If you are matched to housing, the Coordinated Entry team will notify the housing agency and your Skilled Assessor who assessed you for housing. The housing program will use the contact information you provided on the assessment to contact you to tell you about the housing opportunity. You may also hear from your Skilled Assessor, your outreach worker, or the shelter where you have been staying. Once contacted, please respond as quickly as you can. If you do not respond within 10 business days, the housing provider may ask for another applicant. You can decline the housing opportunity and your name will be put back into the Coordinated Entry System. You will be then matched to another housing opportunity that you are eligible for when it becomes available.

What if the housing program tells me I am not eligible after I complete an intake?

Please ask them why they declined your application.

If the reason is that you do not have proof of disability, please connect with your outreach worker or case manager and ask them to help you obtain disability documentation. You may also go directly to your

healthcare provider and ask them to sign a disability letter that can be downloaded at <https://www.csh.org/chicagoces/> (under Documents and Materials).

If the reason is that you do not have proof of homelessness, please connect with your outreach worker or a shelter where you stayed and ask them to provide you with proof of homelessness.

If you believe that you were denied housing due to an unjust reason, please contact CSH, Chicago CES System Facilitator at ChicagoCES@csh.org.

What if the applicant is a veteran?

There are VA funded housing resources available in our community, and all households reporting having completed active military duty will be screened for eligibility for these projects. Even if someone reports having a dishonorable discharge, Skilled Assessors should complete the Veteran section of the assessment and record the offer of permanent housing.

Instructions if you encounter a veteran during the weekday (8:00 am – 4:30 pm)

Complete the CE assessment and write down as much information in the box as you can on the client. You can call the CRRC (Community Resource and Referral Center) at 312-569-5750 to find out the Veteran’s eligibility for VHA and VA-funded services. If the veteran prefers to go directly to the CRRC, their address is 1141 South California Avenue. The CRRC is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.

Instructions if you encounter a veteran after hours during the week (4:30 pm – Midnight) or weekend, Saturday and Sunday (1:30 pm –Midnight)

Complete the CE assessment and write down as much information in the box as you can on the client. You can call the Jesse Brown VA at 312-569-8387 and ask for the Administrator on Duty and inform them that you have a Veteran experiencing homelessness and you would like to be connected to the social worker to check on eligibility. Also, the Veteran can walk into the Jesse Brown Emergency Room during these hours and request to talk to a social worker.

Featherfist has a 24 hour Veterans Hotline: 773-677-9862

Glossary: Program Model types

- **Adult Transitional Housing:** This is temporary housing, either with everyone in the same building or with people in several locations, designed to transition households to permanent housing. This could include affordable or market rate housing, with a time limit of up to two years.
- **Continuum of Care Rapid Rehousing (CoC RRH):** This is short term subsidized housing, either in one building or in an apartment in the community, with supportive services for somewhere between a few months and two years depending on your needs. If you move into your own apartment with help from this program, you keep that apartment when the program ends and pay the rent on your own.
- **Emergency Solution Grant Rapid Rehousing (ESG RRH):** This is temporary subsidized housing in your own apartment that you continue to live in after the program ends, with supportive services for people with an income. It is typically up to 8 months long though you can stay in the apartment for as long as you pay rent and follow the rules of the lease.
- **Permanent Housing (PH):** This is housing that is offers services that are voluntary and has no time limits. The housing may be affordable, although there is no subsidy involved. That means you are responsible for paying your rent each month.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** This is subsidized housing that is either in one building with your own apartment along with others in the program having their own apartment in that building, or it can be apartments in the community selected by the participants, coupled with voluntary services for households who need affordable housing and supports. There are no time limits and leases will be for at least one year. That means you can decide to stay in your home for as long as you are following the rules of the lease, or you can decide to move in the future if you want to do so.
- **Permanent Housing with Short-term Supports (PHwSS):** This is a subsidized housing program that is either an apartment in one particular building or in an apartment in the community, with supports where the participant takes full responsibility of the lease within two years. The lease will be at least one year long in this type of program.
- **VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families (VA SSF):** This is rental assistance and supportive services for Veteran households who do not have a dishonorable discharge status. SSVF providers can also provide homelessness prevention supports to Veterans and if this is needed, the Veteran simply needs to call an SSVF provider. This is typically up to 9 months in a two-year period, depending on income.
- **Youth Transitional Housing (Youth TH):** This is either shared living in one building or your own apartment in the community and includes services with a time limit 2 years or until age 25, whichever comes first. This is not the same as having a voucher. Participants are expected to follow rules such as not having visitors, doing chores, and saving money.
- **Joint Youth Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing (TH & RRH)** - Scattered site or project based subsidized housing with supportive services that are developmentally appropriate for youth, with a time limit of two years.