

# Is Your HMIS Holding Back Your Community's Homelessness Response?

A five-minute diagnostic to show whether your HMIS is a stable foundation for coordinated, equitable care.



# About This Assessment

Many communities rely on an HMIS that meets basic requirements but creates coordination, equity, or governance gaps.

This short self-assessment helps CoC leaders honestly assess whether their HMIS supports long-term leadership and system health or creates operational strain over time.

## Why This Diagnostic Matters

Most HMIS platforms meet baseline requirements, but far fewer hold up as a stable foundation for coordinated, equitable system leadership over time. Even when a system appears to work, hidden risks tend to surface in:

- ✓ Housing placement speed and operational efficiency
- ✓ Provider coordination across diverse geographies and service networks
- ✓ Data credibility for funders, public accountability, and local governance, including Tribal sovereignty, where applicable
- ✓ Staff workload, burnout, and long-term operational sustainability

These gaps often surface when systems face change or added complexity. Stable systems make coordination easier over time, while unstable ones become more costly and fragile under pressure.

## How To Use This Assessment

For each statement, select the response that best reflects your current HMIS.



Add the points for all statements and record your total score (range 0–30). See Interpreting your results for what your score means.

*Estimated time: 5 minutes.*

## The Assessment Checklist >

Work through the five sections below. For each statement, select **Yes / Partly / No** based on how the system works day to day — not on policy or edge cases. These sections are based on patterns we see repeatedly across HMIS implementations.

SECTION 01

### Product Fit & Purpose

Distinguish vendors built for homelessness work from those that force workarounds.

<p>The HMIS was designed specifically for homelessness response, not repurposed from another use case.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> Partly   <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Core workflows (outreach, coordinated entry, and placement) operate end-to-end without manual workarounds.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> Partly   <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>The system supports configurable local workflows and governance requirements.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> Partly   <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Section Total <input type="text"/></p>	

SECTION 02

### Operational Reliability & Resilience

Measure uptime, release hygiene, and validated recovery plans.

<p>Staff rely on the HMIS for daily operations; downtime or slow performance rarely disrupts service.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> Partly   <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Upgrades and maintenance occur with clear notice, minimal disruption, and tested rollback plans.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> Partly   <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>The vendor maintains documented backup and disaster recovery procedures and validates them through testing.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes   <input type="radio"/> Partly   <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>Section Total <input type="text"/></p>	

SECTION 03

## Data Trust & Governance

Confirm data can be trusted for operational use and community governance.

Data is accurate, timely, and consistent enough for operational decisions and reporting.

Yes Partly No

Role-based access, audit logs, and controls let communities enforce sovereignty and governance where applicable.

Yes Partly No

The system supports secure, documented data sharing and clear data ownership rules.

Yes Partly No

Section Total

SECTION 04

## Integration & Adaptability

Assess integrations, mobile/offline support, and roadmap extensibility.

APIs and connectors work reliably without long manual processes or fragile scripts.

Yes Partly No

Mobile and offline workflows support outreach and field staff across wide geographies.

Yes Partly No

The product roadmap and extensibility let the system evolve without risky migrations or frequent workarounds.

Yes Partly No

Section Total

## Vendor Partnership & Sustainability

Assess vendor responsiveness, roadmap collaboration, and financial feasibility.

<p>The vendor provides timely, documented support and meets published service expectations.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="radio"/> <b>Partly</b>    <input type="radio"/> <b>No</b></p>
<p>The vendor engages customers on roadmap priorities and invests in long-term partnerships.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="radio"/> <b>Partly</b>    <input type="radio"/> <b>No</b></p>
<p>Total cost of ownership is predictable, and the vendor demonstrates financial and product commitment to this line.</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="radio"/> <b>Partly</b>    <input type="radio"/> <b>No</b></p>

**Section Total**

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**Section One Total** . . . . .

**Section Two Total** . . . . .

**Section Three Total** . . . . .

**Section Four Total** . . . . .

**Section Five Total** . . . . .

**Assessment Total**

**Results & Next Steps** >

# Results & Next Steps

Use the total score you recorded above (0–30) and follow the steps below to spot issues and choose a practical next move. These results support thoughtful planning, not immediate decisions.

**24 - 30** **Strong Foundation**  
The system and vendor support coordinated, equitable work and long-term leadership. Focus on specific improvements rather than major changes.

**24 - 30** **Functional But At Risk**  
The system and vendor meet many needs but contain risks that will limit scale, coordination, or leadership unless addressed. This is the range where hidden costs and future disruption often emerge.

**24 - 30** **System Limiting Progress**  
The system or vendor relationship likely creates hidden costs, operational risk, or governance gaps that constrain outcomes. Staying put may feel safer than change, but often carries greater long-term risk.

Many communities use this step to confirm what they already suspect or rule options out, not rush decisions.

**Results & Next Steps**  
20 minutes. No demo. No commitment.  
Use a short conversation to talk through your score, compare patterns across systems, and clarify practical, low-risk next steps for your community.

[Schedule a Consultation](#)

