



## Marin County HMIS News May 2024

Welcome to the Marin County HMIS May 2024 newsletter!

**In this edition you'll find the following:**

- Upcoming Events
- Report Spotlight: Annual Performance Report (APR)
- Understanding Chronic Homelessness in the HMIS
- Clarity Human Services Feature Updates: May 2024
- Clarity Toolbox: Data Quality Fields
- Bitfocus is Hiring!



### Upcoming Events

#### HMIS Agency Leads Meeting\*

Wednesday, July 17, 2-3 p.m. | \*Agency Leads Only: Register [HERE](#)

We are asking the designated HMIS Agency Leads and Security Officers to join this meeting on a bi-monthly basis. Of course, if you absolutely cannot make it, please send a representative. Workgroup participants will support communications between the county, Bitfocus and agency staff with regards to

community initiatives, training, privacy, security, program and data management.



## News

### Annual Performance Report (APR) Reminder

It's that time of year again - time to run your Annual Performance Reports (APR)! The APR is a report required to be submitted by entities that receive HUD CoC homeless assistance grants. The APR report is updated regularly in Clarity Human Services to align with the current HUD HMIS Data Standards and provide a comprehensive view of client level data entered in HMIS as well as program outcomes. The APR report is submitted in SAGE, HUD's reporting repository, on an annual basis, within 90 days after the end of the program's operating year.

**We recommend running your APR as a Web Page first** to make sure that all data is accurate before you run it again in CSV-Upload form to submit it to HUD.

Report Output Format       Web Page     PDF     Excel     CSV-Details     CSV-Upload

Drilldown Output Format       Web Page     CSV

Choosing "Web Page" for both the Report Output Format and the Drilldown Output Format allows you to "drilldown" or click into each section for more information on the clients and their data that's being included in your APR.

Here's a Data Quality Checklist to go over when reviewing your APR in Web Page form, prior to submitting your APR to HUD:

- **Q6a. Data Quality: Personally Identifiable Information** - Review and correct any missing information and data issues with a client's **Name, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender**. Also review Client Doesn't Know/Prefers Not to Answer responses for accuracy.
- **Q6b. Data Quality: Universal Data Elements** - Review and correct any missing information and data issues with a client's **Veteran Status, Project**

**Start Date, Relationship to Head of Household, and Disabling Condition.**

Also review Client Doesn't Know/Prefers Not to Answer responses for accuracy.

- **Q6c. Data Quality: Income and Housing Data Quality** - Review and correct any missing information and data issues with a client's **Exit Destination, Income and Sources at 1) Program Enrollment, 2) Annual Assessment, and 3) Exit**. Also review Client Doesn't Know/Prefers Not to Answer responses for accuracy.
  - A common source of data quality issues related to Annual Assessments is that the Annual Assessment hasn't been completed at all or within the HUD-approved window. **Annual Assessments must be completed within 30 days of the Head of Household's anniversary date (30 days before or after their original program enrollment date)**. If you have completed an Annual Assessment, and are still seeing issues in the APR, you'll need to check that 1) the APR was completed within the Annual Assessment Window, and 2) there are no issues with the information logged in the Income and Sources section.
  
- **Q6d. Data Quality: Chronic Homelessness** - Review and correct any missing information and Client Doesn't Know/Prefers Not to Answer responses in the client's **Prior Living Situation** in their program enrollment. ***Missing information in the Prior Living Situation presents a data quality issue because chronic homelessness cannot be determined without complete and accurate responses in this section.***
  - Many programs serve clients who are literally homeless as part of their eligibility requirements. If your program has these requirements, and your program is serving clients who are *not* literally homeless, you will need to review those individuals and provide a narrative to HUD explaining why the program is serving folks who aren't literally homeless.

For more information on how to run the APR, please see the Report Spotlight section of this newsletter!

If you want to learn more about submitting the APR to the Sage HMIS Reporting Repository, please see the Help Center's article on [Sage Uploads](#).



## Clarity Human Services Updates

### Understanding Chronic Homelessness in the HMIS

Understanding a participant's chronic homeless status in the HMIS is a very complicated, and often confusing, topic. The Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) describes individuals as being "chronically homeless" when they meet the following conditions:

#### A chronically homeless person..

- Has a disabling condition; **AND**
- Currently experiencing literal homelessness: living in a place not meant for human habitation (on the streets, in an encampment, in a vehicle, etc) or in an emergency shelter; **AND**
- Has been homeless *continuously for at least 12 months*;
  - **OR** has been homeless *on at least 4 separate occasions for a combined total of 12 months in the last 3 years.*

#### A break in homelessness is defined by:

- 7 consecutive nights of being housed (which includes "couch surfing," temporarily staying with friends or family, and motels paid for by the participant)
- 90+ days in an institution (e.g. jail, hospital, residential treatment program, psychiatric institution, etc.)

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## Clarity Human Services Updates

### May Updates

We have three exciting feature updates we'd like to share with you in this month's newsletter!

### Personal ID “Fuzzy Matching”

The [March 2024 Feature Updates article](#) introduced a process for automatically identifying and deduplicating records whenever a client record is created, recovered, or updated. The system searches for any client records with Personal Identifying Information (PII) that exactly matches the PII in the new/recovered/updated record but have a different **Personal ID**. **Prior to this month's update, if no exact matches were found, the system would stop searching.**

With this update, if no **exact** matches are found, the system will now look for records that are **likely** a match, according to parameters established using the Levenshtein “fuzzy matching” algorithm. This method provides highly accurate identification of records that should be deduplicated because they are associated with the same client.

### Coordinated Entry Event “Note” Icon

The icon that appears in the client's **HISTORY tab** for any services or referrals that have notes associated with them will now also appear for Coordinated Entry events that have notes associated with them.



The icon will also appear in the **Events tab** of a Coordinated Entry program enrollment. Users can hover over the icon to view the text of the note.

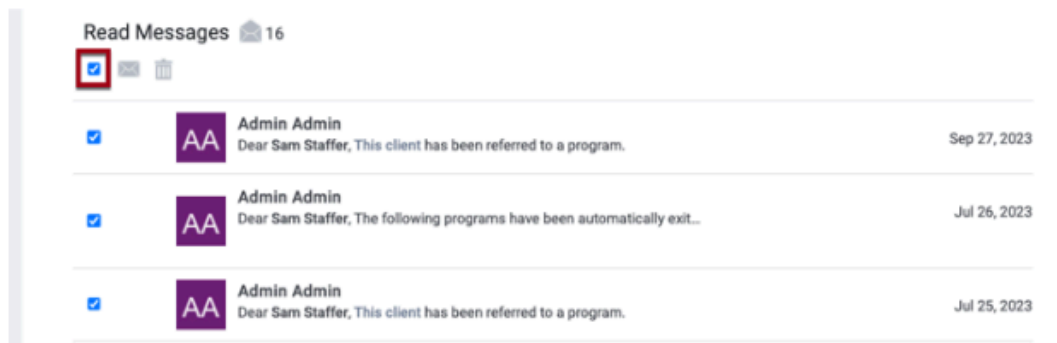
### Bulk Management of Clarity Inbox Messages

The **Clarity Inbox** now includes the ability to select multiple messages so that more than one message at a time can be deleted, marked as “Read,” or marked as “Unread.”

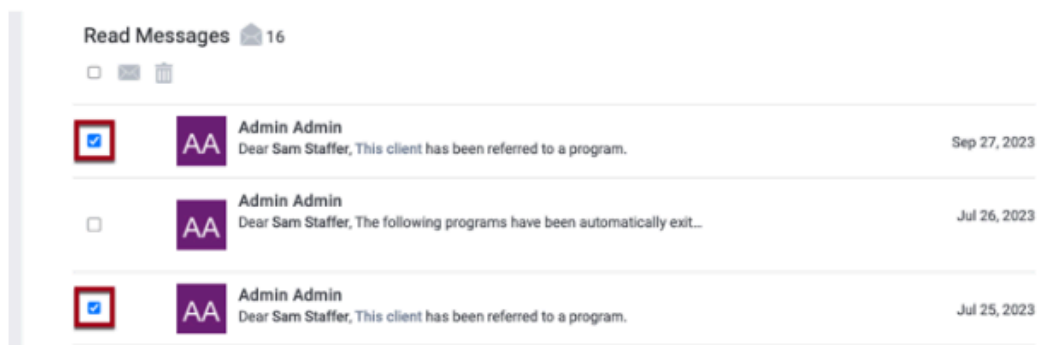
As part of this update, the **Unread Messages** and **Read Messages** are now displayed on separate pages instead of on the same page. The new **Message Status** sidebar allows you to choose which list to view.



To select all messages in the list, check the box at the top of the list.



To select multiple messages in the list, check the box next to the individual messages.



To delete the selected messages, click the trash can icon. 

To mark the selected **Unread Messages** as “Read” and move them to the **Read Messages** section, click the open envelope icon at the top of the list. 

To mark the selected **Read Messages** as “Unread” and move them to the **Unread Messages** section, click the closed envelope icon at the top of the list. 



# Training

# Clarity Toolbox

## Data Quality Fields: What They Are and Why They Matter

When you create a new client in HMIS, you're asked to fill out three data quality fields - Quality of Social Security Number, Quality of Name, and Quality of Date of Birth.

CREATE A NEW CLIENT

Social Security Number

1. Quality of SSN

Last Name

First Name

2. Quality of Name

3. Quality of DOB

Date of Birth

Each of these fields has five possible response options:

- A "full" value option for the field in question
- An "approximate or partial" value option for the field in question
- "Client doesn't know"
- "Client prefers not to answer"
- "Data not collected"

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News

## Bitfocus is Hiring!

Bitfocus hiring for multiple positions! Check out our job postings [here](#).

Apply today!

Questions? Your HMIS Administrator is happy to help.

Phone: 415-429-1400  
Email: [marin@bitfocus.com](mailto:marin@bitfocus.com)



Bitfocus, 5940 S Rainbow Blvd, Ste 400 #60866, Las Vegas, NV 89118, United States, 800-594-9854

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