



Santa Cruz HMIS News December 2023

Welcome to the Santa Cruz HMIS December 2023 newsletter!

In this edition you'll find the following:

- Season's Greetings
- Upcoming Events
- Check out this fun poll: If you shop for holiday gifts, what's your preferred shopping method?
- HMIS Policies & Procedures: New CLS & Status Update Assessments Policy
- HMIS Training Update
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Announcements

Season's Greetings

Happy Holidays from our Team to yours!

As this year comes to an end, we want to thank you all for the amazing work you have done over the past year. There is so much gratitude for all the collaboration and dedication you all have shown, and we are excited to continue the momentum as we begin the New Year in 2024!

Bitfocus' offices will be closed Monday, December 25, 2023, through January 1, 2024 to let our employees unplug, recharge, and celebrate the holidays with their loved ones - empowering our team to have the time away to ultimately bring their best to their work year-long.

Our Help Desk will remain open to address any urgent needs (at limited capacity and response times may be impacted) - with the exception of closing to recognize two federal holidays on 12/25/23 and 1/1/24. Reduced support staff will be working an augmented schedule Tuesday 12/26 - Friday 12/29 and will be processing tickets submitted by email to santacruz@bitfocus.com. On those days, please expect longer than usual response times. On those days, phone calls will be routed directly to voicemail, and will be processed as email tickets. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Help Desk if you need any general support, and they will get back to you as soon as they are able to!

We'll be back to business as usual in the New Year on Tuesday, January 2, 2024. May you have a safe and wonderful holiday season!



Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

Housing for Health - HMIS Workgroup

Monday, January 22 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. | Register [HERE](#)

This monthly virtual meeting provides a regular opportunity for sharing related to HMIS implementation among all HMIS Leads and users. In this meeting, we

discuss specific solutions to system issues end users may be experiencing, along with community-wide initiatives. We would love to have you join us! **Please note that this meeting is required for HMIS Agency Leads.**

Clarity Human Services Office Hours

Tuesday, January 23 | 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. | Register [HERE](#)

We host office hours every fourth Tuesday of each month. Drop-in for as long or as short as you'd like to ask any and all questions related to HMIS or Clarity Human Services. All users are welcome. Please join us within the first 15 minutes or we will assume nobody will be joining us for Office Hours and we will close out the Zoom meeting.



Announcements

Check Out This Fun Poll:

If you shop for holiday gifts, what's your preferred shopping method?

[Click this link to complete the poll](#) to complete the poll and check out the newsletter next month to see what your colleagues said! Please note that your individual response is anonymous.

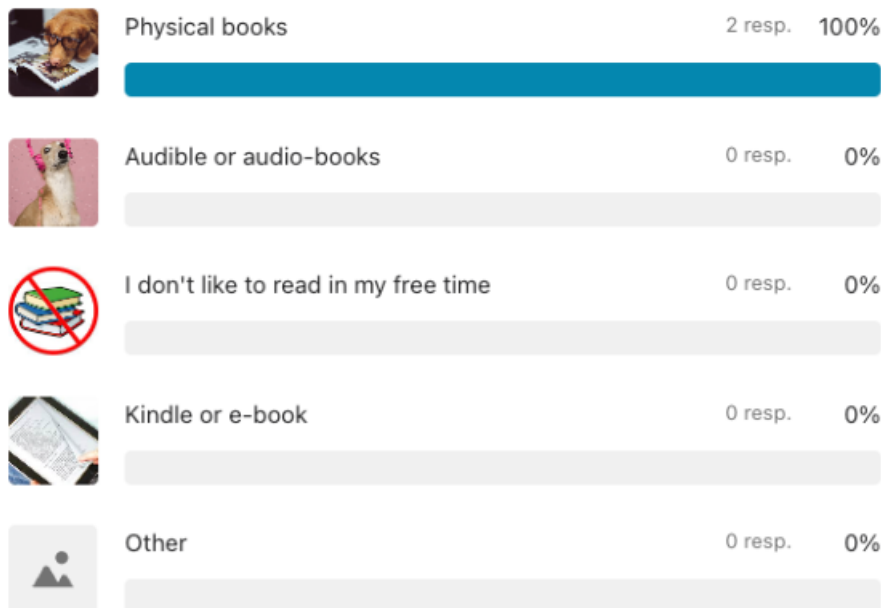


Take the poll!

Here are the results from last month's poll. Thanks for taking the time to respond!

1 Tis the season for curling up with a good book - what's your favorite way to read books?

2 out of 2 people answered this question



Updates

HMIS Policies & Procedures: New CLS & Status Update Assessments Policy

New Policy: Current Living Situation & Status Update Assessments

There has been a policy change to the collection of a participant's Current Living Situation (CLS) Assessment and Status Update Assessment. **A Current Living Situation Assessment is now required at the time of program enrollment, and must be completed immediately after completing a client's program enrollment.** It's important to note that the Current Living Situation Assessment collects where the client anticipates staying *that night*, which is different from

the Prior Living Situation questions, which ask where the participant stayed *the night before*, collected during the program enrollment.

Whenever a participant's situation changes, or at least every 90 days, another Current Living Situation Assessment must be completed. A Status Update Assessment must be completed at this time as well.

Please see [this visual aide](#) to help you understand the expectations of this new policy.

Policy Recommendations Current Living Situation and Status Update Assessments

	All Funding Sources			
	At Program Enrollment		When Participant Situation Changes or At Least Every 90 Days	
	Current Living Situation Assessment	Status Update Assessment	Current Living Situation Assessment	Status Update Assessment
Coordinated Entry				
Services Only				
Street Outreach				
Emergency Shelter - Night-by-Night				
Emergency Shelter - Entry Exit				
Transitional Housing				
PH - Rapid Re-Housing				
PH - Permanent Supportive Housing				
PH - Housing with Services				
PH - Housing Only				

** The Current Living Situation Assessment collects where the client anticipates staying that night. This differs from the Prior Living Situation question collected at program enrollment which asks where the participant stayed the night before.*

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News

HMIS Training Update

In-Person General HMIS Trainings

The last of the initial **General HMIS: Module #1** trainings was held on **12/12** and will now switch to being offered on a quarterly cadence. Thank you to the 150+ users that attended!

With **Module #1** completed, we are launching the second part of the training series, **General HMIS: Module #2**. If you completed Module #1 you should have received an email notification with registration instructions and links for Module #2. If you did not receive the email but need to take this training please follow the below links to that training's corresponding registration page. *Please note that space is limited so register early to ensure you are able to secure a seat in the training you are interested in taking.*

Continue reading



Updates

Please Review Client Information in the HMIS

As you are meeting with your participants, please take some time to review the participant's information to make sure their preferences are accurately reflected in the HMIS. With the updated Data Standards rollout on 10/1/23, HUD implemented new guidance to make the HMIS data standards more person-centered and inclusive.

As an HMIS user, it is important to make the time and space to review all of the participant's profile and enrollment information with them in order to be sure that their data in the HMIS is aligned with how they identify. Perhaps their pronouns, gender identity, race and ethnicity, or sexual orientation wasn't previously captured in a way that they closely identified with, and now that HUD has expanded many of the available response options for these fields, they may find their identity preferences can be more accurately captured. All HMIS users share the collective responsibility of updating client data to make sure participant preferences are accurate and up-to-date.

On the Client Profile, please be sure to review the following demographic data with your participant and update it as necessary:

- **Pronouns**
- **Gender**
- **Race and Ethnicity**
 - **Additional Race and Ethnicity Detail**

On the **Client Profile**, please be sure to review the following demographic data with your participant and update it as necessary:

- **Sexual Orientation**



Training

Preparing for the 2024 Point-in-Time Count on 1/24/24 - 1/25/24

The annual Point-in-Time Count is vital for funding and the development of policies that will help resolve homelessness in Santa Cruz County. This year, Santa Cruz County's unsheltered PIT Count will occur in the early morning of January 25, 2024.

Unsheltered PIT Count:

Sign up to Volunteer for the 2024 PIT Count!

The Count will take place county-wide with the help of volunteers, including those experiencing homelessness, community members, staff from multiple city and county departments, and law enforcement. Using an app-based data collection tool, volunteers will cover the entire county in one morning from 5:00am to 10:00am. Sign up to volunteer here.

Volunteers are an integral part of the PIT Count effort; they help support a robust and accurate collection of data on our neighbors experiencing homelessness. Volunteers will work in teams and are asked to lead a visual count of people who are experiencing homelessness in the County. All teams are led by a trained guide. **To sign up as a volunteer, email**

alex@appliedsurveyresearch.org or call 877-728-4545 or [sign up using this link](#).

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Report Spotlight

Review Your Data for the Point-in-Time Count

The Santa Cruz sheltered Point-in-Time Count will occur on the night of **January 24, 2024**. This means that you will need to make sure your shelter, transitional housing, and/or permanent housing program has complete and up-to-date data for the night of January 24, 2024, and make sure it's entered accurately into the HMIS no later than February 2, 2024. To check your data, please run the following reports as soon as your January 24, 2024 enrollments (including housing move-in dates), exits, and services are entered.

First Check Occupancy

Check your occupancy by running the [Housing Census Report](#) for one night: January 24, 2024. This report can be found in the "Housing" section of the Report Library.

To Run the Housing Census reports:

1. Log in to Clarity Human Services and click on the "Launchpad" at the top right of the screen, to the left of the mail icon. From the launchpad, click on "Reports."
2. Locate [HSNG-108] Housing Census under the Housing Reports section and click Run.
** Select the project type and program name. You may select multiple programs. Data for each program will display separately on the report.*
3. Under Veteran Status, select All Clients.
4. Enter the start date January 24, 2024 and end date for the report January 24, 2024

5. Under Report Output Format select “Web Page,” “PDF,” or “Excel.”
Choosing “Web Page” will allow you to click on the client name or ID and automatically open up the client profile within Clarity Human Services.
6. Click the “Submit” button.
7. Once your report is finished processing, it will show you a notification in the top right of your screen, next to the Launchpad icon. *Pro tip: If it's taking a while to process your report, refresh the page to check if your report is ready.*

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How-to

Resource Highlight

“Getting Started” Help Center Articles

Have you ever thought to yourself, “I wish there were clear instructions I could reference for creating new client records, enrolling clients in programs, and recording services.” Well, there actually are! Let me introduce our “**Getting Started**” section in the Bitfocus Help Center.

Whether you're a brand new Clarity user, or you just need a refresher, the “Getting Started” section in our Help Center is a great place to start. This section has tons of how-to articles on a wide range of common data entry tasks: accessing Clarity Human Services, creating and managing client records, program enrollments, and services, and so much more.

Check it out!

Questions? Your HMIS Administrator is happy to help.

Phone: 831-713-2288

Email: santacruz@bitfocus.com



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

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