

## RECORDING NON-CASH BENEFITS IN CLARITY

### San Francisco Continuum of Care Funded Programs

#### BACKGROUND

CoC-funded programs are required to record non-cash benefits in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in order to determine whether households are accessing the mainstream program benefits for which they are eligible, and to analyze any changes in non-cash benefits between project start, follow-up, and/or exit.

The HUD Data Standards Manual defines non-cash benefits as “**intended to identify regular, recurrent benefits. Services and/or gifts such as phone cards and vouchers that are provided by a project to clients during enrollment are fundamentally different and are not considered benefits.**”<sup>1</sup> Within HMIS, several types of non-cash benefits may be selected, including:

- [CalFresh](#) - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- [WIC](#) - Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children
- TANF Child Care Services
- TANF Transportation Services
- Other TANF-Funded Services

Programs may enter additional non-cash benefits into an “other” category. Through a community feedback process with CoC-funded providers, the following non-cash benefits were determined to fit into the “other” category.

As a reminder, “[t]o collect benefits information, projects are expected to ask clients whether they receive benefits from each of the sources listed (either on paper or through client interview) rather than asking them to state the sources of non-cash benefits they receive. Clients are not required to provide documentation of benefits.”<sup>2</sup>

#### “OTHER” NON-CASH BENEFITS

Below is a list of non-cash benefits case managers may enter in the “other” field in HMIS. Please note that the client should be receiving the benefits on a regular and recurrent basis.

*Example:* a client regularly receives Meals on Wheels deliveries and expects to receive them again next month. Record the response as “other” non-cash benefits.

*Example:* a client received Meals on Wheels but is not eligible to receive them next month. Do not record the response as “other” non-cash benefits.

#### ● Food

- Meal Delivery Services
  - [Meals on Wheels](#)
  - [Project Open Hand](#)
  - [Meals That Heal](#)
  - Recurring Food Delivery Services (Food Bank Home Delivery, Grocery Delivery, Produce/Pantry Drop, [USDA Food Distribution](#))
- Food Vouchers (other than food stamps)
  - [EatSF](#)
- DAAS Congregate Meal Service

#### ● Health Care

<sup>1</sup> [HUD HMIS Data Standards Manual](#), April 2018, page 69.

<sup>2</sup> HUD Data Standards, page 68, noting how requiring documentation of benefits when it is not a funder’s requirement unnecessarily slows down the process for assisting people to exit homelessness.

- Vouchers (other than insurance)
  - [Healthy San Francisco](#)
- Services
  - [In-Home Supportive Services](#) (IHSS)
  - [Family PACT](#)
- **Transportation**
  - [Paratransit](#)
  - *Regular MUNI transportation subsidies*
- **Children's Benefits**<sup>3</sup>
  - *After School Programs*
  - *School Lunch Programs*
  - *Non-CalWORKs Subsidized Child Care*
- **Other Benefits**
  - [PG&E CARE](#)
  - *Adult Day Programs* (client is enrolled)

## INCOME AND OTHER BENEFITS

The below should *not* be entered as non-cash benefits in HMIS:

- **Cash benefits**, which should instead be recorded in HMIS as income. Income is “intended to identify regular, recurrent earned income and cash benefits.”<sup>4</sup> Income includes:
  - Earned income
  - Unemployment insurance
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  - Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
  - VA Service and Non-Service-Connected Disability Compensation
  - Private disability insurance
  - Workers compensation
  - Assistance for needy families (CalWORKs)
  - General Assistance (GA)
  - Retirement income from Social Security
  - Pension or retirement income from a former job
  - Child support
  - Alimony and other spousal support
  - Other regular sources of cash income
- **Health insurance** is a separate data element intended to identify actual health insurance sources.<sup>5</sup>
- **Case management** should be made available by all housing programs and will result in outcomes connecting clients to income and other non-cash benefits. Case management itself should not be considered a non-cash benefit.
- **Housing costs**, including move-in and security deposits are one-time assistance and should not be entered as non-cash benefits. Rental assistance vouchers are also not considered non-cash benefits as they are a central component of housing programs.
- **Other temporary, one-time benefits** should not be entered into HMIS as non-cash benefits, such as the [Home Energy Assistance Program](#) (HEAP).

<sup>3</sup> Please note, children should be enrolled in the below programs in order to qualify as a non-cash benefit. Non-cash benefits for children are recorded under the Head of Household in HMIS.

<sup>4</sup> HUD Data Standards, page 65.

<sup>5</sup> HUD Data Standards, page 70.