# OC HMIS Data Element Cheat Sheet: Profile Creation and Project Enrollment

## Profile Creation

HUD requires you collect certain information from the client with whom you work, in order to create a Client Profile in HMIS. These are some required data elements. Each section contains the name of the data element, rationale for collecting the data element, and suggestions on collecting accurate data from clients.

### Data Element: 3.03 Data of Birth (DOB)
*Calculates the client's age at the beginning of their enrollment, and at any time during their enrollment.*

- If a client cannot remember or refuses to provide their day/ month of birth enter the DOB as:
  - **Quality of DOB -** Client Doesn't Know/ Client Refused
  - **Date of Birth -** 01/01 for MM/DD
- The same steps should be taken if the client cannot remember their DOB. Ask them to estimate their age and fill out the DOB as **Approximate** or **Partial DOB Reported**

> **Ask things like...**
> - Do you know how old you are?
> - Do you know what month/day/year you might have been born on?
> - About how old would you say you are right now?

### Data Element: 3.06 Gender
*Helps us understand who is experiencing homelessness in our CoC*

**Recording Data in HMIS**
- Enter the self reported information as directed by the client
- If the client is already in HMIS, verify that the information is correct. If their gender does not match their current gender then update the record

> **Ask things like...**
> - What gender identity you most closely identify with? If none of these work for you, that's okay.

### Data Element: 3.04 Race & Data Element 3.05 Ethnicity
*Helps us understand who is experiencing homelessness in our community.*

- Staff observations should never be used for collecting client data
- Information is self-reported as directed by the client
- A client's race cannot be determined based on their answer for ethnicity
- HUD's definition of race is concerned with clients' ancestral origins, not where they were born or have lived during their life.

> **(*Race*) Ask things like...**
> - Do you know if your ancestors were originally from a country like Spain, somewhere in Africa, or are you part of an indigenous group?
> - Where did you ancestors come from?

> **(*Ethnicity*) Ask things like...**
> - Do you identify as being Hispanic/Latino?
>   - If a client indicates that they are from a Latin American country they might identify their race as Hispanic. However, their race might be White if they know their ancestors were originally from Europe.

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## Project Enrollment

After you have created the client's profile in HMIS you will need to enroll them in a project to record the services they receive from your agency. Data elements on the Enrollment and Update/Assessment screen are called *Program Specific Data Elements (PSDE)*. Some PSDEs can be updated when necessary due to a change in clients' situations and others only record data about a particular point in time. PSDEs noted with an asterisk (*) are data elements that should be updated when necessary based on clients' situations.

### Data Element: 3.10 Project Start Date
*Determines when a client begins to participate in a project.*

Determining when exactly a client is considered to have begun participating in a project varies by project type.

> **Ask things like...**
> - **Street Outreach:** When was the first contact with the client made?
> - **Emergency Shelter:** When was the first night that the client stayed in the shelter?
>   - **Night-by-night Shelters:** *Unless the client has not returned to the shelter in the last 90 days, the client will remained enrolled.*
> - **Transitional Housing:** When did the client move into the unit? When was the first night they slept in the residence?
> - **Permanent Housing, including Rapid Rehousing:** When was the client accepted into the project? Acceptance into a Permanent Housing project is determined when the following events take place:
>   - Information given by the client, or the referral, indicate that the client will meet the criteria for admission, and;
>   - The client has indicated that they want to be housed by this project, and;
>   - The client is able to access services and housing through the project. The expectation is that the project data housing opening or expects to have availability in a reasonably short amount of time.
> - **Services Only, Day Shelter, Homeless Prevention, Coordinated Entry:** When did the client begin working with the project and receiving services?

### Data Element: 3.917 Residence Prior to Project Entry
*Helps to identify the tliving situation the client was in immediately before they were enrolled in the project, and how long they were there for. Living Situations should be selected from the Living Situation responses listed under Prior Living Situations listed in the **2020 HMIS Data Standards Manual**.*

- Data Element 3.917 should reflect where the client was as of the night before their *Project Start Date*, not where the client was on the date the information is being collected.
- If none of the options listed in the Living Situation responses seem to match the client's previous situation, enter a HMIS Help Desk ticket describing their Living Situation so 211OC HMIS Staff can assist you in selecting the correct response.
  - Quick Tip: Sometimes when asked where they slept last night, clients will respond that they didn't sleep or were up all night. In that case, ask the client where they were during the night and use that information to select a Living Situation.

> **Ask things like...**
> - Can you walk me through your housing history from the last three years?
> - Is this is first time you have experienced homelessness, or has this happened before? How long ago was this?
> - Where were you staying before tonight?
> - Do you recall where you were staying 3 years ago?
> - Can you describe a timeline of events that lead you here?
> - When was the last time you had housing and where was that?

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**Project Enrollment** (Continued)

## Data Element: 3.08 Disabling Condition*
*This element records clients' disabling conditions and helps to determine clients' chronic homeless status.*

HUD provides definitions for 6 categories of disabling conditions. Disabling conditions vary in their applicability to HUD's definition of a disability.

- An answer of "Yes" to PSDEs 4.06 Developmental Disability and 4.08 HIV/AIDS automatically qualify the client for an answer of "Yes" to Data Element 3.08 Disabling Condition.
- If the client answers "Yes" to any of the following PSDEs and "Yes" to the follow up question asking if the client expects the condition to be of long continuing or indefinite duration, the client qualifies for an answer of "Yes" to Data Element 3.08 Disabling Condition:
  - 4.05 Physical Disability
  - 4.07 Chronic Health Condition
  - 4.09 Mental Health Problem
  - 4.10 Substance Abuse
- If the client is a veteran who was disabled by an injury or illness that occurred or aggravated during active military service, and meets the disability definition defined in *Section 223 of the Social Security Act,* they should be identified as having a disabling condition.
- If a client collects *Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), VA Service-Connected Disability Compensation* or *VA Non-Service-Connected Disability Pension*, then they can be considered as having a disabling condition.

For further guidance, please use Disabling Condition Flow Chart to help determine if your client has a disabling condition. (This flow chart can be found in the HMIS Cheat Sheet tab on the ochmis.org site)

## Data Element: 4.02 Income from any Sources*
*Helps to determine if households are accessing all of the income sources they are eligible for.*

- Income information is required for all clients age 18 and over
- If a client turns 18 while enrolled in a project, create an income record for them using the Status Update screen. Do not update the enrollment screen.
  - If the client was working before they 18 and contributing to household expenses:
    - The income they contributed before they were 18 should be added to the Head of Household's income record.
    - When they turn 18 and still to the only income they earned is the same income that they earned as a minor and contributed to the household, create a Status Update income reflecting Earned Income as "Yes" with an amount of $0. This is so the Head of Household does not appear to have lost income during the enrollment period.

**Ask things like...**
- As of today, how much money are you currently earning?
  - The income record should reflect the client's income amount as of the date the information is being recorded, for example:
    - *If a client lost their job and has not found anything yet, their response for Earned Income should be No.*
    - *If a client held a job that was full-time and was being paid $15/hour two weeks ago, but they are now working part-time and earn $10/hour, you will record the income information for the $10/hour job.*
- (Go down the list of possible income sources, do not have the client list out their sources of income. This will help you identify which assistance programs they might be able to access.)

## Data Element: 3.20 Housing Move-In Date (HMID)
*This element is used to document the date that a household admitted into a Permanent Housing (PH) project moves into housing. This element is also used to distinguish homeless clients from house client during the HIC Report.*

- For RRH Projects, a HMID must be entered regardless if they are providing the rental assistance for the unit, for example:
  - *If a RRH project is providing supportive services, but is not providing the rental assistance for a unit a HMID should still be record so that they are differentiated from RRH clients that are in housing and those still experiencing homelessness.*
- For PH Projects, clients that are receiving pre-housing services, but are ultimately housed by another project should be exited from the project to the appropriate permanent *Destination*- with no HMID.
- Examples:
  - If a client leaves a PH project for a different housing opportunity, but does not actually move into any unit - do not enter a HMID, simply exit the client and record the exit Destination.
  - Clients that move from one unit to another with no days of homelessness in between do not need to be exited, because the original housing move in date will reflect the day they entered into permanent housing.
  - If a client was transferred to a PSH or RRH project after having moved into permanent housing then the client's Project Start Date and HMID will be the same.

**Ask things like...**
- Who paid for your unit?
- When was the first day you slept in the unit?
- (If they are exiting for another project) Where will you be sleeping tonight?

## Data Element: 4.11 Domestic Violence (DV) Victim/Survivor*
*Helps identify person/households that are survivors of DV.*

**Recording Data in HMIS**
- If a client enters from a non-homeless situation they will negatively impact a project's performance. However, a DV client that is actively fleeing would be considered a neutral entry.
- If a client discloses that they are a survivor of DV during the course of the enrollment, update the *Enrollment Screen* or any *Status Updates/Annual Assessments* as necessary.
  - *For example, if a client says they are not a survivor at Project Start and later confides that they were a survivor at Project Start, update the Enrollment Screen.*

**Ask things like...**
- Are you currently fleeing from a DV situation?
- How long ago was the incident?
- Do you believe you are currently in danger?
  - Only answer Yes to the follow up DV question (Are you currently fleeing) if the incident recently occurred.

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