

# HPN Screening and Assistance Process

## INSTRUCTIONS

Version 4, 9/20/2021



Homelessness Prevention Network provides brief screening, housing problem-solving, and expedited access to a wide array of assistance for families with minor children and expectant moms who are imminently at-risk of literal homelessness tonight (Risk Level 4) or within 30 days or less (Risk Level 3). HPN is comprised of three types of partners:

| Tier 1<br>HPN Intensive Service Provider (HPN ISP)  | Tier 2<br>HPN Service Provider (HPN SP)  | Tier 3<br>HPN Access Points   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Programs funded and designed to provide targeted homelessness prevention for families and/or pregnant women at-risk of literal homelessness within a 30-day timeframe "but for" program assistance.</p> <p>Programs screen-in and prioritize higher risk households as part of standard intake procedures, conduct more in-depth assessment and housing problem-solving, and provide more intensive and extended service supports.</p> | <p>Social service agencies and other entities that provide prevention-related assistance for at-risk families and/or pregnant women.</p> <p>Programs use standardized HPN brief screening tools to identify higher risk households, offer individualized housing problem-solving assistance, and facilitate expedited access (within 14 days) to one or more agency services and/or to other HPN providers when needed to prevent literal homelessness for higher risk households.</p> | <p>Any type of entity encountering households who may be at-risk of housing instability or homelessness. Entities generally do not provide prevention-related assistance and/or are not able to engage as Tier 2 provider.</p> <p>Entities use standardized HPN brief screening tools or equivalent tools to identify higher risk households, offer basic housing problem-solving assistance, and facilitate expedited access (within 14 days) to other HPN providers when needed to prevent literal homelessness for higher risk households.</p> |

HPN Access Points and Service Providers (Tier 1 and 2) should follow [Steps 1 to 4](#) below to screen, assist and connect high risk families and expectant moms to services to prevent literal homelessness.

### HPN Data Collection:

- Tier 1 HPN Intensive Service Providers:** utilize CSB's Community Services Portal (CSP) data system per normal program data collection practices. When needing to make an expedited referral to a Tier 2 HPN Service Provider, utilize the web based **HPN Screening and Referral Tool** (ESRI).
- Tier 2 HPN Service Providers and Tier 3 HPN Access Points:** utilize the web based **HPN Screening and Referral Tool** (ESRI) to collect basic client information and make an expedited referral, when needed, to an HPN Service Provider or Intensive Service Provider.

### HPN Landing Page with Training Resources, Screening Tools, and Guidance:

<https://www.csb.org/how-we-do-it/homelessness-prevention-network/hpn-resources>

For questions about HPN Screening and Triage, including the **HPN Screening and Referral Tool** contact Monisa Mason, HPN Manager, [mmason@csb.org](mailto:mmason@csb.org).

## HPN SCREENING AND ASSISTANCE PROCESS

### Step 1: Homelessness Risk Screening

Homelessness risk screening is used to quickly identify households who are imminently at-risk of literal homeless within the next 30 days (i.e., households who will soon exhaust all safe housing options and require emergency shelter to avoid being unsheltered). Such households may benefit from immediate housing problem-solving assistance and potentially expedited access to other assistance (e.g., financial assistance, food, childcare, etc.) to avoid literal homelessness and stabilize housing.

HPN Access Point and Service Provider staff should conduct brief screening using the 1-page **HPN Screening Tool** or a similar tool that determines imminency of housing loss in the next 30 days or less, the absence of safe, alternative housing options (temporary or permanent), and the absence of other immediately available resources to secure housing. Screening can be done in stages, including use of a basic 1-question screen to initially identify households potentially at-risk (e.g., **"Are you homeless or are you worried you may become homeless in the next few weeks?"**).

For HPN purposes, brief screening specifically focuses on identifying:

- Families with minor children and/or household with a pregnant member (target universe for HPN).
- Risk level relative to experiencing literal homelessness and needing emergency shelter, with specific goal of identifying those who are currently homeless (Risk Level 4) or imminently at-risk of literal homelessness within 14 days or less (Risk Level 3) or at most within 30 days or less.

HPN Access Points and Service Providers are strongly encouraged to incorporate brief Homelessness Risk Screening in all facets of programs and services, including initial and ongoing contacts with assisted households, to identify and assist those who are at high risk of literal homelessness.

## **Step 2: Housing Problem-Solving**

Housing Problem-Solving is used by HPN Access Point and Service Provider staff to immediately engage high risk families (including pregnant women) in solution-focused, guided conversation to identify available safe housing options and/or resources to secure housing and reduce risk of literal homelessness.

Housing Problem-Solving is the first and most important form of assistance available from HPN Tier 3 Access Points and Tier 1 and 2 Service Providers and involves a more comprehensive exploration of the household's current housing situation, safety issues, options and resources that could be useful to stabilize the household or otherwise help them find alternative, safe housing arrangements. Housing Problem-Solving typically also involves examining other resources and assistance available from the HPN Access Point or Service Provider and/or through another HPN Service Provider that the household might access to help stabilize current housing or secure new housing.

## **Step 3: HPN Prioritized Assistance**

In addition to Housing Problem-Solving, expedited access to other assistance (e.g., financial assistance, food, childcare, etc.) is offered by HPN Access Points and Service Providers when needed to address urgent needs and help stabilize housing. The web based ***HPN Screening and Referral Tool*** should be used by HPN Access Points and Service Providers when needing to make an expedited referral to an HPN Intensive Service Provider (Tier 1) or HPN Service Provider (Tier 2) for one or more types of assistance.

## **Stage 4: Follow-up Support**

HPN trained staff follow-up support based on final risk level after housing problem-solving and use of HPN prioritized assistance:

- ✓ **If RISK LEVEL 4:** Immediately refer to homeless hotline for assistance to access shelter.
- ✓ **If RISK LEVEL 3:** Continue to offer housing problem-solving, additional HPN prioritized prevention assistance, and/or support to immediately access support from another HPN Service Provider if making an expedited referral.
- ✓ **If RISK LEVEL 2, 1 or 0:** Continue to offer housing problem-solving assistance and connection to other assistance or resources, as needed and desired.

## ***HPN SCREENING AND REFERRAL TOOL INSTRUCTIONS:***

### **HPN Screening and Referral Tool (ESRI) User Set-Up**

Before using the web based ***HPN Screening and Referral Tool***, you will first receive an email from Monisa Mason, CSB HPN Manager, to set-up an account that includes your account information (username and password). Please follow these directions to register for access to the tool.

#### ***Register your account:***

Navigate to the following website: <https://homelessness-prevention-network-fca.hub.arcgis.com/>.

Click the blue Register button in the center of the site.

Enter the provided username and password provided to you.

Follow the on-screen instruction to update your password and set up your security questions.

Click the Allow button to finish the process.

#### ***Access the HPN Screening and Referral Tool:***

On the registration page, you will now see a button that allows you to open the HPN tool. You can access the HPN tool this way, or directly here: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/e1705760f37b4815a974ee46c7f43ac7>.

## Data Entry Instructions

1. Login to **HPN Screening and Referral Tool** at: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/e1705760f37b4815a974ee46c7f43ac7>  
NOTE: all questions with a “\*” are required.
2. **Risk for Literal Homelessness:**
  - a. Enter whether client household is imminently at-risk of literal homelessness in the next 30 days. If “No”, the tool will stop. If “Yes”, the tool will proceed and ask if household is imminently at-risk of literal homelessness within 14 days.
3. **Client Consent:**
  - a. Obtain consent to obtain/release information using suggested **HPN Client Consent to Obtain/Release Information** language (see below) or other agency release form with similar consent language.
  - b. Enter whether client provided consent to obtain/release information. If client does not consent, answer “No” and the survey will exclude personally identifying information (e.g., name, date of birth) from the survey.
4. **Client Information:**
  - a. Collect and enter basic client information for the head of household or other adult household member who was screened.
    - i. Current Living Situation: If family is currently staying at an emergency shelter and plans to return to shelter tonight, the survey will STOP. Click **SUBMIT** and connect client with shelter staff for re-housing assistance. **No further HPN data collection.**
    - ii. Previous eviction(s) and/or felony(ies): this information is optional and is collected only to identify if a family household may have more significant housing barriers.
5. **HPN Assistance:**
  - a. Enter whether Housing Problem-Solving Assistance was provided.
  - b. Enter whether family needs immediate access to other assistance to resolve their housing crisis. **If “Yes”:**
    - i. Enter the type(s) of assistance needed and whether one or more types of assistance are needed from another HPN Service Provider.
    - ii. Upon submitting a completed **HPN Screening and Referral Tool** an automated referral email will be generated to one or more HPN Service Providers that offer the type(s) of assistance identified.
    - iii. Referral emails are sent to point of contact at HPN Intensive Service Providers and HPN Service Providers and contain basic client information, type(s) of assistance needed, and client contact information.
    - iv. Recipients of HPN referral emails should use “Reply All” email responses to indicate whether they can pick up the referral and, based on the list of services needed, what type of assistance they can provide, as well as any relevant next steps. Remember, partners can and should work together on a referral if needed. Partners will work together to determine the best next steps when collaborating on a referral.
    - v. Expectant moms: households with an identified pregnant member should be referred to Homeless Families Foundation (HFF) and their prevention services for expectant moms. The HPN Access Point or Service Provider seeking to make a referral will receive an automated email with next step referral instructions and link to HFF’s referral form upon submitting a completed **HPN Screening and Referral Tool**.

## HPN Client Consent to Obtain/Release Information:

“I am part of a Homelessness Prevention Network or “HPN” operated by the Community Shelter Board that includes our agency and other community partners who work together to help families most at-risk of needing emergency shelter. To best assist you, I would like to share basic information about you and your current housing needs into an online screening and referral tool to share your information with other organizations in the HPN to help connect you with other assistance and to help Community Shelter Board better understand the number of families experiencing a housing crisis in Franklin County. As part of this effort, an evaluator from Community Shelter Board may also seek to contact you in the future to learn about your experience and how we can further improve the assistance we provide. All information I collect and share will be kept secure and confidential and will not be shared for any other reason than what I just indicated.

Do I have your permission to share your name and contact information with CSB and other HPN partners?”