

South Central Illinois Continuum of Care Discharge Policy

Foster Care Discharges

The CoC and its affiliates cooperate with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and DCFS contractors to assure that no one is discharged from foster care without a stable home. DCFS processes are geared to: improve access to and use of local, community-based support services; improve access to and use of local, community-based support services to meet the youth's physical and mental health needs; and to improve collaboration between team members assisting the youth with preparing for emancipation (e.g. ensuring the youth's identified family and community supports are actively involved in their transition planning and post-wardship).

When requested, CoC affiliates work with DCFS case managers and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) case managers to ensure the following:

- that the youth identifies and develops a detailed plan to address their top 2 or 3 goals toward transitioning out of the child welfare system;
- that there is a well-developed plan in place to have the youth in their final living arrangement prior to emancipation;
- that the youth's connections to family, community and social supports are nurtured and maintained;
- that the youth's educational and vocational plans are realistic and in process prior to emancipation; and
- that the youth is working toward financial stability.

Health Care Discharges

The CoC and its affiliates cooperate with healthcare providers to assure that to the maximum extent possible, no patient is released into homelessness. Each hospital and health care facility has its own discharge policies and protocols. The CoC and its affiliates respect the need for each institution to follow its own discharge policies.

The CoC and its affiliates identify healthcare facilities within the CoC's geographic area that provide inpatient and/or residential treatment or rehabilitation. The CoC and its affiliates request that any such facility notify the nearest Coordinated Entry intake location prior to the anticipated release of any patient for whom a permanent housing plan or transfer to another facility has not been arranged.

In such cases, the CoC and its affiliates cooperate with the facility's case managers to assure:

- that there is a well-developed plan in place to have the patient secure a stable living arrangement prior to discharge;
- that the patient and their family/advocates are fully aware of all housing and service options available; and
- that the patient has access to all available community support services and benefits to which they are entitled for which they are eligible.

Mental Health Discharges

The CoC and its affiliates cooperate with behavioral healthcare providers and agencies serving persons with intellectual disabilities to assure that to the maximum extent possible, no patient is released into homelessness. The Illinois Mental Health and Development Disabilities Code governs the procedures of admitting and discharging persons from mental health facilities.

The CoC and its affiliates identify inpatient and residential facilities within the CoC's geographic area that house persons with mental illness, substance abuse disorders, or intellectual disabilities. The CoC and its affiliates request that any such facility notify the nearest Coordinated Entry intake location at least 30 days prior to the anticipated release of any patient for whom a permanent housing plan or transfer to another facility has not been arranged.

In such cases, the CoC and its affiliates cooperate with the facility's case managers to assure:

- that there is a well-developed plan in place to have the patient secure a stable living arrangement prior to discharge;
- that the patient and their family/advocates are fully aware of all housing and service options available; and
- that the patient has access to all available community support services and benefits to which they are entitled for which they are eligible.

Corrections Discharges

The CoC and its affiliates cooperate with federal, state, and local correctional institutions to assure that to the maximum extent possible, no one is released into homelessness from a jail or prison. The Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Illinois Department of Corrections have separate release and parole protocols, as do county and municipal jails. The CoC and its affiliates respect the need for each institution to follow its own release/parole policies.

The CoC and its affiliates identify correctional facilities within the CoC geographic area. The CoC and its affiliates request that any such facility notify the nearest Coordinated Entry intake location prior to the anticipated release of any person for whom a permanent housing plan or transfer to another facility has not been arranged.

In such cases, the CoC and its affiliates work with the correctional facility and a WIOA case manager to assure:

- that there is a well-developed plan in place to have the person secure a stable living arrangement prior to release;
- that the person is fully aware of all housing and service options available;
- that the person has access to all available community support services and benefits to which they are entitled for which they are eligible; and
- that the person is working toward financial stability.