Bitfocus

Santa Cruz HMIS News
September 2024

Welcome to the Santa Cruz HMIS September 2024 newsletter!

In this edition you'll find the following:

- Upcoming Events
- Meet our newest Deputy Project Administrator
- Special Announcement: The Next Generation of Clarity Human Services
  - Get Familiar with the New Look and Practice
- New HMIS Screen and Form Updates on 10/1
- Clarity Human Services Feature Updates on October 7, 2024
  - "Client Activity" functionality updated - *Auto Exit Due to Inactivity*
  - Attendance Module Updates
- Data Quality Dashboard and Report Content
- Spotlight Clarity Connect Thank you

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

Housing for Health - HMIS Office Hours

Monday, October 28 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. | Register <u>HERE</u>

Housing for Health and Bitfocus host office hours every **fourth Monday of each month** (in lieu of HMIS Workgroup meetings). Drop-in for as long or as short as you'd like to ask any and all questions related to the HMIS. All users are welcome. Please join us within the first 15 minutes or we will assume nobody will be joining us for Office Hours.

News

Meet Jennifer Abarca, our Newest Deputy Project Administrator!

We're thrilled to introduce Jennifer Abarca who joins the Bitfocus Community Administration Team. She will be supporting several communities, including Santa Cruz, City of Boston, Marin and Napa by assisting in managing Clarity Human Services. Jennifer brings 8 years of experience in the non-profit sector, where she has worked in outpatient facilities, California State Prisons and housing care services.

She dedicated the last five years to case management, advocacy, and housing retention successfully maintaining housing for approximately 80 clients. Jennifer is excited to collaborate with these communities, using her diverse background to enhance support services for the vulnerable populations. She holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and Spanish from Sonoma State University.

📢 Announcements

Special Announcement

The Next Generation of Clarity Human Services New Look!

We have some exciting news to share with you! Clarity is getting an exciting update to its look and feel and we are eager for you to take a look! As a reminder, the beta version of the new user interface will first focus on the main "client/program" area of the system: client profiles, household management, program enrollments, and services.

This update will mean that Clarity is much more mobile friendly for entering data via tablets or phones. It will also be easier to see the steps or "workflow" for entering data to help staff enter all required data along the way.

Get Familiar with the New look and Practice

- **Watch** the **15-minute recording** to walk through the key changes in Clarity Human Services.

- **Practice:** Use our **Interactive Common Functions Tool** to get hands-on experience

- **More Videos:** Get comfortable with the new design and features by following each of the practice steps below:

  - **Search for a client**
  - **Add a new client**
  - **Add a family member**
  - **Enroll a client**
  - **Add a family member to an enrollment**
  - **Provide a service to a client**
  - **Provide an assessment to a client**
  - **Exit a client**

Watch the Clarity Human Services: New Interface Training and **Review** the Screenshot Library.

- **Clarity Human Services: New Interface Training**
- **Screenshot Library**

You may also visit the New Clarity Human Services Interface section of our Help Center for a collection of Help Center articles on the new user interface. Don't forget that you have access to the **Santa Cruz Training Site** should you prefer to familiarize yourself with the new User Interface in the training site first.

All users should expect to have access to the new user interface on October 1, 2024. Use the pop-out icon to switch between the old and new interfaces as needed.
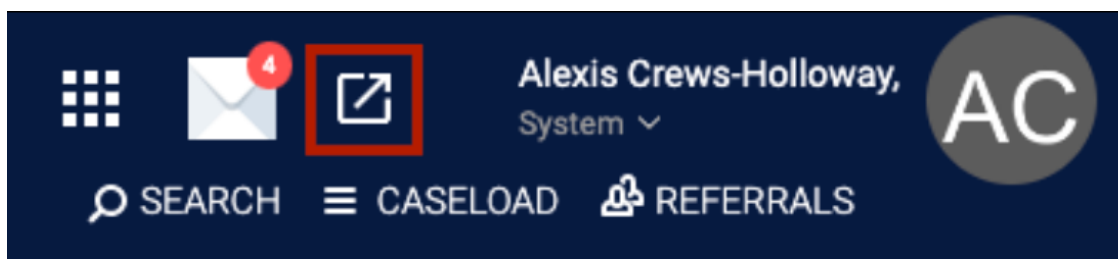
If you run into any software issues using the new User Interface, please reach out to the Help Desk:

Email: santacruz@bitfocus.com

Call: 831-713-2288

Chat: Directly from the Santa Cruz HMIS Support Website or when logged into your HMIS account (from the Client Search screen - chat widget at the bottom right corner)

Updates

New HMIS Screen and Form Updates on 10/1

On October 1, 2024, you will see updates to the HMIS screens and HMIS paper forms. This is part of a local initiative to add more context to the screens (additional warnings, labels, and updated display names) to make your data entry work easier and more understandable. We have added a lot of clarification to the screens - particularly within the following sections: Prior Living Situation, Survivor of Domestic Violence, Monthly Income and Sources, Non-Cash Benefits, Health Insurance, and Last Permanent Address.

As a helpful reminder, we have listed the state-specific naming conventions for the following federally-funded programs you see on the Program Enrollment, Status Update/Annual Assessment, and Exit screens:

In the Monthly Income and Sources section:

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** is the federal program name for California's **CalWORKs** program. If the participant receives CalWORKs funds, please select TANF in the Monthly Income and Sources section.
- **Social Security Income (SSI)** is for participants who are disabled *without* a significant work history.*
- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** is for participants who are disabled *with* a significant work history.*

In the Non-Cash Benefits section:

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** is the federal program name for California's **CalFresh** program. If the participant receives CalFresh benefits, please select Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the Non-Cash Benefits section.

- Just like in the Income section above, **TANF** is the federal program name for California's **CalWORKs** program. Any time you see TANF, this is referring to CalWORKs: TANF Childcare Services, TANF Transportation Services, Other TANF-Funded Services.

In the Health Insurance section:

- **Medicaid** is the federal program name for California's **Medi-Cal** program. If the participant has Medi-Cal health insurance, please select Medicaid in the Health Insurance Section.

While the names for these federal programs do not have CA-state specific names, we know that the difference between SSI and SSDI is often confusing to both HMIS users and participants. Participants may not always know which one they are receiving, so it is always important to confirm this with your participants.

Additionally, the updates we made to the **Last Permanent Address fields** are to collect better data on the region/area that the client last had permanent housing in (as opposed to their address when they were last in permanent housing). *We will be removing the current Last Permanent Address fields on the enrollment screens AND from the Housing Needs Assessment.* The Housing Needs Assessment will still have Question 13: Any adult household member's most recent housing was in Santa Cruz County.

We will be adding new fields to the enrollment screens to capture this data instead. If the client last lived in Permanent Housing in California, and specifically in Santa Cruz County, the questions on the enrollment screen will look like this:

If the client did **not** last live in Permanent Housing in California, or they did live in California but not Santa Cruz County, the questions will stop there.

To access the new HMIS paper forms, **please visit the Santa Cruz HMIS Support Website on 10/1/24** and use the forms that are most applicable to your program.
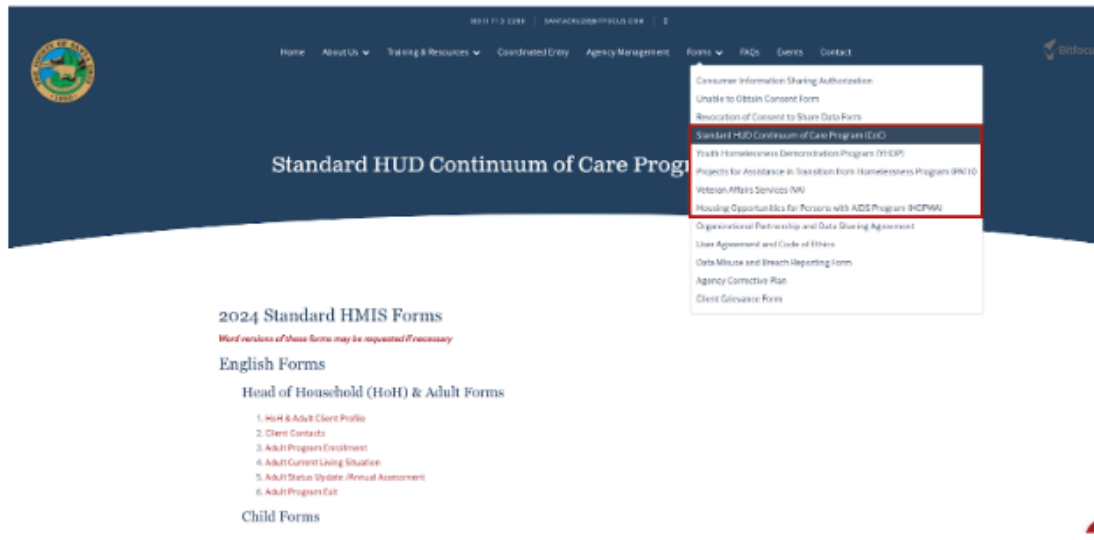
Most programs use the **Standard HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Forms**, but if your program uses any of the following funds, you'll need to use the appropriate forms:

- **Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Forms**
- **Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Forms**
- **Veteran Affairs Programs (SSVF, HUD-VASH, GPD) Forms**

If you are unsure if your program receives any of these Federal Partner funds, please contact your HMIS Agency Lead.

Clarity Human Services Updates

Feature Updates: Updated "Client Activity" Functionality - *coming October 7*

We've made updates to the Auto Exit Due to Inactivity function. Now additional activities can help keep a client enrolled in a program that has Auto Exit Due to Inactivity enabled or active on a Community Queue that has Inactive Referral Expiration Threshold set for 1 day or more. **HMIS Connectors - please read this carefully as Auto Exits Due to Inactivity are in effect for the Coordinated Entry program.**

Program: Auto Exit Due to Inactivity

Currently, the system will automatically exit a client from a program if no one in the household has had any activity related to the program (such as **Unit** connections, **services, Coordinated Entry Events/Result**s, or program-level **assessments**, including Annual Assessments, Status Update Assessments, Current Living Situation Assessments, and Custom/CE assessments) for a certain period of time.

For clients who are enrolled in "Emergency Shelter – Entry Exit program," "Emergency Shelter – Night-by-Night"' program where **Auto Exit** is based on the *Last Activity*, or similar program types, "Client Activity" now also includes:

- Adding or editing a location for the client on the **Location tab**
- Adding or editing a contact for the client on the **Contact tab**
- Editing a Coordinated Entry assessment

When any of these activities happen, the "clock" will restart based on the date the location or contact was added/edited or the date the Coordinated Entry assessment was edited.

Continue reading

Updates

Data Quality Dashboard and Report Content

Please see the pictures below for the agency-level data quality dashboard and report content updates. This is updated monthly - check it out!
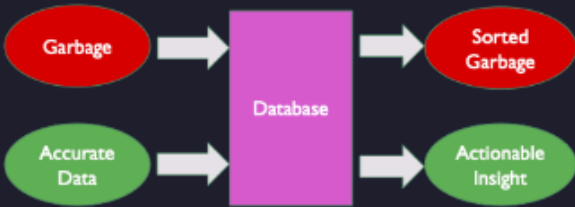
Continue reading

Spotlight

Thank You to all who attended this year's Clarity Connect!

Questions? Your HMIS Administrator is happy to help.

Phone: 831-713-2288
Email: santacruz@bitfocus.com