



Adding Un-Named Clients to the Homeless Management Information System

For the purpose of encouraging tracking services for our most vulnerable clients, Montgomery County, MD HMIS Lead Agency has opened its HMIS to allow for inclusion of clients known as **“Un-Named Clients.”** This option should be used as infrequently as is possible and only when due-diligence has been employed to attempt to get a name.

This document will outline the County’s protocol related to Un-Named Clients. If any exception to this protocol is needed, please contact the HMIS Lead Agency. In order to ensure that the Clients that are un-named are being properly recorded and allow for deduplication where possible, the following rules should be followed.

Who Can Create Un-Named Clients:

Un-Named Clients are to be created by Street Outreach, Safe Haven and Emergency Shelter Projects. It is not to be used for Clients who refuse to have their information shared via HMIS unless by one of the previously mentioned Project Types. Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing and Permanent Housing with Services Providers should not enter Un-Named Clients. Other Services Only Providers should contact the HMIS Lead Agency prior to entering Un-Named Clients.

Any Provider that creates and Un-Named Client must designate a staff person to participate in the Outreach hosted teaming meetings where Un-Named Clients are discussed and make all attempts to identify the Client.

When to add an un-named Ct:

An un-named Ct should be added after the Ct has been seen at least 3 times and has been reviewed by the Outreach group. This will avoid adding Cts as un-named who are either transiently passing through or who are already in the software with their actual information.

What Data Elements need to be Present:

In order to create an Un-Named Client there are a few Data Elements that need to be present. They are:

- A name that follows the naming convention (see below)
- An Alias that includes the location of the client and a description
- Responses to as many descriptive Universal Data Elements as possible
- A photo of the client; when this is not available, a photo of the location where the Ct is most frequently seen, the Ct’s things, etc...

Naming Convention:

If the Ct’s Name is fully unknown, the Ct’s first name will be either “Jane” or “John” depending on the perceived gender of the Ct. The last name will be “Doe (MC)”. If the first name or a “known as” name is present, then the first name will be either Jane or John then a hyphen and that name. For example, if a Ct is known only as Jimmy and is perceived or known to be a male, the name would be “John-Jimmy Doe (MC)”. This allows for ease in searching for un-named Clients and aids in de-duplication.

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Naming Convention Examples:

Name Completely Unknown – First Name: *Jane/John*; Last Name: *Doe (MC)*

Partial Name Known – First Name: *Jane/John – Known Name*; Last Name: *Doe (MC)*

Partial Name Known – Last Name: *Jane/John*; Last Name: *Known Name – Doe (MC)*

If there is a Known First and Last Name, then this is not an un-named client.

Using the Alias Field:

The Alias field in HMIS should be used to record information such as a brief description of the Ct, the location that the Ct is most frequently seen, and any other distinguishing features such as the car the Ct sleeps in, the type of baggage the Ct is known to have, or traits such as “Ct is clean cut” or “Ct mumbles to themselves and rocks back and forth”. This will be displayed in the search results for quick reference.

Photograph:

All Street Outreach Providers have access to upload photographs of the Clients. Other providers who enter Un-Named Clients will have the option to add photographs upon notifying the HMIS Lead that they are using the process.

The ideal photograph would have the Ct’s face, however, this may not be feasible. The image that best allows for providers to recognize a Ct as quickly as possible and distinguish the Ct from others. Additional photographs can be added to the attachments area. The description of the photographs attached to the Ct profile should include the location and date the photo was taken and by which Project. For example, “Ct 12345 at Shady Grove Metro taken 7.15.16 by Homeless Outreach.”

Reviewing Un-Named Clients:

Periodic review of Un-Named Clients will be conducted to ensure that the overall data quality in the system does not suffer from poor data maintenance. These review sessions will be part of the Outreach Teaming process and all Emergency Shelters, Safe Havens, Street Outreach and Service Only Providers will be invited to participate. While those Providers that have created and are serving Un-Named Clients are required to attend, all of the above Project Types are encouraged to participate in an effort to find the Client’s identity.

What to do when an Un-Named Client is Identified:

Every effort will be made to find the identity of Un-Named Clients. When this happens, the Client’s name will be changed in ServicePoint. At the next Outreach Teaming specifically dedicated to the review of Un-Named Clients, the identified Clients will be reviewed so that all Providers involved with the Client are aware that they have been identified.

Resources for Identifying Un-Named Clients:

In addition to the Emergency Shelters, Street Outreach and Safe Havens Projects other entities such as Soup Kitchens, Day Programs, Police Officers, and other Community Based Organizations known to serve the Homeless can be engaged.