



# CES Family Pilot Prioritization Memo

## *Background*

The Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a strategic approach to homelessness and housing services. Its goal is to ensure a more efficient and equitable way of assessing and prioritizing individuals and families experiencing homelessness for available housing resources. HUD requires communities that receive CoC Program funding to establish and operate a Coordinated Entry System. This requirement aims to improve the coordination of resources, reduce duplication of services, and ensure that those in greatest need are prioritized for assistance.

Beginning in late summer of 2024, the Emergency Response system, led by Indianapolis family emergency shelters, began to plan and design a pilot to create additional flow for families with children in emergency shelter. The pilot was designed as a proactive response to an overall increase in families needing emergency shelter but also on the idea that piloting system changes as the community heads into the colder months could provide more space for families if an increased flow into safe permanent housing could be realized from emergency shelter.

Focusing on rapidly exiting and expanding housing pathways for families in shelter is a critical strategy in advancing the CoC racial equity goal, as Black families are the most disproportionately represented group experiencing homelessness.

The purpose of this document is to outline the pilot strategies and to document a shift in system resources to align with the pilot.

## *What problem is being solved for?*

As mentioned briefly in the background, the family emergency shelter providers have identified a lack of flow for families with children residing temporarily in emergency shelters. The Coordinated Entry System (CES) needs to adapt to the increasing family needs and pilot additional pathways for families to move into safe, affordable housing that meets the dynamic needs of those being served.

The goal of the pilot is to create additional flow for families with children residing in emergency shelter into permanent housing. The increased flow will open more shelter capacity for additional families with children.

## *Proposed changes to monthly Voucher Allocations*

The strategies identified in this memo are priorities that have been identified as pieces of an overall solution meant to be piloted and good enough to begin implementing while also engaging in continuous quality improvement, with a focus on a more cohesive approach for families experiencing homelessness. The





allocation below is broken out as 4 pathways for voucher referral through the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and comprises 30 total available Homeless Preference Vouchers (HPV) per month.

Voucher Pathway	Current Allocation	Proposed Pilot Allocation
Rapid Exit	6 per month	12 per month
Diversion	3 per month	3 per month
PSH	10 per month unless more needed	10 per month. If less used, reallocated to Rapid Exit first then Diversion
Move On	11 per month	5 per month

### Complimentary Strategies

- Emergency shelter providers will use HMIS to enroll families into shelter in HMIS and ensure CES assessments are completed.
- Increase the voucher allocation for Rapid Exit and Diversion pathways
- Prioritize “family openings” for permanent housing openings through the CES system for families in emergency shelter.
- Collaborate with the CoC Housing Voucher liaison to identify and implement efficient processes to reduce the length of time a family takes to move in using a Homeless Preference Voucher (HPV).
- Implement problem solving conversations with all families in emergency shelter
- Implementation of Padmission in collaboration with the Housing Acquisition Team (HAT) among the family Emergency Shelter providers to ensure access to multi-bedroom units for those following a Rapid Exit pathway or for those with income but need to identify affordable and safe housing.

### How would current voucher allocations be affected?

- Reduction for Move On Pathway to 5 referrals per month during the pilot period unless RRH or PSH move on strategy would prevent a household return to homelessness. In this event, the household should be staffed as urgent in case conferencing.
- The PSH pathway would still continue to be a priority allocation, however if less than 10 vouchers are utilized within a given month, the additional voucher referrals are prioritized as follows:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Rapid Exit households with at least one minor child in the family
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Diversion households with at least one minor child in the family
- Diversion pathway referrals would still provide an initial 3 referrals per month open to either single young adults or families as identified by the Diversion workgroup.
- Family shelter providers will enter 3 families at a time into AirTable in the event additional families can be referred quickly.

### Implementation Strategy

The implementation of the strategy will be executed through the Family Shelter workgroup, where success will be measured, and processes will be updated as needed. The pilot is being proposed as a 6-month process to increase the flow of families with children from emergency shelters into safe, affordable





permanent housing. Family emergency shelter providers will use HMIS and CES to enroll households to provide family housing data and to track referral outcomes.

The proposed pilot length is a 6-month period beginning on November 1, 2024, to April 30, 2025. The CES Leadership Workgroup will continue to support pilot changes and process enhancements as identified by the Family Shelter workgroup.

### *Communication Strategy*

The CES Leadership workgroup will approve the pilot memo to support the creative work being currently designed. The goal is to approve the pilot on Friday October 18<sup>th</sup> and then send to the BluePrint Council for approval.

### *Measuring Success*

To measure the pilot's success, the Family Shelter workgroup will track the following metrics (what to measure? These are ideas) to see if the flow of families out of emergency shelter has improved.

- # of family referrals for Rapid Exit and Diversion pathway vouchers
- # of families moving into permanent housing through CES
- Household size and type of families housed during pilot through CES and problem-solving
- # of families moving into permanent housing on own without an ongoing subsidy
- # of Black and African American households referred and moved into housing

### *Defining the Ask*

The CES Leadership Workgroup approved the pilot on Friday, Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>. The Blueprint Council is being asked to approve the pilot so that the Family Prioritization Pilot can begin on November 1st in alignment with the beginning of Winter Contingency.

Additionally, the CES Leadership Workgroup has asked for the support and advocacy of the Blueprint Council to assist with the engagement of the Indianapolis Housing Agency (IHA) to specifically work with CoC partners to actively reduce the time families working with the vouchers to move into permanent housing more quickly. The CES Leadership Workgroup sees IHA as a critical partner in making progress toward the Indianapolis CoC's goal of reducing Black homelessness by 35% by January 2025 as well as increasing the utilization of vouchers in the community.

