



# Feedback Project Packet

## (Defining Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Data Elements)

By requesting this packet, you have expressed interest in contributing to efforts to redefine race, ethnicity, and gender data elements within Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS). Thank you—your contributions are appreciated and will help finalize data elements that will soon be incorporated into HMIS and used by Continuums of Care (CoCs) across the country.

### Summary of “The Ask”

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is reconsidering the race, ethnicity, and gender questions that are asked at intake for homeless services and then entered into HMIS. After a deliberative process, the agency has developed proposed new questions. HUD is asking communities to test these proposed questions in the field (during November and December 2022) and then provide feedback on how the tests went.

To help communities with the feedback process, the Alliance has developed the following:

- 1) [Client Survey](#) (likely completed by intake workers at intake), and
- 2) [Intake Worker Survey](#).

Your role is to engage intake workers. They must be provided with information about the project. They should also be provided with the [link to the surveys](#).

The Alliance and its partners will process all the surveys. We will also develop a summary of the results.

### Getting Started

In getting started, it would be helpful to do a bit of background reading. We promise it won't take long. Here are some helpful resources:

- Table outlining the proposed changes to the race, ethnicity, and gender data elements (see Appendix 1 of this packet)
- [HUD Resource Page](#). This website includes information about client-centered approaches to data collection and other helpful materials.

### Decision Points

There are a few decisions you must make based on your community's capacity to contribute:

1) *How many intake workers should my CoC involve in this trial?*

As many as is feasible for your workload! The more responses we are able to receive, the better. Maybe you're thinking, "let's involve all the intake workers in our system" –that would certainly be helpful. But if that's not practical, you may decide to focus on the intake workers who are a) at a particular location, b) in a particular job category (e.g., case managers), c) working a particular shift, or d) or some other criteria that makes sense for your community.

2) *How many people experiencing homelessness will my community survey?*

Again, it would be most helpful if the trial could include all people participating in intake. However, if that's not practical, you can still participate. You can choose a random way of selecting participants. An example would be every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> person coming through intake. You should not choose non-random methods—for example, every person over 65. If you have questions about appropriate ways to limit the number of people experiencing homelessness being surveyed, please contact [research@naeh.org](mailto:research@naeh.org).

3) *How long will my CoC run the trial?*

It would be useful to run the trial and collect feedback for as long as it is practical for your community. However, all feedback must end by December 31, 2022.

4) *Which Alliance materials will my CoC use?*

It is critically important that the voices of people experiencing homelessness are reflected in the feedback process. Ideally, your CoC's intake workers will a) help clients complete the [Client Survey](#) and b) take the [Intake Worker Survey](#).

However, if administering the Client Survey is absolutely not possible, communities can still participate. Intake workers can have one-on-one or group conversations with clients. After these experiences, they can exclusively take the Intake Worker Survey.

## Logistics

Now that you have decided to contribute to this feedback project, here are some things that should happen next:

- 1) *Complete Materials Review.* You may find it helpful to finish reading this packet and the materials listed in the "Getting Started" section above.

- 2) *Resolve Decision Points.* Reflect on the above decision points and decide what is most feasible for your program and your staff. It will likely be helpful to have a meeting with program leaders, representative intake workers, and other valuable voices in your system to determine what this process will look like.
- 3) *Train Intake Workers.* You or another volunteer should train participating intake workers. But please don't feel overburdened by the word "train." A simple informational meeting can be held onsite or via Zoom.
- 4) *Begin Surveying People Experiencing Homelessness.* At the end of their normal intake process, workers will ask participants the Alliance's Client Survey questions. In doing so, they will visit [this link](#). The survey questions will pop up and answers will be entered online. If the workers absolutely prefer paper, they can make copies of the survey question page in this packet and enter the answers online at a later point.
- 5) *Converse with Clients, If Necessary.* If your community absolutely cannot administer the Client Survey, intake workers can hold a series of conversations with clients. These can be one-on-one conversations or occur in a group. In pursuing this option, workers should share the racial and gender questions and assess how clients think and feel about them. The Client Survey questions (Appendix 2) can guide those conversations.
- 6) *Intake Workers Take Survey.* After administering the [Client Survey](#) or holding conversations with clients, intake workers should take the [Intake Worker Survey](#).
- 7) *Results Compiled.* The Alliance and its partners will process the surveys and share the results.

## Important Link

One link (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Feedback-to-HUDs-Proposed-Changes-to-HMIS-Data-Elements>) takes users to **both** the Client Survey and the Intake Worker Survey. Questions asked through that link will direct users to the appropriate questions depending on whether they're answering on behalf of clients or themselves. This link also appears in several other places in this packet.