

NYC COORDINATED ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT SYSTEM (CAPS) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Coordinated Entry and CAPS?

In January of 2017, US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) instructed all Continuums of Care (CoC) to develop a Coordinated Entry (CE) system. In order to meet the HUD requirement of CE, the NYC CoC developed the **Coordinated Assessment and Placement System (CAPS)** to streamline and improve the assessment, prioritization, housing matching and placement system for homeless and at risk households within the NYC CoC geographic region. The ultimate intention of CAPS is to create a more efficient, equitable, and transparent process to access housing and services while expediting exits to permanent housing, reducing waitlists, and maximizing limited resources.

For more information on Coordinated Entry, please see HUD’s announcement [here](#). CE systems must include the following components:

1. Universal Assessment
2. Vulnerability and Prioritization
3. Referral & Placement
4. Evaluation

CAPS development is an iterative process, relying on the existing network of committed advocates, shelters, drop in centers, street outreach teams, housing providers, government agencies, tenants of HUD funded housing and applicants to inform, guide and evaluate CAPS. In order to meet both the HUD requirements and the needs of a complex web of existing systems, the first phase of CAPS will focus on CoC funded permanent supportive housing (PSH), transitional housing (TH) and rapid rehousing (RRH). Throughout 2018 and beyond, additional types of supportive and affordable housing options will be included to fulfill the long-term vision of CAPS. For more information on CAPS in NYC, please see the Policy and Procedure manual [here](#).

NYC CAPS CE and Components:

1. Universal Assessment

What is the Coordinated Assessment Survey (the Survey)?

The Survey is a universal tool to assess your client for potential housing options. The Survey asks a series of basic questions to determine potential eligibility for permanent housing options and rental subsidies.

How do I access it?

The Survey is available to all users of the PACTWeb system. Click [here](#) to access the PACTWeb system. PACTWeb is an online system used to submit and process supportive housing applications, known in NYC as the 2010e. If your agency currently submits the 2010e, you have access to the PACTWeb system, including the Survey. Current PACTWeb users include shelters, drop in centers, street outreach teams,

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supportive housing providers, hospitals, jails, prisons and more. If you don't currently use the system, please contact the HRA User Support Help Desk at the number and email below.

What does the Survey offer case workers and clients?

The Survey is an engagement tool to use with your client to develop an individualized plan to achieve permanent housing. After submitting the Survey, you receive a list of potential housing options, descriptions, application requirements and contact information for next steps. The Survey returns copies of client documents that are needed for housing placement, including Proof of Income documents, social security cards, birth certificates and photo ID. The Survey also returns prior 2010e applications and all supporting documentation (within the past 5 years).

How long does it take to complete the Survey?

The Survey takes about 30 minutes to complete and is active for 6 months.

Is the Survey mandatory?

The Survey is mandatory for all DHS single adult assessment shelters. In addition, it is mandatory before beginning a 2010e application at all DHS single adult program shelters. As CAPS expands across NYC, HRA will work directly with other PACTWeb system users to develop implementation plans to assess the need for the Survey to be completed before beginning a 2010e application.

Where can I get training or support on the Survey and the 2010e application?

For training on completing the Survey, completing a 2010e application or for help using the PACTWeb system, please contact the HRA Customized Assistance Services User Support Help Desk at hracassupport@hra.nyc.gov.

2. Vulnerability & Prioritization

What is the Standardized Vulnerability Assessment (SVA)?

The NYC Standardized Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) is applied to all approved 2010e applications submitted to HRA. The SVA uses current and past housing history, challenges impacting independent living and multi-system contacts to determine a client's level of vulnerability to remaining homeless. The SVA uses a categorical system of **High**, **Medium**, and **Low**. The SVA categories are based on an applicant's Medicaid service utilization within the past year **OR** multi-system contacts and the number of functional impairments experienced within the last 2 years.

Why do we need the SVA?

HUD requires that each CoC develop a tool to determine vulnerability for homeless and at risk households. The need for supportive housing far outpaces the supply; in order to ensure the most

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vulnerable and most at risk of continued homelessness are placed into this scarce resource the SVA is applied.

Are there additional documents required for the SVA?

There are no additional forms or requirements; the SVA is determined by real-time data feeds of system contacts and the information included in the 2010e application. When a client receives the supportive housing determination letter, they also receive an SVA summary report with an explanation of the SVA level. It is very important that staff complete the 2010e accurately to ensure the appropriate SVA designation is assigned to the client. For more information and training on the SVA please see the training [here](#).

What is the difference between vulnerability and prioritization?

Vulnerability is assessed through live data feeds of system contacts, functional impairments and Medicaid usage. Prioritization includes length of time homeless (chronicity) and other federal, state and local priorities for placing people into permanent housing.

What if I have questions on the SVA?

For questions or concerns regarding the SVA determination given to a client, you may contact the PACT reviewer listed on the client's determination letter and SVA summary report. For more information on the SVA and the criteria used to determine vulnerability, please see the SVA fact sheet [here](#).

3. Referral & Placement

How will CAPS impact my referrals?

All CoC funded units in NYC will receive referrals from the By Name List (BNL) maintained by the Coordinated Entry and Supportive Housing Placement Units at HRA. The BNL consists of all approved 2010e supportive housing applications in the PACT Web system. Referrals are made based on available vacancies, eligibility, SVA designation, and prioritization policies established by the CoC. CoC funded units will receive referrals of HIGH vulnerability and HUD chronically homeless individuals and families until all have been referred. Non CoC funded units will continue to receive a mix of HIGH, MEDIUM, and LOW referrals.

What if I don't currently get my referrals from HRA for my CoC funded programs?

The CAPS Housing Supply Workgroup is in the process of identifying all CoC funded units in NYC. Many already get their referrals from HRA; for example those that have joint CoC and NY/NY funding. For CoC funded programs matched with non-NY/NY funding, HRA is working directly with individual supportive housing providers to add the programs into the PACTWeb system.

What do I do if I have questions on my referrals?

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For questions on your referrals, please contact the appropriate Placement Entity. For more information on the Placement Entity responsible for your referrals please see the reference sheet [here](#).

4. Evaluation

How will NYC know if CAPS is working?

The CoC CAPS Steering Committee has established a Continuous Systems Improvement Committee (CSI), comprised of representatives from city and state government agencies, shelter and supportive housing providers, street outreach teams, victim services providers, youth providers and people with lived experiences. This committee will regularly review administrative and qualitative data on select Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and make recommendations to the Steering Committee for changes to the system.

How can I ask a question/get more information/provide feedback on CAPS?

At any point during the CE process, a client, housing provider or referral source can give feedback on CAPS. Anyone can contact HRA at hracassupport@hra.nyc.gov. In addition, the NYC CoC has multiple points of contact and can be reached [here](#). At any point, any user of the CAPS system can call 311 to report a question or concern and the message will be routed to the appropriate agency.