



Sample Housing and Homelessness Status Assessment Questions

In order to prevent and end homelessness, we must be able to identify every individual and family experiencing a housing crisis and assess their need for services. Mainstream programs, like schools, health care providers, and social service agencies, are often the first point of contact for people in crisis and have an important role to play in connecting people with housing needs to the local coordinated entry process so that they can be assessed and referred to programs that will put them on the path to stability.

In order to help identify people's housing needs, mainstream programs should consider adding questions about housing to their screenings, intake processes, or routine case management meetings. Mainstream programs and homelessness service providers should coordinate closely to adapt these questions for local use, including the processes and protocols for staff to follow based on the answers.

Sample Questions

The questions below are based on [those provided to TANF agencies by the Department of Health and Human Services](#):

- Where did you sleep last night?
 - In an emergency shelter, safe haven, or transitional housing project?
 - In an institution (including hospital, jail, prison, juvenile detention facility, long-term care facility, or nursing home)?
 - In a place not meant for human habitation (including in a car, unsheltered on the street or under a bridge, etc.)
 - In housing you shared with others, but did not own? If yes, could you continue to stay there – permanently or temporarily?
 - In housing you rented? If yes, did you have a subsidy?
 - In housing you owned? If yes, did you have a subsidy?
- Is there violence or conflict in the place you were staying last night? If yes, do you have another place to go and how long could you potentially stay there?
- Is your health or safety at risk in the place you were staying last night (due to situations other than violence, such as substandard housing or severe overcrowding)? If yes, do you have another safe place to go and how long could you potentially stay there?
- How long have you stayed in the place you stayed last night?
- Where were you staying prior to the place you stayed last night?

Programs might also consider using questions from a [Homelessness Screening Clinical Reminder tool](#) developed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for use with Veterans accessing health care services. Questions include:

- In the past two months, have you been living in stable housing that you own, rent, or stay in as part of a household? (“No” response indicates Veteran is positive for homelessness.)
- Are you worried or concerned that in the next two months you may NOT have stable housing that you own, rent, or stay in as part of a household? (“Yes” response indicates Veteran is positive for risk of homelessness.)