

**The Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John
(HIPSJ)
Coordinated Access Process Guide
(Version 2.0 – 2021)**

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Background	5
Coordinated Access	6
Purpose and Principles of the BNL	7
Housing First	7
Functional Zero	8
BNL Committee	8
Case Conferencing and Collaboration	9
Access to the BNL	10
BNL Eligibility	11
Adding People to the BNL	11
Access Points	12
Common Assessment and Prioritization	13
Common Assessment.....	13
VI-SPDAT Acuity Scoring	14
Training and SPDAT/VI-SPDAT Frequency	14
High Acuity + Status	14
Housing Program Availability, Matching & Placement	15
Equitable Housing Opportunity	15
Program Matching & Placement Process	16
Process Exceptions	17
Inflow/Outflow and Inactivity Policy	17

Unsheltered Outreach Coverage	18
Veteran Homelessness.....	20
Identifying Affordable Market Rental Vacancies and Landlord Procurement.....	20
Dispute Resolution	20
Appendices	22
Appendix A: HIPSJ Confidentiality Statement.....	24
Appendix B: HIPSJ Memorandum of Understanding	25
Appendix C: Case Conferencing Confidentiality Statement.....	27
Appendix D: BNL and Case Conferencing Weekly Agenda	28
Appendix E: HIPSJ Client Consent Form.....	29
Appendix F: HIPSJ Inactivity Policy.....	31
Appendix G: Coordinated Access Flowchart.....	32

Acknowledgements

The Saint John Coordinated Access Process Guide has been made possible with the support and influence of many communities across the country who have forged the path to ending homelessness in Canada. Many thanks to the City of Peterborough, City of Windsor, the City of Moncton for their willingness to share their documentation and immense expertise in the area of homelessness. Thank you to the team at Built for Zero Canada for their ongoing support in developing Coordinated Access in Saint John. These efforts are leading the charge toward ending homelessness in Canada.

1. Introduction

Saint John's By-Name List (BNL) is the city's centralized list for prioritizing housing supports and services for people experiencing homelessness. The list is one part of a community-driven shift to implement a Coordinated Access System (CAS) in Saint John. Coordinated Access is a single, standardized process to access supports and services, using a common assessment tool for people experiencing homelessness. With improved coordination and efficient intake practices, people experiencing homelessness can access appropriate supports and services more quickly.

The BNL is a real-time list of all people known to be experiencing homelessness in the Saint John area. Once individuals are added to the BNL they are prioritized based on their level of need and vulnerability. They will be referred to appropriate housing programs or community supports dedicated to resolving homelessness as those resources become available. The list is maintained by the Human Development Council (HDC).

Prioritization is determined by several factors including but not limited to length and history of homelessness, current sleeping arrangement, and a variety of demographic factors. The [Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool \(SPDAT\)](#) or the [Vulnerability Index -Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool \(VI-SPDAT\)](#) determine an individual's level of vulnerability as low, mid, or high. This allows the community to connect individuals to housing programs that will meet their specific needs.

This guide serves as the governing document that directs the BNL process in Saint John. The Guide includes:

- Background information on the development of the BNL;
- Overview of Coordinated Access
- Guiding principles for the BNL;
- Information on how to access the BNL; and
- Process for matching individuals to housing

2. Background

The By-Name List was developed as a response to homelessness in Saint John. A pilot project was born out of a collective effort between the city's emergency shelters (Outflow Men's Shelter and Coverdale Centre for Women) and other agencies such as Fresh Start Services for Women and Housing Alternatives Inc., which operate outreach services and the city's Housing First program. To take a strategic approach to homelessness, the committee requested rent supplements from the province which would be used to house people. The NB Department of Social Development agreed to provide the 15 rent supplements. Driven by the need to implement Coordinated Access in Saint John, the committee began to construct a By-Name List to capture real-time data on individuals experiencing homelessness in Saint John.

3. Coordinated Access

Coordinated Access (CA) is an approach that helps communities to build a coordinated response to homelessness. By emphasizing the intentional allocation of housing and supports CA works toward

improved outcomes. With improved coordination and efficient intake practices, people experiencing homelessness can access appropriate supports and services more quickly. Saint John has adopted Coordinated Access as a strategy to end homelessness in the city. Coordinated Access includes the following components:

- **By-Name List:** The By-Name List (BNL) is a real-time list of all people known to be experiencing homelessness in the Saint John area. Once individuals are added to the BNL they are prioritized based on their level of need and vulnerability. They will be referred to appropriate housing programs or community supports dedicated to resolving homelessness as those resources become available.
- **Community Access Points:** Community Access Points are agencies that have regular contact with people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Community Access Points are trained assessors and will add individuals and families to the By-Name List while also providing ongoing supports once individuals have been housed.
- **Common Intake:** The community utilizes a common intake process which includes a consent form, addition form and assessment tool (VI-SPDAT or SPDAT) which ensures that processes are the same across the system.
- **Access to Housing and Supports:** Agencies have dedicated specific housing and support programs to serve individuals and families who are connected to the Coordinated Access System. Community partners collaborate to prioritize individuals on the By-Name List based on the level of need and locally defined priorities and pair them with housing units and required supports.

4. Purpose and Principles of the BNL

The By-Name List (BNL) is a real-time list of all people known to be experiencing homelessness in the Saint John area and a key component of Coordinated Access. Once individuals are added to the BNL they are prioritized for housing based on their level of need and vulnerability. They are referred to appropriate housing programs or community supports dedicated to resolving homelessness as those resources become available. Increasingly, communities are acknowledging the importance of knowing people by name and understanding the context of their homelessness to efficiently and appropriately serve them. To this end, the BNL informs us, as a system, who to serve first and in what way. It is also an essential tool for tracking homeless inflow and outflow, and in advocating for more resources to support those experiencing homelessness. The information stored in the BNL serves five main purposes:

1. To know people experiencing homelessness by name and to understand their housing and support needs;
2. To use the BNL to prioritize supports based on the level of need;
3. To monitor progress toward achieving functional zero for homelessness;
4. To inform continuous improvement and to understand gaps and system pressure points;
5. To clearly demonstrate what resources are needed to functionally end homelessness in our community.

Housing First

The BNL process is grounded in the principles of Housing First: a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that centres on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing and then providing additional supports and services as needed. The five core principles of Housing First are as follows:

1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements;
2. Consumer choice and self-determination;
3. Recovery-oriented;
4. Individualized and client-driven supports; and
5. Social and community integration

Note that while these are best practices that we seek to carry out in our community and through our operations, we acknowledge that resources in housing choice are limited and we are not always able to provide housing based on consumer choice and self-determination. It is the community's hope that through advocacy and community development, this will become a reality.

Chronic Homelessness

The BNL process is driven by the need to address chronic homelessness in our communities. According to Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, chronic homelessness refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:

- They have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year.
- They have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days).

Measurement of chronicity does not include time where individuals have had access to secure, permanent housing, transitional housing or time spent in public institutions such as hospitals or correctional facilities. Individuals who are discharged into homelessness from public institutions can be considered chronically homeless if they were experiencing chronic homelessness upon entry into the public institution (Reaching Home, 2019).

Functional Zero

A primary function of creating the BNL is to reach “functional zero”. Functional Zero recognizes that homelessness and risk cannot be completely eradicated, nor can efforts undermine personal choice in some instances. The BNL will support Saint John to meet Functional Zero by tracking the inflow and outflow of homelessness and matching the most vulnerable people in our community with supports and services that are most appropriate for that person, at that time. The BNL will give community agencies the ability to provide supports and services more efficiently and effectively by:

- Implementing a system-wide entry point through coordinated access and common assessment for people experiencing homelessness with triaging to appropriate supports and services;
- Offering appropriate supports and services based on prioritizing factors; and
- Developing greater coordination within the sector.

5. BNL Committee

The BNL Committee is a group of community stakeholders that meet on a regular basis to assess available supports and services and determine when a support and/or service is available for a program match. The BNL Committee meetings foster collaboration and improve communication. As a governance body, the BNL Committee makes pertinent decisions about the BNL and Coordinated Access in Saint John. Recommended policy changes or adjustments to process are presented to the Community Advisory Board (CAB) for final approval.

In order to participate in the BNL Committee, each member is required to sign the Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) Confidentiality Statement (*Appendix A*). Each participating agency is also required to sign the HIPSJ Memorandum of Understanding (*Appendix B*). Terms of Reference are under development.

The BNL Committee meets on an ongoing basis in order to complete the following tasks:

1. Discuss current apartment vacancies for BNL clients;
2. Identify available program spaces and offer supports and services to those with the highest prioritization;
3. Provide suggestions, feedback and recommendations to the Human Development Council for the BNL process and the BNL Process Guide, as required.

6. Case Conferencing and Collaboration

Case conferencing meetings are held bi-weekly to review and case-plan for individuals and families who are at imminent risk of or experiencing homelessness. At these meetings, agency representatives work together to share information, expertise, and case planning for those experiencing homelessness and who are assessed as having many complex needs. There is also an opportunity in these meetings for housing programs to complete information-gathering for any individuals who are on the priority list for housing

It is important to understand that this body is not a referral destination, nor does it have dedicated housing or supports – that is the function of the By-Name List. Instead, it should be considered as an additional resource for workers that are supporting high-risk individuals in our community.

This group is supported by the Affordable Housing Specialist, an employee housed at the HDC. Workers submit names and details for Case Conferencing prior to the meeting via a Survey Monkey link which is emailed out one week before the meeting. Workers are only required to provide brief details about the client and their case. Case Conferencing meetings will maintain the following standardized structure to maximize efficiency: Issue, Possible Solution, Action, Responsibility. Submissions can also occur by emailing bnlupdates@sjhdc.ca. The Affordable Housing Specialist can be contacted should any questions arise prior to the meeting.

Each Case Conferencing meeting begins with a ready of the following Opening Statement to ground our work:

Opening Statement:

We are here because we care about improving the lives of our most vulnerable community members. We believe everyone has a right to live in a safe, affordable home. Each of us brings to this table a different set of experiences and opinions. Every voice is valued, and all perspectives are needed. Together, we create solutions that would not be possible alone.

We know that ending homelessness is not simply a matter of serving clients better, but about creating environments in which doing better is easier. This is the task to which we continually commit ourselves, and we hold our relationships in trust.

Case Conferencing meetings are structured as follows:

- Presentation of information and decisions made in the BNL meeting.
- Information Sharing on Pending Program Matches/Upcoming Moves (includes Vacancy, Matching and Referral Chart)
- Prevention and Diversion Clients
- Urgent/Emerging Cases
- Are there any unsheltered hotspots that we should know about?
- Is there anyone you know who is experiencing homelessness and does not want to provide their consent to be added to the BNL?
- Other Business

This structure has been implemented to facilitate the flow of information between the BNL meeting and the Case Conferencing meetings. Workers should be prepared with all relevant information on an individual in order to present a full picture of the case to program representatives who will be providing housing support. In order to participate in the Case Conferencing meeting, each member is required to sign the Case Conferencing Confidentiality Form (*Appendix C*).

BNL Committee members, in addition to referring agencies and community partners will coordinate and strategize outreach and safety plans with people on the BNL who most at risk are and have not provided consent to complete the BNL Referral

7. Access to the BNL

The BNL is managed by the Human Development Council (HDC). Access to the List is granted in a read-only format to those agencies/representatives who have signed a confidentiality form. Bi-weekly meetings of the BNL Committee are held to discuss program availability and client prioritization. Following these meetings, HDC staff will send the List to member agencies asking for client updates. Updates should be submitted by responding to the email containing the BNL and must be submitted at least 36 hours prior to the next regular BNL meeting. A copy of the weekly calendar that guides daily BNL requirements and processes is attached to each weekly agenda sent out to BNL members (*Appendix D*).

Any individual with access to client information agrees to the following (contained within the confidentiality form):

- Treat all client data as confidential, and only engage in discussion of such information as required in the course of my professional duties;

- Not release or otherwise provide access to such information to another person, agency, or body without the required prior authorization by the client and/or the HIPSJ;
- Not download or share copies of the By-Name List which they may receive via email;
- Ensure that confidential information is always kept in a secure location at all times; and
- Equally, ensure that any information they are entrusted with remains confidential and secure.

8. BNL Eligibility

Eligibility for the BNL is determined after confirming that:

1) People are currently experiencing homelessness;

- For BNL purposes, homelessness is defined as currently sleeping rough, in a shelter, transitional housing, or couch surfing. It does not include those who are at risk of homelessness.

2) Have legal status in Canada

- Having legal status means an individual is authorized to enter and remain in Canada as a temporary or permanent resident under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, as a Canadian citizen under the Citizenship Act or as a Registered Indian under the [Indian Act](#).

9. Adding People to the BNL

In order to be added to the BNL and be eligible for services, clients must have a completed BNL Intake (Appendix E) and Consent Form (Appendix F). Intake forms are completed and submitted online by trained staff at a homeless-serving agency (Primary Access Points). Intakes can also come from other agencies in the community that are affiliated with the Coordinated Access System (Secondary Access Points). Submissions are reviewed, and updates made by the BNL coordinator **within one week** if the individual has been homeless for a period of 14 days or longer. If this is the individual's first experience of homelessness, there will be a 14-day waiting period during which agencies will engage in diversion efforts with the individual in question in order to divert them from entering the Coordinated Access System. The agency/individual who submitted the intake will receive confirmation when the intake has been received and added to the BNL. The names of new intakes to the BNL will be sent to Social Development to determine document readiness before the next BNL meeting.

BNL Consent forms are sent to the BNL Coordinator/Affordable Housing Specialist or uploaded to HIFIS for tracking purposes.

Each client on the BNL will be assigned a unique identifier, generated by HIFIS (file number). If a client is not in HIFIS, they will be assigned a unique identifier designated by the BNL Coordinator (ex: 2020-28). This is intended to prevent duplication of client records and facilitate coordination between HIFIS and the BNL. In the case that a client does not consent to have their name and/or information shared on the BNL, a unique identifier will be recorded in place of their name. This will ensure the community maintains an anonymous count of people experiencing chronic homelessness without violating the client's wish to remain anonymous.

People who are added to the BNL are not guaranteed any specific support, program, or service – nor are timelines for housing placements ever certain. This means that service providers in the community will continue to support and engage people added to the BNL until they are matched with appropriate supports and services (e.g. a housing program to meet their needs). People who are ineligible for the BNL or those waiting to receive housing and supports through the BNL can receive supports from other agencies and/or programs, including shelters, drop-in centres, community agencies etc.

10. Access Points

Community Access Points are identified agency locations in Saint John who have regular contact with people who are at risk of or who are experiencing homelessness and have been trained to assess individuals' and families' needs. All agencies at the BNL table act as access points where individuals may have an intake completed. Agencies are divided into Primary and Secondary Access Points. Primary Access Points are agencies that work with any individuals who need to enter the Coordinated Access System. Secondary Access Points are agencies that work with and refer their specific clients to the BNL. The following agencies are considered designated Access Points in the Coordinated Access System:

Primary Access Points

- Coverdale Shelter for Women
- Outflow Shelter for Men
- Fresh Start Services
- Housing Alternatives

Secondary Access Points:

- New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL)
- Teen Resource Centre
- Youth Unbound
- YES Program
- Correctional Service Canada

- Elizabeth Fry Society
- John Howard Society
- Veteran’s Affairs Canada
- Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP)
- Hestia House

This list is subject to change as progress on Coordinated Access continues in the community. If an organization cannot complete a BNL intake, the individual should be directed or referred to one of the Primary Access points.

11. Common Assessment and Prioritization

Once a person has been added to the BNL, they are prioritized to be considered for available program spaces and housing units. In Saint John, prioritization is determined based on the 8 factors listed below. The BNL Committee prioritizes program offers based on overall prioritization score in addition to specific program eligibility.

Prioritization Factors

1. Chronic Homelessness;
2. Current sleeping arrangement;
3. Age;
4. Indigenous Status;
5. Newcomer Status;
6. LGBTQIA2S+;
7. Pregnancy;
8. Mental or physical health issue;
9. Critical Safety Risk;
10. Substance Use Disorder;
11. Risky Behavior

Priority criteria are assigned a value based on an equitable voting process which occurs annually as part of a quality assurance and data review process. The individual with the highest score on the list is the highest priority for housing. A housing match is determined using the highest priority score, the level of

acuity and program eligibility. Once these criteria are determined using the BNL, the 5-highest priority clients on the list are referred to the appropriate program for matching.

For example: An individual with a score of 28 (Prioritization Factors) + High Acuity (SPDAT Score) would be matched and referred to the Housing First team as a potential match.

Prioritization factors will be re-visited by the BNL Committee on a periodic basis to determine the most accurate indicators for the community based on available data. Adjustments to these priorities will be made based on the data collected through the BNL.

Common Assessment

Saint John has adopted the [Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool \(SPDAT\)](#) as the community's common assessment tool. This is used to determine acuity and obtain information on the type - and level - of supports required by an individual experiencing homelessness. [The Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool \(VI-SPDAT\)](#) may also be used as a triage tool prior to completing the full SPDAT. Note that someone's score on the SPDAT or VI-SPDAT does not directly impact their prioritization on the BNL but rather indicates the level of supports they will require. For example, if a person obtains a score of 4 -7 on the VI-SPDAT they will fall into the priority group for a Rapid Rehousing program. These programs are designed for individuals who require low to moderate wrap-around supports. A score of 8 or higher on a VI-SPDAT will have someone assigned to the priority group for a Housing First program. These programs are tailored for individuals who require more intensive moderate to high supports. Individuals who have not yet completed a full assessment but who have consented to be on the BNL will still be included on the list. Assessments should be completed with the individual within one week of being added to the BNL.

VI-SPDAT Acuity Scoring:

- **Low Score (0-3)** – No formal housing intervention: Individuals who do not require intensive supports but may still benefit from access to affordable housing, housing listings and community-level resources to solve their own homelessness.
- **Medium Score (4-7)** – Rapid Re-Housing: Individuals or families with moderate health, mental health and/or behavioural health issues, but who are likely to be able to achieve housing stability with medium to short term access to financial and/or support services.
- **High Score (8+)** – Permanent Supportive Housing: Individuals or families who need permanent housing with ongoing access to services and case management to remain stably housed.

Training and SPDAT/VI-SPDAT Frequency

Regular quarterly SPDAT training will be coordinated by the HDC in collaboration with designated SPDAT trainers. SPDATs and VI-SPDATs will be regularly monitored and reviewed and “refresher training” may be required at any time to continue the use and administration of the VI-SPDAT. To maintain fidelity, processes and procedures will be implemented to oversee the administration of VI-SPDATs.

The full SPDAT or VI-SPDAT assessment will be completed with individuals and families who are connected to any housing or intensive support programs. SPDATs will be completed on a regular basis in accordance with OrgCode’s recommendations as follows:

- For individuals or families who remain on the active BNL after 90 days without housing
- At point of move-in to housing
- 30 days post-move-in
- Every 3 months following unless something has changed

Referring agencies will be encouraged to re-connect with individuals to gain more information about their barriers to housing and work together with community partners to support the resolution of identified barriers.

12. High Acuity + Status

After a year and a half of gathering data on homelessness in Saint John, the community has determined that there are gaps in services and housing supports for some of the most vulnerable in our community. Some individuals who are in the High Acuity category have been prioritized for housing repeatedly, but the current supports offered through Housing First models do not meet their needs. In an effort to continue gathering this information and highlight these specific needs, Saint John has implemented a process wherein individuals whose needs are not being met by the current forms of housing in Saint John are designated as High Acuity + on the By-Names List. When individuals are moved into this category on the BNL, they will no longer be on the priority. However, the names on this list will be reviewed on a bi-monthly basis at Case Conferencing meetings to determine whether they should remain in the High Acuity + category.

The following criteria should be met to move someone into the High Acuity + category:

- i. Individuals will have a High Acuity score and be Chronically Homeless
- ii. They must have been on the BNL for 6+ months
- iii. Individuals will have been passed over for housing 2 + times
- iv. They must have either a MH or Substance Use challenge

- v. Individuals will be discussed at Case Conferencing related to additional barriers they face to housing.

13. Housing Program Availability, Matching & Placement

BNL Committee members will report available program spaces prior to – or during each BNL meeting. Program matches will be determined based on individual programs' eligibility criteria and BNL prioritization. The 5 names with the highest prioritization on the BNL that also meet an agency's eligibility criteria will be provided to said agency for program matching. The agency will then select a client from the prioritized group to match to housing. Community partners will continue to be responsible for housing support and service coordination, case management and engagement with people added to the BNL until such time as an alternate community partner assumes that responsibility. Community partners may also stay involved with the individual to assist in providing wrap-around supports for the individual.

At no particular time shall a person be screened out of the BNL due to perceived barriers related to supports and services, including but not limited to: too little or no income, active or a history of substance use disorder, mental health issues, domestic violence history, resistance to receiving services, the type or extent of disability-related services or supports that are needed, history of evictions or poor credit, lease violations or history of not being a leaseholder, indigenous status, sexual orientation, or criminal record.

Equitable Housing Opportunity

Every individual on the BNL should have equitable access to housing opportunities. To ensure equity, BNL Coordinator will monitor the names on the list in order to identify whether an individual is repeatedly prioritized without being chosen for housing. If an instance arises wherein an individual continues to be prioritized without being offered housing, the individual's name will be discussed at the BNL table. For example, if an individual who is scoring 'High Acuity' has repeatedly arrived at the top of the prioritized names has not been offered housing or support, the name will be brought forward at the BNL table for consideration and discussion.

The BNL Committee will consider the following criteria when an individual is prioritized several times without being chosen for housing:

1. Has this individual been previously evicted? If so, considerations will be made around placing them with another landlord and providing the appropriate support to ensure their success.
2. The BNL Coordinator will reach out to the housing program that has received the referred name to discuss what strategies can be implemented for this individual to be housed.
3. Considerations will be made regarding intensive case management of this individual and barriers to housing will be identified and addressed.

Program Matching & Placement Process

1. Following discussion related to governance and decision-making, the BNL Coordinator will ask the table to identify housing program spaces and discuss any available housing units or rent supplements;
2. The BNL Coordinator will filter the List to prioritize only those who are eligible for the available program space (eligibility factors may include age, gender, and acuity level, depending on the program);
3. Five names will be taken from the top of the List, which is ordered in accordance with the agreed-upon prioritization. These names will be forwarded by the BNL Coordinator to the agency operating the Housing Program in question;
4. Case Managers will collect pertinent data on BNL clients during the case conferencing meetings to determine best fit for the program;
5. The housing program will identify an individual/family from the list provided and connect with them to ensure that they are eligible for the housing program (e.g., conduct follow-up assessment, interview, etc.);
6. Once a program match has been identified, the referring agency will conduct a warm transfer to the new agency offering a program space within two business days;
7. The Agency will offer the individual/family available housing and support services
8. If the individual or family accepts the placement, appropriate steps will be taken to create a case plan, complete a referral agreement with the landlord, where appropriate, and connect the individual or family to other services;
9. Should the individual or family not accept the offered housing or supports, they will remain on the BNL without penalty and the organization will select another name from the original list of 5 to offer the housing and/or supports;
10. If a selected individual or family cannot be found within two weeks to offer supports and services, the agency will select another person from the priority group to contact.

14. Process Exceptions

The BNL Committee is charged with matching prioritized individuals to available units and housing support programs. On occasion, there will be cases which arise wherein an individual does not meet the criteria for the BNL because they are not currently homeless. However, the individual may require support in order to be diverted from homelessness through appropriate supports and a housing unit. These situations will be brought to the table by the community organization supporting the individual. The committee has the discretion to determine whether prevention and diversion strategies should be implemented in order to divert the individual from homelessness and the BNL.

These cases should be submitted to the BNL Coordinator prior to the BNL meeting and will be considered exceptions to the process involving extenuating circumstances. Exception cases must meet the following criteria:

1. The individual becoming homeless will impact the health and safety of others in the community.
2. The individual becoming homeless will create a strain on community organizations.
3. The individual will become homeless within the next 60 days.
4. A logical plan is presented which will mitigate these criteria.

The following are instances where exceptions to the process may be considered:

- An individual has not been added to the BNL but is facing eviction or housing termination and there are outstanding factors that the BNL Committee determines warrant prioritization for an available unit and support.
- An individual who had previously been prioritized and housed from the BNL but is facing housing unit termination, transfer or an instance where an individual may benefit from transferring to another service provider.

Unanimous consent from all participating members of the BNL table is required to move forward with exceptions.

It should be noted that process exception cases are not an opportunity to advocate for clients who are on the BNL to acquire housing, they are strictly exceptions to the process.

15. Inflow/Outflow and Inactivity Policy

The BNL is an essential tool for tracking homeless inflow and outflow. Inflow represents the number of individuals that have been newly identified as homeless, returned from a housing placement, or returned from inactive status. Outflow reflects the number of individuals that have been moved into permanent housing or become inactive (e.g., moved out of the city, become incarcerated, or have had

no contact with homelessness services). Saint John's inactivity policy (*Appendix G*) outlines the conditions that must be met to mark an individual as "inactive". This is important to ensuring the BNL remains a real-time priority list and that the matching and housing support process can be completed as quickly as possible. Without an inactivity policy, the Coordinated Access System can experience delays in its referral procedures due to the time spent searching for households in the community who they have not been able to reach through multiple attempts, often for many months.

16. Unsheltered Outreach Coverage

The BNL collects and tracks data of those in the community who are sleeping rough or in any area not designated for human habitation. To assure suitable outreach coverage and robust data collection, the community tracks information on unsheltered hotspots in the area at bi-weekly Case Conferencing meetings where community service providers are asked the following question:

- "Are there any new unsheltered hotspots that require outreach coverage?"

This information is then passed on to our volunteer Outreach worker (Fresh Start) and the youth-serving Outreach Coordinator (Youth Unbound) who are both connected with the CAS.

As an additional measure, a second question is discussed at bi-weekly Case Conferencing meetings wherein community and outreach workers are asked:

- "Is there anyone who is experiencing homelessness that does not want to provide their consent?"

Information on individuals who do not provide their consent is then added to the BNL using a unique identifier. Non-consenting individuals are included in our overall homeless count. Unsheltered people who DO provide their consent are prioritized for housing based on the pre-determined prioritization criteria designated by the community.

17. Veteran Homelessness

Saint John is amongst several other communities across Canada seeking to end Veteran homelessness. According to Veterans Affairs Canada, a **veteran** includes any former member of the Canadian Armed Forces as well as former members of an Allied Forces (e.g., U.S./U.K

veteran), former members of the RCMP, former Reservists, Veteran Civilians, and former Canadian Rangers.

A **Veteran experiencing homelessness** includes those who do not have stable, permanent, appropriate housing or who are without the ability to acquire secure housing. With guidance from Built for Zero, the aim is to reach Functional Zero Veteran Homelessness:

- A community has ended veteran homelessness when the number of veterans experiencing homelessness is less than the number of veterans a community has proven it can house in a month (BFZ, 2020).

Veterans can be referred to the BNL through designated CA Access Points or specific veteran-serving agencies: VAC and NB Command (all Provincial Legions). To work toward an end to Veteran homelessness, Saint John collects data on homeless Veterans in the city including those who are sleeping rough in the region's hotspots. Based on advice from veteran organizations and veterans themselves, the following language is used in the BNL Intake Process to assure accurate data collection:

“Has this client served or completed basic training for the Canadian Armed Forces or another country’s military? Were they ever an officer for the RCMP?”

After data is submitted through the BNL Intake Process, Veteran Status is confirmed via the local Veteran’s Affairs Canada (VAC) office. Once Veteran Status has been confirmed individuals on the list are then referred to NB Command (for Provincial support and resources) or VAC (for Federal support and resources) and prioritized for housing placements through the BNL process. Should a Veteran experiencing homelessness arrive at the Legion under NB Command, they will be referred to VAC for a BNL intake. VAC and the Legion make updates to the BNL on Veterans who have been added to the system.

Confirmation of Veteran status is also tracked on the BNL. If a Veteran referral is submitted to the BNL, they are asked to sign both a Form 520 (Consent for Veterans Affairs Canada to Disclose Personal Information to Third Parties) or a Form 928 (Consent for Veterans Affairs Canada to Collect Personal Information from Third Parties) to provide their consent to confirm Veteran status. This information is included in monthly reporting to Build for Zero.

18. Identifying Affordable Market Rental Vacancies and Landlord Procurement

Within Saint John's CA System, the community effectively identifies affordable market rental vacancies. Fresh Start Services for Women Inc., one of the community Access Points, the agency which operates a formalized Homelessness Prevention Program, creates a monthly list of all market rental vacancies and willing landlords. The available rental list is provided to all individuals in need of housing to divert people from the homeless serving system and to make affordable housing options accessible.

The Affordable Housing Specialist is responsible for landlord engagement for BNL purposes including procuring willing landlord partners who are open to applying a Provincial rental subsidy to their rental units. Subsidized units are secured and brought forward to the BNL table to be matched to the appropriate supports and resources (Matching and Referral). The Affordable Housing Specialist then sends the priority list to the designated Housing Program, they determine a match and proceed with a housing offer.

It is part of the Affordable Housing Specialist's role to participate in ongoing landlord engagement and consistently seek out opportunities for affordable housing placements for BNL clients. This is done through ongoing relationship building with landlords and mediating potential issues that arise between a landlord and a tenant by referring the landlord to the tenant's support network (inclusive of BNL Housing Programs) and offering financial support where required.

19. Dispute Resolution

If a systemic or case-specific dispute arises, the following procedures will be used to resolve them.

Examples of case-specific disputes:

- Accuracy of assessment score
- Prioritization on the BNL
- Program placement

Disputes of this nature will be addressed using the following steps:

- a. Members of the BNL Committee will discuss the issue at the next meeting and seek resolution;
- b. If a resolution is not achieved, the BNL Committee Chair and BNL Coordinator will consult their Coordinated Access advisors and/or Built for Zero Team to recommend a solution.

Examples of systemic disputes:

- Administrative or procedural differences
- Differences in service delivery, principles, or politics

Disputes of this nature will be addressed using the following steps:

- a. Staff will identify the nature of the dispute and discuss with their manager
- b. Managers identified as part of the dispute will discuss the issue to seek a resolution
- c. If a resolution is not achieved, the BNL Coordinator will consult their Coordinated Access advisors and/or Built for Zero Team to recommend a strategy to resolve the issue.

Inquiries or concerns regarding BNL status & process may be forwarded to BNLupdates@sjhdc.ca.

Appendix A

Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) Confidentiality Statement

I _____, of _____
(Name of organization)

am aware that as a service provider/member/guest of the Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) I will have access to confidential information for the purposes of assessing the appropriateness of applications for housing or support services. I agree to protect the privacy of applicants/clients and abide by the privacy policies of my organization with respect to access, storage, and sharing of client information.

In particular, I will:

- Treat all client data as confidential, and only engage in discussion of such information as required in the course of my professional duties;

- Not release or otherwise provide access to such information to another person, agency, or body without the required prior authorization by the client and/or the HIPSJ;
- Not download or share copies of the By-Name List which I may receive via email;
- Ensure that confidential information is kept in a secure location at all times; and
- Equally, ensure that any information I am entrusted with remains confidential and secure.

I acknowledge a responsibility to report any instances where privacy has been breached or confidentiality appears to be misused to cover actions that might be fraudulent, unethical, or criminal in their intent. I accept that the HIPSJ will treat such reports in confidence and will protect me from negative sanctions if such reporting was honestly taken without malicious intent on my part. I also understand that improper disclosure of client information may be cause for the HIPSJ to recommend my removal from the committee.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B

Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) ***Memorandum of Understanding***

Collaborative Agreement between agencies participating in the Saint John By-Name List and the Human Development Council as Community Entity.

Purpose

Parties signing this MOU agree to enter into a collaborative agreement for the purpose of providing people who are at risk of or are currently experiencing homelessness with supports and services through a prioritized list.

Parties signing this MOU agree to participate in the Saint John By-Name List (BNL) and to comply with the following standards:

- To comply with any and all applicable laws and regulations concerning the confidentiality of client records, files or communication in addition to the terms of this agreement
- Collaborate to address process issues for the purpose of evaluating service efficiency and effectiveness
- Provide all program eligibility criteria to the BNL Committee
- Participate in BNL Committee meetings and provide client information to the BNL Coordinator, as required
- Abide by the policies and procedures of the BNL
- Meet with BNL Coordinator and other Committee members when requested to discuss concerns and issues around the BNL

For agencies completing referrals:

- Attend required training on the BNL Process Guide, referral process and administration of the SPDAT/VI-SPDAT
- Administer VI-SPDAT to clients attempting to access the BNL
- Record VI-SPDAT scores in the BNL referral form
- Be knowledgeable of data confidentiality and consumer confidentiality rights and be able to explain these rights to each person assessed
- Obtain a signed consent form for each client whose information is being added to the BNL
- Update signed consent forms as required to maintain accurate documentation
- Refer people who are ineligible for homeless assistance services to other, more appropriate community resources

For agencies that receive BNL referrals:

- Accepting and promptly acting on client referrals through the BNL
- Participating in BNL Committee meetings requested to resolve issues or concerns regarding program matches/offers
- Abide by consumer eligibility and acceptance determination decision
- Comply with fair housing legal requirements in all housing transactions and tenant selection plans and procedures

Termination of MOU

This MOU becomes effective upon execution of all parties and will remain in effect unless terminated by one of the following:

1. Upon 60 days of written notice by one party to the others;
2. Upon mutual consent of all parties;

3. Upon good cause of any party if the other parties fail to comply with the terms of the MOU. However, prior to any such unilateral termination of good cause, the party wishing to terminate must give the other parties written notice of the alleged non-compliance and 180-day opportunity to cure;
4. Upon filing of bankruptcy or liquidation of any party
5. Upon termination, the confidentiality clauses of this agreement shall remain in effect and binding upon the parties.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) Case Conferencing Confidentiality Statement

I _____, of _____
(Name of organization)

am aware that as a service provider/member of the Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) and a participant in case conferencing meetings I will have access to confidential information for the purposes of assessing the appropriateness of applications for housing or support services. I agree to protect the privacy of applicants/clients and abide by the privacy policies of my organization with respect to access, storage, and sharing of client information.

In particular, I will:

- Treat all client data as confidential, and only engage in discussion of such information as required in the course of my professional duties;
- Not release or otherwise provide access to such information to another person, agency, or body without the required prior authorization by the client and/or the HIPSJ;
- Not download or share copies of the By-Name List which I may receive via email;
- Ensure that confidential information is kept in a secure location at all times; and
- Equally, ensure that any information I am entrusted with remains confidential and secure.

I acknowledge a responsibility to report any instances where privacy has been breached or confidentiality appears to be misused to cover actions that might be fraudulent, unethical, or criminal in their intent. I accept that the HIPSJ will treat such reports in confidence and will protect me from negative sanctions if such reporting was honestly taken without malicious intent on my part. I also understand that improper disclosure of client information may be cause for the HIPSJ to recommend my removal from case conferencing meetings.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D

BNL & Case Conferencing Weekly Agenda

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	HDC sends a reminder email to get updates in by the end of the day.	Agenda is sent out for the Case Conferencing meeting (including which clients will be discussed)	Bi-weekly BNL Meeting @ 11 am <i>Looking at units and prioritizing individuals to be housed. Focused on process and governance.</i>	
	Case Conferencing lead from each agency submits update form (includes BNL updates,	Case Conferencing reps from each agency meet with their team to	Weekly Case Conferencing @ noon <i>Discussing clients who are "stuck" or complex cases. Focused on how to best</i>	

	Case Conferencing clients, and program spaces).	identify any updates that should be brought forward at Thursday's meeting.	<i>provide supports through collaboration.</i>	
--	-------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------	--

Appendix E

Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) Client Consent

I _____ understand that this agency is part of the Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ), a group of agencies working together to reduce homelessness in Saint John. As such,

- I consent to my personal information being shared with other agencies in HIPSJ through the use of a secure database called HIFIS in order to best serve my needs.**
 - I recognize that only authorized staff who have access to this database will be able to view my personal information.
 - I have the right to see a current list of agencies using this shared database if I so choose.
- I consent to be added to Saint John's By Name List, a list of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and in need of housing and/or support services, and to having my**

personal information, relevant to my housing situation, discussed by members of HIPSJ in order to help connect me with housing or other supports.

- I have the right to see a current list of agencies who will be discussing my information, and ask for exceptions if I so choose.
- Exceptions _____

I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- If I choose not to sign this form, I am still eligible to receive services;
- I can change my mind and withdraw consent to share my information at any time by submitting a written request to this agency;
 - Note: If you do withdraw your consent, you understand that information already in the HIFIS will remain in the system, but no future information will be collected for the shared computer system.
- I have a right to see a copy of my client record, and ask for changes, upon request;
- I have been informed and understand that some non-identifiable information will be shared with the Government of Canada, purely for reporting or research purposes.

Client (please print name): _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Agency: _____

Staff (please print name): _____

Signature: _____

Appendix F

Homelessness Information Partnership Saint John (HIPSJ) Inactivity Policy

Background

To ensure an efficient assessment and referral process, referral sources and destinations must have the ability to contact and connect with households as soon as a housing opportunity is available. Without an inactivity policy, the Coordinated Access System can experience delays in its referral procedures due to the time spent searching for households in the community who they have not been able to reach through multiple attempts, often for many months. Due to this loss of contact, it is hard for the system to determine whether these households are still in need of housing.

Policy

If a household has had no contact with any service providers within the HIPSJ AND they have had no shelter stays in HIFIS for the past **2 months (60 days)**, the household will be removed from the Active Homeless List and placed on the Inactive List. We review our By-Name List bi-weekly and flag when people have not been seen for 30 days. These people are flagged with street outreach and other Homeless-specific Providers (HSP) to watch for and to search as appropriate with other known locations, contacts, hospital etc. If a household on the inactive list makes contact with the homeless system including outreach workers, drop-in centers, shelters, etc., they are moved from the inactive list to the active list and can be referred to housing openings once they have fully re-engaged with the system which may include re-assessment of their vulnerability.

Appendix G

SAINT JOHN'S COORDINATED ACCESS SYSTEM

Coordinated Access (CA) is a process through which individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, are provided access to housing and support services, based on a standardized intake procedure, assessment of need, and matching and referral to housing.



