

### 3.6 Non-Discrimination

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Coordinated Entry System (CES) provides fair, equal, and non-discriminatory access to housing and services for all participants, regardless of their membership in any Civil Rights protected class. The policy outlines that while the CES may collect information about participants' membership in protected classes for documentation purposes, such information will not be used to restrict, limit, or direct participants to specific referral options. It also emphasizes compliance with federal laws that govern non-discrimination in housing and related services.

#### **FORMS**

There are no forms related or required for this Policy

#### **POLICY**

The CES may collect and document participants' membership in Civil Rights protected classes but will not consider membership in a protected class as justification for restricting, limiting, or steering participants to particular referral options.

CES has been designed to offer a fair, equal access and low barrier Housing First approach. All participants within the CES will have equal access to all programs regardless of race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, parenthood, creed, veteran's status, veteran's disability, or physical or mental disability. The following laws govern non-discrimination policies within the CoC and CES:

- The Fair Housing Act prohibits discriminatory housing practices based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits public entities, which includes State and local governments, and special purpose districts, from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in all their services, programs, and activities, which include housing, and housing-related services such as housing search and match assistance.
- Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits private entities that own, lease, and operate places of public accommodation, which include shelters, social services establishments, and other public accommodations providing housing, from discriminating on the basis of disability.

Eligibility for CES will not be determined or affected by:

- Too little or no income
- History or active substance abuse
- Domestic violence history
- Resistance to receiving services
- The type or extent of disability-related services or support needed
- History of evictions or poor credit
- Lease violations or leaseholder history
- Criminal record

Data from the assessment process will not be collected to discriminate or prioritize households for housing and services on a protected basis, such as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, familial status, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender, identity, or marital status.

If an individual or household feels they are being discriminated against based upon any of the previously mentioned factors, they may file a complaint utilizing the grievance policy. Any complaint filed will not affect the individual's place within CES

### KEY TAKE AWAYS

- **Non-Discrimination Principle:** Membership in a Civil Rights protected class, such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or familial status, will not be used to

justify restrictions or limitations in CES referral options, ensuring that all participants have equal access to available housing and services.

- **Inclusive Access:** The CES is designed to operate under a Housing First approach, offering fair, equal, and low-barrier access to all participants, regardless of factors like income, substance use history, disability, or criminal record.
- **Compliance with Federal Laws:** The policy adheres to multiple federal laws, including the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which collectively prohibit discrimination in housing and related services based on various protected characteristics.
- **Equal Treatment in Eligibility:** Eligibility for CES will not be determined or influenced by participants' income, substance use, domestic violence history, disability needs, eviction history, or criminal record, ensuring that all participants are treated fairly and equitably.
- **Grievance Process:** Participants who believe they have been discriminated against based on any protected characteristic may file a complaint using the established grievance policy, without fear of it affecting their status within the CES. This provides a safeguard for participants' rights within the system.