

DEFINITION AND CRITERIA FOR "RISK OF HOMELESSNESS"

Purpose: This document aims to establish guidelines for determining when an individual served by a regional center meets the standard of "risk of homelessness," enabling rent, mortgage, or household expense payments as authorized under AB 3291 for those enrolled in or entering Supported Living Services. The following criteria draws on federal definitions from the McKinney-Vento Act and HUD's Homeless Definition to address the unique needs of individuals served by Regional Centers.

Definition of Risk of Homelessness

An individual is considered at risk of homelessness when they face circumstances that could imminently result in the loss of stable housing, posing a health and safety risk for themselves or others. These include:

1. Literally Homeless Conditions (adapted from HUD Category 1)

- Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- Living in a public or private place not intended for human habitation, such as, but not limited to, cars, parks, camping grounds, or abandoned buildings;
- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- Are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Are abandoned in hospitals; or
- Are staying in temporary arrangements like motels or shelters funded by charitable or government organizations ([McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless](#))([HUD Homeless Definition](#)).

2. Imminent Risk of Homelessness (adapted from HUD Category 2)

- Likely to lose their primary nighttime residence within 14 days for example due to eviction, foreclosure, or unsafe conditions; or
- No subsequent residence has been identified; and lacking alternative housing options or resources/support networks to secure permanent housing ([HUD Homeless Definition](#)).

3. Unstable Housing Arrangements (based on McKinney-Vento)

- Sharing housing due to loss of residence, economic hardship, or similar reasons; or
- Living in substandard conditions that do not meet basic safety or habitability standards ([McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless](#)); or
- Living in overcrowded housing (more than two people per bedroom); forced moves (current or past-year formal or informal eviction); or multiple moves (living in three or more places in the past year); or
- Living in unaffordable housing (client or household is paying more than 30% of their income on rent/mortgage)

4. Transitions and Institutional Discharges

- Exiting an institution (hospital, correctional facility) after a stay of 90 days or less (**HUD Homeless Definition**); or
- Aging out of foster care or transitioning from other state systems without a housing plan.

5. Health and Behavioral Risks

- Serious mental illness, substance abuse, or severe behavioral health challenges.
- Physical health challenges, like multiple chronic conditions or severe mobility impairments.
- Any individual served who:
 1. Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence;
 2. Has no other residence; and
 3. Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing

Determination Process

Steps for Certification:

1. Assessment of Housing Instability

- Collect and document evidence of instability, including eviction notices, utility shutoff warnings, or unsafe housing conditions.
- Consider reports from service coordinators, caregivers, provider support agencies, or medical professionals.

2. Health and Safety Evaluation

- Confirm that continued instability directly endangers the individual's health or safety.

Documentation and Recordkeeping

- The SLS agency should assist the individual in obtaining the needed supporting documentation
- To promote transparency and compliance, documentation may include but may not be limited to:
 - Specific housing risk factors;
 - Evidence of imminent housing loss or current homelessness (ie. eviction notice); and/or
 - Details of any alternative housing solutions explored.