

Maine's HMIS Notice of Privacy Practices

The Gathering Place (TGP) and other service providers, homeless agencies, and social service agencies, including street outreach, shelters, and housing programs, collect personal information about the people we serve in a computer system called Maine's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Why do we collect this information?

- So, we know how many people we serve and the types of people we serve at our Agency and in the state.
- So, we all understand what people need and can plan services to meet those needs.
- To satisfy U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requirements.

Who can see information that is in Maine's HMIS?

- People who work for this Agency will use it to help provide services to you or your family.
- Other agencies like this Agency provide services and have received permission from you to see your information. The agencies that participate in Maine's HMIS may change from time to time.
- Auditors or funders who have legal rights to review the work of this Agency, such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and other state or local government entities.
- Organizations that run, administer, and work on the HMIS system. When these organizations work on the system, they may see information about you. They are required to protect your confidential information.
- The law says we have to report physical or sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults. If we have cause to suspect that there is abuse or neglect in your household, we must report it to Child or Adult Protection.
- We may disclose your information to protect the health or safety of you or others as required by law.
- Others as required by law, including officials with a valid subpoena, warrant, or court order. We will not disclose your information for any other use unless you permit us in writing.

How is your privacy protected?

- All users of HMIS data must sign an agreement to protect your privacy and comply with state and federal laws and policies before seeing any information.
- The HMIS computer program used for this purpose has industry standard security safeguards and protocols and is updated regularly to meet these security requirements.

What are your rights?

- **If you do not want your name, social security number, or date of birth entered in HMIS, tell the intake worker.** This Agency will **not** refuse to help you if you refuse to authorize TGP to share your information with other providers/agencies through HMIS. However, federal and state regulations may require limited data collection for funding purposes.
- You have the right to request a copy of Maine's HMIS information about you.
- You have the right to correct mistakes in HMIS information about you.
- If you think this Agency or Maine's HMIS violated your privacy rights, you have the right to complain or appeal. Ask a staff person for a complaint and appeal form.