**COORDINATED ASSESSMENT PLAN**

**Regional Committee Plan**
Regional Committees within the NC Balance of State CoC (NC BoS) will design coordinated assessment plans using this form. Plans are due to the Coordinated Assessment Council of the BoS Steering Committee in fall 2014 (firm deadline to be established once ESG and CoC application timelines are known).

Regional Committee: Foothills Homeless Coalition

Counties served: Alexander, Caldwell and McDowell

Elected Coordinated Assessment Lead: Sharon Poarch (main) and Sharon Osborne (alternate)

Regional Lead: Sharon Poarch (Sharon Osborne - alternate)

**ACCESS TO SYSTEM**
Regional Committees within the NC BoS will use one of two approved coordinated assessment models. Please indicate your Regional Committee model below (choose one):

\_\_\_\_ Designated agency(s) administer both emergency response screening and VI-SPDAT assessment tool and make program referrals for the system

\_X\_ All agencies will uniformly administer both emergency response screening and VI-SPDAT assessment tool and make program referrals

**List of agencies administering emergency response screening**

Daulton Outreach Center, Inc. (Kwanzaa Family Inn)

Caldwell County Yokefellow (Lenoir Emergency Outreach Shelter (LEOs)

McDowell Mission Ministries (Friendship Home, John Thompson Center)

Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. (serving Caldwell and Alexander counties)

Smoky Mountain LME/MCO

**Agencies acting as Coordinated Assessment sites within Regional Committee**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agency** | **Emer. Response Screening?** | **VI-SPDAT** | **# Staff for CA** | **Time/week for CA** | **Schedule** |
| Dulatown Outreach Center, Inc. (Kwanzaa Family Inn) (Serving surrounding counties) | Yes | Families & individuals | 1 | Mon-Fri, 9 am to 6 pm  | Mon-Fri, 9 am to 6 pm |
| Caldwell County Yokefellow (Lenoir Emergency Outreach Shelter) (Serving Caldwell Co.) | Yes | Families & individuals | 2 | Yokefellow Mon, Tues, Thurs Fri 9-12 and 1-3:30LEOs Mon-Sun 3:30 – 8:30 | Yokefellow Mon, Tues, Thurs Fri 9-12 and 1-3:30LEOs Mon-Sun 3:30 – 8:30 |
| Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. (serving Caldwell and Alexander counties) | Yes | Families & individuals | 19 | 24/7/365 | 24/7/365 |
| McDowell Mission Ministries (Friendship Home) (serving McDowell County) | Yes | Families & individuals | 2 | Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm  | Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm |
| McDowell Mission Ministries (John Thompson Center) (serving McDowell County) | Yes | Families & individuals | 1 | Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm  | Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm |
| Smoky Mountain LME/MCO (serving McDowell, Caldwell and Alexander Counties) | Yes | Families & individuals | 2 | Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm  | Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm |

**How will individuals access homeless programs in your community? (Should correspond to diagram for individual access in Appendix C)**

A homeless individual or family will access one of the agencies listed above. An attempt will be made to divert the individual or family from the homeless system. Implementing the emergency response screening questionnaire will be the first step. If the screening reveals a domestic violence situation, the process will stop and a referral will be made to domestic violence resources. (Assessors for participating agencies will be trained in the service criteria for the DV/SA emergency shelters intake; i.e. a recent event or situation creating a need emergency shelter in a secure facility.) If a non-domestic violence situation, the screening will continue, again with the goal being to divert the individual or family from the homeless system.

See attached diagram at end of document.

For households referred in shelter, staff at participating agencies will administer the VI-SPDAT within 14 days of program entry. Referrals will be made by using VI-SPDAT scores – households with higher scores will be prioritized for program referral. Side doors (informal contact and referral methods traditionally utilized) will be eliminated and closed.

Streamlining of referrals will be implemented as the coordinated assessment plan is utilized, as it is hard to predict barriers until the system is implemented. Advantages may be preventing and diverting individuals into the homeless system, making it easier to serve the most vulnerable population, and providing common ground among participating agencies, so that problems and challenges can be addressed and solutions shared within the region.

**How will families access homeless programs in your community? (Should correspond to diagram for family access in Appendix C)**

Same as above

**Are people required to travel to different locations to access programs and services in your community?**

\_X\_ Yes \_\_ No

**If yes, what happens if a household is unable to access transportation?**

If unable to access transportation, access to services is limited or unavailable. Within the Foothills Homeless Coalition transportation providers are Greenway (fee system), Medicaid transport (medical appointments only), private transportation (friends, family, or others) or public transportation (cabs, etc.). McDowell County has a veterans’ transportation program. Once within an ESG funded facility, transportation may be available in-house. For example, Kwanzaa Family Inn and Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. (serving Caldwell and Alexander counties) transport clients to appointments (legal, medical, job-related) as needed. Transportation may be limited in some cases. McDowell Mission Ministries has a transportation program as well for clients. If transportation is not available, individuals and families may call one of the agencies listed for an initial phone assessment.

**How is coordinated assessment advertised in your community? (check all that apply)**

\_X\_ All agencies aware \_\_ Posters \_\_ Billboards \_\_ Media stories \_\_ Flyers
\_\_ Stickers \_\_ Community Forum \_X\_ Other (Please describe:)

 Coordinated assessment has not been advertised to the general public as yet within the Foothills Homeless Coalition, but most FHC participating agencies are aware. To facilitate the smoother operation of a coordinated assessment plan in our region, a PSA campaign will be planned and implemented in late 2015.

**How does your community connect coordinated assessment to existing systems? Please describe what is available locally and how the systems overlap and interact.

Prevention services:** The NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund (through the NC Housing Finance Agency), in partnership with Western Piedmont Council of Governments (serving Alexander and Caldwell counties), and related agencies, gives assistance on mortgages and foreclosure prevention. Isothermal Planning and Development serves McDowell County in a similar capacity. These agencies interact with individuals and families who are referred to them in an effort to help them keep them from becoming homeless. Alexander County DSS, Caldwell County DSS, and McDowell County DSS all have programs to help with keeping services (water and power) from being shut off. Salvation Army (FHC region), Yokefellow (Caldwell County), South Caldwell Christian Ministries, and The Christian Crisis Center (Alexander County) have similar programs, thus aiding in preventing individuals and families from becoming homeless. All agencies will need education on the coordinated assessment approach to services. Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. offers SOAR facilitators for clients served by their organization who meet the criteria for SSI or SSDI.

**Veterans Affairs:** Veterans Service offices/representatives in Alexander, Caldwell and McDowell counties are available to veterans. Veterans receive preferential treatment in federal offices and state offices, such as NCWorks. Larry McMullen of VTAB serves on the Foothills Homeless Coalition, and provides direction and advice to veterans on pertinent issues. The Caldwell County National Guard Family Assistance Center provides assistance to soldiers and veterans. All agencies will need education on the coordinated assessment approach to services.

**Faith-based poverty programs:** Recovery systems for men and women are AA and NA. Halfway houses for male substance abusers in Caldwell County are Bethel Colony and Caldwell House. Whitnel Pentecostal Holiness Church sponsors Celebrate Recovery on Thursdays for both individuals and families. Freedom Life Ministries in McDowell County services released prisoners to help them find housing. Alexander County has The Christian Crisis Center which helps with food (through their pantry) clothing, medicine, utility bills, rent, and limited homeless relief through a local motel. Yokefellow Christian Ministries provides for food sense, budget and finance, and sustainability classes as a part of their emergency assistance programming. South Caldwell Christian Ministries is available for emergency assistance services, as is Salvation Army. Many individual churches also have emergency funds available to both their members and other needy individuals who approach them for assistance. All agencies will need education on the coordinated assessment approach to services.

**Mental health services:** Smoky Mountain LME/MCO is available to navigate consumers to these services in all three counties in Foothills region. RHA Behavioral Mental Health also serves all three counties in this regional as the public mental health service provider. County health departments and income-based health providers may be able to give limited mental health assistance to the homeless and also refer. Easter Seals UCP of NC & VA, Strategic Interventions and A Caring Alternative work within several communities in the Foothills Homeless Coalition to provide mental health services to the homeless. Broughton Hospital (Burke County) is available for services to individuals in the Foothills Homeless Coalition region. There are substance abuse facilities and programs available to help individuals and families in their recovery. All agencies will need education on the coordinated assessment approach to services.

**Legal/judicial system, including law enforcement and prisons:** Legal Aid of NC assists individuals with certain legal issues. Social security lawyers assist individuals in receiving the benefits they are qualified for. Court-appointed lawyers are available for help with certain charges. Jails and prisons in each county house many homeless inmates who will need information provided to them on services available to them upon release. Law enforcement officers refer individuals to services within their jurisdiction. All agencies will need education on the coordinated assessment approach to services.

**Department of Social Services (if multiple DSS agencies within Regional Committee, please discuss each agency):** Alexander County DSS, Caldwell County DSS, and McDowell County DSS all help individuals and families receive necessary services such as receiving SNAP, WIC, and other like programs, emergency assistance with certain bills, childcare, child and adult protection, employment permits for minors under 18, Work First programs, and assistance with filing for SSI, SSDI, Medicaid and Medicare (adults and children). All agencies will need education on the coordinated assessment approach to services.

**Education System:** County School Systems ensure that students found to be eligible under the McKinney-Vento Act (*Federal homeless education legislation*), have access to free, appropriate public education and other services that they need. The system informs parents, guardians, or youth of their rights under the McKinney-Vento Act. They coordinate with community service agencies, such as DSS, Caldwell County Yokefellow, South Caldwell Christian Ministries, The Christian Crisis Center, Kwanzaa Family Inn, Shelter Home of Caldwell County, LEOS, etc.

**REFERRALS**

 **Please describe how the referral process will work in your community. If clients need to transfer agencies in the referral process, please describe how this will be done.**

In certain circumstances, if non-emergent, a domestic violence facility can refer the individual or family to a standard homeless shelter. Referrals will be made for the individual or family to contact an agency that works with Permanent Supportive Housing or Section 8 based on VI-SPDAT score. Referrals will also be made to low to no income based housing as needed.

**Are transportation funds/resources provided?** \_X\_ Yes \_\_ No (But limited)

**If yes, please describe resources, to whom they are available, and how and when they are accessed.**

Outside most facilities or programs, responsibility for transportation is upon the individual or family. There are transportation resources, but funding (other than their own) is limited or non-existent. Greenway (fee system), Medicaid Transport (medical appointments only), private transportation, public transportation (buses and cabs) are available. McDowell County has a veterans’ transportation program. These services are usually accessed by telephone. Once accepted within a homeless shelter there are additional transportation resources, but some are more limited than others. Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. has transportation funds for assisting victims in transferring into or out of the area. If transportation is not available, individuals and families may call one of the agencies listed for an initial phone assessment.

**Are forms sent with clients and/or included in HMIS?** \_X\_ Yes \_\_ No

If yes, please describe:

Hard copies of the VI-SPDAT will accompany the clients as all agencies are not designed to have access to the HMIS system. For Kwanzaa Family Inn a hard copy referral must accompany the client to the intake process.

**Does your Regional Committee use real-time bed availability?** \_\_ Yes \_X\_ No

If yes, please describe:

**What is the process for agencies that do not want to accept referrals coming from coordinated assessment?**

In order to receive ESG funding, an agency must participate in Coordinated Assessment to comply with HUD guidelines. All supportive agencies making referrals must also participate to some degree to facilitate the process. Any agency refusing to accept a referral from a coordinated assessment participant must state in writing why they are refusing the referral. The coordinated assessment participating agency should generate a response that encourages future cooperation for the benefit of homeless individuals and families. If all agencies, as a whole, refuse to accept the referral, the coordinated assessment participating agency will seek options for referral in another region.

**What is the grievance process for individuals who do not agree with their referral?**

An individual or family needs to state in writing (can be hand written; they can use a proxy) why they do not agree with their referral, preferably during the referral process. They may request an alternate referral at that time. However, there may be no choice, in order for appropriate services to be administered. A copy of their disagreement/request needs to be retained by the referring agency. A copy needs to be sent to the recipient agency. The client has a right to request a hearing before a grievance committee if their wishes are not met. The Foothills Homeless Coalition will appoint a grievance committee to address these issues as needed. Grievances will be addressed in 3-10 days.

**How does your Regional Committee handle waitlists for programs? Please include information for how this waitlist is created, stored, and updated and the agency/person responsible.**

A waitlist (as defined by Coordinated Assessment training) is a ranked list of all homeless individuals who have been processed through the coordinated assessment model and scored according to most vulnerable, not first-come/first-serve. Agency waitlists (if pertinent) will be generated by each member agency for individuals and families that are awaiting services. Each participating agency should update their waitlist once a week.

Foothills Homeless Coalition will designate one person from the Coalition to maintain the waitlist for the four (4) agencies in our region that maintain waiting lists which are as follows:

Friendship House (Marion NC)

John Thompson House (Marion NC)

Lenoir Emergency Outreach (Lenoir)

Kwanzaa Family Inn (Lenoir NC)

NOTE: Shelter Home of Caldwell County does not maintain a waiting list based on the nature of their services as a DV Shelter and the security concerns.

**Please include the full list of program rules for each agency participating in coordinated assessment in Appendix A. Please indicate below which rules are specifically required by funders.**

Kwanzaa Family Inn:

* + Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
	+ Intakes only women and women with minor children up to age 18
	+ No men allowed; male minor children up to age 18 only; must be in school
	+ If substance abuser, must be clean 30 days
	+ Must follow Kwanza Family Inn program rules and guidelines or be evicted
	+ Emergency program (individuals / families with no income) restricted to 45 days per HUD
	+ If exit emergency program before completion, can return after 1 year (conditionally)

LEOS :

* + Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
	+ Intakes men, women and families
	+ All residents exit facility in a.m. to job search, conduct business, etc. and return in p.m.

Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc.:

* Individual and/or family must have been victim of recent domestic violence incident / situation; or be the victim of a sexual assault/sexual abuse to be served in Emergency Shelter. (Services to non-sheltered clients include DV, SA, Trauma and Healing, Seeking Safety support groups, assistance seeking Protection Orders, court accompaniment, DV and Lethality Assessments and Safety Planning. (CFW and GCC funding criteria)
* Intakes for women and families to the Shelter property. Male DV/SA victims are sheltered off-site but provided the same supportive victim services. (CFW and GCC funding criteria)
* Must follow SHCC program guidelines. Termination of service for program guidelines violations that relate to safety, confidentiality, substance abuse, violence or law violations. Active participation in their personal Goal Plan is required.
* Emergency Shelter and all services at no cost.
* Residency maximum in Emergency Shelter is 90 days with a program goal of safe transition in 30 days.
* Provision of Transitional Housing on campus for qualifying sheltered clients transitioning out of Emergency Shelter, but still in need of on-site supportive services. Program Participation fees apply to Transitional Housing apartments.

Friendship Home:

* Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
* Intakes only women and women with minor children up to age 18 (females)
* No men allowed; male minor children up to age 13 (16 if meets criteria)
* Drug test on intake; if fail will retest after 30 days; if fail again, referred elsewhere
* Must follow Friendship Home program rules and guidelines or be referred elsewhere
* Residents may stay as long as needed; when employed, must pay residential fees. Cap of $40/week
* Must comply with case management recommendations, including work on GED while resident
* If exit program before completion, can return after 30 days (conditionally)

John Thompson Center:

* Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
* Intakes only men (18+ yrs.)
* Drug test on intake; if fail will retest after 30 days; if fail again, referred elsewhere
* Must follow John Thompson Center program rules and guidelines or be referred elsewhere
* Residents may stay as long as needed; when employed, must pay residential fees
* Cap of $40/week
* Must comply with case management recommendations, including work on GED while resident
* If exit program before completion, can return after 30 days (conditionally)

Family Services of McDowell County:

* Individual and family must be in domestic violence situation to be assisted
* Intakes women and families (no men)
* Six weeks maximum stay
* Must follow program rules and guidelines, including no contact with abuser, or

be referred elsewhere

Smoky Mountain LME/MCO:

* Individual and family must be homeless and in shelter to receive Shelter Plus services
* Intakes individuals and families
* Supportive Housing through Shelter Plus program time frame is service and case plan specific to individuals.
* Rules for this program available on website <http://www.smokymountaincenter.com/>

**Coordinated assessment will help communities to identify gaps in services. How will your community address these gaps as they become apparent?**

Each quarter, the Foothills Homeless Coalition will hear a report from the Coordinated Assessment Lead about current system gaps. Regional Committee members will discuss proposed plan to address these gaps. All affected agencies will review and fine-tune the plan for approval. The Foothills Homeless Coalition will then work with affected agencies to implement the plan.

**OVERSIGHT:**

**Will your Regional Committee engage in further measures (e.g. including weekly case management meeting to case conference, monthly provider meeting to assess system flow, elected group to monitor local grievances)? Please describe below.**

The Foothills Homeless Coalition meets once a month. During that time, the coordinated assessment lead will present information from the CAC, as well as progress reports on our coordinated assessment process. As needed, the Foothills Homeless Coalition will appoint committees to engage in additional meetings to address internal issues (to improve the coordinated assessment process in our area), gaps in area services (including educating potential partners to the benefits of coordinated assessment), client / agency grievances, etc.

**APPENDICES**
Please fill tables in Excel document Coordinated Assessment Plans -- Appendix

**• Appendix A – All programs within Regional Committee that serve people who are homeless**

Dulatown Outreach, Inc. (Kwanzaa Family Inn) (Caldwell)

Caldwell Co. Yokefellow (Lenoir Emergency Outreach Center - LEOS) (Caldwell)

McDowell Mission Ministries

Friendship Home (McDowell)

John Thompson Center (McDowell)

Family Services of McDowell County (McDowell)

Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. (serving Caldwell and Alexander counties)

Smoky Mountain LME/MCO

Alexander County DSS

Caldwell County DSS

McDowell County DSS

Alexander County Health Department

Caldwell County Health Department

McDowell County Health Department

Happy Valley Medical Center (Caldwell)

Collettsville Medical Center (Caldwell)

Helping Hands (Caldwell)

A Caring Alternative

Easter Seals UCP of NC & VA

RHA Behavioral Health Services

Strategic Interventions

Salvation Army

The Christian Crisis Center (Alexander)

South Caldwell Christian Ministries (Caldwell)

Yokefellow (Caldwell)

Lenoir Soup Kitchen (Caldwell)

Veterans Services & National Guard Family Assistance Centers

County NCWorks

Law Enforcement (City, County State)

Urgent Care Ctrs. / Hospitals

Assisted Living Facilities

Income-based Housing (Section 8, Low to no Income)

County School Systems

United Way (call 211)

Individual churches (food pantries and meals)

• Appendix B-1 – Domestic Violence Resources

Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc. (serving Caldwell and Alexander counties)

Family Services of McDowell County

Alexander County DSS

Caldwell County DSS

 McDowell County DSS

• Appendix B-2 – Prevention and Diversion Resources

*The NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund (through the NC Housing Finance Agency) funds:*

Western Piedmont Council of Governments (Alexander, Caldwell, McDowell counties)

Isothermal Planning and Development Commission (McDowell County)

 Alexander County DSS

Caldwell County DSS

 McDowell County DSS

 Salvation Army (Caldwell, McDowell and Alexander)

South Caldwell Christian Ministries (SCCM) (rent and utility assistance)

 The Christian Crisis Center (rent and utility assistance) (Alexander County)

 Yokefellow (rent and utility assistance) (Caldwell)

 Smoky Mountain LME/MCO

• Appendix B-3 – Mainstream Resources

Alexander County DSS

Caldwell County DSS

McDowell County DSS

Alexander County Health Department

Caldwell County Health Department

McDowell County Health Department

Social Security Administration

NC Works (Alexander, Caldwell & McDowell counties)

Veterans Services

County School Systems

Law Enforcement (City, County, State)

Urgent Care Centers/Hospitals

• Appendix B-4 – Foreclosure and Prevention Resources

*The NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund (through the NC Housing Finance Agency) funds:*

Western Piedmont Council of Governments (Alexander, Caldwell, McDowell counties)

Isothermal Planning and Development (McDowell County)

In addition, please attach the following documents:

**• Appendix A**
 Full list of program rules for each participating agency

Kwanzaa Family Inn:

* + Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
	+ Intakes only women and women with minor children up to age 18
	+ No men allowed; male minor children up to age 18 only; must be in school
	+ If substance abuser, must be clean 30 days
	+ Must follow Kwanza Family Inn program rules and guidelines or be evicted
	+ Emergency program (individuals / families with no income) restricted to 45 days per HUD
	+ If exit emergency program before completion, can return after 1 year (conditionally)

LEOS :

* + Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
	+ Intakes men, women and families
	+ All residents exit facility in a.m. to job search, conduct business, etc. and return in p.m.

Shelter Home of Caldwell County, Inc.:

* Individual and/or family must have been victim of recent domestic violence incident / situation; or be the victim of a sexual assault/sexual abuse to be served in Emergency Shelter. (Services to non-sheltered clients include DV, SA, Trauma and Healing, Seeking Safety support groups, assistance seeking Protection Orders, court accompaniment, DV and Lethality Assessments and Safety Planning. (CFW and GCC funding criteria)
* Intakes for women and families to the Shelter property. Male DV/SA victims are sheltered off-site but provided the same supportive victim services. (CFW and GCC funding criteria)
* Must follow SHCC program guidelines. Termination of service for program guidelines violations that relate to safety, confidentiality, substance abuse, violence or law violations. Active participation in their personal goal Plan is required.
* Emergency Shelter and all services at no cost.
* Residency maximum in Emergency Shelter is 90 days with a program goal of safe transition in 30 days.
* Provision of Transitional Housing on campus for qualifying sheltered clients transitioning out of Emergency Shelter, but still in need of on-site supportive services. Program Participation fees apply to Transitional Housing apartments.

Friendship Home:

* Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
* Intakes only women and women with minor children up to age 18 (females)
* No men allowed; male minor children up to age 13 (16 if meets criteria)
* Drug test on intake; if fail will retest after 30 days; if fail again, referred elsewhere
* Must follow Friendship Home program rules and guidelines or be referred elsewhere
* Residents may stay as long as needed; when employed, must pay residential fees. Cap of $40/week
* Must comply with case management recommendations, including work on GED while resident
* If exit program before completion, can return after 30 days (conditionally)

John Thompson Center:

* Individual and family must be homeless or imminently homeless per HUD Guidelines
* Intakes only men (18+ yrs.)
* Drug test on intake; if fail will retest after 30 days; if fail again, referred elsewhere
* Must follow John Thompson Center program rules and guidelines or be referred elsewhere
* Residents may stay as long as needed; when employed, must pay residential fees
* Cap of $40/week
* Must comply with case management recommendations, including work on GED while resident
* If exit program before completion, can return after 30 days (conditionally)

Family Services of McDowell County:

* Individual and family must be in domestic violence situation to be assisted
* Intakes women and families (no men)
* Six weeks maximum stay
* Must follow program rules and guidelines, including no contact with abuser, or

be referred elsewhere

Smoky Mountain LME/MCO:

* Individual and family must be homeless and in shelter to receive Shelter Plus services
* Intakes individuals and families
* Supportive Housing through Shelter Plus program time frame is service and case plan specific to individuals.

Rules for this program available on website <http://www.smokymountaincenter.com/>

 MOUs from agencies participating in coordinated assessment in your community

*To come*