

## **Northern Nevada**

### **Community Housing Assessment Tools (CHAT) Do's and Don'ts Guide**

#### **Do:**

- Do ensure client privacy while administering the assessment.
- Do make sure you are completing the correct assessment based off household (individual vs. family)
- Do establish client trust before administering the assessment – will help provide the most factual information used to determine client need.
- Ask the questions as they are written – important piece for ensuring standardized assessment offered to everyone accessing Coordinated Entry

#### **Don't:**

- Do not prepare the client or prompt them to give a specific response – make sure clients are responding for themselves.
  - Ease concerns for difficult questions – nothing shared during the assessment will be used against them. The assessment helps us understand which housing resources will be best suited for the person being assessed, based on their specific situation and needs. For example, justice involvement is often not disclosed by clients for fear of being found ineligible for support.
- Do not make statements that would set expectations.
  - For example, don't make comments like: "Let's get your score up," or "Let's get you on the queue."
- Do not ask clients to change answers. Asking for clarification to answer the question is permitted, but prompting someone to give a specific answer is not.
- The person being assessed may not feel comfortable disclosing a mental health diagnosis. In these cases, you can encourage those being assessed to answer honestly to ensure the assessment is accurate. If someone does not disclose a mental health diagnosis, the assessor should record their answer accordingly and will have the opportunity to indicate they believe the person being assessed may have a mental health condition affecting them.
- Do not be afraid to pause the assessment if you find that a client is unable to complete it with you once you've started. It is acceptable to stop the assessment and start it again later.
  - For example, someone may become too agitated to complete the CHAT the first time, or you may discover that the person being assessed is too intoxicated to continue. Remember in these circumstances, the person's immediate needs should be prioritized over the administration of the CHAT.

If you have any questions about administering the CHAT, either generally or in a specific situation, please contact the CoC Matchmaker at [CoCMatchmaker@WashoeCounty.Gov](mailto:CoCMatchmaker@WashoeCounty.Gov).