Stanislaus County Homeless Management Information System
(Stanislaus County HMIS)

User Policy, Responsibility Statement & Code of Ethics

For: Agency Name *(Print):* _____

User/Employee Name *(Print):* _____

Agency Location *(Print):* _____

The Stanislaus County Homeless Management Information System (Stanislaus County HMIS) is a collaborative project of the Stanislaus Community System of Care Collaborative (StanCSOC) and the Stanislaus County Community Services Agency, CSA. Stanislaus County HMIS will enable homeless service providers to collect uniform client information over time. This system is essential to efforts to streamline client services and informed public policy. Through Stanislaus County HMIS, homeless program clients benefit from improved coordination in and between agencies, informed advocacy efforts, and policies that result in targeted services. Analysis of information gathered through Stanislaus County HMIS is critical to accurately calculate the size, characteristics, and needs of the homeless population; these data are necessary to service and systems planning and advocacy.

The Collaborative and Stanislaus County Community Services Agency, CSA, recognize the privacy of client needs in the design and management of the Stanislaus County Stanislaus County HMIS. These needs include both the need to continually improve the quality of homeless and housing services with the goal of eliminating homelessness in Stanislaus County, and the need to vigilantly maintain client confidentiality, treating the personal data of our most vulnerable populations with respect and care.

As the guardians entrusted with this personal data, Stanislaus County HMIS users have a moral and a legal obligation to ensure that the data they collect is being collected, accessed and used appropriately. It is also the responsibility of each user to ensure that client data is only used to the ends to which it was collected; ends that have been made explicit to families and individuals in Stanislaus County to resolve their housing crises. Proper user training, adherence to the Stanislaus County HMIS Policies and Procedures, and clear understanding of client confidentiality are vital to achieving these goals.

USER POLICY

Partner Agencies who use Stanislaus County HMIS and each User within any Partner Agency is bound by various restrictions regarding the Client information.

It is a Client's decision about which information, if any, is entered into Stanislaus County HMIS database and whether that information is to be shared with any Partner Agencies. ***Client Informed Consent and Release of Information*** shall be signed by Client before any identifiable Client information is designated in Stanislaus County HMIS for sharing with any Partner Agencies. User shall insure that prior to obtaining Client's signature; the ***Client Informed Consent and Release of Information*** were fully *reviewed with Client in a manner to insure that Client fully understood the information (e.g. securing a translator if necessary).*

USER CODE OF ETHICS

Users must be prepared to answer Client questions regarding Stanislaus County HMIS.

Users must faithfully respect Client preferences with regard to the entry and sharing of Client information within Stanislaus County HMIS. Users must accurately record Client's preferences by making the proper designations as to sharing of Client information and/or any restrictions on the sharing of Client information.

Users must allow Client to change his or her information sharing preferences at the Client's request.

Users must not decline services to a Client or potential Client if that person refuses to allow entry of information into Stanislaus County HMIS or to share their personal information with other agencies via Stanislaus County HMIS.

The User has primary responsibility for information entered by the User. Information Users enter must be truthful, accurate and complete to the best of User's knowledge.

Users will not solicit from or enter information about Clients into Stanislaus County HMIS unless the information is required for a legitimate business purpose such as to provide services to the Client.

Users will not use Stanislaus County HMIS database for any violation of any law, to defraud any entity or conduct any illegal activity.

Upon Client's written request, users must allow a Client to inspect and obtain a copy of the Client's own information maintained within Stanislaus County HMIS. Information compiled in reasonable anticipation of or for use in a civil, criminal or administrative action or proceeding need not be provided to Client.

Users must permit Clients to file a written grievance/complaint regarding the use or treatment of their information within Stanislaus County HMIS. The Partner Agency will send a written notice to the HMIS System Administrator of any HMIS related client grievance and the Partner Agency's response to that grievance. Partner Agencies may use the provided **Client HMIS Grievance Form**, at their option.

The Client may not be retaliated against for filing a grievance.

USER Responsibility

Your username and password give you access to the Stanislaus County HMIS ClientTrack.Net™ software.

Initial each of the following items to indicate your understanding and acceptance of the proper use of the Stanislaus County HMIS ClientTrack.NET™ software and the confidential information provided by the Client. Failure to uphold the confidentiality standards set forth below is grounds for immediate termination from Stanislaus County HMIS database access, and may result in disciplinary action from the Partner Agency as defined in the Partner Agency's personnel policies.

I agree to maintain the confidentiality of client information in Stanislaus County HMIS in the following manner:

_____ Username and password assigned to me are for my use only and will **not be shared** with anyone.

_____ I have read and will abide by my Agency's *Privacy Notice* and the *Stanislaus County HMIS Consumer Notice;* ensuring clients understand their rights.

_____ I will not use the browser capacity to remember passwords: I will enter the password each time I log on to the Stanislaus County HMIS.

_____ I will take reasonable means to keep my password secure.

_____ I will only view, obtain, disclose, or use the database information that is necessary to perform my job.

_____ I understand that only individuals who may directly access Stanislaus County HMIS client information are authorized users, and will take the necessary steps to prevent casual observers from seeing or hearing Stanislaus County HMIS client information.

_____ I will log off the Stanislaus County HMIS before leaving my work area, or make sure that the Stanislaus County HMIS database has "timed out" before leaving my work area.

_____ I will not leave unattended any computer that has Stanislaus County HMIS "open and running".

_____ I will keep my computer monitor positioned so persons not authorized to view Stanislaus County HMIS cannot view it.

_____ I will store hard copies of Stanislaus County HMIS information in a secure file and not leave such hard copy information in public view, on my desk, or on photocopier, printer or fax machine.

_____ I will properly destroy paper copies of Stanislaus County HMIS information when they are no longer needed, unless they are required to be retained in accordance with applicable law.

_____ I will not discuss Stanislaus County HMIS confidential client information with staff, clients, or client family members in a public area.

_____ I will not discuss Stanislaus County HMIS confidential client information on the telephone in any areas where the public might overhear my conversation.

_____ I will not leave messages on my agency's answering machine or voicemail system that contains Stanislaus County HMIS confidential client information.

_____ I will keep answering machine volume low ensuring Stanislaus County HMIS confidential information left by callers is not overheard by the public or unauthorized persons.

A Client Consent/Release of Information form must be signed by each client whose data is entered into the Stanislaus County HMIS database.

Client consent may be revoked by that client at any time by a written notice.

No client may be denied services for failure to provide consent for Stanislaus County HMIS data collection.

Clients have a right to inspect, copy, and request changes in their Stanislaus County HMIS records.

I will not knowingly enter malicious or erroneous information into the Stanislaus County HMIS database.

I understand that a failure to follow these security steps appropriately may result in a breach of client Stanislaus County HMIS confidentiality and Stanislaus County HMIS security. If such a breach occurs, my access to the Stanislaus County HMIS may be terminated and I may be subject to further disciplinary action as defined in the partner agency's personnel policy.

If I notice or suspect a security breach, I will immediately notify the director of my agency and the Stanislaus County HMIS System Administrator.

I understand and agree to comply with all the statements listed above.

User/Employee Signature:_____   Date:_____

Agency Director Signature:_____   Date:_____