



HMIS Notice of Privacy Practices



THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN ACCESS THIS INFORMATION.

Open Communities and the Northeast Illinois Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

When you request services from Open Communities, information about you and members of your family is entered into a computer system called HMIS, or Homeless Management Information System. HMIS is a project of the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County (Alliance) in partnership with many organizations in northeast Illinois that provide homeless, health care, medical, and social services to persons and families in need. The information collected in HMIS will help us coordinate and provide better service, document the need for additional services, and generate reports such as the number of persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in northeast Illinois.

How your information in the HMIS may be used

Unless restricted by law, the information can be used by:

- Authorized people who work in Open Communities, HMIS partner organizations for administrative purposes related to providing and coordinating services to you or your family, or for billing or funding purposes.
- Auditors or others who review the work of Open Communities or need to review the information to provide services to Open Communities.
- The HMIS system administrator(s), the Alliance and its designees, and the HMIS developer (WellSky) for administrative purposes (for example, to assist Open Communities by checking for data errors and identifying your potential eligibility for services).
- Individuals performing academic research who have signed a research agreement with Open Communities or the Alliance. Your name, social security number or other identifying information may be used to match records but will not be used directly in the research unless you sign a separate consent.
- Open Communities or the Alliance may use your information to create aggregate data that has your identifying information removed. Also, Open Communities may disclose to a third-party aggregate data so that the third party can create data that does not include any of your identifying information.
- Government or social services agencies that are authorized to receive reports of homelessness, abuse, neglect or domestic violence, when such reports are required by law or standards of ethical conduct.
- A coroner or medical examiner or funeral director to carry out their duties.
- Authorized federal officials for the conduct of certain national security or certain activities associated with the protection of certain officials.
- Law enforcement officials, but the disclosure must meet the minimum standards necessary for the immediate purpose and not disclose information about other individuals. A court order or search warrant may be required.
- Others, to the extent that the law requires a specific use or disclosure of information. Information may be released to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public; if the disclosure is made to a person or persons reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat or harm, including the target of a threat.

Other uses and sharing of your information will be made only with your written consent.



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Your rights regarding your information in the HMIS

- You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of your own protected personal information for as long as it is kept in the HMIS, except for information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or for use in, a legal proceeding.
- You have the right to request a correction of your protected personal information when the information in the record is inaccurate or incomplete.
- You have a right to request that your personal information be provided to you by alternative means, (such as by mail or telephone), or at alternative locations (such as at your home or place of work). Open Communities will accommodate reasonable requests.
- You have the right to receive a list of disclosures of protected personal information made by Open Communities or the Alliance during the six years prior to the date you request this information, except for disclosures for national security or intelligence purposes or to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials. If a law enforcement official or health oversight agency requests that we temporarily suspend giving you an accounting of disclosures made to them, the request must be time-limited and given to us in writing.
- You may request a list of current HMIS partner organizations from Open Communities or the Alliance, or review the current list at <http://www.suburbancook.org>. The Alliance may add new HMIS partner organizations to this list at any time.

Exercising your rights regarding your information in the HMIS

You can exercise these rights by making a written request to Open Communities, or by making a written request to the Alliance. The addresses are listed at the end of this Notice.

Enforcement of your privacy rights

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may send a written complaint to Open Communities. If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may send your written complaint to the Alliance. Addresses are listed at the end of this Notice. You will not be retaliated against for filing a complaint.

Open Communities is required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected personal information, and to display a copy of the most recent Notice. Open Communities reserves the right to change the Notice from time to time, and if it does, the change will affect all of the information in the HMIS, not just the information entered after the change. The revised Notice will be posted in Open Communities. You may request a copy of it from Open Communities or the Alliance.

Addresses

Open Communities
1880 Oak Avenue, Suite 301
Evanston, IL 60201

Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County
4415 Harrison Street, Suite 228
Hillside, IL 60162

If you have any questions about this Notice or need further information, you may request it from:
Director of Information Services at the Alliance (708) 236-3261