

## HMIS Notice of Privacy Practices

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

#### **Together We Cope and the Northeast Illinois Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)**

When you request services from Together We Cope, 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 Together We Cope, HMIS partner organizations (including the regional Veteran's Administration) 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 Together We Cope or need to review the information to provide services to Together We Cope.
- The HMIS system administrator(s), the Alliance and its designees, and the HMIS developer (Bowman Systems Inc.) for administrative purposes (for example, to check data errors).
- Individuals performing academic research who have signed a research agreement with Together We Cope 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.
- Together We Cope or the Alliance may use your information to create aggregate data that has your identifying information removed. Also, Together We Cope 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). Together We Cope will accommodate reasonable requests.
- You have the right to receive a list of disclosures of protected personal information made by Together We Cope 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 the Alliance.

### **Exercising your rights regarding your information in the HMIS**

You can exercise these rights by making a written request to Together We Cope, 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 Together We Cope. 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.

Together We Cope is required by law to maintain the privacy of your protected personal information, and to display a copy of the most recent Notice. Together We Cope 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 Together We Cope. You may request a copy of it from Together We Cope or the Alliance.

### **Addresses**

Together We Cope  
17010 S Oak Park Ave  
Tinley Park, IL 60477

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 ext.02