HMIS Data Entry Workflow: PATH

Street Outreach & Supportive Services Only

Table of Contents

PATH 101

PATH providers conducting street outreach may encounter challenges related to HMIS data collection due to factors such as the infrequency of contacts or the length of time it takes to collect accurate information from a client, among others. The data collection process is designed to support PATH projects as they connect to individuals and families that are experiencing homelessness, and as relationships are built between the street outreach worker and the client. For more information please refer to the HUD Exchange: PATH Program HMIS Manual and/or the HUD Exchange: HMIS Data Standards. Several key terms specific to the PATH Program are defined below.

PATH Program Components:

PATH funding includes two components that are set-up as two separate projects in HMIS:

1. **Street Outreach Component:** This is used by PATH projects that provide outreach and engagement to those living in places **not meant** for human habitation.

   These PATH activities are designed to meet the immediate needs of unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, and / or critical health services.

   Example of person who are living in places **not meant** for habitation are those who sleep on the *streets*, *under bridges*, *in camps*, *campgrounds*, *abandoned buildings*, *structure meant for animals*, *vehicles*, and *public places*.

2. **Supportive Services Component:** This is used by PATH projects to provide outreach and engagement to those living in places **meant for** human habitation.

   This includes both persons who are *residing in shelter*, and those *doubled-up in housing* or *at-risk of homelessness*.

Determining Which Component to Use:

PATH providers should use the following data collection methodology to determine which project the client is entered into at first contact (Project Start Date). Upon asking the individual '*Where did you stay last night?*', if the client responds with an answer consistent with:

- *Place **not meant** for human habitation*, use the PATH ***Street Outreach*** project
- *Place **meant for** human habitation*, including Emergency Shelter, use the PATH ***Supportive Services*** project
- If the client **does not** provide an answer, *wait until you can get an answer*, and enter them into HMIS at that point
- If the client does not provide an answer to "Where did you stay last night?", and you never encounter the client again, you should enter them into the Supportive Services Only project. This will keep the client from being counted in the HUD System Performance Measure 7A

Terms:

Date of Engagement (DoE)**:** The point at which an interactive client relationship results in a deliberate client assessment or beginning of a case plan. Clients ***cannot be enrolled*** in PATH **without** being engaged.

- May occur on or after the project Entry date
- Must occur prior to PATH Enrollment date and project Exit date
  - Although some interactions with a client may result in a positive outcome, without a deliberate client assessment or the beginning of a case plan, those interactions are not considered to be an engagement
  - Data quality is gauged after a DoE is entered into a client record and all assessment fields must be completed once the client becomes engaged

- If client does not become Engaged, no date is recorded
- Must be ***only one*** DoE per enrollment into a PATH project

Current Living Situation (CLS) (also referred to as *'Contacts'*)**:** A CLS must be recorded in HMIS **every time** a PATH-funded worker meets/has contact with an individual who is *potentially* PATH eligible **or** enrolled in one of the two PATH components. Including when a Project Start Date, Date of Engagement, and Project Exit Date is recorded.

- CLS recorded at the Project Start Date, must be completed within the Entry Assessment
- Any CLS recorded prior to the Exit Date must be completed within an Interim *(Update or Annual)* Assessment
  - The CLS *Start - Information - End dates* are the ***same as*** date the Entry/Interim/Exit assessment is being completed
- The interaction may range from a brief conversation between the street outreach worker and the client about the client's well-being or needs, to a more in-depth conversation resulting in a referral to service
- The interaction may occur in a street outreach setting or a service setting such as an emergency shelter or drop-in center

Enrollment / PATH Status: The point at which the PATH-funded worker can determine if a person is eligible for the PATH Program. And the PATH-eligible individual and a PATH provider have mutually and formally agreed to engage in services and the provider has initiated an individual file or record for that individual.

- Enrollment is recorded in HMIS using *PATH Status*, which provides additional information regarding PATH enrollment
- If a client **is not enrolled** in either PATH component, then '*Client Became Enrolled in PATH*' is answered No, and the date of the non- enrollment and reason should be recorded
- If a client **is enrolled** in either PATH component, then '*Client Became Enrolled in PATH*' is answered YES, and the date of the enrollment is recorded

Connection with SOAR: Connection with SOAR is intended to determine if the client has been connected to the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program, regardless of whether that connection was established by the PATH provider or not (the connection to SOAR can be made prior to PATH involvement or post-PATH involvement and should be treated as: "have you ever been connected to SOAR?"). Connection to SOAR can change during the client's involvement with the PATH program and should be updated accordingly.

Re-Engagement: The process of re-establishing interaction with PATH-enrolled individuals who are disconnected from PATH services in order to reconnect the client to services based on the previously developed case management or goal plan.

- Reengagement is recorded in HMIS using *Services Provided – PATH Funded*
- Reengagement **must occur** *after* Enrollment and *prior* to project Exit

Referral: Active and direct PATH staff support on behalf of or in conjunction with a PATH-enrolled individual to connect to an appropriate agency, organization, or service.

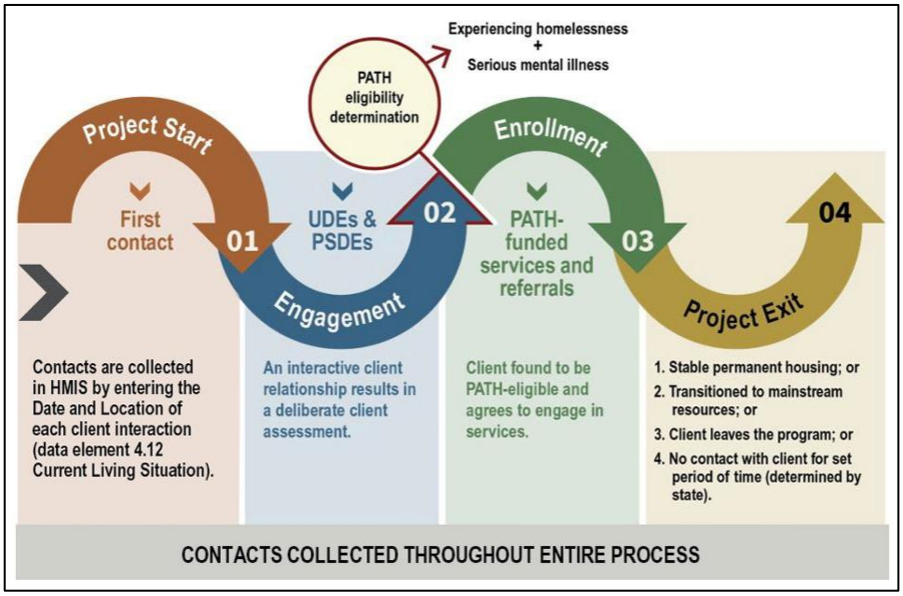
- Referrals are only reported for PATH-funded referrals provided to a PATH-enrolled individual
- Referrals are different from services
  - If the PATH provider does not actually deliver the PATH-funded service and must connect the client to a different agency, organization, or service to fulfill the client's need, it should be entered in HMIS as a referral
- Referrals are recorded in HMIS using *Referrals Provided – PATH*

Services: A specific PATH-funded assessment, benefit, or form of assistance provided to a PATH-enrolled individual.

- PATH-funded services may include:
  - Screening

    - Clinical assessment
    - Community-based mental health services
    - Substance use treatment
    - Housing assistance
- Services are only reported for PATH- funded services provided to a PATH-enrolled individual
- Services are different from referrals in that if the PATH provider directly delivers the PATH funded service, it should be entered in HMIS as a service
- Services are recorded in HMIS using *Services Provided – PATH Funded*

Eligibility: PATH-funded workers are not expected to determine eligibility at project entry but must have a reasonable expectation that the person will be eligible.



Data Entry Workflow

Project Entry - Initial Meeting with Client:

This is the initial Point of Contact with the client. In essence, it involves capturing the information about the client's demographics and the number of contacts the outreach worker had with the client before Engagement, and finally, formal Enrollment into the PATH Project.

Note: The PATH outreach worker is required to *enter all* persons *contacted* into HMIS

In the past, most projects waited until a client was formally Enrolled into the PATH Project before entering the information into HMIS. With the new reporting structure, all clients who have been contacted for potential enrollment into PATH must have their data entered into HMIS. In some instances, a person contacted may not even be willing to provide a name. This person will still need to be entered into HMIS.

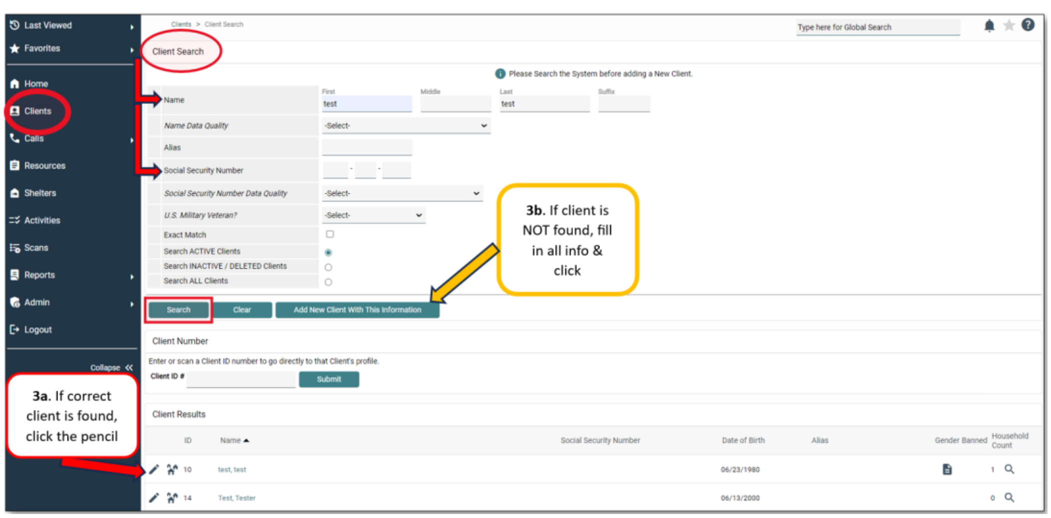
Projects are highly encouraged to collect as much information as possible, but in certain circumstances, it may be necessary to put very rudimentary information into HMIS. In these situations, it is critical that you remember the system client ID that was automatically generated and assigned to the client file. With a lack of client demographics and identifying information, it will be more likely that duplicate client files will be created, which can cause report issues.

Home Dashboard

1. Log into HMIS
2. Click ***Enter Data As*** then click the plus next to the project for which you are entering data
3. Set **Back Date Mode** if data is not being entered into HMIS the same day it was receive

Client Search

4. Click on **Clients**
5. Enter Head of Household's Name &/or partial SSN
6. Click **Search**
   a. If a match is found, confirm the details match the client's name, date of birth, and social security number. If it is the same person, click on the **pencil** to the left of the client's name
   b. If no matches are found, try at least two other ways to search for the client (partial name, alias, or full SSN). If still no matches are found, add the additional client information including full name, name data quality, SSN, SSN data quality, and veteran status, and click **Add New Client with This Information**



Households

NOTE! *If the client is presenting as a single client, skip this section*

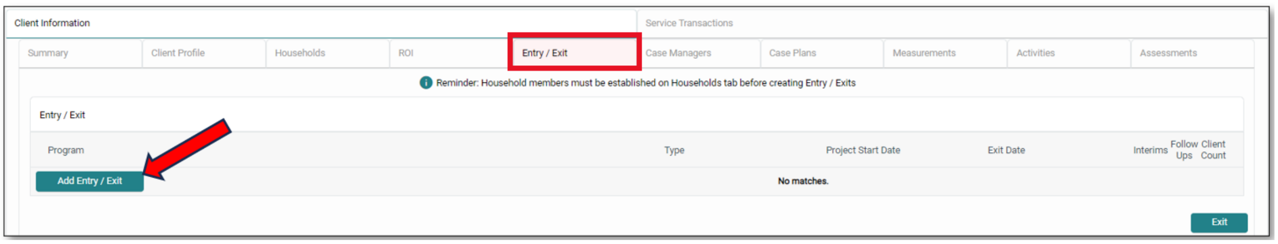
If client presents with a household, Click Here to refer to the *Managing Households in HMIS* guide for step-by-step instructions on searching, creating, and managing households in HMIS.

Release of Information (ROI)

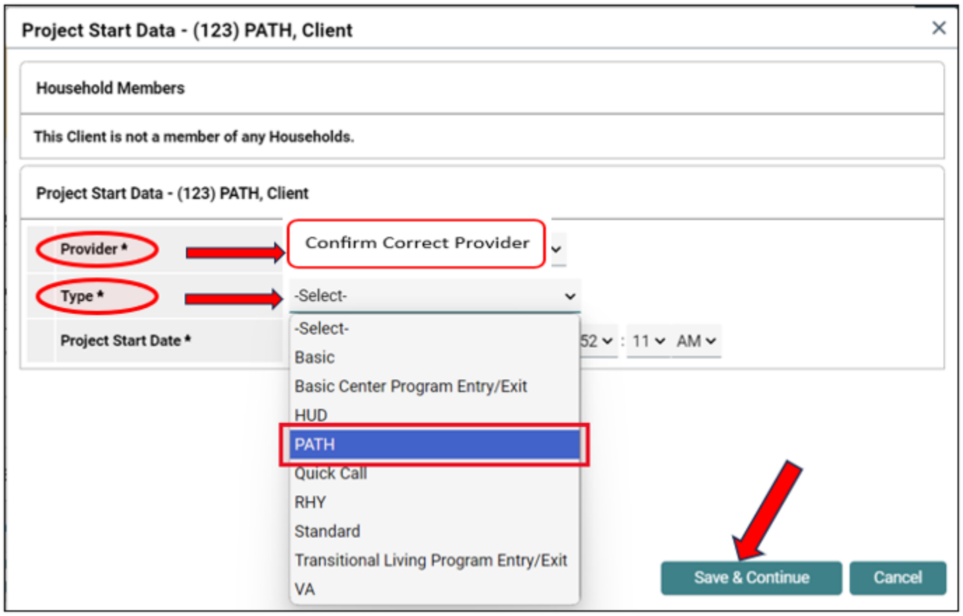
The MD BoS HMIS Privacy Policy & Procedures are posted on the MD BoS HMIS website and includes instructions for when a clients chooses to complete the 'HMIS Client Data Sharing Opt-Out Form'. Click Here to view.

Entry Assessment

1. Click **Entry/Exit** tab
2. Click **Add Entry/Exit**



3. Confirm Project Start Data
   a. If there is more than one client entering, check the box next to each additional household member that is entering the project.
      - *Anyone not checked will be excluded from the project*
   b. Confirm the Provider listed is correct
      - The *default provider appearing will be whatever was selected under Enter Data As when first logging into HMIS. If the provider is not correct, click Cancel. Set the Enter Data As and re-search for the head of household*
   c. Select PATH as the Type
   d. Confirm the **Project Start Date**
      - Do NOT change the time fields
   e. Click **Save & Continue**



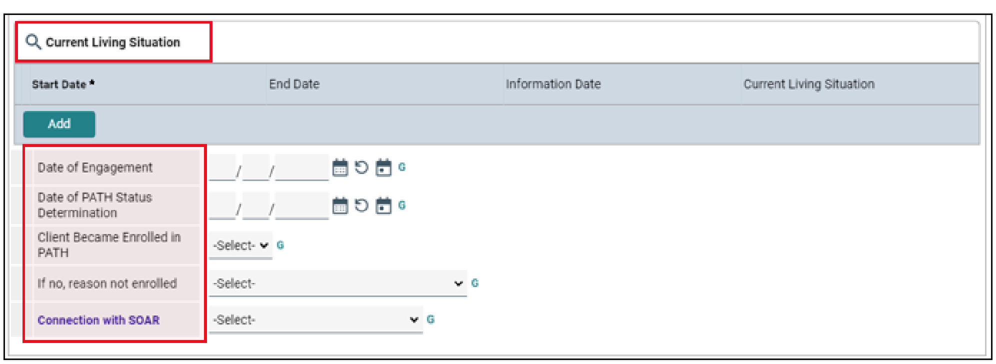
4. Complete the assessment
    a. If *the screen reads "<u>No Entry Assessment had been specified for this Provider</u>", the wrong project type was selected*
        - *Scroll to the top of the screen*
        - *Select the correct **Type** from the drop menu*
        - *Click **Update***

NOTE!! *Complete the Entry Assessment as thoroughly as possible, with information client is willing to provide.*

PATH clients may not provide you with all the information at initial contact & you may need to edit the Entry Assessment to add information learned from the client as you build rapport.

Remember to complete:

- Current Living Situation sub-assessment
    - The **first CLS** must be entered at the time of **project entry** (***REMEMBER*** *- The CLS <u>Start - Information - End dates</u> are the **same as** the project entry date)*
- If client ***does not meet criteria*** to be considered '*Engaged*', leave the <u>*Date of Engagement*</u> (DoE) blank
    - If there a DoE from a previous project enrollment – **clear out the old date**!

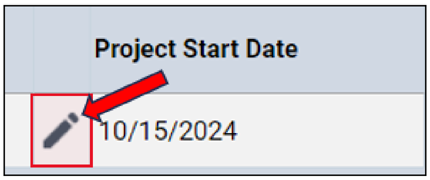


5. Click **Save**
    - If applicable, repeat above steps to complete for additional household members
6. Click **Save & Exit**

Updating Client Information that was *NOT* collected at initial contact

If you need to edit / add information in the Entry Assessment *(information that **__was true__** at project entry, but **__was not__** collected at initial contact)*.

- ➢ Back Date to the Project Start Date; and
- ➢ From the Entry / Exit tab - click on the pencil icon next to the Entry Date to open the Entry Assessment

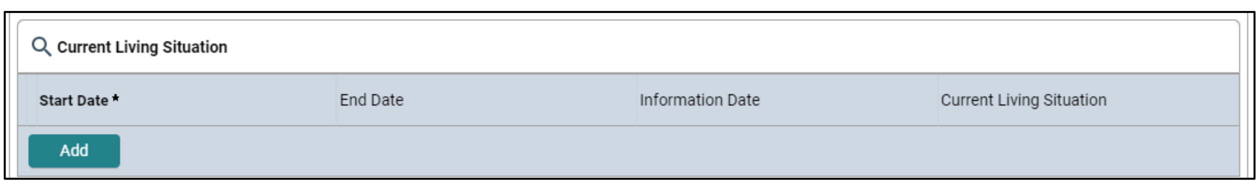


Interim Reviews

To Record Current Living Situation (CLS)

A *__Current Living Situation__* (CLS) ***__must be recorded__*** in HMIS ***__EVERY time__*** a PATH-funded worker meets with an individual who is *potentially* PATH eligible **or** is enrolled in one of the two PATH components. Including when a Date of Engagement (DoE) is recorded. These are recorded by completing the *__Current Living Situation__* (CLS) sub-assessment.

- Any CLS recorded ***prior*** to the Exit Date must be completed within an *__Interim Assessment__*
    - ***REMEMBER*** *- The CLS __Start - Information - End dates__ are the* ***same as*** *date the Interim assessment is being completed*
- The interaction may range from a brief conversation between the street outreach worker and the client about the client's well-being or needs, to a more in-depth conversation resulting in a referral to service
- The interaction may occur in a street outreach setting or a service setting such as an emergency shelter or drop-in center



To Record 'Date of Engagement' – 'PATH Status' – 'Enrollment'

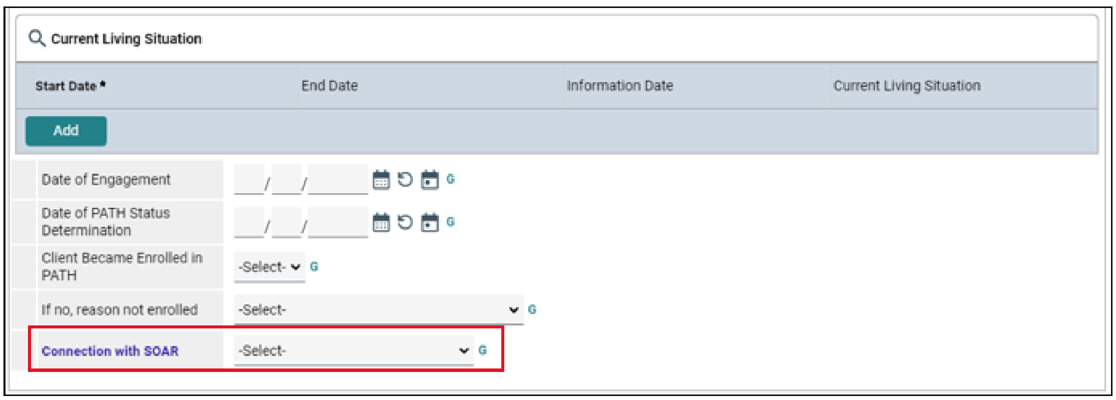
Over time, the outreach worker and client will develop a relationship that leads to *Engagement*. Once a client has formally agreed to accept PATH services, the client record should be updated to note this in the PATH Status.

***Note**: The Date of Engagement (DoE) MUST be **on** or **before** the date the client is __enrolled__ in PATH (PATH Status = Yes) __and__ MUST be **after** the project Start Date.*

If the DoE, PATH Status, and Enrollment are **determined after** the project start date, they must be completed within an *__Interim Assessment__*.

- **Interim Review Type**: Update
- **DoE**: Must occur prior to PATH Enrollment date and project Exit date
    - If client does not become 'engaged', no date is recorded

- ***Only one*** DoE can be recorded per enrollment into a PATH project
    - ***Remember!*** Data quality is gauged *after* a DoE is entered into a client record and all assessment fields must be completed once the client becomes engaged
- **Date of Status Determination**: Date must be on or after the Project Start Date and DoE, and must be prior to the Project Exit Date
- **Client Became Enrolled in PATH Program**: Clients ***cannot be enrolled*** in PATH **without first** having a DoE recorded
    - Record as 'NO' If it is determined that the client is not eligible to enroll in PATH project, or they are not enrolled for any other reason
        - Complete the 'If no, reason not enrolled' question
- **Connection with SOAR**: Connection with SOAR is intended to determine if the client has been connected to the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program, regardless of whether that connection was established by the PATH provider or not (the connection to SOAR can be made prior to PATH involvement or post-PATH involvement and should be treated as: "have you ever been connected to SOAR?"). Connection to SOAR can change during the client's involvement with the PATH program and should be updated accordingly

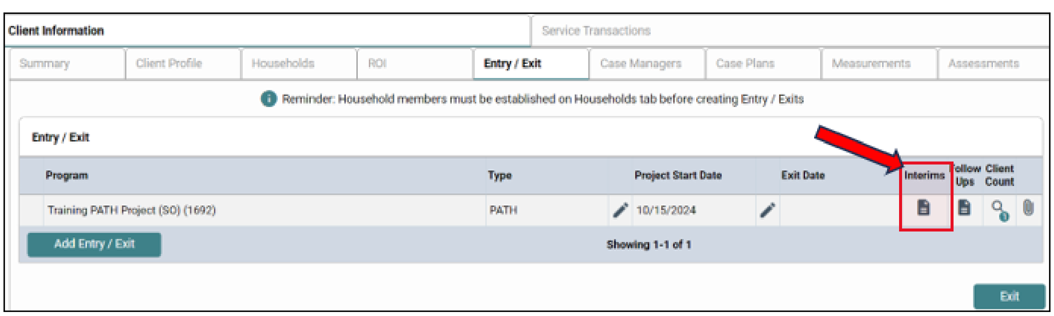


1. Create an Interim Review

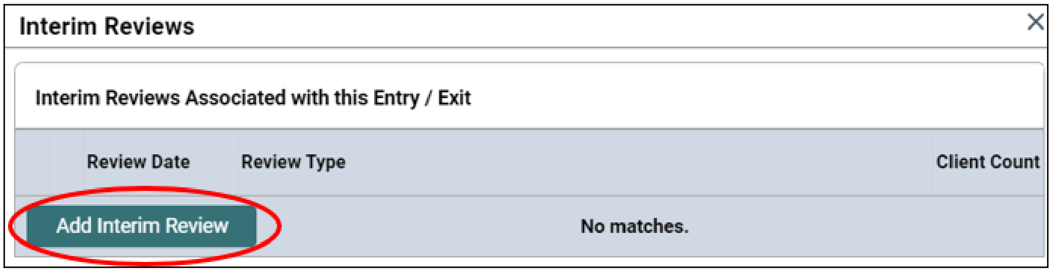
[Click Here](#) to view the HMIS Workflow: Sub-Assessments for more information on completing Interim Review assessments.

a. Click the **Entry / Exit tab**

b. Click the **Interim** icon listed within your project's row



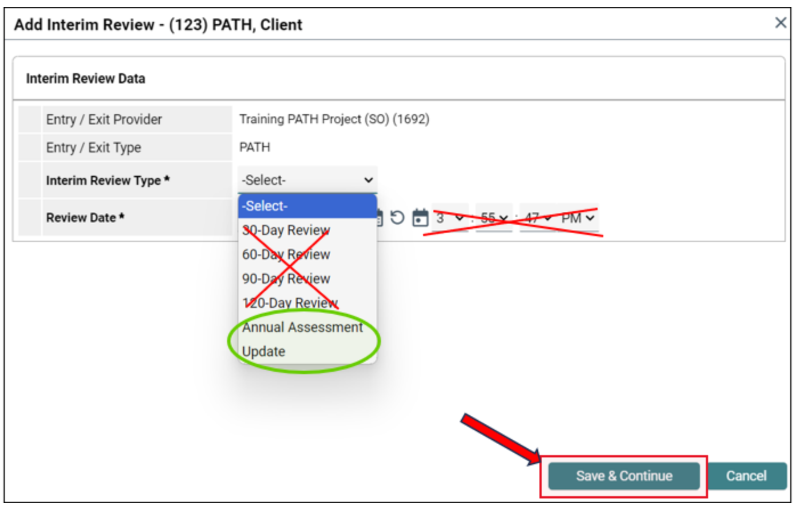
c. Click Add Interim Review



d. Select the **Interim Review Type**

- **Update**: completed anytime information has changed since project entry
- **Annual**: required assessment for all clients remaining in a project after one year; Annual Assessments must be completed within 30 days before or after the Head of Household's project start anniversary date (example: if the HoH entered the project on 3/17/2022, the Annual Assessment would need to be completed between 2/15/2022 and 4/16/2023)
- MD BoS CoC does not use (nor report on) any of the other Interim Type options

e. Click Save & Continue



f. **Add CLS** (***REMEMBER*** - *The CLS Start - Information - End dates are the* ***same as*** *date the Interim assessment is being completed)*

g. Update the assessment information - Click Here to view the HMIS Workflow: Sub-Assessments for more information on completing Interim Review assessments

h. Click Save & Exit

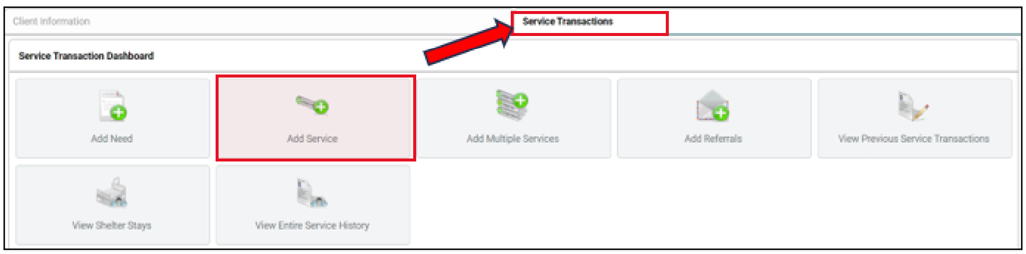
Documenting Services

Services are a specific PATH-funded assessment, benefit, or form of assistance provided to a PATH-enrolled individual. Services are **only reported** for PATH-funded services provided to a PATH-enrolled individual.

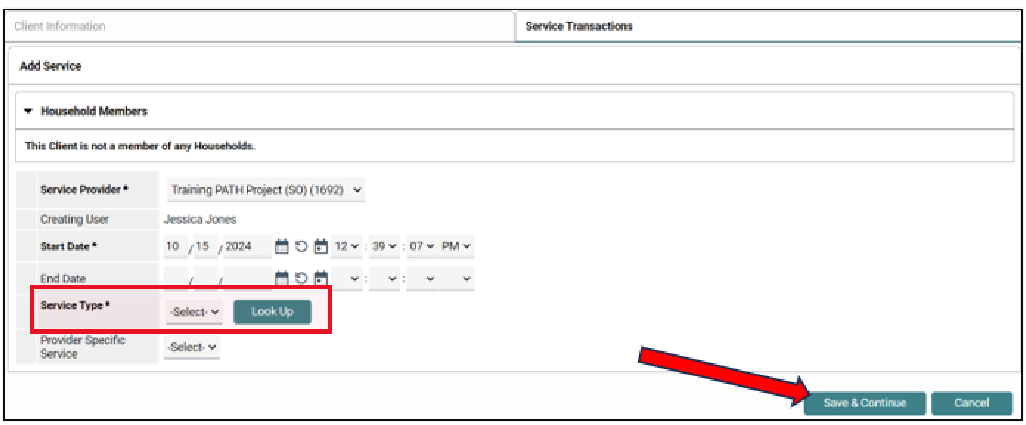
A *PATH-funded* service *only* needs to be **recorded once** for the client while entered into the PATH program, but projects are encouraged to enter all services that are provided to *PATH-enrolled* individuals.

Please refer to the *PATH Services & Referrals Crosswalk Guide* (located on the MD BoS HMIS website) to select the correct HMIS Service / Service Code that corresponds to the PATH-funded service being provided.

- **Create a Service for the client**
  - Click on the **Service Transactions** tab
  - Click **Add Service**

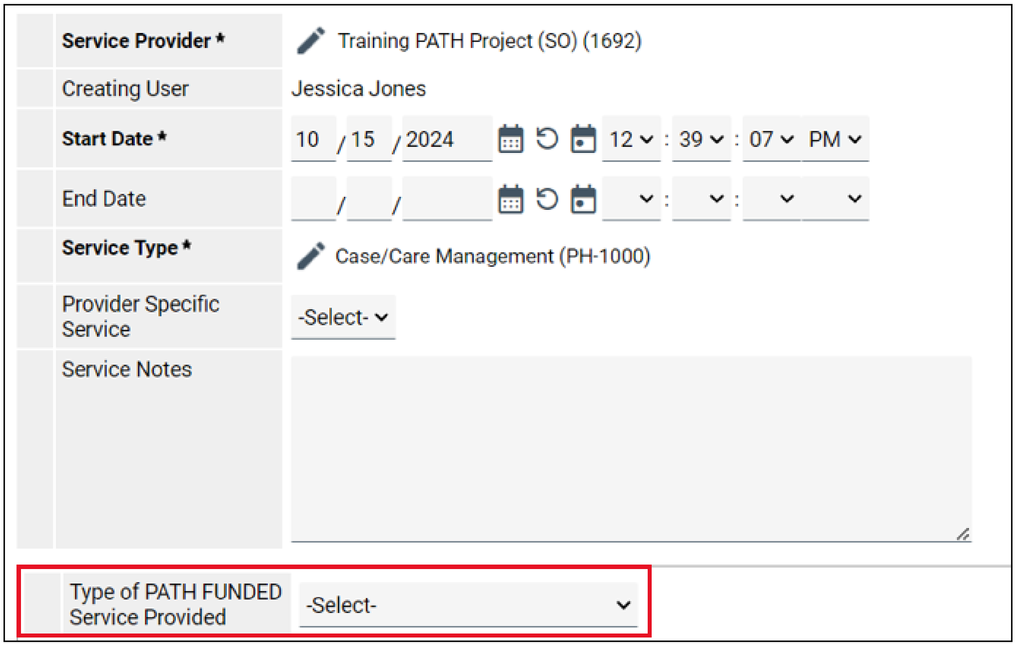


  - Select the **Service Type** from the dropdown menu
  - Click **Save and Continue**



  - Select the **Type of PATH FUNDED Service Provided** from the dropdown.

    *If the *Type of PATH Funded Service Provided* ***is not*** answered, the **service will not** be counted on the PATH report



- Scroll down to the bottom and select the **Need Status and Outcome of Need**

- **Save and Exit**

Documenting Referrals

A *PATH-funded referral* ***may not*** be provided until the client is ***enrolled*** into a PATH project.

- *However, PATH providers may provide non-PATH funded referrals without enrolling someone in PATH and record that referral in HMIS*

To receive credit for a referral on the PATH report:

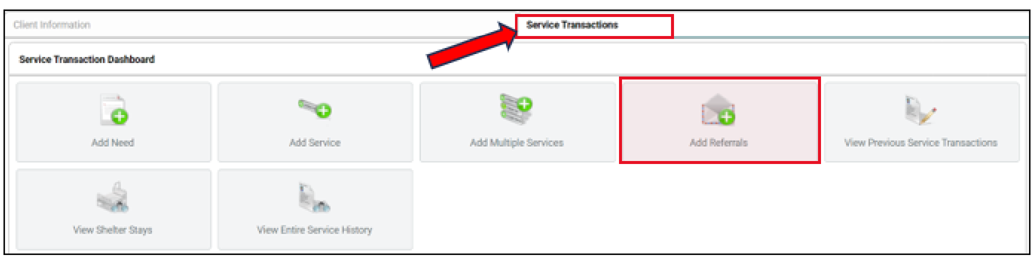
- You **must** answer the Type of PATH Referral
- Additionally, you **must** track the outcome of the referral, which can be completed when adding the referral initially

At project Exit, each referral should be marked as one of the below options:

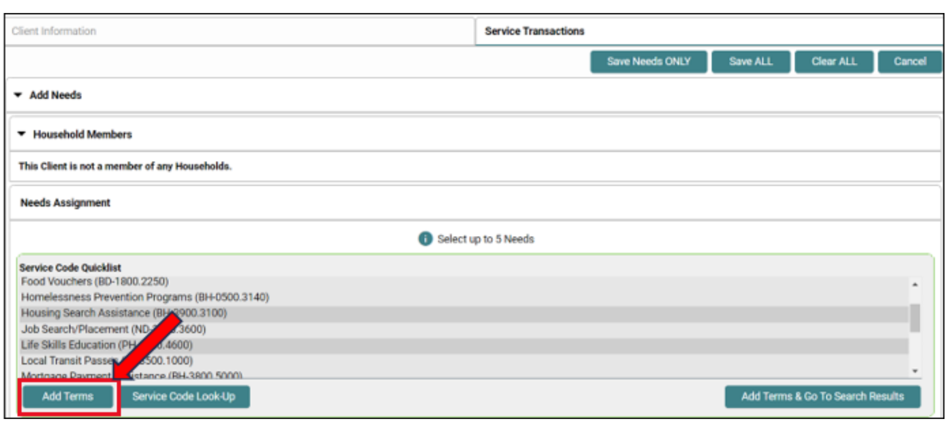
- Attained: Client was connected to and received the service (if the referral is for housing, it is not attained until the housing placement starts).
  A referral has only been attained once the PATH-enrolled client **begins receiving services** as the result of PATH referral
- Not Attained: Client was referred to, but may not have ever been connected with, the service or did not actually receive the service
- Unknown: Status of the client's connection or receipt of service is unknown to the provider entering the data

Please refer to the *PATH Services & Referrals Crosswalk Guide* (located on the MD BoS HMIS website) to select the correct HMIS Service / Service Code that corresponds to the PATH-funded service that the referral is for.

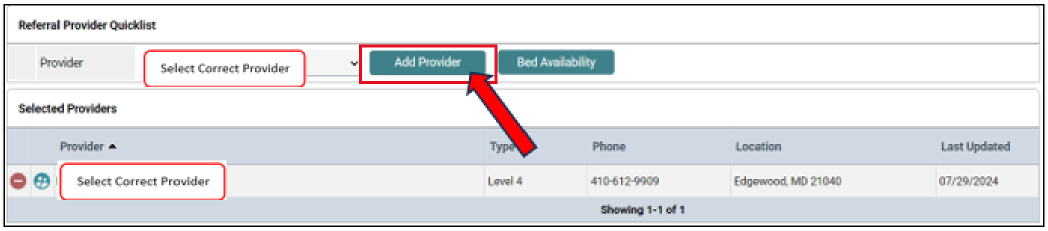
- **Create a Referral for the client**
  - Click on the **Service Transactions** tab
  - Click **Add Referrals**



  - Under **Needs Assignment**, select the Need for which you are making the referral
    - To select more than one Need for the referral, hold the Ctrl key while selecting the needs
  - Click **Add Terms**

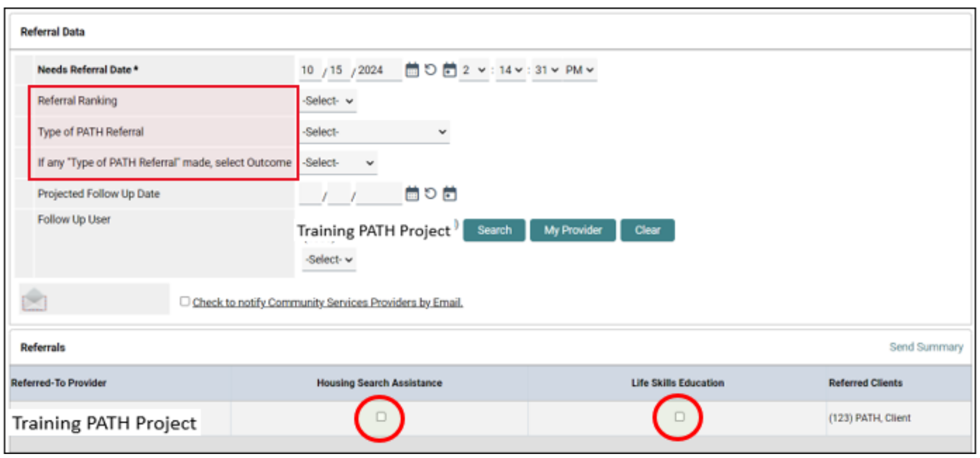


- Under **Referral Provider Quicklist** select the HMIS project that the referral will be assigned to
  - *As majority of PATH referrals created in HMIS are for reporting purposes only & **will not** actually be sent to the selected provider via HMIS, typically you will select your own PATH project for the purpose of documentation*
    - Select the applicable project from the dropdown list & then click **Add Provider**



* *Should your PATH project need to have the referral sent to a specific HMIS Participating Project contact the HMIS Team to get that specific project added to your dropdown list*

- Scroll down to Referral Data
  - Select the **Type of PATH Referral**
  - Answer **If any Type of PATH Referral made, select Outcome**
  - Make sure to *check the box* under each identified Need in the Referrals section

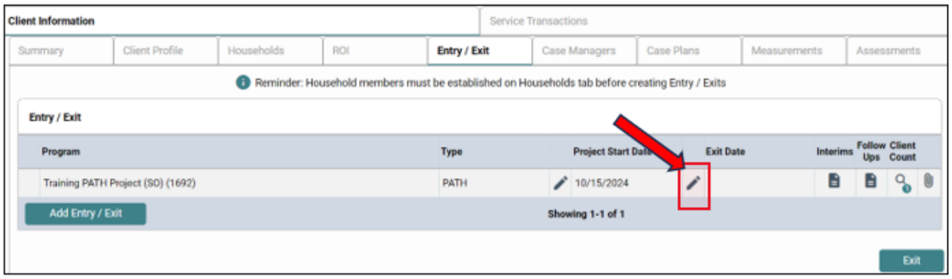


- Click **Save ALL**

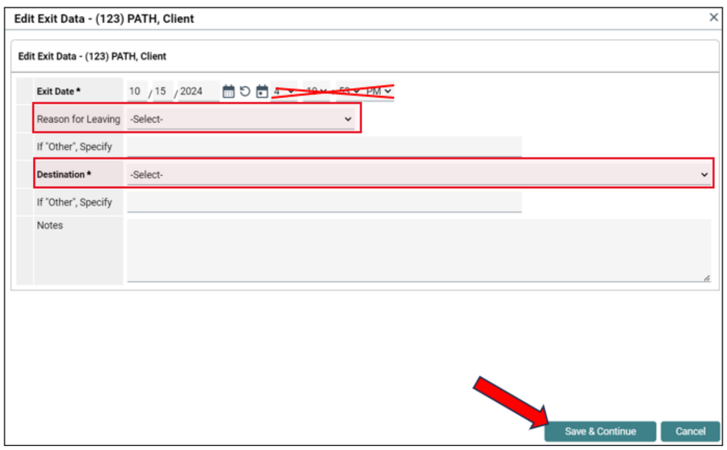
Client Exit from the PATH Project

An Exit is created for the client if the client is not enrolled in the PATH Project or if the client declines further services. Clients who are “Contacted” or “Contacted and Engaged”, but never have a PATH Status determined (Enrollment) will need an Exit from the PATH Project after 90 days of non-contact.

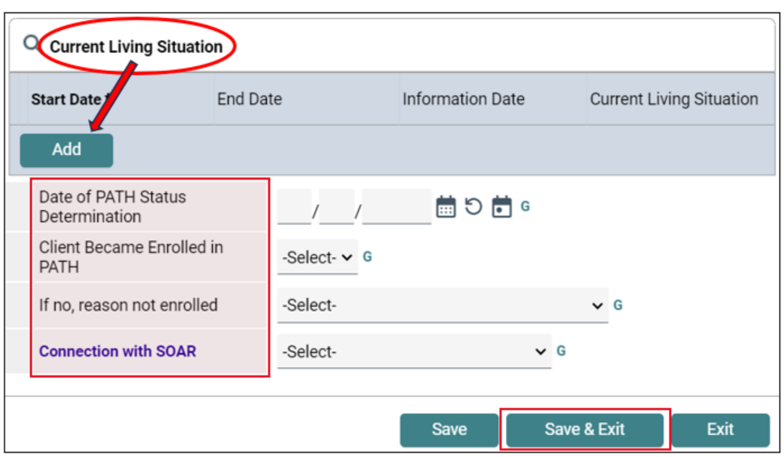
1. **Create the Exit Record**
   a. Click on the Entry / Exit tab
   b. Click the pencil next to the Exit Date column within your project’s row



   c. Select a Reason for Leaving and Destination



   d. Click Save & Continue
   e. Make sure to:
      - Complete a Current Living Situation (if also had contact with client at time of exit)
      - If data has not previously been entered, complete the other PATH specific questions



   f. Click Save & Exit

PATH Project Workflow Checklist

- ✓ Create the client record in HMIS, if the client doesn't already exist in the system
- ✓ Record Project Entry Date and First Date of CLS with the same dates
- ✓ Record all known data elements in the Entry Assessment
- ✓ Record Outreach Service Transactions
- ✓ Record subsequent CLS (contacts) with client in Interim Assessments
- ✓ Enter additional data elements in the Entry Assessment as they become available
- ✓ Record Date of Engagement (only 1 DoE per enrollment)
- ✓ Record PATH Status (Enrollment)
- ✓ Record Service Transactions
- ✓ Record Referrals for services not provided directly by the PATH Project
- ✓ Record Project Exit Date (make sure to record CLS if also had contact with client at exit)

Helpful Tips and Reminders

- As you meet with the client and gather additional client demographic information that was not captured at time project enrollment, include those data elements in the PATH ***Entry*** Assessment
- The difference between updating client information on the *Entry* **vs** *Interim* Assessment:
  - Even if you don't know all of the client's demographic data (i.e. name, gender, DoB, etc.) at the time of project entry, *regardless* of when you do learn this information, the client demographic information is true for a client at the time of their PATH Project Entry Date
    - ***Therefore***, when the client provides this data, you should enter this information on the project *Entry* Assessment
  - Interim Assessments are used for documenting:
    - A CLS each time contact is made with the client
    - DoE (if 'engagement' occurred after date of project enrollment); and
    - For updating any data elements that changed ***after*** the PATH enrollment
      - ➢ Example: PATH client begins receiving SSI after the project enrollment date. Since this data was not true/accurate at the time of the PATH enrollment, the EU will create an Interim Update to document the date that the change in income occurred
- To pull on the ***PATH report***, clients must:
  - Have a **project enrollment** into a ***PATH project***
  - Have a **Date of Engagement** (DoE) that fall ***on / before*** report start date
  - Have **Current Living Situation** (CLS) recorded ***during the report time frame*** (this indicates that client continues to be actively engaged in project)

  ➡ For projects that have CLS as part of HMIS data entry workflow - the CoC's HMIS policy is that:

  🚫 Clients that ***do NOT*** have a **CLS** documented at least *1x every 90-days* are to be ***exited*** from project as they are not actively engaged
- Services and Referrals are not documented as PATH Funded until:
  - *Client Became Enrolled in PATH* is listed as 'YES'; and
  - *Date of PATH Status Determination* is recorded

PATH Workflow Decision Tree