

## Overview Process

The housing and homelessness sector in Simcoe County is implementing a By-Name List in January 2020 as one of the first steps towards building a Coordinated Access System. The By-Name List is a way to track and share information about individuals currently experiencing homelessness. It provides individual-level and community-level information to help us serve individuals better over time, avoid duplication of service, and understand patterns and trends. We will use the By-Name List to inform and design a Coordinated Access System that works for everyone, and advocate for the types of services and housing that are most needed in our communities.

This guide is meant for housing-specific agencies who have been trained in HIFIS. That includes Housing Support, Emergency Shelter, Motel Voucher, and Transitional Housing staff. Later on other agencies and other types of service providers will also be encouraged to use the BNL, but to start only this specific group of agencies needs to use the BNL.

In this first phase, the BNL will be in the form of a spreadsheet accessible only to the BNL Data Manager who is responsible for maintaining it. Client information and updates are submitted securely through Sharepoint. The BNL Data Manager will remove personal information and provide only non-identifying information to the weekly Prioritization Table, who will use objective scoring to determine which individuals have the highest priority to be assigned Housing First case managers.

Additions to the BNL and updates every 30 days will be submitted through Sharepoint, using the Common Intake Form and BNL Update Form. The information also needs to be entered into HIFIS. This is a duplicate process for a temporary period of time, until software changes to HIFIS and service providers' familiarity with using HIFIS enable the BNL to be pulled directly out of HIFIS.

This guide goes through the steps of adding, updating, and removing individuals on the By-Name List, including:

- Privacy and Consent
- BNL Sharepoint Folder
- How to add an individual to the BNL
- How to update an individual on the BNL
- How to refer an individual to the Housing First program
- How to fill in the BNL Update Form

Take a look at [builtforzerosimcoecounty.ca/bnl](http://builtforzerosimcoecounty.ca/bnl) for all the documents you need and more background information.

Contact the BNL Data Manager anytime with questions and suggestions. We want to hear from you!  
Sherry Teeter [bnl@communityconnection.ca](mailto:bnl@communityconnection.ca)

## Security, privacy, consent for personal information

The first step is always for the client to sign a Common Consent Form. This is a standard form across Simcoe County. The same form is used for HIFIS and the BNL.

If a client has already signed a Common Consent Form for HIFIS, you can use it to also add them to the BNL. The Common Consent Form lists 'Coordinated Access System' as one of the services clients are consenting to, which includes the By-Name List.

The Common Consent Form applies to all service providers, so if the client has signed a Common Consent Form with another service provider you can use it to add them to the BNL.

If an individual does not give consent:

- Do not enter them into HIFIS
- Do not submit a Common Intake Form to the BNL
- Serve them as best you can and continue encouraging them to provide consent so they can be part of the shared service system
- If the person gives and signs consent later, continue through the process

See [simcoe.ca/hifis](http://simcoe.ca/hifis) for information about what to do in HIFIS when an individual wants to be anonymous or have their information shared with only one agency. At this time although anonymous clients can be entered in HIFIS, only individuals who give full consent can be included on the By-Name List.

If a client who is already on the By-Name List withdraws their consent, fill in a BNL Update Form and check the box to remove consent. Upload the form to Sharepoint. The BNL Data Manager will confirm with you that the individual has been removed.

Remove from BNL (fill in any known changes)

Withdraw consent

You also need to remove the individual from HIFIS. This needs to be done directly with the County. Have the client sign the Withdrawal of Consent Form saved at [simcoe.ca/hifis](http://simcoe.ca/hifis), and review the Consent Quick Guide for more steps to follow.

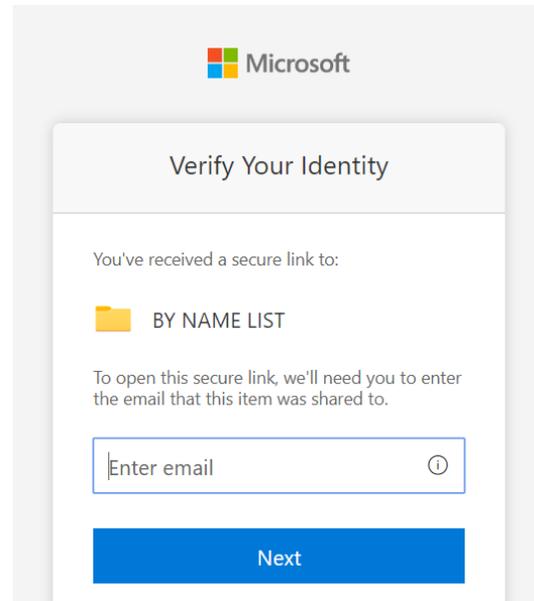
When a client withdraws their consent, no further personal information can be entered into HIFIS. However their information that was already in HIFIS will not be removed.

## By-Name List Sharepoint Folder

Your agency should be set up with a unique URL and a password shared by all staff in the agency. It will be a long URL (starting with simcoecs-my.sharepoint.com). This link is specifically for your agency. If no-one in your agency has this info, contact the BNL Data Manager.

You need:      URL  
                    Username/Email  
                    Password

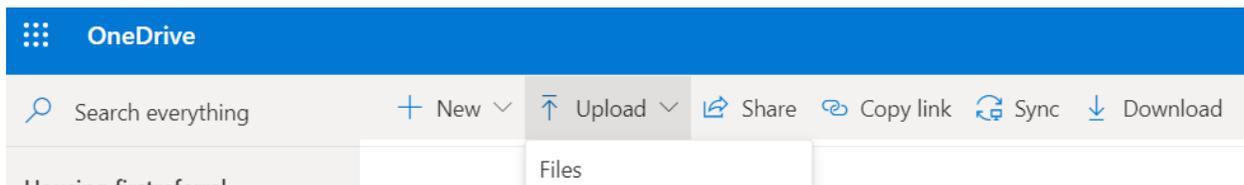
\* If you have previously used Sharepoint to submit Housing First referrals, you will now use the same URL and login for the By-Name List



The Sharepoint folder is hosted by Empower Simcoe, as a secure place to upload and save documents. Please use Sharepoint for all Forms, and only use email for brief and non-sensitive communications about a client on the BNL. When emailing about a client, use their four-digit HIFIS ID# and/or initials.

When you upload a document to your Sharepoint folder, it is automatically mirrored over to the BNL Data Manager so they can access the document. They are the only user beyond your agency who can see that document. The BNL Data Manager uses the forms to update the By-Name List, and saves the documents in Sharepoint for future reference. You can keep forms in your own Sharepoint folder or organize them however you like – the BNL Data Manager’s copy will be saved on their side.

Once you’re signed in to Sharepoint, click on **Upload** to add files.



Files in Sharepoint should be saved with the format : Last Name, First Initial (#HIFIS ID) – Date  
For example:

Doe, J (#1234) – Intake – 20 Dec 2019                      Weasley, R (#9012) – BNL Update – 15 Jan 2020  
Simpson, H (#5678) – Consent – 20 Dec 2019              Griswald, C (#3456) – VI-SPDAT – 11 Feb 2020

\* Because the Common Consent Form and Common Intake Form need to be uploaded to two different places in HIFIS, you will have these two forms as separate documents. Use the same two documents to upload to the BNL Sharepoint folder (you do not need to combine them into one document).

## How to add an individual to the BNL

Add clients who are **currently experiencing homelessness**. For clients who are housed or at risk of homelessness, you can enter them into HIFIS but not onto the BNL.

This is the process to **add new clients to the By-Name List**. We are starting from this point (January 2020) and adding individuals going forward. For **existing clients you are still working with currently**, go through the below process the next time you meet with them. You do not need to retroactively add clients you are no longer actively working with.

Frontline Staff:

Check if the individual is already entered into HIFIS. If not:

- complete Common Consent Form and Common Intake Form
- enter the individual's information into HIFIS
  - upload Common Consent Form in HIFIS to Client Information => Consent
  - upload Common Intake Form in HIFIS to Client Information => Documents
- upload the Common Consent Form and Common Intake Form to Sharepoint

\* include HIFIS ID# on Common Intake Form

\* Common Intake Form must have mandatory fields filled out in order to add individual to the BNL

If the individual is already in HIFIS and working with another service provider, they may have been added to the BNL already. While we are getting started you may not know whether they have been added to the BNL, so check with the service provider who entered the individual into HIFIS or ask the BNL Data Manager.

Once the By-Name List is up and running, we can all assume that someone already entered in HIFIS has also been added to the By-Name List.

Existing clients you are still working with currently:

- Use the same Common Consent Form the individual already signed (upload to Sharepoint)
- If you have a Common Intake Form that is still correct, you can use the same Intake Form to add the individual to the BNL (upload to Sharepoint)
- If there are minor changes to the Common Intake Form, you can use the original Common Intake Form together with a BNL Update Form showing changes (upload both to Sharepoint)
- If the Common Intake Form is quite old and needs a lot of changes, it may be easiest to do a new Common Intake Form to add the individual to the BNL (upload with Common Consent Form to Sharepoint)

BNL Data Manager will:

- access Consent and Intake forms from Sharepoint folder
- add information to BNL spreadsheet

- Confirm with the service provider by email that the individual has been added (or needs missing information in order to be added)
- Include information about the updating process and timeline for updating in the next 30 days

Consent Form and Intake Form remain accessible in Sharepoint to the service provider who submitted them and to the BNL Data Manager

## **How to Update an Individual on the BNL**

When you add an individual to the By-Name List, you are responsible to update their information once per 30 days for as long as you are working with that client and/or for as long as they are actively experiencing homelessness.

The most important part of the BNL is that it is up-to-date and can show changes in real time. Updates from direct service providers are the most important step in the BNL process. Please keep up to date on your updates!

The BNL Data Manager will send reminder emails for individuals who are coming due for an update. Depending on what works best for each agency, these reminders may go to one central staff at the agency or to individual workers, and may be sent throughout the month or all together once per month.

### **Frontline Service Providers**

#### **If you are still working with the person and they have experienced changes in their situation or provided additional information:**

- Complete a BNL Update Form with any information that has changed since Intake or since the last update. There's no need to re-enter information that is still the same, only enter changes
- Also enter changes into HIFIS to keep the client's profile up to date
- Upload the BNL Update Form to Sharepoint
  - If the individual is being referred to the Housing First Program, upload a VI-SPDAT summary sheet to the same folder in Sharepoint. If the individual has already been referred to Housing First, upload an updated VI-SPDAT whenever one is available

#### **If you are still working with the person but there have been no significant changes since the last update:**

- Email the BNL Data Manager at [bnl@communityconnection.ca](mailto:bnl@communityconnection.ca) to confirm that you are still working with the person and there are no updates. When communicating by email please use the individual's HIFIS ID# and/or initials (Last Name, First Initial), not their full name. Please do not include any significant information about an individual's personal situation in an email.

## **How to refer an individual to the Housing First program**

If an individual is eligible and wants to be referred to the Housing First program, the referral is a part of the same BNL Update process. They need to be on the By-Name List before being referred to Housing First

- Complete all information on the third page of the BNL Update Form, including a signature from the client (signature is required for initial referral only, not every update)
- When you upload the BNL Update Form to Sharepoint, also upload a VI-SPDAT summary sheet

## **How to update an individual already referred to Housing First**

By-Name List updates apply both to the BNL and the Prioritization List that is used for Housing First openings. When you submit a BNL Update, the individual's information will be updated for their Housing First referral at the same time

If an individual has already been referred to the Housing First program, upload a new VI-SPDAT summary sheet to the BNL Sharepoint folder whenever one is available

## **If the person has moved into housing, moved out of Simcoe County, withdrawn their consent to be on the BNL, or is no longer receiving service for any other reason:**

- Complete a BNL Update Form with the relevant checkbox checked at the top of the form. Include as much information on the rest of the form as you can, ie if they moved into housing, what type of housing is it and in which community?
- Also enter changes into HIFIS to keep the client's profile up to date
- Upload the BNL Update Form to Sharepoint

After completing these steps, you are no longer responsible for updating this individual on the BNL. If they move back into homelessness or come back into service with a different agency, the service provider who next has contact with them will complete and submit a BNL Update Form. The individual's past information will be re-activated on the BNL at that time.

**If you have not been in contact with the person in the last 30 days and are not able to reach them:**

- Email the BNL Data Manager at [bnl@communityconnection.ca](mailto:bnl@communityconnection.ca) to say that you have not been in contact. When communicating by email please use the individual's HIFIS ID# and/or initials (Last Name, First Initial), not their full name
- Continue trying to contact the person to get an update, and complete a BNL Update Form when you can
- You may need to coordinate with other service providers who are also working with the individual, or it may make more sense for a different service provider to complete the BNL Update instead of you

**If you have not been in touch with the individual for 90 days**, they will be made inactive on the BNL and you will no longer be responsible for updating their information. If they start working with you or another service provider again, their past information will still be available on the BNL to re-activate and add to. The service provider who next comes into contact with the person will submit a BNL Update Form.

**BNL Data Manager will:**

- Send reminders to service providers to submit monthly updates for their clients
- Use BNL Update Forms to change and add information on the BNL, and remove or inactivate individuals
- the BNL spreadsheet tracks changes over time, including the individual's length of time homeless

Personal information added to the BNL will not be shared.

- Aggregate data (community-level information not associated with the person's name or other identifiers) will be used to track trends, changes, and demographics in the community. These trends and changes will be shared with the housing service community
- Non-identifying information about individuals who are referred to Housing First will be viewed by regional representatives on the Prioritization Table, in order to assign individuals to available Housing First case management spots
- Personal information about individuals on the BNL should match information in HIFIS. Service providers can access information in HIFIS when needed to provide service to a client

## BNL Key Messages

### Script for Frontline Service Providers to use with Clients

March 2020

**The By-Name List is an up-to-date list of people currently experiencing homelessness in Simcoe County.**

By-Name Lists are used around North America by communities working to end chronic homelessness.

The By-Name List helps to provide better service, avoid duplicating services, and also to give us a better understanding of what services we need in the community.

The Common Consent Form is used to share your personal information with housing service providers. Giving your consent means that your information is entered into a Simcoe County-wide software called HIFIS and is added to the By-Name List.

Your personal information will be available (in HIFIS) to other housing service providers you may work with. They can access your information so you don't need to answer the same questions again.

Your personal information can only be accessed by housing service providers who are trained in privacy standards and who need your information because they are providing a service to you. They're not going to look at your personal information unless they are working with you.

Information with your personal identifiers removed is also used to track community-level changes and needs, so we can advocate for more services and reduce homelessness.

The By-Name List is not a waitlist for housing. You will still be able to access other ongoing services working towards housing.

It's a way to keep track of your information over time, to provide better service.

The By-Name List is also used to prioritize individuals for Housing First case management services. If you want to be added to the list for Housing First case management spots that come up, you need to be on the By-Name List.

You need to stay in touch with me (or other service providers) so we can keep your information up to date over time. If you're not in contact, you will end up being inactive on the list until we see you again.

\* For more information about consent, read the full Common Consent Form

### What is a By-Name List?

A By-Name List is an up-to-date list of all people currently experiencing homelessness. The BNL can be used to determine appropriate service referrals, to track the progress of individuals accessing service as they transition out of homelessness, and to track the community's progress towards functional zero of chronic homelessness.

The BNL is used both for information on a personal level and community level. A quality By-Name List contains all the information necessary to effectively move people through a coordinated access system, and to reliably show changes in inflow, outflow and actively homeless to improve services and reduce chronic homelessness.

The most important part of the BNL is that it is up-to-date and can show changes in real time. Updates from direct service providers are the most important step in the BNL process.

### Who is supposed to use the BNL right now?

The initial By-Name List process is meant to be used by housing-specific agencies who are funded by the County of Simcoe and have been trained in HIFIS. Service providers who can add clients to the BNL work in those designated Emergency Shelters, Motel Voucher, Transitional Housing, and Housing Support Programs.

We are limiting BNL referrals to this group so that we can work out an efficient process and get used to the BNL, before expanding the process to include all other housing-specific agencies and even non-housing agencies in related service areas including health. In the future more agencies and more types of service providers will be encouraged to contribute to the BNL.

### Which clients do I need to add to the BNL?

The BNL includes people who are **currently experiencing homelessness** and **have given consent** to share their information.

People who are at risk for homelessness or have moved out of homelessness can be entered into HIFIS, but will not be on the BNL unless currently homeless.

The BNL is meant to include all people currently experiencing homelessness, so you should add anyone you come into contact with. But if the individual is working with more than one agency, it is best for the agency with the longest-term relationship or most consistent contact to add the person to the BNL and keep their information up to date. You may need to coordinate with other BNL service providers to confirm that they can add the individual to the BNL rather than you, for example if you only see the individual for brief service one time.

### **Where does client information go? Who has access to individuals' personal information?**

The BNL Data Manager maintains the list securely in a private spreadsheet file, and does not share the full BNL.

The weekly Prioritization Table group uses a list with all personal identifying information removed to decide which individuals have the highest priority to be assigned to Housing First case management. After an individual is assigned, their information is given to the HF Case Manager.

All service providers who contribute to the BNL have access to see and share client information in HIFIS when they need to. Information in HIFIS should match the updated client information submitted to the BNL.

Demographic and housing information about individuals is also used to track and report on trends and changes on a community level. The housing service provider community will get updates regularly about our collective progress towards reducing chronic homelessness, and key highlights and changes over time.

### **What benefit is there for clients to be added to the By-Name list?**

The BNL is important for tracking information both on a community level and individual level. It will show us more details about the current situation of people who are experiencing chronic homelessness, and the month-to-month changes in people coming into and moving out of chronic homelessness. We will use this information to build a coordinated access system, advocate for the specific services that are most needed, and track our progress towards functional zero.

The BNL uses the same Common Consent Form and is connected with HIFIS, where service providers can more easily share information so that clients don't need to answer the same questions over and over. Individual information on the BNL will be used to prioritize people for the Housing First case management program, and in the future for other programs and services that meet various levels and types of needs.

A lot of the concrete benefits of a quality By-Name List will come after it is fully-functioning and as we continue to take more steps towards a Coordinated Access System. Right now the benefit of the BNL is more about building up our collective systems.

### **What if a client refuses to provide consent? How does a client get service if they don't consent to being on the BNL?**

If an individual does not consent to their information being shared, they cannot be entered into HIFIS, cannot be added to the BNL, and cannot be referred to the Housing First Program. Serve them as best you can and continue to engage with them to provide consent to be part of the shared service system.

### **What if a client removes consent after they are already on the BNL?**

If an individual withdraws their consent, complete a BNL Update form and check the box to *Remove from BNL - Withdraw Consent*. Submit it to the Sharepoint folder. The By-Name List Data Manager will confirm with you that the individual has been removed from the BNL.

In this situation you also need to remove the individual from HIFIS. See [simcoe.ca/hifis](http://simcoe.ca/hifis) for more details.

### **Why do we need to fill out multiple different forms, use HIFIS, and do a VI-SPDAT?**

When HIFIS is being fully used across the County and after software changes have been made specifically for the BNL, we will start pulling the By-Name List directly from HIFIS. There will no longer be any need to duplicate entry into HIFIS as well as entry onto the BNL through Sharepoint. This process is temporary while we get familiar with using a BNL and while all service providers get comfortable using HIFIS.

The VI-SPDAT is a common assessment tool that measures an individual's acuity and level of need. Assessment needs to be consistent across different agencies and areas of Simcoe County. VI-SPDATs will continue to be an important part of our future Coordinated Access System. An individual does not need to have completed a VI-SPDAT to be added to the BNL, but does need to have a VI-SPDAT to be prioritized for Housing First case management.

### **What is the difference between the BNL and HIFIS?**

HIFIS is a Homeless Management Information System that can include different types of clients and detailed case notes and history. The BNL is an up-to-date list of clients who are currently homeless, with key personal information and summary information about significant changes over time.

HIFIS may have a lot more detail than the BNL for each individual. HIFIS also includes individuals who are not on the BNL because they are not currently experiencing homelessness.

### **How do I know if a client is already on the By-Name List?**

When you meet with a new client, check if they are already entered into HIFIS and have a Common Consent Form saved in HIFIS. If they are, update their information in HIFIS, and submit a BNL Update Form with any new information to the BNL Sharepoint folder.

If they are not in HIFIS, they are not on the BNL. Enter the client into HIFIS and submit a Common Consent Form and Common Intake Form to the BNL Sharepoint folder.

At the beginning while we are getting the BNL set up, there may be existing clients who were already entered into HIFIS but have not yet been added to the BNL. For your clients who were or are also working with other BNL service providers, contact them or check with the BNL Data Manager [bnl@communityconnection.ca](mailto:bnl@communityconnection.ca)

### **Do I need to refer to the BNL and Housing First separately?**

The referral process for the Regional Housing First Program is now combined with the new BNL process. When you have decided that a client is eligible for and wants to be referred to the Housing First Program for case management, fill out a BNL Update Form with additional details on the last page, and also submit an up-to-date VI-SPDAT summary page. The client needs to already be on the BNL, then be referred to the Housing First Program once you know enough about them to make a referral.

Your regular monthly updates using the BNL Update Form serve to update both the By-Name List and the Prioritization List used for Housing First.

### **Once someone is on the BNL, how do I change their status and update their information?**

Individuals on the BNL need to be updated once per 30 days, to provide information about significant changes or to confirm that the service provider is still actively working with the client. Fill in the BNL Update Form with information that has changed from the Common Intake Form or past updates, and upload it to Sharepoint. If there are no changes you can provide a simple update by email to the BNL Data Manager rather than filling in the Update Form.

It is also important to update individuals sooner than 30 days, if they experience a significant life change. The most important update to submit is when a person has been successfully housed and is no longer homeless.

When you add an individual to the BNL, you will be responsible for keeping them up to date for as long as you are working with that individual. When a client is no longer in touch with you or is working primarily with another agency, that agency will be responsible for updating the client's information. You may need to be in contact with other service providers to coordinate who is the best source of up-to-date information.

### **How do I explain the BNL properly to my clients so they know they won't receive direct service by being on the list? So they know it's not a waitlist for housing?**

Take a look at the suggested Script for service providers to use with clients. It gives tips on how to explain what the BNL is, where information goes and how it is used.

Keep in mind that the BNL will be used for more over time, as we build a Coordinated Access System in Simcoe County. Right now it is used to track personal information, track community-level changes, and to prioritize people for the Housing First case management program.

### **Who can I talk to about questions, concerns and suggestions?**

Find all the documents and forms you need on the BNL Support Page at [builtforzerosimcoecounty.ca/bnl](http://builtforzerosimcoecounty.ca/bnl)

Contact the By-Name List Data Manager anytime - Sherry Teeter [bnl@communityconnection.ca](mailto:bnl@communityconnection.ca)