Homeless Services Department

Multnomah Screening Services Tool (MSST) HMIS Data Entry Handbook

This handbook provides instructions on the data entry workflow for the MSST in HMIS.

Have questions?

- For assistance with programmatic Coordinated Access questions or questions related to specific MSST assessments:
  - Contact adultca@multco.us for adult-only households.
  - Contact familyca@multco.us for families with minor children households.
- For assistance with technical HMIS questions, contact hmishelp@multco.us.

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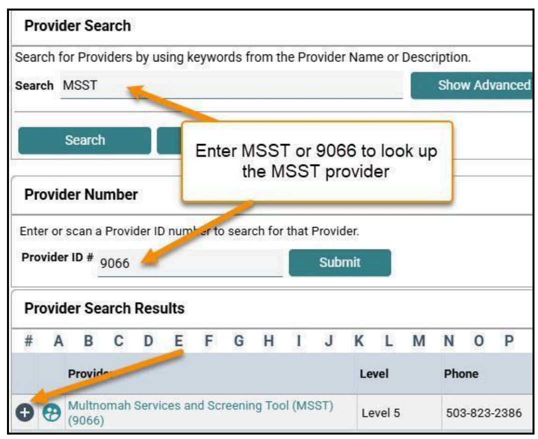
Before adding any new MSST data, check the Entry/Exit tab in the participant's record to confirm whether the participant already has an open MSST entry.

> *If the participant already has an open MSST entry, DO NOT CREATE A NEW ONE. Contact adultca@multco.us or familyca@multco.us for assistance.*
>
> *If you believe the participant already has a MSST entry in HMIS but you cannot see it, request assistance at hmishelp@multco.us.*

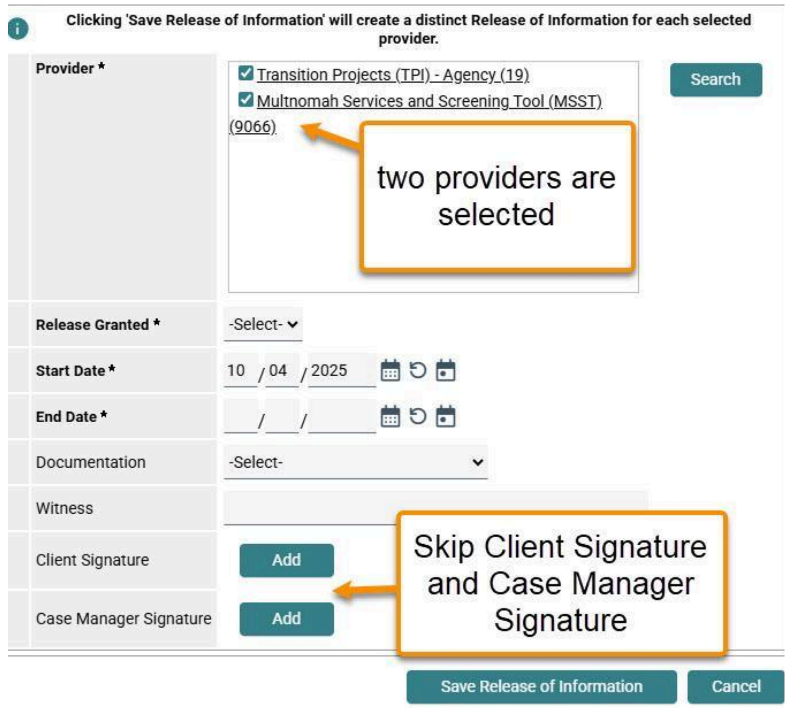
Release of Information

- Click **ROI** from main menu bar, then click **Add Release of Information**
- *Only include the Head of Household. Leave other household members unchecked.*



- **Provider:** The default selection is your login provider (your agency). To add the MSST provider:
  - Click **Search** next to your login provider**.**
  - Look up the MSST provider by entering "MSST" in the search field. Then click **Search**. Alternatively, enter **9066** in the provider ID # field.
  - Click **the green plus sign** to add the provider.
    - Both your login provider and the MSST provider now appear in the *Provider Search Select Results* section. Keep both providers.
  - Click **Exit**.

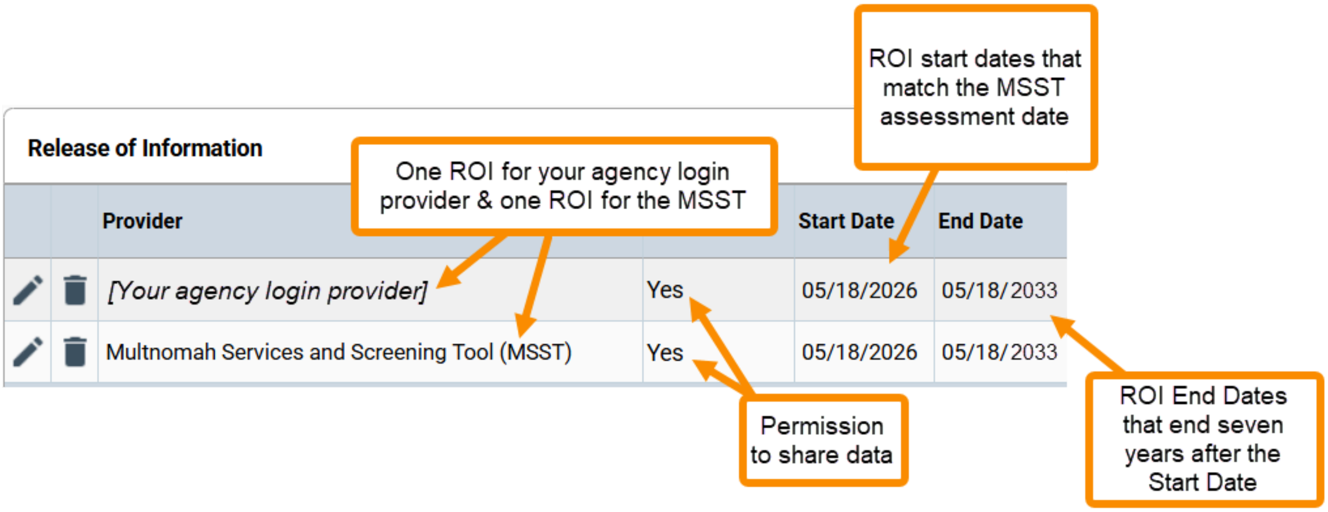
On the next screen, enter information as follows:



- **Release Granted:** Select Yes or No based on whether the participant agreed to share data or not.
- **Start date:** the ROI start date *must* equal the program start date *even if consent was collected on a different day.*
- **End date: 7 years** after the start date.
- **Documentation:** Select Verbal Consent.
- **Witness:** Enter the name of the person identified in the Witness field of the Verbal ROI form.
- **Client Signature:** Skip this.
- **Case Signature:** Skip this.
- Click **Save Release of Information.**

Wellsky added the new ROI buttons in early August, 2026. HSD does not require the use of these buttons. Data added to Client Signature and Case Manager Signature will not be migrated to Clarity HMIS.

Correctly entered ROIs look like this:



Create MSST Entry

- Click the **Entry/Exit** tab. Then, click **Add Entry/Exit**.

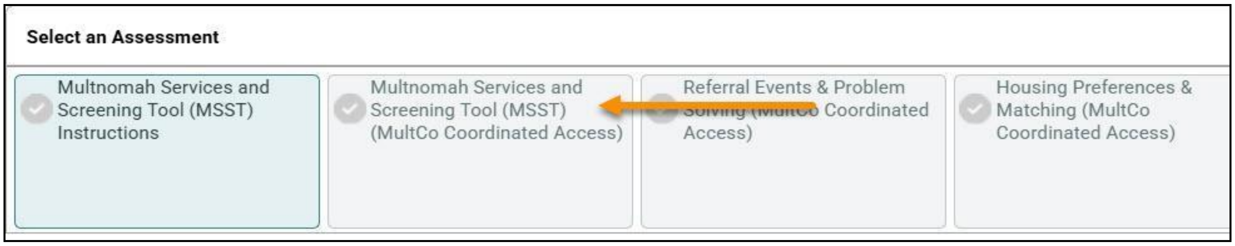
Only include the head of household in the MSST entry. Leave other household members unchecked. There is a question in the MSST that asks how many members are in their household, so this should only be created for one household member, the head of household.

- **Provider:** Defaults to your agency login provider. Click **Search** to look up the MSST provider by entering “MSST” in the *Search* field. Then, click **Search**.
- Click **the**  to the left of the MSST provider (#9066).

Back on the *Project Start Data* screen:

- **Type**: Select “Basic”.
- **Project Start Date**: Enter the MSST assessment date.
- Click **Save & Continue**.

Enter assessment data: Multnomah Services and Screening Tool (MSST).



- Review the formatting key at the top of the MSST assessment to understand the meaning of different text formats:

Formatting Key (Read to learn how to interpret the different text formats below.)

Text that is bold, black and underlined indicates a section header.

Text that is indented, blue and in italics indicates an instruction for you (the assessor). You should not read this kind of text to the participant.

Text that is black and in italics is helper text that you should read to the participant.

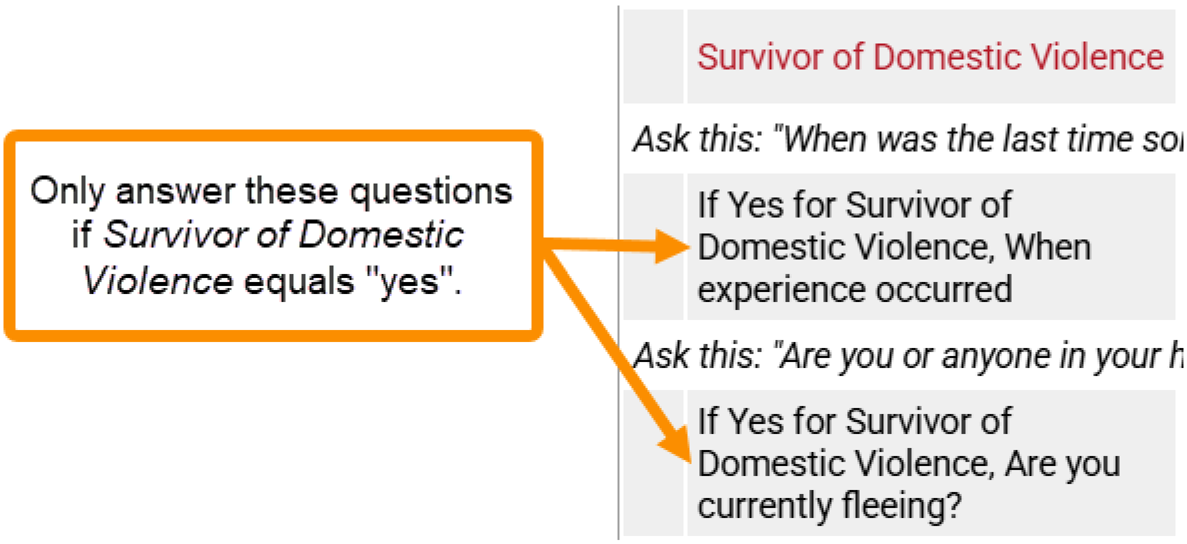
1. **Screening Questions**
   - Ask and collect answers from participants. **Do not assume the answers to any questions**.
   - Stop the assessment and exit participants from the MSST in one of the following scenarios:
     - Participants are unable to complete the assessment for health or safety reasons.
     - Participants refuse to complete the assessment.
     - Participants are ineligible for Coordinated Access.

2. **What are your pronouns (select all that apply)**
   - Click **Add** and enter a response.
   - Leave the default **Start Date**, which matches the MSST Start Date.
   - **What are your pronouns?:** Select the best response.
   - **Write-in Response:** Only answer this question if you answered “Other (write-in below)” to the previous question.
   - **End Date:** Leave blank.

- If the participant uses multiple sets of pronouns (e.g. both He/Him & They/Them), click **Save and Add Another.** Repeat as needed.
- When all pronouns have been entered, click **Save**.

3. Survivor of Domestic Violence

- If the answer to Survivor of Domestic Violence is “yes”, answer the next two questions as well. Otherwise, skip them.

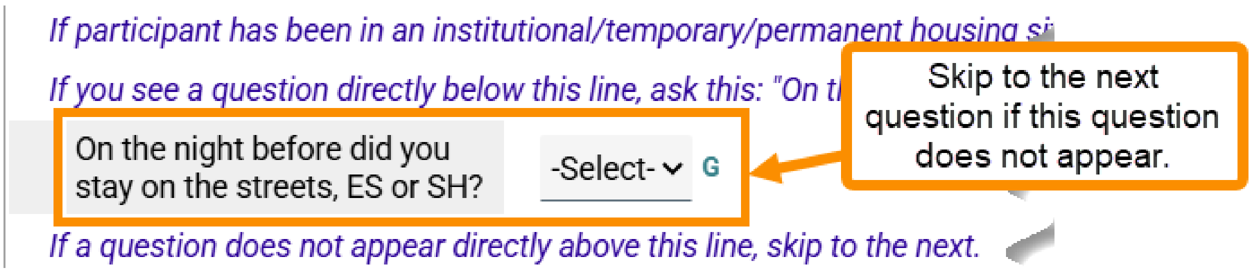


4. Prior/Current Living Situation

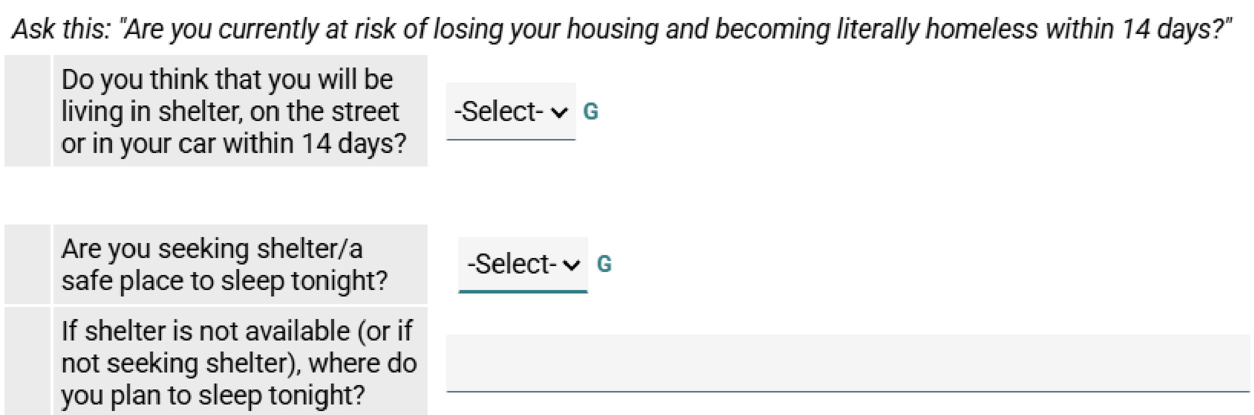
- **Where did you sleep last night?:** Enter the response provided by the participant.
- **Prior Living Situation:** This is the place the participant stayed *on the day of the MSST assessment*. Select the most appropriate response from the dropdown.
  - **Rental Subsidy Type:** This question only appears if the answer to *Prior Living Situation* is “Rental by client, with ongoing housing subsidy.”
- **Length of Stay in Previous Place:** Select the most appropriate response from the dropdown.
  - Note: Another question may appear directly below this question, based on previous answers.

        - If the question reads “Did you stay less than 90 days?”, it will be automatically answered and you can’t edit it.
        - If the question reads “Did you stay less than 7 nights”, answer accordingly.

- **On the night before did you stay on the streets, ES or SH?:** This question only appears if the participant has a *Prior Living Situation* in an institutional setting and stayed there for less than 90 days. This question looks like this:



- The three remaining questions in this section are as follows:



    - Answer these questions.
        - The top two questions (“Do you think…” & “Are you seeking…”) are essential to help determine if a Family Shelter Waitlist entry should be created for the participant. See the *Create Family Shelter Waitlist (FSWL) Entry* section below for more information.

5. Household Size and Composition

- **Relationship to Head of Household:** *This question does not appear on the PDF version of the MSST but should be answered in HMIS.*
    - Select “Self (head of household)” for all MSST entries.

- *Note:* Household members who are not heads of household should be excluded from MSST entries. If multiple household members complete MSST assessments individually, create a separate MSST entry for each person.

- The next four questions are as follows:

	Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?
	Of those, how many are under age 18?
	How many of those children are younger than 5 years old?
	Are there any children under 18 that are not currently in your household but are likely to join your household in the future? This includes any children who would live with you if you moved to a different housing situation.

The second and fourth questions ("Of those, how many…" & "Are there any children…") are essential to help determine if a Family Shelter Waitlist entry should be created for the participant. See the *Create Family Shelter Waitlist (FSWL) Entry* section below for more information.

- The final two questions in this section are as follows:

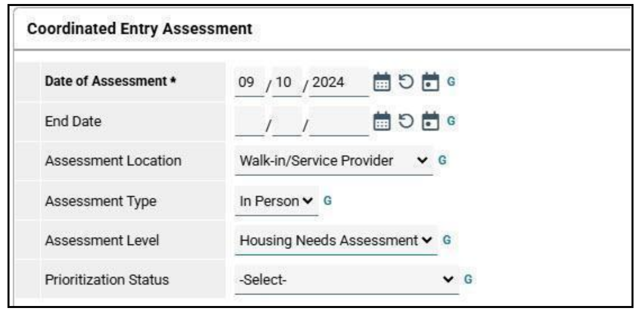
	Is anyone in your household currently pregnant or expecting a new child in the next 9 months?
	Including yourself, how many adults in your household are 55 years old or older?

Answer both of these questions.

- Read & follow the helper text in blue.
    - *Only proceed to the next section if the helper text indicates that you should do so.*
    - If the helper text indicates that you should *not* proceed, scroll to the bottom of the assessment, then click **Save & Exit.**

6. Coordinated Entry Assessment

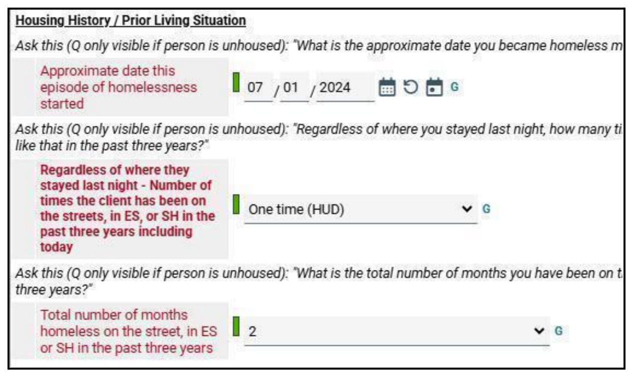
Click **Add** and answer the following:



- **Date of Assessment:** Enter the date of the MSST assessment.
- **End date:** leave blank
- **Assessment Location:** select one
- **Assessment Type:** select one
- **Assessment Level:** Select “Housing Needs Assessment.”
- **Prioritization Status:** leave blank.
- Click **Save**.

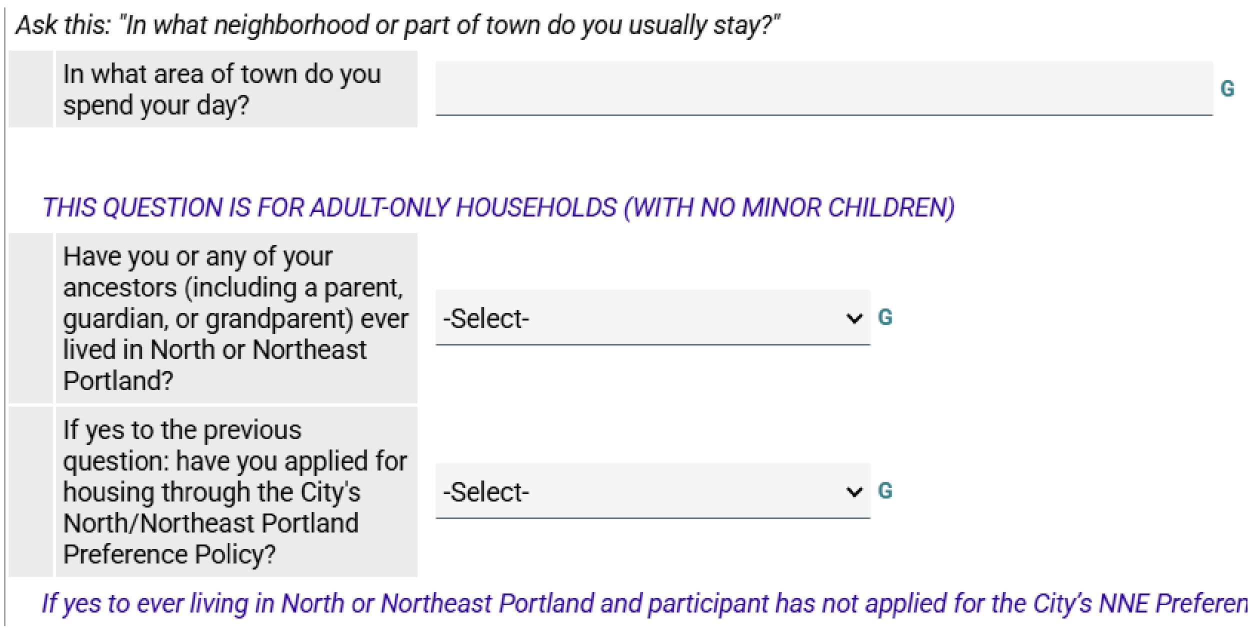
7. Housing History/Prior Living Situation

Three questions appear in this section only if the Prior Living Situation question above identifies a “homeless situation”. See screenshot.



- If these questions do not appear, skip to the next visible question.
- If these questions do appear, answer all three.
    - Note: It’s important that these questions are consistent with one another. For example, if someone’s *Approximate date this episode of homelessness started* is a date from more than 12 months ago, the answer to *Total numbers of months homeless on the street, in ES or SH in the past three years* should be “More than 12 months.”
    - For *“Regardless of where you stayed last night, how many times have you been on the street, in shelters, on someone’s couch, or anything like that in the past three years?”*
        - This is about episodes of homelessness: the number of times they have been housed and unhoused in the last three years.

        - If they were housed, then went to shelter, were housed again, and then returned to shelter, you would mark “Two times”.
        - If they have been continuously unhoused in the last 3 years, you would mark “One time”.
- The final three questions in this section are as follows:


Ask this: "In what neighborhood or part of town do you usually stay?"

In what area of town do you spend your day?		G

THIS QUESTION IS FOR ADULT-ONLY HOUSEHOLDS (WITH NO MINOR CHILDREN)

Have you or any of your ancestors (including a parent, guardian, or grandparent) ever lived in North or Northeast Portland?	-Select-	G
If yes to the previous question: have you applied for housing through the City's North/Northeast Portland Preference Policy?	-Select-	G

If yes to ever living in North or Northeast Portland and participant has not applied for the City's NNE Preferen

- **In what area of town do you spend your day?**: Enter the participant’s response.
- The last two questions are for adult-only households. Skip these questions for family households.

8. Income

- **Annual Income:** Enter the total household income, including **all** household members.
- **Household Area Median Income (“HH AMI”):** To calculate the household’s Area Median Income (HH AMI), visit https://www.portland.gov/phb/income-rent-and-utility-limits
    - Note: Please notify us at hmishelp@multco.us if the above url is broken.

9. Demographic Information

- **Date of Birth:** Enter the actual birthdate if possible. If the participant does not want to share their actual birthdate, ask to use an approximate birthdate. Leave DOB blank if participants prefer not to answer.
- **Date of Birth Type:** Select the most appropriate response.
- **What is your age range?:** Select a self-reported age range.

10. Gender and Race & Ethnicity

Hold the "Ctrl" on PC or "Cmd" key on Mac and select multiple options, if necessary.

To learn more about the Gender and Race & Ethnicity write-in fields, visit these websites:

https://johs.us/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Gender-Write-Ins-in-HMIS_Mar2024.pdf

https://johs.us/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Race-Write-Ins-in-HMIS_Mar2024.pdf

11. Other MSST Sections

Complete each of the following sections:

Do not assume participant answers based on your own observations.

- Health
- Eviction History
- Documentation Accessibility
- Legal Challenges
- Social Support
- Contact Information
- Secondary Contact Person (optional)
- Participant Feedback Survey
- Assessor Information and Observation

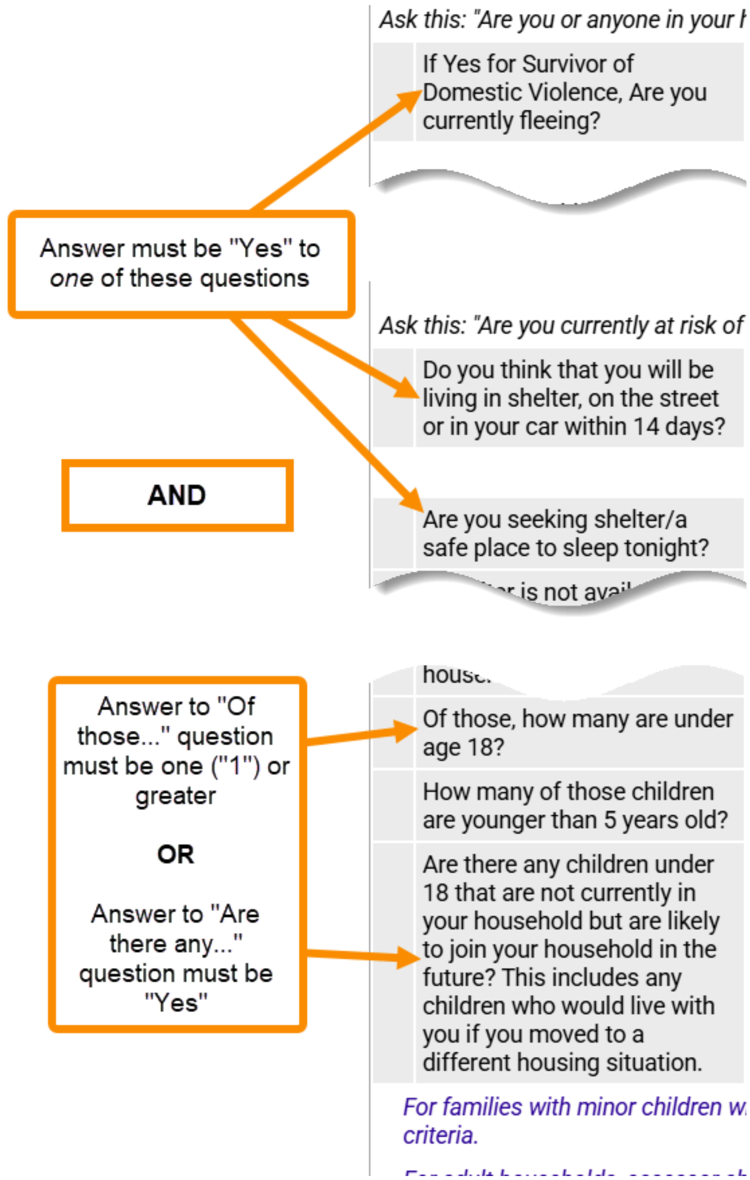
- When *all* sections are completed, click **Save & Exit**.
- See the next section called "Create Family Shelter Waitlist (FSWL) Entry" to determine if a FSWL entry needs to be created.

Create Family Shelter Waitlist (FSWL) Entry

After completing the data entry for the MSST, ***create an FSWL entry only if****:*

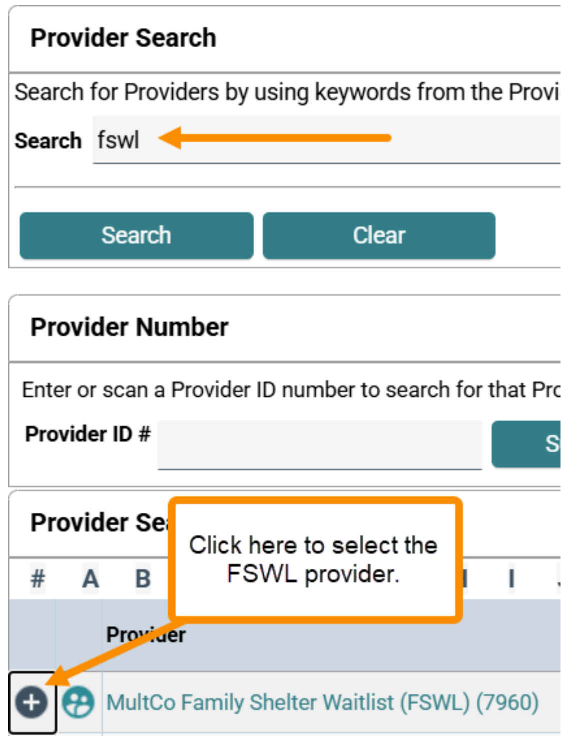
- *The household has an open MSST entry (i.e. lacking an Exit Date)* **AND**
- *The household is fleeing DV (Q6b)* **OR** is *currently at risk of losing housing and becoming literally homeless within 14 days (Q10)* **OR** *is seeking shelter (Q11)* **AND**
- *The household includes one or more kids under 18 years of age (Q13)* **OR** *there are children under 18 that are not currently in your household but are likely to join the household in the future (Q14)*

These criteria are described (without reference to the open MSST entry) in the screenshot on the next page.



To create an FSWL entry:

- While still within the HoH's Entry/Exit Tab, click **Add Entry/Exit**.
    - <u>Only include the HoH for this entry</u>.
    - Household members that are not the HoH should *not* get FSWL entries.



- Select FSWL provider. To do this, click **Search**.
- Enter "FSWL" in the Search field (or "7960" in the Provider ID field).
- Click the  sign next to the FSWL provider.

On the next screen:

- **Entry/Exit Type:** Basic
- **Project State Date:** Date the MSST assessment is completed.
- Click **Save & Continue**.

MSST assessment data will appear in many of the fields in the FSWL assessment. Verify the information is accurate.
Answer any questions that are blank.

- Once done, click **Save & Exit**.

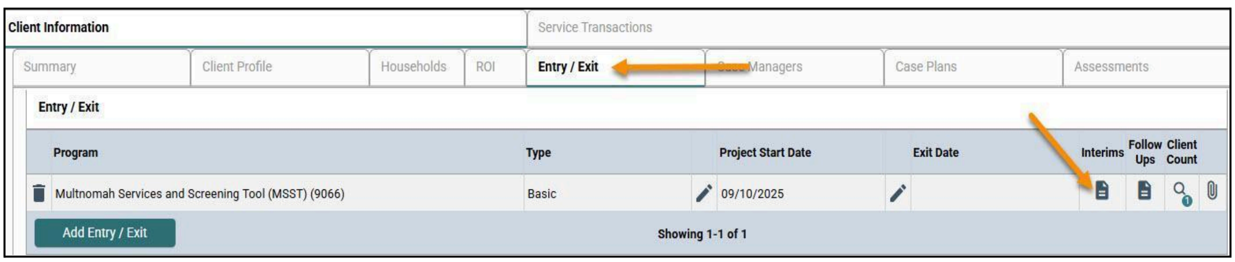
! Updating a MSST Assessment via an Interim

Assessors should update a MSST as an interim review under the following circumstances:

- *More than six (6) months have passed since the household's last MSST assessment OR*

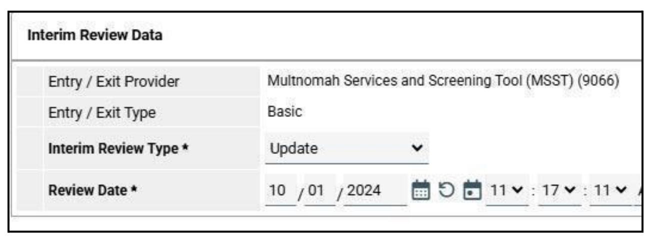
- *The household composition has changed (e.g. a single adult now has additional household members, minor children are no longer a part of the household, etc.)*

- Go to the **Entry/Exit** tab & look for the most recent MSST entry. Click the page icon for that MSST entry under the **Interims** header**.**



- Click **Add Interim Review**.

- **Interim Review Type**: Select "Update".
- **Review Date:** Enter the date of the most recent MSST assessment.
- Click **Save & Continue**.

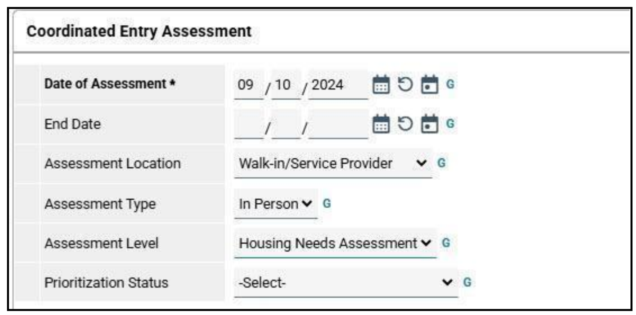


- Click the *Multnomah Services and Screening Tool (MSST)* assessment and enter new data as needed.

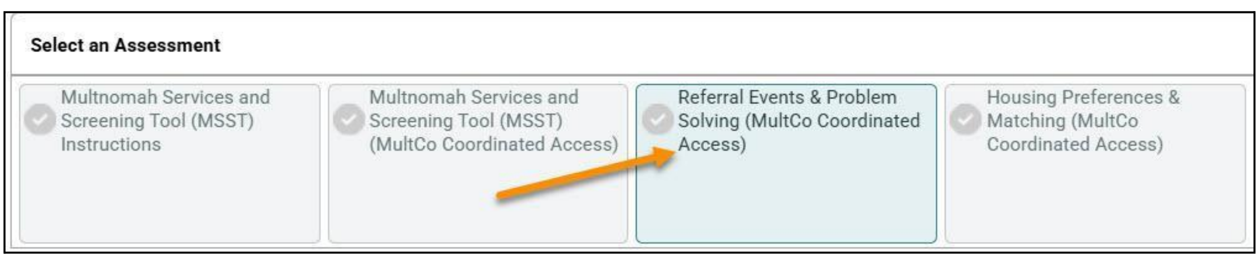
- Enter a new *Coordinated Entry Assessment* response whenever a household is re-assessed with the MSST.

To add a new *Coordinated Entry Assessment* response, click **Add**. Then, answer the following:

- **Date of Assessment:** Enter the date of the MSST assessment.
- **End date:** leave blank
- **Assessment Location:** select one
- **Assessment Type:** select one
- **Assessment Level:** Select "Housing Needs Assessment."
- **Prioritization Status:** leave blank.
- Click **Save**.



Enter assessment data: Referral Events & Problem Solving.



Housing Problem Solving (HPS) should be recorded throughout participants' Coordinated Access journey. All assessors *except 211 staff* are expected to conduct HPS conversations with participants only **after** the MSST assessment tool is completed.

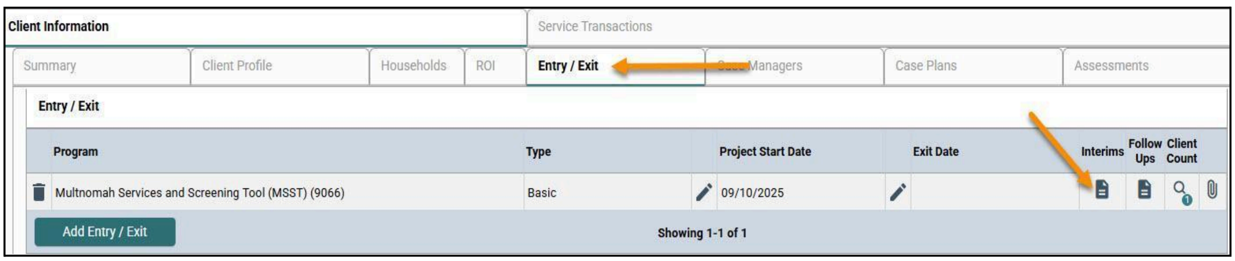
If HPS happens on the same day as the MSST, enter HPS data through the Referral Events & Problem Solving tab *at entry*.

If HPS happens after the MSST is completed, enter the HPS data *through an Interim* (see next section).

Note: If you provide ongoing case management to a household, you only need to enter HPS data once at entry, as part of the MSST assessment.

Enter Housing Problem Solving (HPS) data through an interim.

Go to the **Entry/Exit** tab. Look for the MSST entry (as participants may have several entries). Click the book icon under **Interims.**

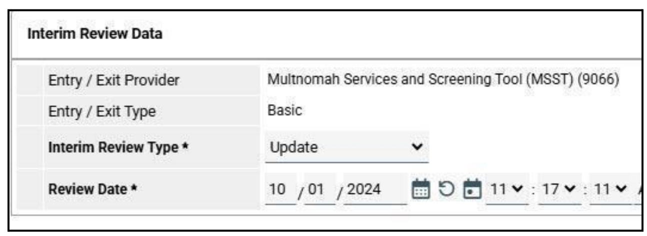


Click **Add Interim Review**.

Interim Review Type: Select Update.

Review Date: Enter the date of HPS Conversation.

Click **Save & Continue.**

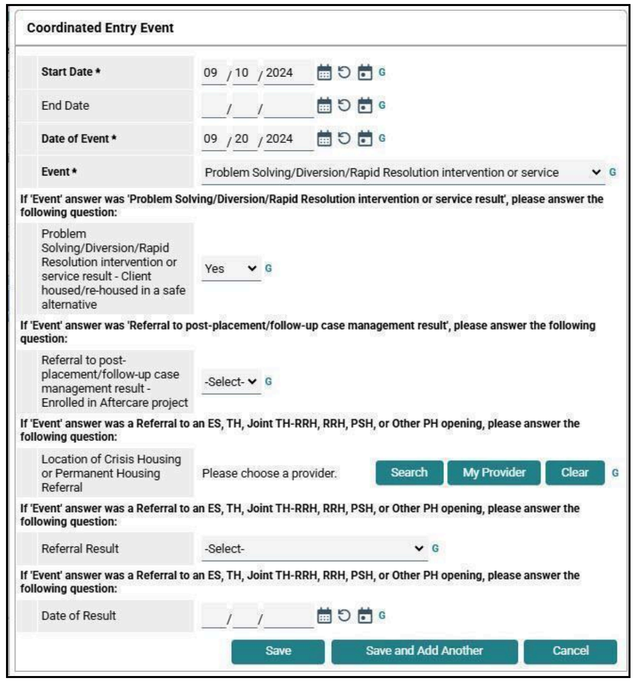


Click the **Referral Events & Problem Solving** tab.

1. Coordinated Entry Event

MSST assessors should enter one Coordinated Entry Event response for each instance of Housing Problem Solving.

HSD staff also enter data in this section related to referrals to housing programs.


Coordinated Entry Event

Start Date * 09 / 10 / 2024

End Date / /

Date of Event * 09 / 20 / 2024

Event * Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service

If 'Event' answer was 'Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service result', please answer the following question:

Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service result - Client housed/re-housed in a safe alternative: Yes

If 'Event' answer was 'Referral to post-placement/follow-up case management result', please answer the following question:

Referral to post-placement/follow-up case management result - Enrolled in Aftercare project: -Select-

If 'Event' answer was a Referral to an ES, TH, Joint TH-RRH, RRH, PSH, or Other PH opening, please answer the following question:

Location of Crisis Housing or Permanent Housing Referral: Please choose a provider. Search My Provider Clear

If 'Event' answer was a Referral to an ES, TH, Joint TH-RRH, RRH, PSH, or Other PH opening, please answer the following question:

Referral Result: -Select-

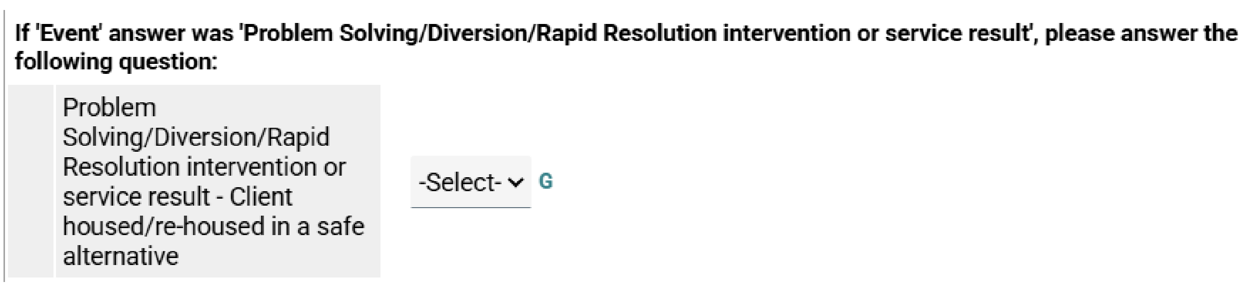
If 'Event' answer was a Referral to an ES, TH, Joint TH-RRH, RRH, PSH, or Other PH opening, please answer the following question:

Date of Result / /

Save | Save and Add Another | Cancel

To enter a Coordinated Entry Event related to Housing Problem Solving:

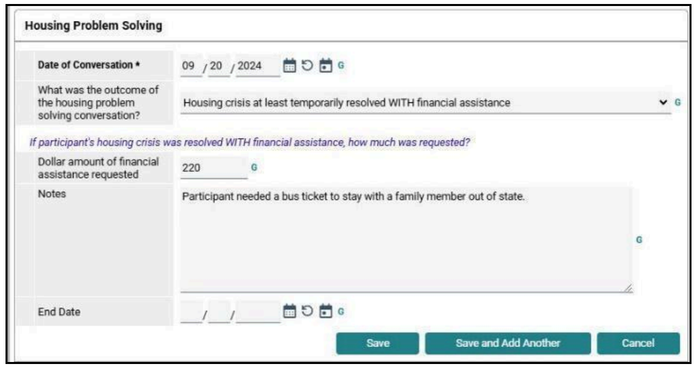
- Click **Add.**
- **Date of Event:** Enter the date of the HPS conversation.
- **Event:** Select “Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service.”
- Answer the next question:


If 'Event' answer was 'Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service result', please answer the following question:

Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service result - Client housed/re-housed in a safe alternative: -Select-

- Leave the remaining questions blank.
- Click **Save.**

2. Housing Problem Solving



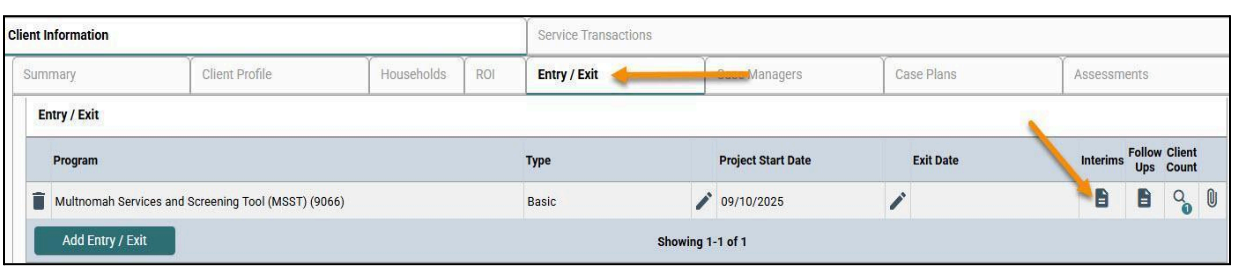
- Click **Add.**
- **Date of Conversation**: Enter the date of the HPS conversation.
- Complete the remaining questions.
- Add notes as needed.
  - *Do not enter any personal protected information (PPI) into this notes field. PPI includes names, addresses, phone numbers or anything else that could identify a specific person.*
- **End Date:** Leave this field blank.
- Click **Save.**
- Click **Save & Exit.**

Enter assessment data: Housing Preferences & Matching

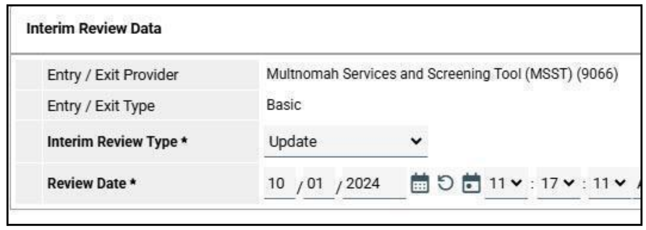
Only complete this assessment if HSD staff notify you that the participant is in the priority pool.

Only add data to this assessment when instructed to do so by HSD staff. Once you get the go-ahead from HSD staff, contact participant to complete the Housing Preferences & Matching assessment.

- In the **Entry/Exit** tab, click the book icon under the **Interims** header for the most recent, open MSST entry**.**
  - Data must always be entered into the Housing Preferences & Matching assessment *through an interim*.



- Click **Add Interim Review.**
- **Interim Review Type**: Select "Update".
- **Review Date:** Enter the date of Housing Preferences Assessment.



- Click **Save & Continue.**
- Click **Housing Preferences & Matching** assessment and enter data.

Make sure all fields are completed. Missing information may cause delays in the housing match process.

Some data may be populated from previous entries. Always review and ensure data is accurate and up to date.

- Click **Save & Exit,** once done.

For adult-only households: When Housing Preference data entry is completed, please email adultca@multco.us. This helps HSD to review the answers immediately, and offer available housing resources.

Closing a MSST Entry

- *Do not close MSST entries if you work at a service provider agency.*
- *If you believe a MSST entry should be closed, contact adultca@multco.us or familyca@multco.us.*

Need more help?

- For assistance with programmatic Coordinated Access questions or questions related to specific MSST assessments:
    - Contact adultca@multco.us for adult-only households.
    - Contact familyca@multco.us for family households.
- For assistance with technical HMIS questions or broken urls in this document, contact hmishelp@multco.us.

~ End ~

Document Revision History

<u>August ‘26:</u>

- Removed bullet referencing Culturally Specific Services from the “Other MSST Sections” section

<u>July ‘26:</u>

- Updated ROI instructions and screenshot to indicate ability to skip new Signature buttons

<u>June ‘26</u>:

- Updated:
  - FSWL entry instructions
  - url to AMI tables
  - Instructions for Coordinated Entry Event & Housing Problem Solving assessments
  - Instructions & descriptions for Prior Living Situation questions
  - Various screenshots
- Added instructions & screenshots for previously missing questions
- Made various, minor language & formatting adjustments for clarity & consistency