



King County 2026 HUD Data Standards Update

Dear HMIS End User,

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2026 Data Standards updates will go into effect Wednesday, **October 1, 2025**. As HUD has not yet published (as of September 22, 2025) the 2026 Data Standards Manual and 2026 Data Dictionary, please review the below information from King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA).

"KCRHA is aware of HUD's new 2026 HMIS Data Standards, which retires the "Gender" field and introduces a new "Sex" field for the upcoming 2026 Data Standards on October 1, 2025. While HUD will require "Sex" to be recorded (data element 4.21), our community will continue collecting "Gender" for local outcomes, equity monitoring, and alignment with local values, plans and contracts. At KCRHA, we recognize that this change has raised concerns because "Sex" (data element 4.21) introduces a binary selection that may not reflect the understanding or the lived experience of transgender and non-binary community members. This field stems from a federal executive order that HUD must comply to and our role, as a CoC, is to implement this requirement while continuing to prioritize equity, trust, and safety in every client interaction.

Important Notes:

- The Sex (4.21) field will be added to the enrollment screen and required.
- We currently do not have instructions from HUD on how this data should be collected.
- We have not yet set local standards for data quality for this element.
- At this time, this question can be collected if the household is comfortable, but data collection should never be a barrier to authentic engagement.
- As a reminder, if collecting sensitive data requires time or discretion, providers should prioritize rapport and safety in the client relationship.
- Services cannot be withheld if clients refuse or are unable to answer.


Providers will continue using LGBTQIA+ affirming practices:

- Ask for chosen name and pronouns.
- Explain why sensitive data is collected and who can access it.
- Affirm that clients may decline to answer any question.
- Ensure consistency in affirming practices across staff.

KCRHA will provide training on technical implementation and supports providers in building client trust. Our approach centers on affirming, client-led practices—so data collection strengthens engagement rather than creating harm."

To help you prepare for the upcoming **2026 HMIS Data Standards**, we've created a training resource that breaks down all the changes. **Please note:** No action is required from you. The changes will be applied automatically.

[View Here](#)

 Bitfocus

FY 2026 HUD Data Standards

Crucial Updates for WA-500 Seattle/King County, WA

What are the HUD Data Standards?

These standards provide explicit instructions for HMIS data collection and are updated every two years. The new FY 2026 standards will impact everything from questions asked to the overall data entry workflow starting **October 1st, 2025**

New

As of October 1st, HUD is requiring the “Sex” field to be collected for all new program enrollments.*

*This excludes Coordinated Entry Program enrollments.
**HUD is prohibiting mapping data from the gender field to the new sex field.

Sex (4.21)

- Female
- Male
- Client Doesn't Know
- Client Prefers Not to Answer
- Data Not Collected

Resources

[2026 HMIS Data Standards Manual](#)

You can find your 2026 Community Forms [here](#)

[2026 Data Standards Update](#)

You can also explore these essential resources:

- [Client Centered Approach to Collecting Gender Identities for HMIS](#)
- [Client Centered Approach to Race & Ethnicity for HMIS](#)

We are committed to supporting you through this transition. If you have any questions, please reach out to kcsupport@bitfocus.com.

Sincerely,

Lauryn & Rohan

Your Local Community Administrators

**Questions? Your HMIS Administrator
is happy to help.**

Phone: (206) 444-4001, Ext 2
Email: kcsupport@bitfocus.com



Bitfocus, 5940 S Rainbow Blvd, Ste 400 #60866, Las Vegas, NV 89118, United States, 800-594-9854

[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)