

Alaska-Specific HMIS Data Standards Manual

Federal Fiscal Year 2022

This document identifies all Alaska-Specific Data Elements (AKSDEs) and is designed to support the collection of these data by providing instructions and collection standards for each element.

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INTRODUCTION

The Alaska-Specific Data Elements (AKSDEs) described herein were designed by the two Alaska Continua of Care (AK CoCs) to collect information important to the community and to organizations that fund Alaska-specific community programs. The AKSDEs are required to be collected by all projects participating and entering data into the Alaska Homelessness Management Information Systems (AKHMIS). All AKSDEs are approved by the Alaska Balance of State Continuum of Care, the Anchorage Continuum of Care, and the AKHMIS Advisory Board prior to implementation.

RATIONALE FOR COLLECTION

Collection of AKSDEs by all AKHMIS-participating providers, with the quality of these data monitored and maintained, supports local system planning and understanding of who is experiencing homelessness. It also ensures that these data elements are available to homeless services organizations to both apply for funding opportunities as well as to fulfill reporting requirements of existing funding streams to continue to receive funds. Information about AMHT disabling conditions is important to the Trust and provides a basis for funding programs that support and serve clients with these conditions. Alaska Native Regional Corporation affiliation data can also be used to apply for funding from a corporation or used by case workers to connect clients with available resources. Information about Sexual/Relationship Orientation can be used by community planners and homeless services providers in Alaska to ensure equity in our programs.

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST (AMHT) DISABILITIES

Project-level data: Must be collected or reviewed/updated upon EVERY project stay.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) is a state corporation that administers the Alaska Mental Health Trust (AMHT), a perpetual trust, to improve the lives of beneficiaries. The Trust operates much like a private foundation, using its resources to ensure that Alaska has a comprehensive integrated mental health program. The Trust also works in prevention and early intervention services for individuals at risk of becoming beneficiaries. The Trust considers prevention of these conditions, where possible, to be part of its mandate.

Beneficiaries of the Trust include the following broad groups of Alaskans with:

- Mental illness
- Developmental disabilities
- Chronic alcohol or drug addiction
- Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia
- Traumatic brain injuries

[Click here to read the statutory definition of beneficiaries.](#)

COLLECTION STANDARDS

At project start and for each AMHT disabling condition, a client is asked if they are an AMHT Beneficiary. No documentation is required to verify a client’s response in AKHMIS.

Data Element ID	AMHT	
Implementation Date	August 27, 2018	
Data Element Name	AMHT Disabling Conditions	
Data Required For	All Clients	
Data Collection Point	Project Start Interim/Update as necessary to reflect any change(s)	
Field 1-5 Response Options & Instructions	<i>Select from the following options when entering into AKHMIS for each of Fields 1-5:</i>	
	Yes	Use when client responds yes.
	No	Use when client responds no.
	Client doesn’t know	Use when client does not know an answer.
	Client refused	Use when client refuses to provide an answer.
	Data not collected	Use when client was not asked the question.
Field 1	Alzheimer’s Disease And Related Dementias	
	<i>Client is asked if they have Alzheimer’s Disease or Related Dementias:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary degenerative dementia of the Alzheimer type; multi-infarct dementia; senile dementia; and pre-senile dementia. 	
Field 2	Chronic Alcoholism or other Substance Use Disorder	
	<i>Client is asked if they have a Chronic Alcoholism or other Substance Use Disorder:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol withdrawal delirium (delirium tremens); alcohol hallucinosis; alcohol amnestic disorder; dementia associated with alcoholism; alcohol-induced organic mental disorder; alcoholic depressive disorder. 	
Field 3	Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities	

	<p><i>Client is asked if they have an Intellectual or Developmental disability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cerebral palsy; epilepsy; intellectual developmental disorder; autism; severe organic brain impairment; significant developmental delay during early childhood indicating risk of developing an intellectual and/or developmental disorder.</i> 	
Field 4	<p>Mental Illness</p> <p><i>Client is asked if they have any mental illness:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Schizophrenia; delusional (paranoid) disorder; mood disorders; anxiety disorders; Somatic symptom disorder; organic mental disorders; personality disorders; dissociative disorders; other psychotic or severe and persistent mental disorders manifested by behavioral changes and symptoms of comparable severity to those manifested by persons with mental disorders listed in this subsection; and persons who have been diagnosed by a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or physician licensed to practice medicine in the state and, as a result of the diagnosis, have been determined to have a childhood disorder manifested by behaviors or symptoms suggesting risk of developing a mental disorder.</i> 	
Field 5	<p>Traumatic Brain Injuries</p> <p><i>Client is asked if they have a traumatic brain injury (TBI) potentially resulting from one or more of the following – information below from mayoclinic.org:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Falls from a bed/ladder/ in the bath/ or down stairs or other similar event are the most common cause, particularly in older adults and young children. Collisions involving cars, motorcycles or bicycles and pedestrians involved in such accidents. Gunshot wounds, domestic violence, child abuse and other assaults. Shaken baby syndrome in infants caused by violent shaking. Penetrating wounds, severe blows to the head with shrapnel or debris, and falls or bodily collisions with objects following a blast. May be caused by injuries from a number of sports, including soccer, boxing, football, baseball, lacrosse, skateboarding, hockey, and other high-impact or extreme sports; these are particularly common in youth. Explosive blasts are a common cause of traumatic brain injury in active-duty military personnel.</i> 	
Field 6	Start Date*	Enter the date the information was collected.
Field 7	End Date	<p>Always leave blank on a new record.</p> <p>If a prior record exists that needed updating, add an End Date to the <u>prior record</u>, setting it to the day before Start Date of the new record, to “close out” the prior record.</p>

AKHMIS DATA ENTRY NOTE: If a record for AMHT Disabling Conditions exists in AKHMIS for a client and the record has complete and current data (does not contain any responses of “Client doesn’t know”/ “Client refused”/ “Data not collected” and matches a client’s current responses) a new record does not need to be added. If a record exists but a client’s responses have changed, a new record needs to be added to record a client’s new responses along with the date the information was collected.

ALASKA NATIVE REGIONAL CORPORATION AFFILIATION (ARC)

Project-level data: Must be collected or reviewed/updated upon EVERY project stay.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) created thirteen Alaska Native Regional Corporations. These [Alaska Native-owned corporations](#) provide stewardship of ancestral lands and of financial and other resources for Alaska's Native peoples.

COLLECTION STANDARDS

Clients are asked if they are affiliated with an Alaska Native Regional Corporation at project start, with two fields available for responses. No documentation is required to verify a client's response in AKHMIS.

Data Element ID	ARC	
Implementation Date	August 27, 2018	
Data Element Name	Alaska Native Regional Corporation	
Data Required For	All Clients	
Data Collection Point	Project Start	
Field 1	Primary Alaska Native Regional Corporation	
	<i>Client is asked if they are affiliated with an Alaska Native Regional Corporation.</i>	
Field 1 Response Options & Instructions	Ahtna Corp.	Select the corresponding option at left if client identifies an Alaska Native Regional Corporation affiliation. <i>Continue to Field 2 – Secondary Corporation.</i>
	Aleut Corp.	
	Arctic Slope Regional Corp.	
	Bering Straits Native Corp.	
	Bristol Bay Native Corp.	
	Calista Corp.	
	Chugach Alaska Corp.	
	Cook Inlet Regional Corp.	
	Doyon Limited Corp.	
	Koniag Incorp	
	NANA Regional Corp.	
	Sealaska	
	13th Regional Corp.	
	Client doesn't know	
Client refused	Use when client refuses to provide an answer to the question. <i>Skip Field 2 – Secondary Corporation.</i>	
Data not collected	Use when client was not asked the question. <i>Skip Field 2 – Secondary Corporation.</i>	
Not Affiliated	Use when client does not have an affiliation. <i>Skip Field 2 – Secondary Corporation.</i>	
Field 2 – Dependent (Optional)	Secondary Corporation	
	<i>If a client indicated a Primary affiliation, client is asked if they have a secondary affiliation.</i>	
	Leave blank if response is not a second affiliation.	

Field 2 Response Options & Instructions	Ahtna Corp.	Select the corresponding option at left if client identifies a second Alaska Native Regional Corporation affiliation. Any other response, leave this blank. <i>Never enter any of the following into Secondary Corporation:</i> <i>Client doesn't know</i> <i>Client Refused</i> <i>Data not collected</i> <i>Not Affiliated</i>
	Aleut Corp.	
	Arctic Slope Regional Corp.	
	Bering Straits Native Corp.	
	Bristol Bay Native Corp.	
	Calista Corp.	
	Chugach Alaska Corp.	
	Cook Inlet Regional Corp.	
	Doyon Limited Corp.	
	Koniag Incorp	
	NANA Regional Corp.	
	Sealaska	
	13th Regional Corp.	

SEXUAL ORIENTATION (R3) & ALASKA SEXUAL/RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION (ASO)

Project-level data: Must be collected or reviewed/updated upon EVERY project stay.

Self-identified sexual orientation and optional additional sexual or relationship orientation data is collected for all adults and heads of households at project start, with two fields available for responses.

Clients are informed prior to responding of the voluntary nature of the question and that a refusal to respond will not result in a denial of services. The intent is to allow clients to self-describe and choose the term or terms that fit them best (see [Additional Data Collection Guidance](#) below).

Data Element ID	R3 & ASO	
Implementation Date	October 1, 2022	
Data Element Name	Sexual Orientation & Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation	
Data Required For	All Adults and Heads of Household <i>(Only applies to clients actively enrolled on or after October 1, 2021)</i>	
Data Collection Point	Project Start	
Field 1 – R3	R3 – Sexual Orientation	
	<i>All adults and heads of household self-describe their sexual orientation. See Additional Data Collection Instructions for Sexual / Relationship Orientation below.</i>	
Field 1 Response Options & Instructions	Heterosexual	Select an option at left when it corresponds to client’s answer. <i>Continue to Field 2 – ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation if client has additional response and/or as appropriate.</i>
	Gay	
	Lesbian	
	Bisexual	
	Questioning / Unsure	Use when “Questioning / Unsure” is client’s answer – do not confuse with “Client doesn’t know”. <i>Continue to Field 2 – ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation if client has additional response and/or as appropriate.</i>
	Other	Use when client’s answer does not fit any other response option. <i>Continue to Field 2 – ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation.</i>
	Client doesn’t know	Use when client does not know an answer – do not confuse with “Questioning / Unsure”. <i>Skip Field 2 – ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation.</i>
	Client refused	Use when client refuses to provide an answer. <i>Skip Field 2 – ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation.</i>
	Data not collected	Use when client was not asked the question. <i>Skip Field 2 – ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation.</i>
Field 2 – ASO (Dependent)	ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation	
	<i>All adults and heads of household are asked if they have an additional sexual orientation they would like to identify or a relationship orientation they would like to identify. See Additional Data Collection Guidance for Sexual / Relationship Orientation below.</i>	
	If client has no additional response and did not select “Other” to R3 – Sexual Orientation, leave blank.	
Field 2 Response Options & Instructions	Aromantic	Select an option at left when it corresponds to client’s answer.
	Asexual	
	Demisexual	
	Pansexual	
	Queer	

	Other (Ex: same gender-loving, stud)	Use when client’s answer is not available.
	Client doesn’t know	Use when client does not know an answer.
	Client refused	Use when client refuses to provide an answer.

ADDITIONAL DATA COLLECTION GUIDANCE FOR SEXUAL/RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION

Clients should be informed prior to responding to these two questions that they will not be denied services or receive different services if they refuse to answer.

Case workers may ask these questions in a way that best serves each client. These questions may be asked together (with both sets of response options made available at once) or R3 – Sexual Orientation asked first and ASO – Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation asked as appropriate, depending on the client’s response to R3 – Sexual Orientation.

This data element allows clients to self-describe their orientation. The intent is to allow clients to choose the term or terms that fit them best. Clients who are transgender or non-binary may hold any of these orientations. Case workers may want to have the below “commonly understood definitions” for the response options available in AKHMIS for reference.

COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD DEFINITIONS

Please be aware of the following:

- *The meanings of these terms may likely change over time.*
- *Meanings may vary across communities and not everyone will agree with these definitions.*
- *Many terms are not included in the list of available options; the intention was to keep the list as brief and relevant to providers as possible.*

Aromantic	Having no interest in or desire for romantic relationships.
Asexual	The lack of a sexual attraction or desire for other people.
Bisexual	Emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to more than one sex, gender, or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.
Demisexual	Sexual attraction towards another person only after establishing an emotional bond with that person.
Gay	Emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to members of the same gender. Men, women, and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.
Heterosexual / Straight	A woman who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to men, or a man who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to women.
Lesbian	A woman who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to women. Women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.
Pansexual	Emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with bisexual.
Queer	A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ+ movement.
Questioning	A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual/relationship orientation or gender identity.
Same-Gender Loving	A term some prefer to use instead of lesbian, gay, or bisexual to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender.

DATA COLLECTION QUICK REFERENCE

Regardless of the funding source, all projects participating in AKHMIS are required to collect the Alaska Universal Data Elements.

All AKSDEs are project-level data: These questions must be collected or reviewed/updated upon EVERY project entry, and updated during a project stay to accurately reflect changes in a client's situation.

ID	Element	All Clients	All Adults and Heads of Household	Project Start	Project Update	Project Exit
AMHT	Alaska AMHT Disabling Conditions	X		X	X	
ARC	Alaska Regional Corporation	X		X		
R3 & ASO	Sexual Orientation & Alaska Sexual/Relationship Orientation		X	X		

REFERENCES

[2004 HMIS Data and Technical Standards Final Notice](#)

[Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority](#)

[Alaska Native-owned corporations](#)

[Mayoclinic.org](#)