

Queensland Homelessness Information Platform (QHIP)

Service Coordination Protocol

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PURPOSE

This Service Coordination Protocol provides information for Specialist Homelessness Services and regional Domestic and Family Violence services on:

- use of Queensland Homelessness Information Platform (QHIP)
- roles and responsibilities of services in assessment and referral
- guidelines for accessing brokerage funds for clients escaping domestic and family violence
- tools, resources and support available.

This protocol does not affect the operation of all other departmental policies and guidelines. The Coordination Protocol should be read in conjunction with:

- Service Agreement;
- QHIP Policy; and
- QHIP User Guide.

All enquiries should be directed to: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au

QHIP RESOURCES

QHIP Helpdesk

The QHIP Helpdesk is available to provide support and information for:

- Difficulties logging onto system
- Password resets.

Hours of operation: Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5pm

Telephone: (07) 3514 3514

QHIP System Administrator

The Department of Housing and Public Works is the System Administrator. The role of the System Administrator is to:

- Add new Users
- Deactivate Users
- Maintain organization and service data
- Add new properties
- Make changes to properties
- Merge client records
- Manage duplicate client records.

All system administrator requests are directed to: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au

QUEENSLAND HOMELESSNESS INFORMATION PLATFORM

Accessing QHIP

Authorised Approver

QHIP is a protected system, with access limited to authorised Users only.

Each service is required to nominate a manager or senior member of staff to act as an Authorised Approver. The role of the Authorised Approver is to nominate staff requiring access to QHIP, and authorise User access request forms.

By authorising User access request forms, the Authorised Approver is providing assurance that the User is familiar with contracted Service Provider obligations under the Information Privacy Act 2009 and the QHIP Service Coordination Protocol, in relation to the handling of personal client information.

To add a new Authorised Approver:

1. Email the System Administrator HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au to request an Authorised Approver form.
2. Complete the Approver details.
3. Have the form signed by a Service Agreement signatory.
4. Return the completed form to: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au.
5. Records will be updated, and the new Authorised Approver will be authorised to sign User access request forms.

Authorised User

Authorised Users of QHIP have access to sensitive information, and are required to acknowledge an understanding of obligations under the Information Privacy Act 2009, and the QHIP Service Coordination Protocol.

To **add** a new authorised User:

1. Download a *User Access Request Form* from the QHIP Resources menu option.
2. Complete the User details.
3. Have the form signed by the Authorised Approver.
4. Forward the completed form to: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au
5. A Username and password will be issued to the new User via email.

Note - It is recommended new Users be provided with the QHIP User Guide and Fact Sheets, and attend formal QHIP training at the first opportunity.

To **change** User details:

1. Download a User Access Request Form from the QHIP Resources menu option.
2. Complete the User details.
3. Forward the completed form to: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au
4. QHIP User details will be updated.

To **deactivate** an existing User:

1. The Authorised Approver to email the User details, and date for deactivation to: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au
2. QHIP User will be deactivated.

Note - QHIP User accounts will be automatically locked after three months of inactivity.

To re-activate an authorised User account, the User must contact the System Administrator at: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au

QHIP Passwords

QHIP access requires two- factor authentication. Authorised Users require the following for each login access to QHIP:

- A Username (supplied); and
- a password (chosen by User); and
- a Personal Identification Number (generated for each day or 10 hour period of system access).

At the first login each day, a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) is issued to each authorised User, enabling QHIP access for a 10 hour period. At the commencement of the next working day, or after 10 hours, a new PIN must be issued for continued access.

Passwords and PINs should be kept confidential and should not be shared.

Forgotten password or change password

To request a password reset, authorised Users must contact the QHIP Helpdesk at: HSQHIP@hpw.qld.gov.au.

To change a password, authorised Users should access the *Change Password Link* on the left hand side of the QHIP homepage and follow the instructions.

If QHIP is Not Operational

In the event of QHIP system outage or issues with internet connectivity, the assessing service is required to:

- undertake the initial assessment and seek client acknowledgement of the QHIP Privacy Notice;
- record the assessment information on a QHIP assessment paper form;
- contact other service providers to identify possible vacancies;
- share assessment information with other service providers as required;
- once QHIP can be accessed, enter the client details (if necessary), client assessment and referral information into QHIP.

If the system is experiencing technical difficulties that may take some time to resolve, Users will receive an email to inform of the outage. A follow up email will be sent when the system is operational.

Any difficulties accessing QHIP should be reported to the QHIP Helpdesk on: (07) 3514 3514

Note - It is recommended services download and save a copy of QHIP forms so they can be readily accessed in the event of a system outage.

MAINTAINING QHIP INFORMATION

Accommodation Services

All accommodation services are required to regularly maintain and update property information, accommodation and service information in QHIP.

Property Details

The information section may be used to record static information about a property that is not likely to change on a regular basis but may affect the suitability of the service when matching a client's needs. This may include the following:

- provision of meals
- wheelchair access or other specific inclusions
- laundry facilities available
- accommodation style e.g. shared room, communal living, independent unit style
- access to transport.

Vacancy Limiting Conditions

The vacancy limiting conditions section records information that is likely to change with each referral, and may affect the suitability of a service for a client. This may include the following:

- current house/resident dynamics
- service case load
- staff absences
- intake hours
- other property attributes.

Non-Accommodation Services

Non-accommodation services are also included in the Vacancy Capacity Management System (VCMS) within QHIP. Non-accommodation services include:

- Access Services e.g. Information and referral hubs
- Virtual Access
- Outreach Access
- Centre based support services
- Mobile Support services
- DV Connect
- Regional Domestic and Family Violence Services.

Service Details

The information section may be used to record static information about a service that is not likely to change on a regular basis, but may affect the suitability of the service when matching a client's needs. This may include the following:

- services offered
- hours of operation.

Capacity Limiting Conditions

The capacity limiting conditions section records information that is likely to change with each referral, and may affect the suitability or availability of a service for a client. This may include the following:

- service case load
- staff absences
- attributes.

Updating Vacancy Status

To ensure the VCMS is an accurate source of vacancy information and statistical data, accommodation services are required to:

1. List all funded vacancies on the VCMS.
2. Change the vacancy status to occupied (or unavailable if appropriate) when a vacancy is no longer available.
3. Update the VCMS as close as possible to the date and time the vacancy becomes available.

If a vacancy has been allocated to a client, the accommodation service is required to:

1. Change the vacancy status of the property to 'unavailable other'.
2. Update the vacancy limiting conditions and state the vacancy has been allocated to a client.
3. Change the vacancy status to occupied (or unavailable if appropriate) when a vacancy is no longer available.

Vacancy Availability Dates

If a property is listed as **unavailable**, an availability date must be entered, to note the estimated date the property will become available.

If the property is not available by the expected date, the availability date should be updated with a new estimate, or the vacancy status should be updated to **vacant**.

Note - Failure to update the availability date or change the vacancy status to **vacant** will result in the property being listed on a Departmental exception report.

Vacancy Information

Information about property vacancies is not available for general public access. Services must not provide vacancy information directly to people seeking assistance or third parties.

People seeking homelessness assistance should be assessed to determine an appropriate course of action. The name and address of the receiving service should only be given to the client once the initial assessment has been completed and the receiving service has accepted the referral.

QHIP Referrals

Assessing services

Assessing services must always check the VCMS to see if a vacancy exists prior to making a referral.

Once a vacancy is established, the assessing service should:

1. Complete the referral in QHIP;
2. Contact the receiving agency to confirm the vacancy still exists, and ensure the agency is available to action the referral.

Receiving services

Receiving services should accept or reject incoming referrals as soon as possible.

Specifically:

- Referrals for immediate accommodation services should be accepted or rejected within **two hours** of the referral being made; and
- Referrals to non-accommodation services should be accepted or rejected within **24 hours**.

Referrals to some transitional accommodation services may take longer, depending on the intake process for the receiving service, which may involve an initial interview or discussion with the client before a decision can be made.

For after-hours referrals, a worker may verbally confirm acceptance of the referral with the receiving service, and accept the referral in QHIP once the client intake occurs. The acceptance notes should be updated to state the referral was accepted verbally, and include the date and time of the verbal acceptance.

Note - Any decision to reject a referral must be accompanied by a valid reason for rejection.

Pending Assessments

The **pending** list is a summary of current open assessments and referrals. Services may have a number of pending assessments at any time. Each client may only have one assessment pending at any one time.

Assessing service	Receiving service
<p>When a service conducts an initial assessment for a client and makes a referral, the client will appear in the assessing service's pending list as an outbound referral.</p> <p>The client remains on the pending list of the assessing service until the referral is accepted or rejected by the receiving service.</p>	<p>The client appears on the pending list of the service receiving the referral as an inbound referral.</p> <p>The client remains on the pending list of the receiving service until the referral is accepted or rejected.</p>

Note – If no response is received, or an alternative suitable referral identified, the referral can be retracted by the accessing service.

Once retracted, the assessment will no longer appear as a pending assessment.

Referring to Non QHIP Providers

If a suitable vacancy is not available within the funded service network, the assessing service may refer a client to a suitable unfunded accommodation service (external provider).

Assessing services should:

1. Undertake the initial client assessment
2. Contact the external service to determine their capacity to assist the client, and whether it is appropriate to send the client to them
3. Record the referral in QHIP by selecting the external referral box in the **Course of Action** page
4. Record the name of the service the client has been referred to, and the reason for the referral.
Eg: referral to XYZ service for emergency relief
5. If the assessing service plans to continue working with the client, a new assessment should be created. The client will remain pending for the assessing service until another course of action is completed. This may occur several times for clients with high or complex needs.

Note - External providers do not have access to QHIP, so referrals can only be made via direct contact.

HOMELESSNESS CLIENT PATHWAYS

Pathway 1 – Client Presents to a Specialist Homelessness Service

If a client presents to a Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) requiring a homelessness response, AND the client fits the target group, AND the service has a vacancy or capacity to provide support, the SHS has the option to complete the following steps OR proceed directly to creating a SHIP/SRS client record::

1. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP
2. Have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice
3. Enter or update the client details and client assessment information in QHIP
4. Complete the transaction by self-referring the client to their own service in QHIP

If a client presents to a Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) requiring a homelessness response, and the client does not fit the target group, and/or the service does not have a vacancy or capacity to provide support, the SHS will:

1. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP
2. Have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice
3. Consult the VCMS to locate a suitable vacancy
4. Notify the receiving service of the QHIP referral.

The receiving service will:

1. Review the client assessment record
2. Complete the **outcome** page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
3. If the referral is accepted, update the VCMS to change the property status.

If a suitable vacancy cannot be found:

Where a suitable vacancy cannot be found immediately or limited referral options are available, the assessing service may consider a non-accommodation response. This may include:

- referral for brokerage
- referral for emergency relief
- provision of interim support if the client's needs and risks are high.

In this situation, the client will remain on the pending list of the assessing service until a referral can be completed.

Pathway 2 – Client Presents to a Non-Accommodation Service

Non-accommodation services will:

1. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP.
2. Have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice.
3. If the client requires accommodation, consult the VCMS and locate a suitable vacancy.
4. Notify the receiving service of the QHIP referral.

The receiving service will:

1. Review the client assessment record.
2. Complete the **outcome** page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
3. If the referral is accepted, update the VCMS to change the property status.

Pathway 3 – Client Presents to Homeless Hotline Telephone Service

The Homeless Hotline Telephone Service will:

1. Provide homelessness information to the person seeking assistance
2. Consult the VCMS to locate a suitable vacancy or non-accommodation service offering
3. Attempt to warm transfer the client to a service with a vacancy or capacity to assist.
4. Where a warm referral has not been possible, escalate the client to a Professional Support Officer (PSO) who will:
 - a. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP
 - b. Have the client acknowledge the Privacy Notice
 - c. Consult the VCMS to locate a suitable service offering
 - d. Notify the receiving service of the QHIP referral.

The Receiving Service will:

1. Accept the warm transfer/referral from Homeless Hotline
2. Complete a more detailed client assessment (as required)
3. Update the VCMS to change the property status or service capacity (where applicable)/ make a further referral where required.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE CLIENT PATHWAYS

Pathway 1 – Client Presents to DVConnect Requiring Refuge

DVConnect maintains responsibility for the client until the referral has been accepted by the receiving agency.

DVConnect will:

1. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP and mark the primary presenting reason as **seeking refuge**
2. Read the Privacy Notice to the client and seek verbal acknowledgement
3. Consult the VCMS and locate a suitable vacancy
4. Contact the receiving service to confirm vacancy is still available
5. Notify the receiving service of the QHIP referral.

The receiving service will:

1. Review the client assessment record
2. Accept or reject the referral verbally
3. Open the client assessment record in QHIP and complete the **Outcome** page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
4. Update the VCMS to change the property status.

During periods of increased demand, clients may be housed in temporary accommodation such as overnight in motels until a suitable vacancy becomes available, or an accommodation service may progress an intake with the client.

In this situation if the client's needs and risks are high, DVConnect may refer the client to a Regional Domestic and Family Violence service or an accommodation service which also provides mobile support for interim support. In this situation:

DVConnect will:

1. Undertake the initial assessment
2. Read the Privacy Notice to the client and seek verbal acknowledgement
3. Contact the Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service or mobile support service to request and negotiate the provision of interim support to the client
4. Bring forward the client assessment and note the primary presenting reason as "Seeking refuge"
5. Make necessary arrangements for the interim period and for transfer to the interim support service.

The interim support provider will:

1. Discuss the request for interim support with DVConnect
2. Review the initial client assessment record
3. Accept or reject the referral for interim support in QHIP.
4. Provide interim support as negotiated with DVConnect.

Pathway 2 - Client Presents to Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service

The Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service will maintain responsibility for the client until the referral has been accepted by the receiving agency.

Referrals within Queensland:

The Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service will:

1. Undertake the initial assessment
2. Have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice
3. Locate a suitable vacancy on the VCMS
4. Phone the refuge or SHS to secure the vacancy
5. Consult with DVConnect for advice on transport options and costs if necessary
6. Make arrangements for transport of the client to refuge or SHS.

DVConnect will:

1. Provide information and advice as required which may include suitable or cost effective transport options or information about accommodation options.
2. Make other arrangements as required (e.g. medication, supplies, meals, etc.).

The receiving service will:

1. View the client assessment record
2. Open the client assessment record in QHIP and complete the outcome page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
3. Update the VCMS to change property status.

Note - In some circumstances it may be necessary for DVConnect to make client travel and/or accommodation arrangements on behalf of the Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service.

This will be negotiated between the two services.

Pathway 3 – Client Presents to Homeless Hotline Telephone Service

If domestic and family violence is identified as the main presenting reason for seeking assistance, the client will be offered a referral to DVConnect for domestic violence information, support and refuge referral.

The 24 hour Homeless Hotline will:

1. Determine whether the client is seeking refuge from Domestic Violence
2. Advise the caller that DVConnect is the 24 hour domestic violence telephone service providing information, support, assistance and referral to safe accommodation in Queensland.
3. Transfer the client directly through to DVConnect for assistance.

DVConnect will:

1. Undertake initial assessment
2. Read the Privacy Notice to the client and seek verbal acknowledgement
3. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP
4. Consult the VCMS and locate a suitable vacancy
5. Contact the receiving service to confirm the vacancy is still available
6. Notify the receiving service of the QHP referral
7. Make transport and other arrangements as appropriate.

The receiving service will:

1. Review the client assessment record
2. Open the client assessment record in QHIP, and complete the Outcome page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
3. Update the VCMS to change the property status.

Pathway 4 – Client Presents to Specialist Homelessness Service

Women seeking specialist domestic and family violence information and support should be referred directly to a local Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service. If there is not a Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service available in the local area, a referral to DVConnect for information and support is appropriate.

At times, women escaping domestic and family violence will present to a non-domestic and family violence specialist homelessness service for immediate supported accommodation.

The specialist homelessness service will:

1. Advise the client that DVConnect is the specialist 24 hour domestic violence telephone service providing information, support, assistance and referral to safe accommodation in Queensland
2. Offer to facilitate a referral directly to DVConnect or support the client to make contact with DVConnect

DVConnect will:

1. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP and mark the primary presenting reason as **seeking refuge**
2. Read the Privacy Notice to the client and seek verbal acknowledgement
3. Consult the VCMS and locate a suitable vacancy
4. Contact the receiving service to confirm vacancy is still available
5. Notify the receiving service of the QHIP referral.

The receiving service will:

1. Review the client assessment record
2. Accept or reject the referral verbally
3. Open the client assessment record in QHIP and complete the **Outcome** page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
4. Update the VCMS to change the property status.

Pathway 5 – DFV Inter-Refuge Transfer

At times a client may need to be transferred from one refuge to another for safety or other reasons. In this instance, the service where the client is currently accommodated undertakes the initial assessment and makes the referral.

Initiating DFV Refuge will:

1. Consult the VCMS to identify a suitable vacancy
2. Re-confirm the QHIP Privacy Notice
3. Create a new DFV Assessment and update with current information
4. Mark primary presenting reason as **seeking refuge** and provide supporting information in the free text box
5. Contact the receiving DFV Refuge to discuss
6. Negotiate transport arrangements if required.

Receiving DFV Refuge will:

1. Review the client assessment record. Discuss any issues or concerns with DFV Refuge 1
2. Confirm transport arrangements and pick up time with Refuge 1
3. Open the client assessment record in QHIP and complete the outcome page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
4. Update VCMS to change property status.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST REFERRALS

Interstate Referrals

Regional Domestic and Family Violence Services or refuges seeking client refuge interstate should contact the relevant state-wide domestic and family violence service for vacancy information and refuge contact details. QHIP does not facilitate interstate referrals

The assessing service will:

1. Complete the initial assessment in QHIP
2. Have the client read and acknowledge the Privacy Notice
3. Contact the interstate domestic and family violence telephone service for vacancy information and service details
4. Contact the interstate receiving service and make a telephone referral
5. Make transport and other arrangements as appropriate.

DVConnect may provide the following support to facilitate an interstate referral:

1. Provide the assessing service with the relevant statewide domestic and family violence telephone number

or

2. Contact the relevant statewide domestic and family violence service on behalf of the assessing service to identify a possible vacancy, and arrange for the interstate refuge to contact the assessing service.

If a client contacts DVConnect directly:

Generally all refuge referrals are made within Queensland. However DVConnect may arrange interstate refuge referrals when it is absolutely necessary for the client's safety and wellbeing. In this situation the following procedure applies:

DVConnect will:

1. Undertake the initial assessment in QHIP
2. Contact the relevant interstate domestic and family violence service for vacancy information and service details
3. Contact the interstate service provider and make a telephone referral
4. Make transport and other arrangements as appropriate.

Cost Referral

At times Regional Domestic and Family Violence Services and refuges may seek financial assistance from DVConnect to assist with expenses associated with meeting a client's immediate safety or wellbeing needs.

A request for brokerage in QHIP is a **cost referral**. Cost referrals may be negotiated for the following client related expenses:

- emergency accommodation costs
- transport costs
- food, meals
- supplies & personal items
- medication
- staff overtime costs associated with receiving an out of hours referral from DVConnect.

The referring service will:

1. Consider the capacity of their service to fund or partially fund the required items or services
2. Bring forward the assessment, identify the primary presenting reason as brokerage and outline a proposal for costs. Identify the service type as **cost referral**
3. Contact DVConnect to advise of the cost referral and reach a mutual agreement
4. If DVConnect accepts the cost referral, make arrangements to:
 - a. send the invoice to DVConnect for reimbursement of costs or
 - b. arrange for DVConnect to be invoiced directly by the supplier.

DVConnect will:

1. Review the client assessment, and consider the request in terms of the client's needs and risks
2. Discuss the request with the referring service, including exploring alternative or less expensive options where appropriate
3. Make a decision to either:
 - a. Accept the cost referral
 - b. Propose a cost sharing arrangement
 - c. Suggest a counter-proposal if there is disagreement
 - d. Reject the cost referral
4. Outline details of the agreement in the client assessment record
5. Open the client assessment record in QHIP and complete the outcome page to accept or reject the referral as soon as possible
6. Reimburse costs incurred by Regional Domestic and Family Violence Services, upon receipt of invoice.

Note - DVConnect has a limited budget for client related costs, so the referring service should contribute to client related expenses wherever possible.

Pets in Crisis Referral

The Pets in Crisis Program is a partnership between DVConnect and the RSPCA Queensland. Regional Domestic and Family Violence Services and refuges may identify clients for the Pets in Crisis Program through the initial assessment process. All referrals into the Pets in Crisis program are facilitated by DVConnect.

Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service will:

1. Check QHIP for an existing client record:
 - a) *If no client record*- Create a new initial assessment and have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice
 - b) *If client record exists*- Bring forward a new client assessment and ensure acknowledgement of the Privacy Notice exists. If not, have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice
2. Complete the **Pets in Crisis** Page. Mark the primary presenting reason as **Seeking Refuge** and the reason for referral as **Pets in Crisis Referral**
3. Contact DVConnect and provide relevant information as required to the Pets in Crisis worker
4. Assist the client to speak to the DVConnect Pets in Crisis worker.

DVConnect will:

1. Review the initial assessment and Pets in Crisis information
2. Provide information about the Pets in Crisis Program as required to the client, and seek the client's consent for their information to be shared with the RSPCA
3. Accept the referral
4. Make arrangements with the client and assessing service to transport the pet.

Safety Alert Referral

Clients identified as high risk may be referred to DVConnect, with an alert of potential safety issues. This is known as a safety alert referral.

Regional Domestic and Family Violence Service will:

1. Check QHIP for an existing client record:
 - a. If client record exists – Create a new client assessment and update as required. Check if written agreement of the Privacy Notice exists. If not, have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice
 - b. If no existing client record – Have the client read and sign to acknowledge the Privacy Notice. Create a new client record and undertake a new initial assessment with the client. Mark the primary presenting need as **safety alert**. Add supporting information into the free text box
2. Contact DVConnect to advise of the referral for safety alert.

DVConnect will:

1. Discuss the referral with the referring agency.
2. Review the QHIP client assessment.
3. Accept the referral. Once accepted the client's name will disappear from pending list.

DEFINITIONS

Brokerage	The purchase of a good/service that will support client(s) meeting goals as identified in a case/support plan.
Cost referral	<p>A referral for brokerage to assist fund client related expenses related to a client's immediate safety and wellbeing needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency accommodation costs • transport cost • food, meals • groceries • supplies • medication • staff overtime costs.
External provider	A homelessness service not funded by the Department of Housing and Public Works.
Inbound referral	A referral received by a service.
Internal provider	<p>A contracted Specialist Homelessness Service who receives homelessness funding from the Department of Housing and Public Works.</p> <p>All internal providers are QHIP Users.</p>
Intake	The process of welcoming and orientation of the client into the service after the referral has been accepted.
Pending list	Each services list of current inbound and outbound referrals.
Pets in Crisis Referral	A referral to DVConnect for client's pets or animals who are at risk of harm to be temporarily cared for by the RSPCA whilst the woman and any children are seeking safety.
Safety Alert Referral	<p>A referral to DVConnect for high risk client.</p> <p>This will provide DVConnect with additional information which may be used to tailor a response to the client seeking support or referral to refuge.</p>