

# How to Check Consumer Status

## with DMH, DHS, VA

### Why would I want to check “consumer status,” and what does that even mean?

Housing resources from the LA County of Department of Mental Health & Health Services as well as the Department of Veteran Affairs all require beneficiaries to have been prior users of their respective services (i.e., “consumers”).

As a result, a successful match cannot be completed without checking and verifying that your client is in fact a consumer of DMH, DHS, or the VA.

### So how is that done?

There are three main steps that apply for these departments:

1. **Sign Consent:** Public agency privacy protocols will require that your client fill out a consent specific to their agency (additional to the CES consent) – this will authorize them to check disclose specified pieces of information regarding your client. Each are called different things, but they each accomplish the same purpose:
  - DMH: 1) MH 602 Form + 2) pre-authorization form for SPC or 2)MHSA certification at time of match
  - VA: Release of Information (ROI)
  - DHS: Pre-Screen Form
2. **Fax/Mail Consent:** You will need to fax and/or mail it to the respective agencies. See below for specific notes.
3. **Keep Track:** Please retain a copy for your own records in case as well as noting your administration of this form on your community's case conferencing tool.

### How will this relate to the CES system?

Team leads and community coordinators should equip navigators and outreach workers/volunteers with these 3 additional consents. Certain responses on the VI-SPDAT screener or the Matching Initiation Form should alert the interviewer to administer these consents (for instance, if someone answers yes to Vet status, reporting mental health problems, or to multiple ER/inpatient stays). The interviewer should ask at the conclusion of the interview whether the client will fill out the respective form as it may increase the housing resources available.

If a match is later made, it will allow DMH, VA, DHS to verify eligibility prior to the client being contacted.

### Where do I send it?

- **DHS:** Fax “Attn: Joe” to 213-482-3395 or email Joe ([WTsai@dhs.lacounty.gov](mailto:WTsai@dhs.lacounty.gov))
- **DMH:** Fax to Anu Sahni at (213) 252-8883
- **VA:** Contact your designated SPA team's VA Outreach Representative who will come by and pick it up

### Are there additional eligibility criteria beyond being a client that I should know about?

- **DHS:** 2 or more admissions for inpatient hospitalization or emergency-based services at any a DHS hospitals over the past 12 months: Harbor-UCLA, LAC+USC, Olive View-UCLA, Rancho Los Amigos
- **VA:** 1) cannot have Other-than-honorable (OTH) discharge; 2) cannot be registered sex offender; 3) must be legal resident; 4) If active service prior to 1980 a day or more of service OR if active service after, 24 months of consecutive service
- **DMH:** departmental record check of services consumed