***HUD’s Definition of Chronically Homeless:***

HUD issued a final rule on December 4 on the definition of “chronically homeless” used in the Continuum of Care Program and in the Consolidated Plan. There are three key changes to the interim rule published on July 31, 2012.

With these changes, HUD intends to align the period of time of those experiencing occasional homelessness with that of those experiencing continuous homelessness by adding the text requiring a break in homelessness to be at least seven consecutive nights and by excluding from a break in homelessness stays in institutional care facilities shorter than 90 days if an individual or family was homeless prior to entering the facility.

The final definition is presented here with the new or revised text in bold and with the prior interim rule text in brackets.

Chronically homeless means:

1. **A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9))**, who:
[An individual who can be diagnosed with one or more of the following conditions: substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)), post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability]
	1. Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
	2. Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition continuously for at least **12 months** [one year] or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years,[where each homeless occasion was at least 15 days] **as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (1)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute a break in homelessness, but rather such stays are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility;**
2. An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility; or
3. A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

The final rule is at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-12-04/pdf/2015-30473.pdf>