

# Bed Utilization Tip Sheet

## How do I calculate my agency's bed utilization rate?

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### Determine Capacity

- **Step One:** Determine the number of units and beds available for your agency. If you are a scattered-site housing program, take the number of units you have available and break it down by bedroom size. HUD follows the formula that 1 bedroom is for 1 person. For example, Agency X has 6 units: two 1 bedroom units, two 2 bedroom units, and two 3 bedroom units. To calculate capacity for Agency X you would do the following:
  - **2 units x 1 bedroom = 2**
  - **2 units x 2 bedrooms = 4**
  - **2 units x 3 bedrooms = 9**
  - **Total capacity = 2+4+9 = 15**

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### Determine Number of Persons in the Program on a Given Night

- **Step One:** Pick a date for a monthly HMIS point-in-time count. The default date used in the HMIS office is the last Wednesday of every month. Agencies can choose an alternate date for their count. For comparison purposes, agencies should choose a similar date for each monthly HMIS point-in-time count.
- **Step Two:** For the date you have chosen, run an HMIS report to determine how many persons were in your program on that day. For emergency shelters, you can use the monthly shelter report. For housing programs, you can use the APR.

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### Use the Utilization Rate Formula

- **Step One:** Use the following formula to calculate bed utilization rates: (# of clients served on a monthly point-in-time count) ÷ (capacity) x 100 = bed utilization rate.

## How do I know if my agency's utilization rate is too high or too low?

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Here are a few suggestions for helping you determine if your agency's utilization rates are accurate:

- Assess whether the number "makes sense." For example, a utilization rate of 200% means there are twice as many people in your program than there are available beds. Is that feasible?
- Determine if your agency's utilization rates fall outside of the 65%-105% acceptable range. If they do, follow the steps listed below under common utilization rate problems.

### Common Utilization Rate Problems

- **Under-utilization:** If your agency has a utilization rate below 65%, it is often an indicator that HMIS data has not been entered on every client your agency has served. Check to make sure you have completed an intake and recorded an arrival for all clients served.
- **Over-utilization:** If your agency has a utilization rate above 105%, it is often an indicator that exits have not been recorded for clients who have left your program. Check to make sure you have recorded exits for all clients who have left your program.