

VI-SPDAT Version 3 How-To

When to Conduct a VI-SPDAT

- **Shelters** should be conducting VI-SPDATs after 14 days of stay (consecutive or cumulative within the past three years)
- Attempts should be made to ensure no one is in shelter for 30 days (cumulative within the past three years) without a VI-SPDAT completed and recorded in HIFIS
- **Outreach workers** working with unsheltered clients should complete a VI-SPDAT at the first opportunity
- **Drop-in programs** should only complete VI-SPDATs with clients currently experiencing homelessness

Where to conduct a VI-SPDAT

- Ideally somewhere private, or where a client feels comfortable
- Information can be gathered over the course of several conversations with clients and does not need to be completed in one sitting or specific setting

How to Conduct a VI-SPDAT

- Completing a VI-SPDAT should be tailored to the clients (i.e. connecting with them at times they are responsive and open to engagement)
- While we wait for the latest version to be integrated into HIFIS, we are asking agencies to use paper copies and then answer five questions in HIFIS. This Custom Table is titled *VI-SPDAT* and will appear on the right side of your **Client - Vitals** page.
- Questions to record in HIFIS are:
 - Type of VI-SPDAT (i.e. single, family, or youth)
 - Length of time homeless in the last three years
 - Score
 - Client housing preference*
 - Date of assessment
- *The housing preference is a new drop-down feature that attempts to capture some features of housing important to clients, helping us to better understand housing motivations. This is not a mandatory question.

How will this Process be Monitored?

- On a monthly basis, Housing Services will request a small random sample of completed VI-SPDATs to be sent to the HomelessPolicyPrograms@Hamilton.ca
- Once received, Housing Services will spot check to ensure the information was accurately submitted into HIFIS and monitor trends month over month

Things to Note

- The VI-SPDAT is a decision assistance tool not a decision-making tool and does not take the place of other clinical assessment tools
- Triage assessments don't need to be done in one sitting
- Staff expertise and reading of each situation will determine how best to capture the client's story

What Happens when a Client does not have a VI-SPDAT?

- Indigenous clients are not required to complete the SPDAT series of tools; Housing Services continues to work with partners to ensure pathways are culturally safe and accessible to Indigenous clients
- If a client does not have a VI-SPDAT completed they are not appropriately triaged on the By-Name List, which could impede their connection to appropriate housing programs