



Can Automation Improve Homeless Service Delivery?

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NHSDC SPRING 2022 CONFERENCE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN | MARCH 28-30, 2022

Introductions



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Who is LAHSA?

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) is an independent joint powers authority whose role is to coordinate the use of federal and local funding for homeless services across Los Angeles County.

- We are the CoC Lead
- We are the HMIS Administrator
- We are a Grant Administrator
- We are the Coordinated Entry System Administrator

Understanding the Scale of L.A.

Equal Population Mapper

Los Angeles County

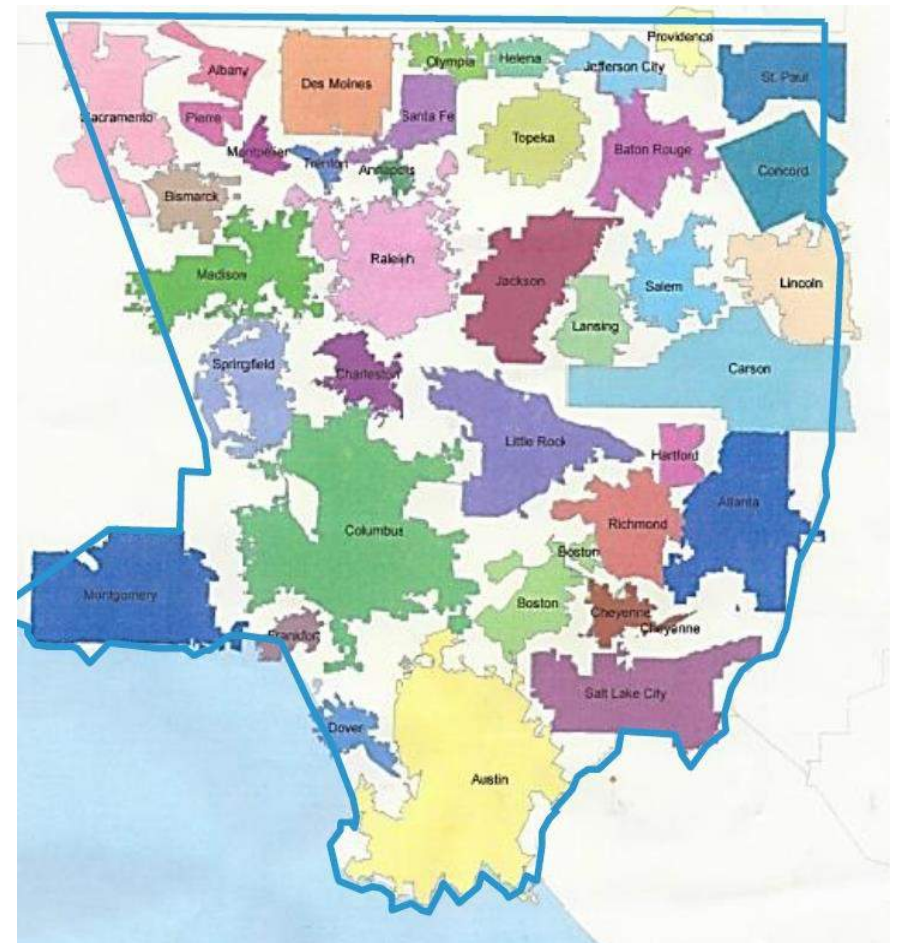
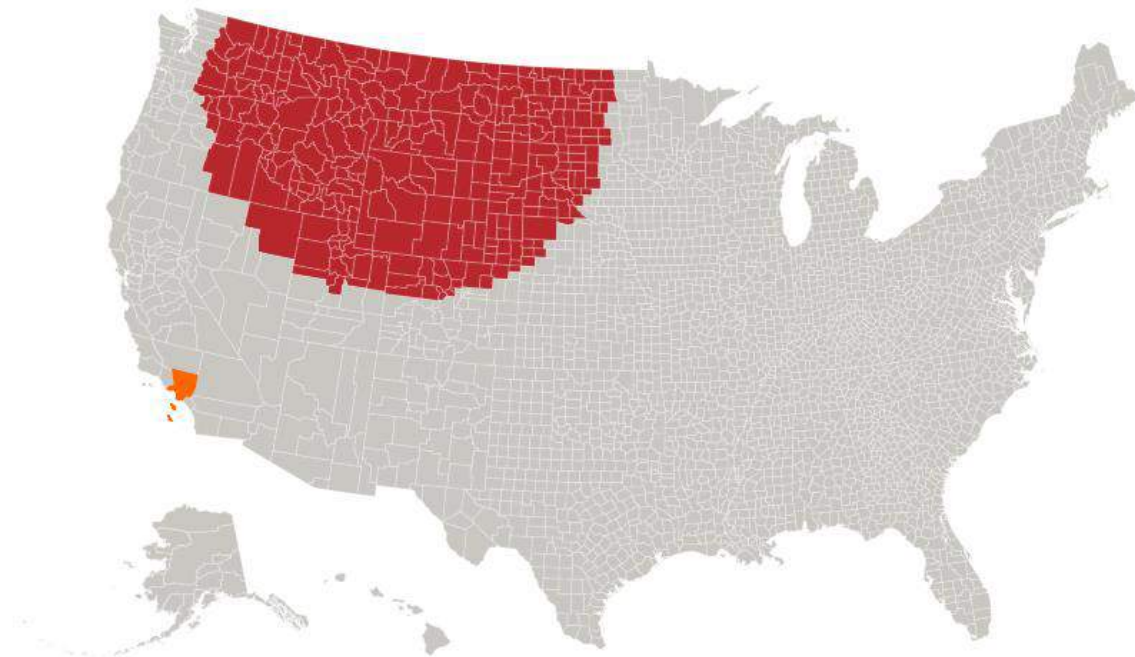
Population: 9.82 million

Total Area: 4,751 square miles

Red Region

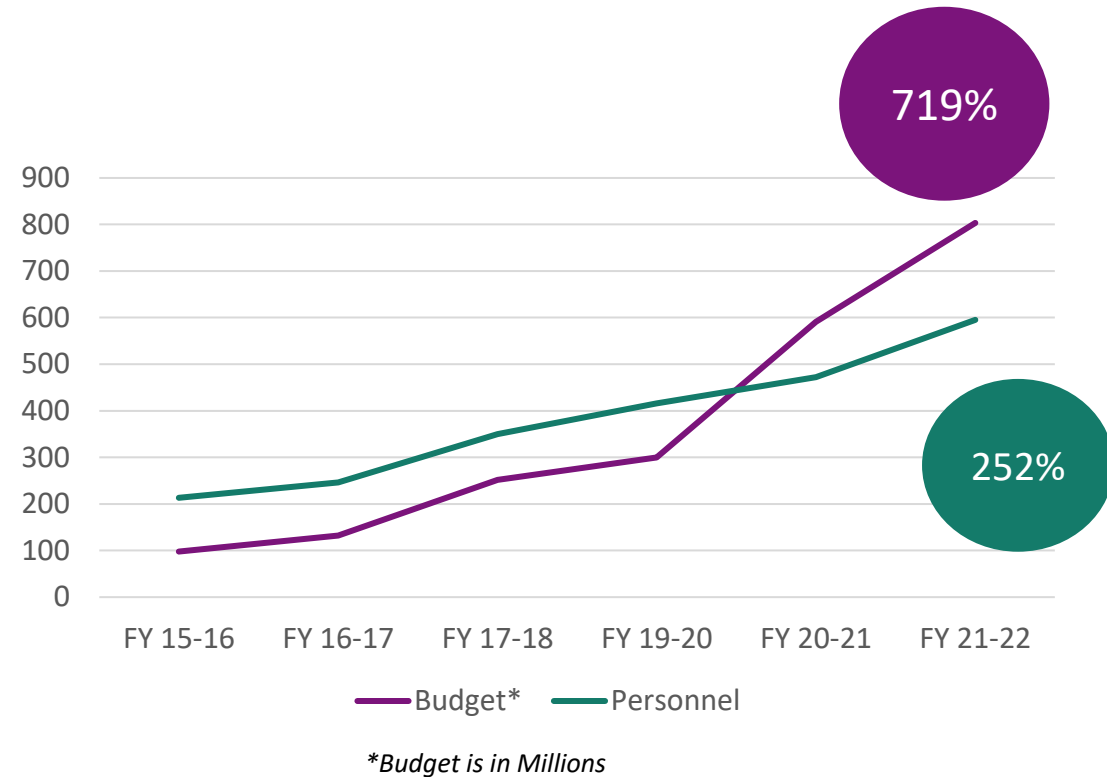
Population: 9.47 million

Total Area: 649,929 square miles



Last 5 Years at LAHSA

1. Measure H
2. Proposition HHH
3. New State and Local funding
4. COVID Response Funding



*This is a graphic from last year, needs to be updated.

Let's Understand L.A.'s Vast Digital Environment

1. L.A. is made up of 4 CoCs, LAHSA being the collaborative lead
 - Some of the CoCs have their own HMIS
2. The Health agency, one of LAHSA largest partners in this fight to end homelessness
 - Have their own database for tracking homeless services
3. L.A. has 22 Public Housing Authorities all of which have their own database
4. DV/IPV agencies have their own unique database by agency
5. Individual utilization and resource tracking

Almost none of it was connected to produce an output that would allow for active management of the system.

Rapid Growth Response (the last 5 years)

Increasing our digital landscape:

1. Change in HMIS vendors
2. Updating/ developing our database infrastructure
3. Learning new ways to integrate applications in the day-to-day work i.e., PSH/IH inventory,
4. Developing an (active) grant management system
5. Introduce LAHSA to automation
6. Develop our user-centered/ experience design practice to be more inclusive



Rapid Growth Response (the last 5 years)

Engaging the system:

1. We needed to learn what we were doing well and not well
2. We needed to learn how to engage the subrecipients a different way
3. We needed to become more transparent and more inclusive
4. We needed to learn how to keep ourselves accountable, through public-facing dashboards and reports
5. We needed to learn how to make actionable decisions based on data
6. We needed to engage our system partners in an action-oriented and meaningful way



We Needed Help!

1. We went from an agency that managed less than \$100M to an agency that managed over \$800M annually.
2. We were needing thousands of new staff to operate and manage all the new funding.
3. We were attempting to integrate technology and data into everything without democratizing the data information and addressing all of the separate data systems within the community.
4. We needed help working with our partners, everyone had their own goals, priorities, and workflows.
5. We were inflating our front door with outreach and interim housing solutions, and we were not paying nearly as much attention to throughput into permanent housing.
6. We had thousands of vacant units while tens of thousands of people were experiencing homelessness on the street

So, We Called in Reinforcements

Housing Central Command

1. We called HUD for help
2. HCC was developed in November 2019
3. Was a new initiative to establish unprecedented real-time awareness of LA's permanent supportive housing (PSH) portfolio across all jurisdictions and funding streams.
4. Model was developed and modeled on HUD emergency disaster response
5. HUD, HUD TA, State Officials, Local Politicians, and local administrative agencies below

WE ARE ONE TEAM



Problems Identified

1. The Coordinated System that we have built wasn't exactly as coordinated as we hoped in key areas.
2. The Housing process was a nightmare!
3. No one was collecting documentation for housing: IDs, SSN, Certification of Disability, VA Letters (DD214)
4. Staffing was/is needed to support the housing process



Some Solutions Were Easier to fix

In the first 9 months:

Digital Documents were now accepted by everyone

Document Specialist were created*

We completed an MOU with DPSS to obtain documents*

There was a singular goal

Started intensive training for document obtainment*

All C-Suite housing partners were at the table

We identified all backdoors and side channels into housing

Focus on hiring and retaining staff through incentives*

*Tested out for COVID but expanded for the entire system if not partially

Some Solutions Took Longer

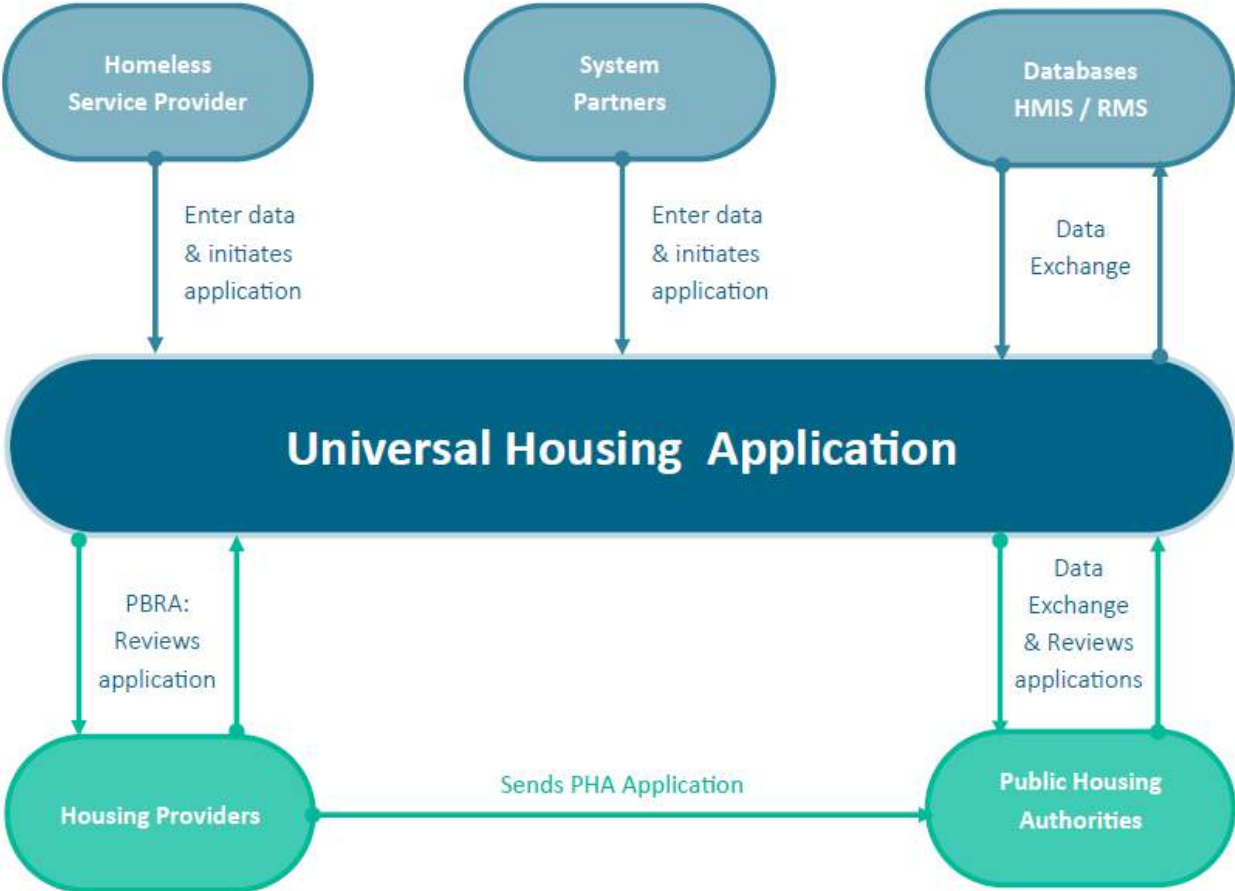
The Coordinated System that we have built wasn't exactly as coordinated as we hoped in key areas.

1. We Started an IH-to-PH workgroup with the system leads
2. We Started Regional Implementation Meetings where everyone within a region of Los Angeles who worked in homeless services were invited from C-Suite to CM
3. We closed all known backdoors within the system

The Housing process was a nightmare!

1. We Consolidated over 20+ housing applications and the PHA applications
2. We enhanced our agreements with DPSS for all clients and also added obtaining benefits statements
3. We created the **Universal Housing Application!**

Universal Housing Application Walkthrough



As of today...

1. We have over **XX** active users
2. We are working with **XX** Buildings which are **XX** vacancies
3. We have submitted over **XX** applications throughout the entire process
4. We have seen preliminary data show a decrease of **XX**% from match to move-in.

Still In The Works

The Coordinated System that we have built wasn't exactly as coordinated as we hoped in key areas.

1. IH-to-PH workgroup is primarily being tested within one region in LA County, we are working to expand it across the entire County.
2. Improve Matching to resources and data quality
3. Democratizing our Data: Trainings and hands-on onboarding throughout the entire County

The Housing process was a nightmare!

1. General Availability for the **Universal Housing Application**
2. APIs and other Data Exchanges with key partners are needed, which we plan to integrate into the UHA and other tools
3. We have been working with State Funders as it relates to Tax credits and other non-HUD funding for more alignment across the board.

Lessons Learned

1. You can't just think about function, you need to think about design, usability, competing priorities, and buy-in – **Inclusive Design Matters!**
2. Workload + Capacity + New Projects + Current Projects + Self Care = **There needs to be a balance!**
3. Staff Needed – You cannot take on a project like this without both the proper number of staff and **properly trained/experienced staff**
4. Knowing what you are building and knowing what you are not building – **One product cannot solve all the problems**
5. Understanding the challenges from concept to development to implementation and navigating change management from a manual to digital infrastructure. **Change from old to new is Hard and Nuanced**
6. Understanding across partnerships that the current processes will not continue after implementation. There needs to be a shared understanding the **old ways of doing things will need to change to adopt new tools.**

