



HMIS Document

Client Merge Requests Policies & Procedures

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the policies and procedures for reviewing and approving or denying client merge requests submitted by participating agencies in HMIS.

The primary goal of processing a client merge is to ensure that each client has a single, accurate profile that consolidates all relevant information. Merges should only be completed when it is certain that the profiles belong to the same individual.

If there is any doubt that the profiles may represent different people, the merge must not be processed. Merging records incorrectly creates a significant data integrity risk, and once profiles are merged, separating them is complex and may not be fully reversible.

Scope

This document pertains to anyone assigned to process client merge requests through our Helpdesk, including System Success Specialists, Data Analysts, and Partner Success Specialists.

Receiving a Client Merge Request

All client merge requests must be submitted to the HMIS Helpdesk. Once received, a ticket is created and assigned to an HMIS employee, usually a Partner Success Specialist.

The merge request must contain the following information in order to be processed:

- The Source Client ID (the duplicate that was created)
- The Target Client ID (the original profile that already existed)

Processing a Client Merge Request

When reviewing client profile merges, any differences in key identifying information must be investigated and confirmed before proceeding. This includes:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Social Security Number
- Demographics (Gender, Sex, Race/Ethnicity)

If discrepancies are found, notify the requesting agency immediately. Clearly specify which data elements do not match and ask them to confirm that the correct Client IDs were submitted.

- If the agency provides a corrected Client ID, continue reviewing the merge request using the updated information.
- If the agency confirms the profiles belong to the same individual despite differences, they must submit documentation proving both profiles represent the same person.

Acceptable proof may include existing documents already attached to either profile, such as:

- Government-issued ID
- Social Security card
- Birth certificate
- Profile photos
- Lease agreements

Additional acceptable documentation may include:

- Legal name change documentation (e.g., marriage certificate, court order, etc)
- Matching client signatures uploaded to both profiles
- Case manager verification letters on agency letterhead
- Court or legal documents with identifying information

All documentation must clearly support that both profiles belong to the same individual. Documentation submitted as proof should be legible, current, and contain at least one personal identifying element (Name, Date of Birth, etc).

How to Deny a Client Merge Request

If sufficient documentation is not provided, the merge request must be denied. Inform the requesting agency that client merges are intended to maintain accurate and reliable records. When key information does not match and cannot be verified, merging profiles creates a significant risk of combining records for different individuals.

Example Macro Suggestion:

“Hello,

Thank you for submitting this client merge request. After reviewing all profiles and submitted documentation, we have determined that there are too many differences between the profiles to complete a merge. The differences include: XX, XX, XX.

When key information does not match and cannot be verified, merging profiles creates a significant risk of combining records for different individuals. Therefore we must deny this request at this time. If further documentation becomes available, please resubmit the merge request and attach the new documentation.”

How to Escalate a Client Merge Request

If a requesting agency disputes or pushes back on a client merge denial, the ticket should be escalated for further review.

Step 1: Initial Escalation

Escalate the ticket to an HMIS Data Analyst or Data Security Officer. These roles are responsible for:

- Reviewing the original decision and supporting documentation
- Confirming whether the denial aligns with HMIS policies
- Providing a detailed explanation of the risks associated with merging profiles that contain conflicting information

They may also communicate directly with the requesting agency to reinforce the decision and request any additional documentation, if appropriate.

Step 2: Secondary Escalation

If the agency continues to dispute the decision after review by a Data Analyst or Data Security Officer, escalate the ticket to the Director of Information Systems.

At this level:

- A final determination will be made
- Any exceptional circumstances will be evaluated
- The decision will be considered final and communicated to the requesting agency

Document History

Date of Revision	Document Version	Revision Notes
2026/03/31	1.0	First Release of Document