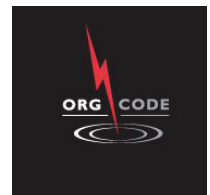# Vulnerability Index -
Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool
(VI-SPDAT)

Prescreen Triage Tool for Single Adults

AMERICAN VERSION 2.0

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

ORG CODE

Welcome to the SPDAT Line of Products

The Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) has been around in various incarnations for over a decade, before being released to the public in 2010. Since its initial release, the use of the SPDAT has been expanding exponentially and is now used in over one thousand communities across the United States, Canada, and Australia.

More communities using the tool means there is an unprecedented demand for versions of the SPDAT, customized for specific client groups or types of users. With the release of SPDAT V4, there have been more current versions of SPDAT products than ever before.

VI-SPDAT Series

The Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) was developed as a pre-screening tool for communities that are very busy and do not have the resources to conduct a full SPDAT assessment for every client. It was made in collaboration with Community Solutions, creators of the Vulnerability Index, as a brief survey that can be conducted to quickly determine whether a client has high, moderate, or low acuity. The use of this survey can help prioritize which clients should be given a full SPDAT assessment first. Because it is a self-reported survey, no special training is required to use the VI-SPDAT.

Current versions available:
- VI-SPDAT V 2.0 for Individuals
- VI-SPDAT V 2.0 for Families
- VI-SPDAT V 1.0 for Youth

All versions are available online at

www.orgcode.com/products/vi-spdat/

SPDAT Series

The Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) was developed as an assessment tool for front-line workers at agencies that work with homeless clients to prioritize which of those clients should receive assistance first. The SPDAT tools are also designed to help guide case management and improve housing stability outcomes. They provide an in-depth assessment that relies on the assessor's ability to interpret responses and corroborate those with evidence. As a result, this tool may only be used by those who have received proper, up-to-date training provided by OrgCode Consulting, Inc. or an OrgCode certified trainer.

Current versions available:
- SPDAT V 4.0 for Individuals
- SPDAT V 2.0 for Families
- SPDAT V 1.0 for Youth

Information about all versions is available online at

www.orgcode.com/products/spdat/

SPDAT Training Series

To use the SPDAT, training by OrgCode or an OrgCode certified trainer is required. We provide training on a wide variety of topics over a variety of mediums.

The full-day in-person SPDAT Level 1 training provides you the opportunity to bring together as many people as you want to be trained for one low fee. The webinar training allows for a maximum of 15 different computers to be logged into the training at one time. We also offer online courses for individuals that you can do at your own speed.

The training gives you the manual, case studies, application to current practice, a review of each component of the tool, conversation guidance with prospective clients – and more!

Current SPDAT training available:
* Level 0 SPDAT Training: VI-SPDAT for Frontline Workers
* Level 1 SPDAT Training: SPDAT for Frontline Workers
* Level 2 SPDAT Training: SPDAT for Supervisors
* Level 3 SPDAT Training: SPDAT for Trainers

Other related training available:
* Excellence in Housing-Based Case Management
* Coordinated Access & Common Assessment
* Motivational Interviewing
* Objective-Based Interactions

More information about SPDAT training, including pricing, is available online at

http://www.orgcode.com/product-category/training/spdat/

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Administration

Interviewer's Name	Agency	◑ Team
		◑ Staff
_____	_____	◑ Volunteer
Survey Date	**Survey Time**	**Survey Location**
DD/MM/YYYY ____/____/_____	__ __ __ __	_____

Opening Script

Every assessor in your community regardless of organization completing the VI-SPDAT should use the same introductory script. In that script you should highlight the following information:

- the name of the assessor and their affiliation (organization that employs them, volunteer as part of a Point in Time Count, etc.)
- the purpose of the VI-SPDAT being completed
- that it usually takes less than 7 minutes to complete
- that only "Yes," "No," or one-word answers are being sought
- that any question can be skipped or refused
- where the information is going to be stored
- that if the participant does not understand a question or the assessor does not understand the question that clarification can be provided
- the importance of relaying accurate information to the assessor and not feeling that there is a correct or preferred answer that they need to provide, nor information they need to conceal

Basic Information

First Name	Nickname	Last Name
_____	_____	_____
In what language do you feel best able to express yourself? _____		
Date of Birth	**Age** **Social Security Number**	**Consent to participate**
DD/MM/YYYY ____/____/_____	_____ _____	◯ Yes ◯ No

IF THE PERSON IS 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER, THEN SCORE 1.	**SCORE:**
	0

A. History of Housing and Homelessness

1. Where do you sleep most frequently? (check one)

   ○ Shelters
   ○ Transitional Housing
   ○ Safe Haven
   ○ **Outdoors**
   ○ **Other (specify):**
   _____
   ○ **Refused**

IF THE PERSON ANSWERS ANYTHING OTHER THAN "SHELTER", "TRANSITIONAL HOUSING", OR "SAFE HAVEN", THEN SCORE 1.	SCORE: 1

2. How long has it been since you lived in permanent stable housing? ___ Years ☐ Refused

3. In the last three years, how many times have you been homeless? _____ ☐ Refused

IF THE PERSON HAS EXPERIENCED 1 OR MORE CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF HOMELESSNESS, AND/OR 4+ EPISODES OF HOMELESSNESS, THEN SCORE 1.	SCORE: 0

B. Risks

4. In the past six months, how many times have you…

   a) Received health care at an emergency department/room? ____ ☐ Refused

   b) Taken an ambulance to the hospital? ____ ☐ Refused

   c) Been hospitalized as an inpatient? ____ ☐ Refused

   d) Used a crisis service, including sexual assault crisis, mental health crisis, family/intimate violence, distress centers and suicide prevention hotlines? ____ ☐ Refused

   e) Talked to police because you witnessed a crime, were the victim of a crime, or the alleged perpetrator of a crime or because the police told you that you must move along? ____ ☐ Refused

   f) Stayed one or more nights in a holding cell, jail or prison, whether that was a short-term stay like the drunk tank, a longer stay for a more serious offence, or anything in between? ____ ☐ Refused

IF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERACTIONS EQUALS 4 OR MORE, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **EMERGENCY SERVICE USE.**	SCORE: 0

5. Have you been attacked or beaten up since you've become homeless? ◉ Y ◉ N ◉ Refused

6. Have you threatened to or tried to harm yourself or anyone else in the last year? ◉ Y ◉ N ◉ Refused

IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **RISK OF HARM.**	SCORE: 0

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7. Do you have any legal stuff going on right now that may result in you being locked up, having to pay fines, or that make it more difficult to rent a place to live?   ◎ **Y**   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

IF "YES," THEN SCORE 1 FOR **LEGAL ISSUES.**	**SCORE:**
	0

8. Does anybody force or trick you to do things that you do not want to do?   ◎ **Y**   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

9. Do you ever do things that may be considered to be risky like exchange sex for money, run drugs for someone, have unprotected sex with someone you don't know, share a needle, or anything like that?   ◎ **Y**   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **RISK OF EXPLOITATION.**	**SCORE:**
	0

C. Socialization & Daily Functioning

10. Is there any person, past landlord, business, bookie, dealer, or government group like the IRS that thinks you owe them money?   ◎ **Y**   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

11. Do you get any money from the government, a pension, an inheritance, working under the table, a regular job, or anything like that?   ◎ Y   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

IF "YES" TO QUESTION 10 OR "NO" TO QUESTION 11, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **MONEY MANAGEMENT.**	**SCORE:**
	0

12. Do you have planned activities, other than just surviving, that make you feel happy and fulfilled?   ◎ Y   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

IF "NO," THEN SCORE 1 FOR **MEANINGFUL DAILY ACTIVITY.**	**SCORE:**
	0

13. Are you currently able to take care of basic needs like bathing, changing clothes, using a restroom, getting food and clean water and other things like that?   ◎ Y   ◎ **N**   ◎ Refused

IF "NO," THEN SCORE 1 FOR **SELF-CARE.**	**SCORE:**
	0

14. Is your current homelessness in any way caused by a relationship that broke down, an unhealthy or abusive relationship, or because family or friends caused you to become evicted?   ◎ **Y**   ◎ N   ◎ Refused

IF "YES," THEN SCORE 1 FOR **SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS.**	**SCORE:**
	0

D. Wellness

15. Have you ever had to leave an apartment, shelter program, or other place you were staying because of your physical health?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

16. Do you have any chronic health issues with your liver, kidneys, stomach, lungs or heart?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

17. If there was space available in a program that specifically assists people that live with HIV or AIDS, would that be of interest to you?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

18. Do you have any physical disabilities that would limit the type of housing you could access, or would make it hard to live independently because you'd need help?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

19. When you are sick or not feeling well, do you avoid getting help?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

20. *FOR FEMALE RESPONDENTS ONLY:* Are you currently pregnant?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ N/A or Refused

	SCORE:
IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **PHYSICAL HEALTH.**	0

21. Has your drinking or drug use led you to being kicked out of an apartment or program where you were staying in the past?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

22. Will drinking or drug use make it difficult for you to stay housed or afford your housing?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

	SCORE:
IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **SUBSTANCE USE.**	0

23. Have you ever had trouble maintaining your housing, or been kicked out of an apartment, shelter program or other place you were staying, because of:

    a) A mental health issue or concern?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

    b) A past head injury?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

    c) A learning disability, developmental disability, or other impairment?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

24. Do you have any mental health or brain issues that would make it hard for you to live independently because you'd need help?   ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

	SCORE:
IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, THEN SCORE 1 FOR **MENTAL HEALTH.**	0

	SCORE:
IF THE RESPONENT SCORED 1 FOR **PHYSICAL HEALTH** AND 1 FOR **SUBSTANCE USE** AND 1 FOR **MENTAL HEALTH**, SCORE 1 FOR **TRI-MORBIDITY**.	0

25. Are there any medications that a doctor said you should be taking that, for whatever reason, you are not taking? ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

26. Are there any medications like painkillers that you don't take the way the doctor prescribed or where you sell the medication? ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, SCORE 1 FOR **MEDICATIONS.**	SCORE:
	0

27. *YES OR NO:* Has your current period of homelessness been caused by an experience of emotional, physical, psychological, sexual, or other type of abuse, or by any other trauma you have experienced? ☑ **Y**   ☑ N   ☑ Refused

IF "YES", SCORE 1 FOR **ABUSE AND TRAUMA.**	SCORE:
	0

Scoring Summary

DOMAIN	SUBTOTAL	RESULTS
PRE-SURVEY	0 /1	**Score: Recommendation:**
A. HISTORY OF HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS	1 /2	0-3: no housing intervention
B. RISKS	0 /4	4-7: an assessment for Rapid Re-Housing
C. SOCIALIZATION & DAILY FUNCTIONS	0 /4	
D. WELLNESS	0 /6	8+: an assessment for Permanent Supportive Housing/Housing First
GRAND TOTAL:	0 /17	

Follow-Up Questions

On a regular day, where is it easiest to find you and what time of day is easiest to do so?	place: _____ time: ___ : _____ or Night
Is there a phone number and/or email where someone can safely get in touch with you or leave you a message?	phone: (_____) _____ - _____ email: _____
Ok, now I'd like to take your picture so that it is easier to find you and confirm your identity in the future. May I do so?	☑ Yes ☑ No ☑ Refused

Communities are encouraged to think of additional questions that may be relevant to the programs being operated or your specific local context. This may include questions related to:

- military service and nature of discharge
- ageing out of care
- mobility issues

- legal status in country
- income and source of it
- current restrictions on where a person can legally reside

- children that may reside with the adult at some point in the future
- safety planning

Appendix A: About the VI-SPDAT

The HEARTH Act and federal regulations require communities to have an assessment tool for coordinated entry - and the VI-SPDAT and SPDAT meet these requirements. Many communities have struggled to comply with this requirement, which demands an investment of considerable time, resources and expertise. Others are making it up as they go along, using "gut instincts" in lieu of solid evidence. Communities need practical, evidence-informed tools that enhance their ability to to satisfy federal regulations and quickly implement an effective approach to access and assessment. The VI-SPDAT is a first-of-its-kind tool designed to fill this need, helping communities end homelessness in a quick, strategic fashion.

The VI-SPDAT

The VI-SPDAT was initially created by combining the elements of the Vulnerability Index which was created and implemented by Community Solutions broadly in the 100,000 Homes Campaign, and the SPDAT Prescreen Instrument that was part of the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool. The combination of these two instruments was performed through extensive research and development, and testing. The development process included the direct voice of hundreds of persons with lived experience.

The VI-SPDAT examines factors of current vulnerability and future housing stability. It follows the structure of the SPDAT assessment tool, and is informed by the same research backbone that supports the SPDAT - almost 300 peer reviewed published journal articles, government reports, clinical and quasi-clinical assessment tools, and large data sets. The SPDAT has been independently tested, as well as internally reviewed. The data overwhelmingly shows that when the SPDAT is used properly, housing outcomes are better than when no assessment tool is used.

The VI-SPDAT is a triage tool. It highlights areas of higher acuity, thereby helping to inform the type of support and housing intervention that may be most beneficial to improve long term housing outcomes. It also helps inform the order - or priority - in which people should be served. The VI-SPDAT does not make decisions; it informs decisions. The VI-SPDAT provides data that communities, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness can use to help determine the best course of action next.
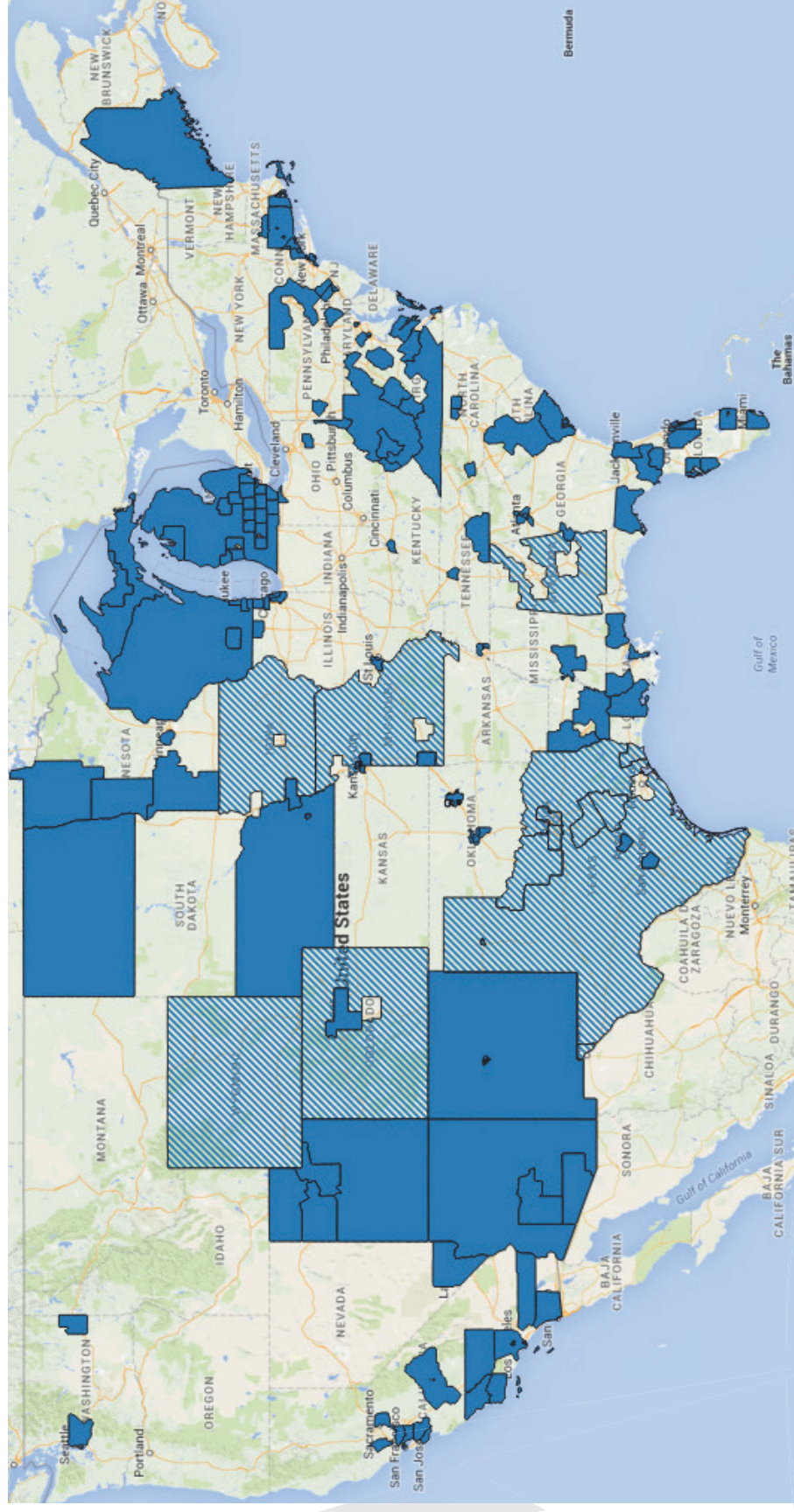
Version 2

Version 2 builds upon the success of Version 1 of the VI-SPDAT with some refinements. Starting in August 2014, a survey was launched of existing VI-SPDAT users to get their input on what should be amended, improved, or maintained in the tool. Analysis was completed across all of these responses. Further research was conducted. Questions were tested and refined over several months, again including the direct voice of persons with lived experience and frontline practitioners. Input was also gathered from senior government officials that create policy and programs to help ensure alignment with guidelines and funding requirements.

You will notice some differences in Version 2 compared to Version 1. Namely:

• it is shorter, usually taking less than 7 minutes to complete;

• subjective elements through observation are now gone, which means the exact same instrument can be used over the phone or in-person;

• medical, substance use, and mental health questions are all refined;

• you can now explicitly see which component of the full SPDAT each VI-SPDAT question links to; and,

• the scoring range is slightly different (Don't worry, we can provide instructions on how these relate to results from Version 1).

Appendix B: Where the VI-SPDAT is being used in the United States

Since the VI-SPDAT is provided completely free of charge, and no training is required, any community is able to use the VI-SPDAT without the explicit permission of Community Solutions or OrgCode Consulting, Inc. As a result, the VI-SPDAT is being used in more communities than we know of. It is also being used in Canada and Australia.

A partial list of continua of care (CoCs) in the US where we know the VI-SPDAT is being used includes:

Alabama
- Parts of Alabama Balance of State

Arizona
- Statewide

California
- San Jose/Santa Clara City & County
- San Francisco
- Oakland/Alameda County
- Sacramento City & County
- Richmond/Contra Costa County
- Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County
- Fresno/Madera County
- Napa City & County
- Los Angeles City & County
- San Diego
- Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County
- Bakersfield/Kern County
- Pasadena
- Riverside City & County
- Glendale
- San Luis Obispo County

Colorado
- Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative
- Parts of Colorado Balance of State

Connecticut
- Hartford
- Bridgeport/Stratford/Fairfield
- Connecticut Balance of State
- Norwalk/Fairfield County
- Stamford/Greenwich
- City of Waterbury

District of Columbia
- District of Columbia

Florida
- Sarasota/Bradenton/Manatee, Sarasota Counties
- Tampa/Hillsborough County
- St. Petersburg/Clearwater/Largo/Pinellas County
- Tallahassee/Leon County
- Orlando/Orange, Osceola, Seminole Counties
- Gainesville/Alachua, Putnam Counties
- Jacksonville-Duval, Clay Counties
- Palm Bay/Melbourne/Brevard County
- Ocala/Marion County
- Miami/Dade County
- West Palm Beach/Palm Beach County

Georgia
- Atlanta County
- Fulton County
- Columbus-Muscogee/Russell County
- Marietta/Cobb County
- DeKalb County

Hawaii
- Honolulu

Illinois
- Rockford/Winnebago, Boone Counties
- Waukegan/North Chicago/Lake County
- Chicago
- Cook County

Iowa
- Parts of Iowa Balance of State

Kansas
- Kansas City/Wyandotte County

Kentucky
- Louisville/Jefferson County

Louisiana
- Lafayette/Acadiana
- Shreveport/Bossier/Northwest
- New Orleans/Jefferson Parish
- Baton Rouge
- Alexandria/Central Louisiana CoC

Massachusetts
- Cape Cod Islands
- Springfield/Holyoke/Chicopee/Westfield/Hampden County

Maryland
- Baltimore City
- Montgomery County

Maine
- Statewide

Michigan
- Statewide

Minnesota
- Minneapolis/Hennepin County
- Northwest Minnesota
- Moorhead/West Central Minnesota
- Southwest Minnesota

Missouri
- St. Louis County
- St. Louis City
- Joplin/Jasper, Newton Counties
- Kansas City/Independence/Lee's Summit/Jackson County
- Parts of Missouri Balance of State

Mississippi
- Jackson/Rankin, Madison Counties
- Gulf Port/Gulf Coast Regional

North Carolina
- Winston Salem/Forsyth County
- Asheville/Buncombe County
- Greensboro/High Point

North Dakota
- Statewide

Nebraska
- Statewide

New Mexico
- Statewide

Nevada
- Las Vegas/Clark County

New York
- New York City
- Yonkers/Mount Vernon/New Rochelle/Westchester County

Ohio
- Toledo/Lucas County
- Canton/Massillon/Alliance/Stark County

Oklahoma
- Tulsa City & County/Broken Arrow
- Oklahoma City
- Norman/Cleveland County

Pennsylvania
- Philadelphia
- Lower Marion/Norristown/Abington/Montgomery County
- Allentown/Northeast Pennsylvania
- Lancaster City & County
- Bristol/Bensalem/Bucks County
- Pittsburgh/McKeesport/Penn Hills/Allegheny County

Rhode Island
- Statewide

South Carolina
- Charleston/Low Country
- Columbia/Midlands

Tennessee
- Chattanooga/Southeast Tennessee
- Memphis/Shelby County
- Nashville/Davidson County

Texas
- San Antonio/Bexar County
- Austin/Travis County
- Dallas City & County/Irving
- Fort Worth/Arlington/Tarrant County
- El Paso City and County
- Waco/McLennan County
- Texas Balance of State
- Amarillo
- Wichita Falls/Wise, Palo Pinto, Wichita, Archer Counties
- Bryan/College Station/Brazos Valley
- Beaumont/Port Arthur/South East Texas

Utah
- Statewide

Virginia
- Richmond/Henrico, Chesterfield, Hanover Counties
- Roanoke City & County/Salem
- Virginia Beach
- Portsmouth
- Virginia Balance of State
- Arlington County

Washington
- Seattle/King County
- Spokane City & County

Wisconsin
- Statewide

West Virginia
- Statewide

Wyoming
- Wyoming Statewide is in the process of implementing