SUBJECT:	APPLICABLE TO:	ISSUED:
JOINT COMMAND CENTER'S FACILITY PLACEMENT PROCESS	Street Homeless Solutions, Office of Shelter Intake and Assessment, and Vacancy Control	September 24, 2024 **DHS-PB-2024-013**

ADMINISTERED BY:	APPROVED BY:
Street Homeless Solutions' Joint Command Center, Office of Shelter Intake and Assessment, Vacancy Control	Joslyn Carter, Administrator Department of Social Services/ Department of Homeless Services

■ **INTRODUCTION**

The Joint Command Center (JCC) is a unit within the New York City Department of Homeless Services' ("DHS") Street Homeless Solutions ("SHS") and coordinates with Outreach Teams that are tasked with safely engaging individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. When Outreach teams engage with individuals experiencing street homelessness ("clients"), they ask them a series of questions to make a recommendation for an appropriate facility placement (safe haven, drop-in center, stabilization bed, or shelter). Outreach teams then contact JCC staff to confirm the requested placement.[1]

■ **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to standardize the JCC placement process by providing instructions to JCC staff on how to respond to requests for placement. This standardization ensures that clients receive a placement suited to their needs and individual situation.

■ **PROCEDURE**

After the Outreach team has determined that a client needs a placement, they contact the JCC with a placement request. The JCC checks CARES and StreetSmart to see if the client has documented history of significant health, mental health, and substance use/abuse issues (For more information on how to check a client's history see the Joint Command Center (JCC) Outreach - Job Aid (**DHS-160a**). The JCC will offer the appropriate referral to the Outreach team who will then offer the referral to the client. Once the client agrees to accept services, the JCC will secure the bed, and the Outreach team will coordinate transportation for the client to the appropriate placement site.

---

[1] For more information see Street Homeless Solutions Outreach Placement Process (DHS-PB-2024-012)

A. Non-Asylum-seekers:

a. If the client **HAS AT LEAST SIX-MONTHS** of documented history of street homelessness in StreetSmart **AND DOES NOT HAVE** documented significant mental health, medical illness, substance use/abuse issues in StreetSmart or CARES, the JCC refers the client to a **Stabilization Bed.**

b. If the client **HAS LESS THAN SIX-MONTHS** of documented history of street homelessness in StreetSmart and **DOES NOT HAVE** documented significant mental health, medical illness, substance use/abuse issues in StreetSmart or CARES, the JCC refers the client to **Intake.**

c. If the client **HAS AT LEAST SIX MONTHS** of documented history of street homelessness in StreetSmart and **HAS DOCUMENTED** significant mental health, medical illness, substance use/abuse issues in StreetSmart or CARES, the JCC refers the client to a **Safe Haven.** If the client is currently assigned to a mental health shelter, the JCC should consult with a manager.

d. If the client **DOES NOT HAVE AT LEAST SIX MONTHS** of documented history of street homelessness in StreetSmart and **HAS DOCUMENTED** significant mental health, medical illness, substance use/abuse issues in StreetSmart or CARES, the JCC should consult with a manager.

In each case, the JCC will review the appropriate list of available beds in each facility and work with the Outreach team to find a bed that meets the client's needs.

Note: Assistant Commissioner titles and higher can grant exceptions to policy for non-asylum-seekers where necessary.

B. Asylum-seekers:

a. The DHS contracted Outreach team will determine if the client is an asylum-seeker by asking the client questions or reviewing **Intake Process for Asylum-Seekers, Asylees, and Victims of Human Trafficking (DHS-PB-2023-004)**. The DHS contracted Outreach team must communicate this finding to the JCC for the appropriate referral.

b. If the JCC determines the client to be an asylum-seeker, then the JCC must recommend that the Outreach team refer the client for processing at a designated intake center for NYC asylum-seekers.

■ TERMS

A. Street Homeless

Any individual whose nighttime residence is in a place that is not meant for human habitation, such as a car, subway station, abandoned building, park, or sidewalk.

B. Outreach Teams

Non-profit provider staff who work to locate, build relationships with, and offer support to people experiencing homelessness. There are six DHS contracted Outreach teams in New York City; they cover all five boroughs and the subway system. Teams proactively canvass people living outdoors and in subway stations to engage and encourage individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness to come indoors. The teams provide links to shelter options and social services.

C. Safe Havens

Safe Havens provide an immediate alternative transitional housing resource with flexible program requirements and robust case management services. Safe Havens are low barrier environments, without curfews or sobriety requirements.

D. Drop-In Centers

Drop-in centers (DICs) are in all five boroughs. They have no eligibility requirements and are open 24/7. The centers are low-barrier facilities for people who have lived unsheltered. Drop-in Centers have no beds. There are chairs and tables for clients to use throughout the day and night. People are allowed to come indoors, rest, bathe, and access services. Each center provides basic necessities such as three meals per day, clothing referrals, showers, and limited storage of property and valuables for those clients who are "on caseload" and engaging with drop-in center staff. Drop-in centers can also assist in connecting clients to transitional and permanent housing opportunities.

E. Stabilization Beds

Stabilization beds are low-threshold placement options for clients experiencing unsheltered homelessness, where clients may stay until they are placed in permanent housing or a long-term transitional setting.

F. Asylum-seekers

Non-citizens in the U.S. seeking to remain in the U.S. due to persecution, or fear of persecution, in their home country on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Some of these individuals may have been paroled into the U.S. temporarily or may have some other immigration status.

G. Asylees

Non-citizens in the U.S. who have been granted asylum in accordance with section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

H. Joint Command Center

The Joint Command Center (JCC) is a part of the Street Homeless Solutions Division. The JCC acts as central communications hub and processes all placements into Safe Havens and Stabilization beds.

Effective immediately

■ ATTACHMENTS

DHS-160a (E)   **Joint Command Center (JCC) Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System**

DHS-160 (E)   **How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid**

■ RELATED PROCEDURES

DHS-PB-2023-004	Intake Process for Asylum-seekers, Asylees, and Victims of Human Trafficking
DHS-PB-2024-012	Street Homeless Solutions' Outreach Placement Process
BK-37	Street Homeless Solutions Joint Command Center: Overview and Best Practices Guide

Joint Command Center (JCC)
Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System

After contracted DHS Outreach teams contact JCC staff with a placement request, JCC must confirm whether the client has documented mental health, medical illness, substance use/abuse history by carefully reviewing the client's record in the Client Assistance and Rehousing Enterprise System ("CARES") and StreetSmart. This job aid explains how JCC staff checks this information in CARES and StreetSmart.

1. To access CARES:
   a. Go to the CARES website
   b. Click OK under "Welcome to CARES"
   c. Input your username and password
   d. Click the blue "LOGIN" button
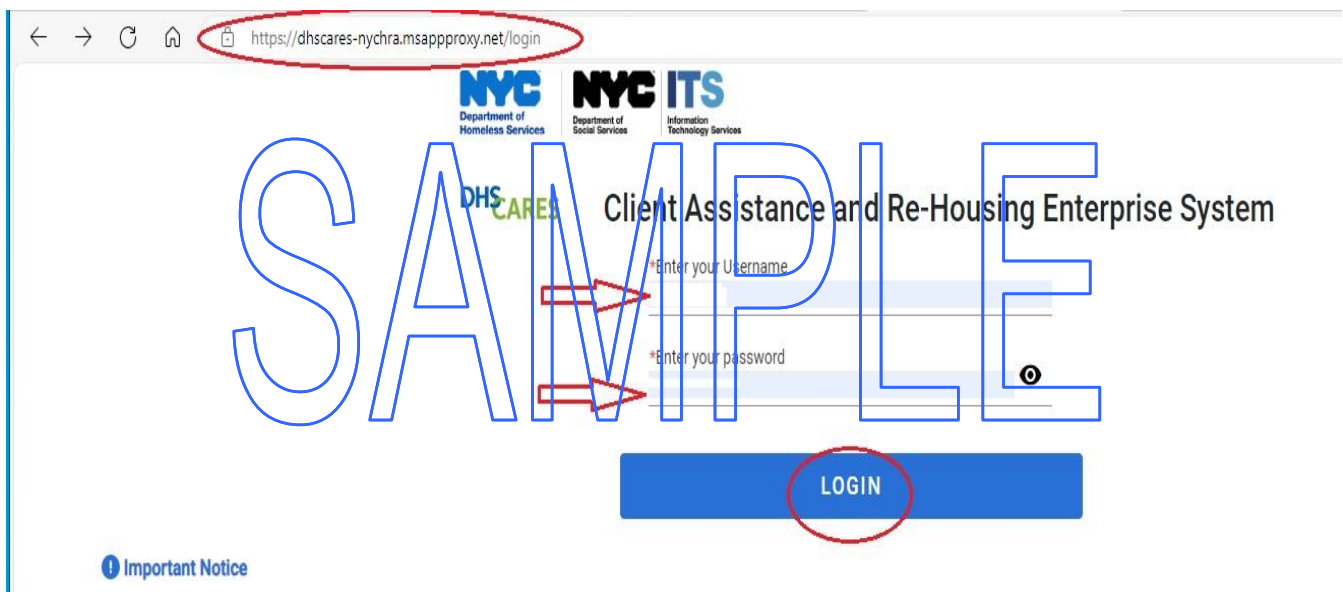
(Turn page)

Joint Command Center (JCC)
Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System *(continued)*

2. You should see your first and last name next to "My Workspace". Click the "Search Client" button under the "My Shortcuts" tab.
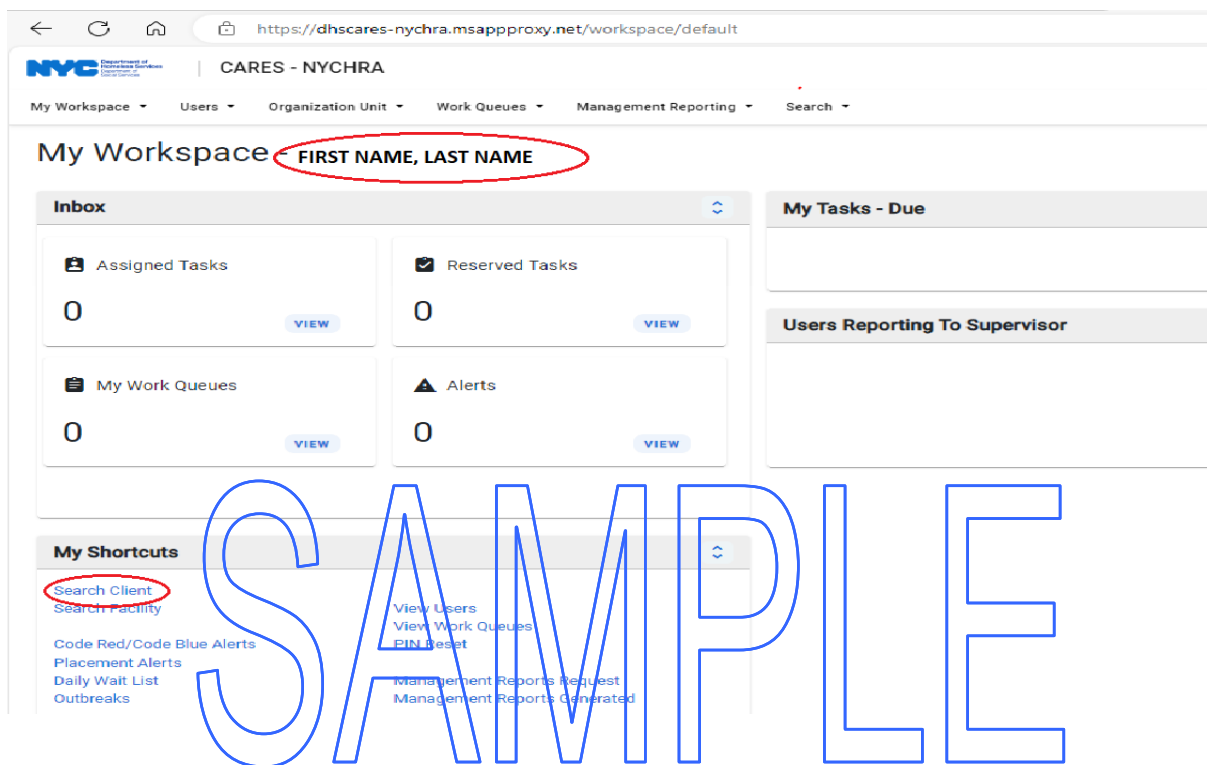
3. You may try inputting various combinations of the client's information to help you to locate the correct client in the "CARES SEARCH" box. For example: Last Name, First Name, Date of Birth, CARES ID or CARES Case Number.
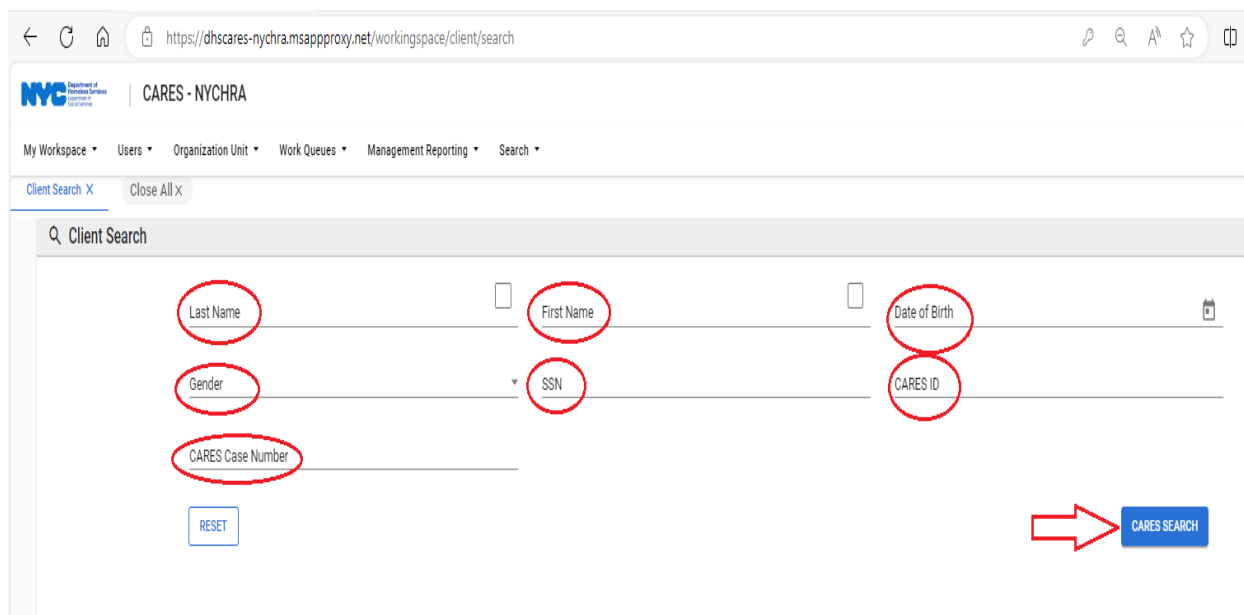
(Turn page)

Joint Command Center (JCC)
Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System *(continued)*

4. Click the "CARES SEARCH" button to review the list of possible clients. Select the correct client by clicking on the eyeball ◉ symbol near the right side of the page under "Actions".
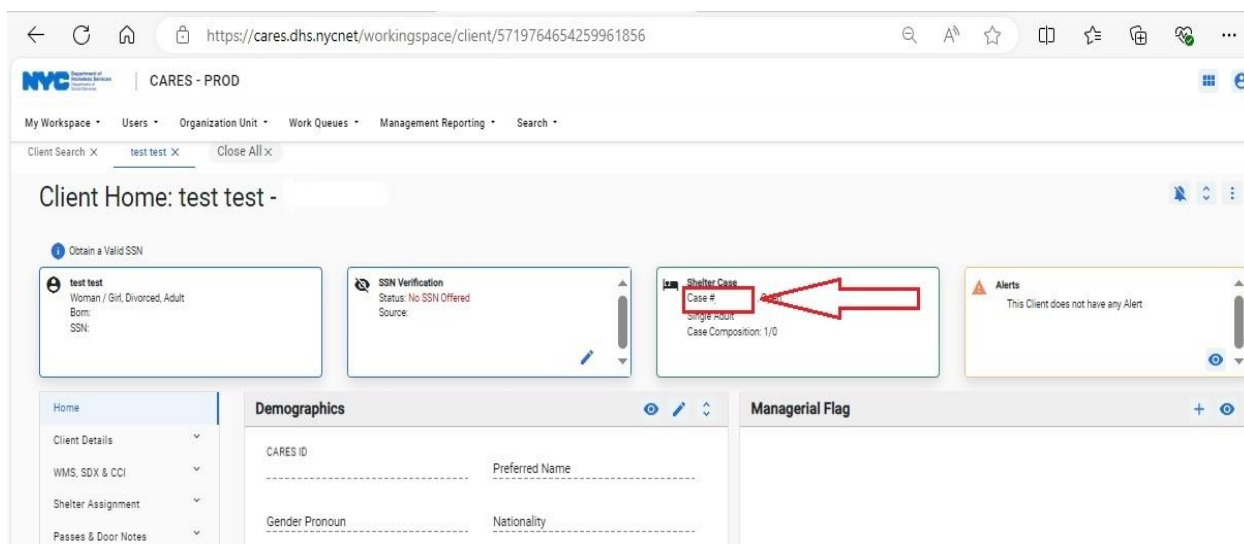
   Note: A client may have multiple profiles that have similarities. Check for obvious typos in the first or last name, date of birth etc., to ensure that you have located the correct client.

5. The "Client Home" page will show the client's first and last name as well as the CARES number near the top left side of the page. On the "Shelter Case" tab, select the **Case #** in the "Shelter Case" tab for information on client demographics, the shelter location, etc.

(Turn page)

Joint Command Center (JCC)

Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System *(continued)*

6. You may also find information regarding the client's health, mental health and substance use/abuse issues by clicking on the "Alerts" tab.
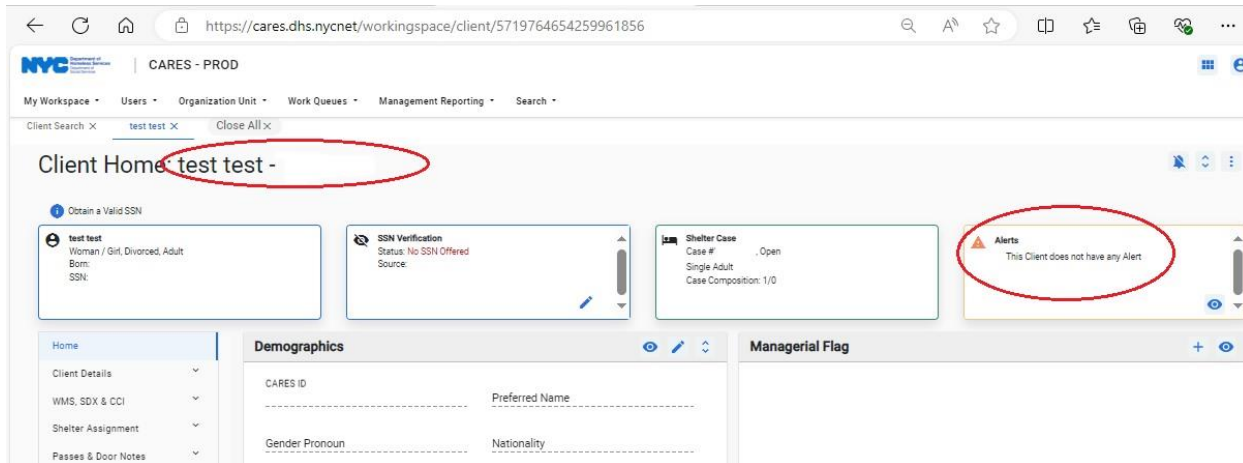
7. Select "Case Notes" tab, located on the left side of the screen to review any pertinent information that may aid in assessing the client's needs regarding placement. You should be looking for significant mental health, health, or substance use/abuse issues in the Case Notes.
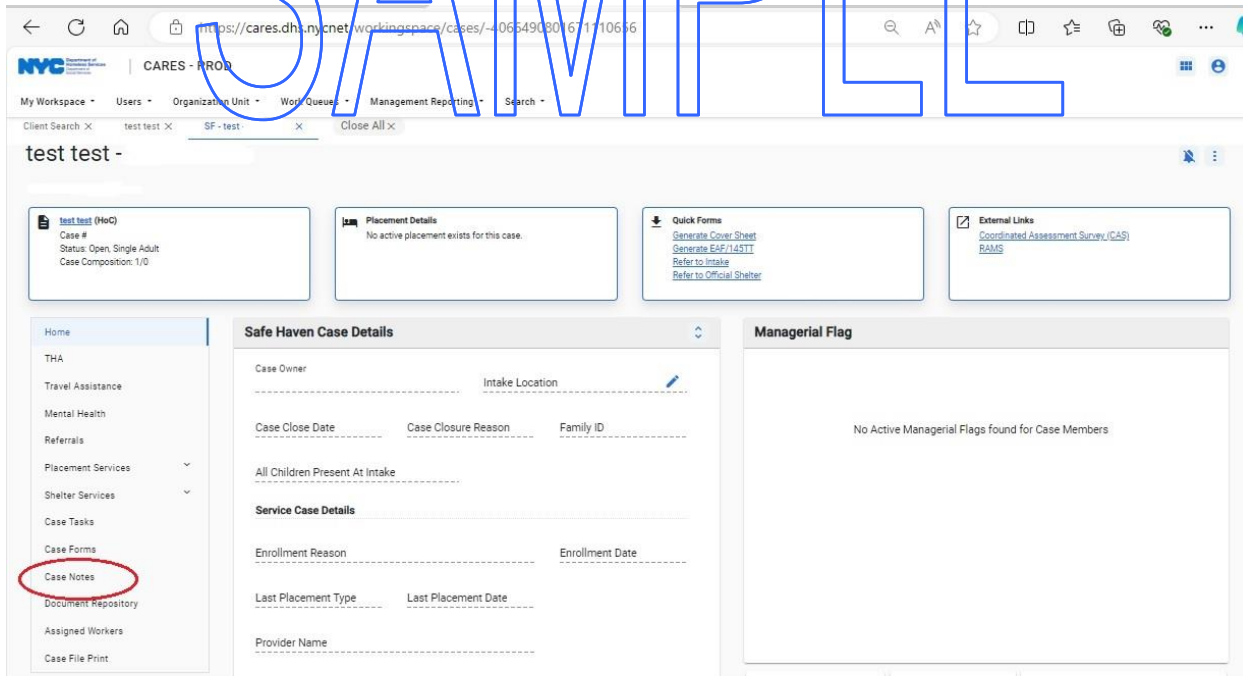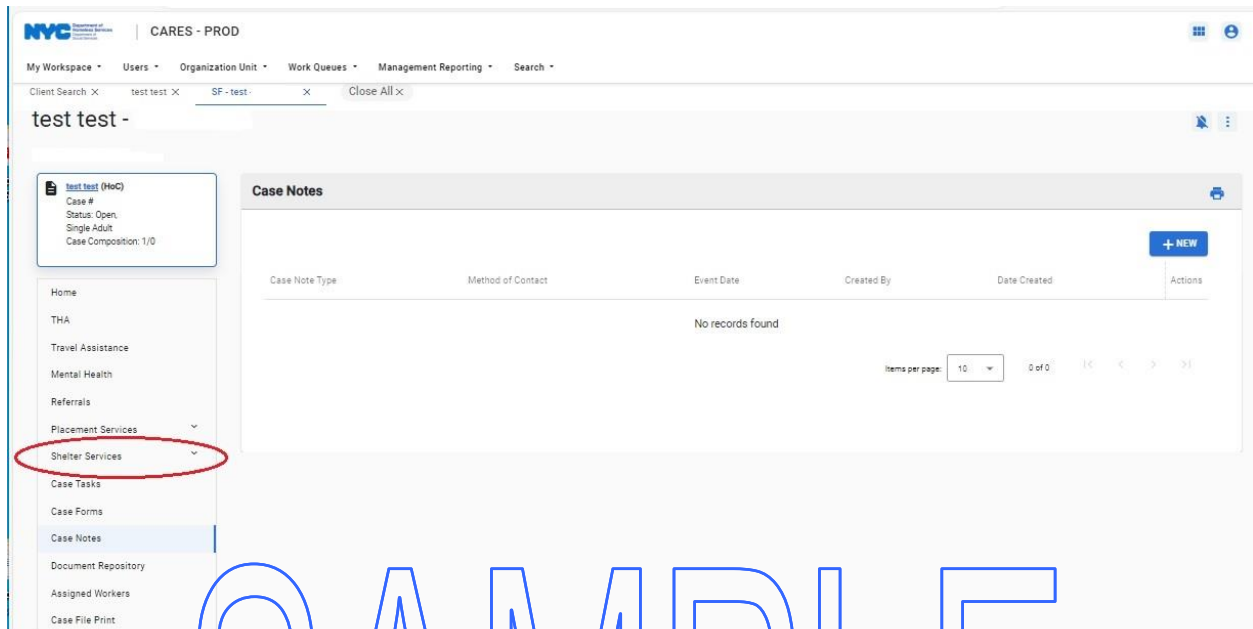

(Turn page)

Joint Command Center (JCC)
Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System *(continued)*

8. Click the "Shelter Services" dropdown menu on the left side of the screen.

9. Select "Assessments".
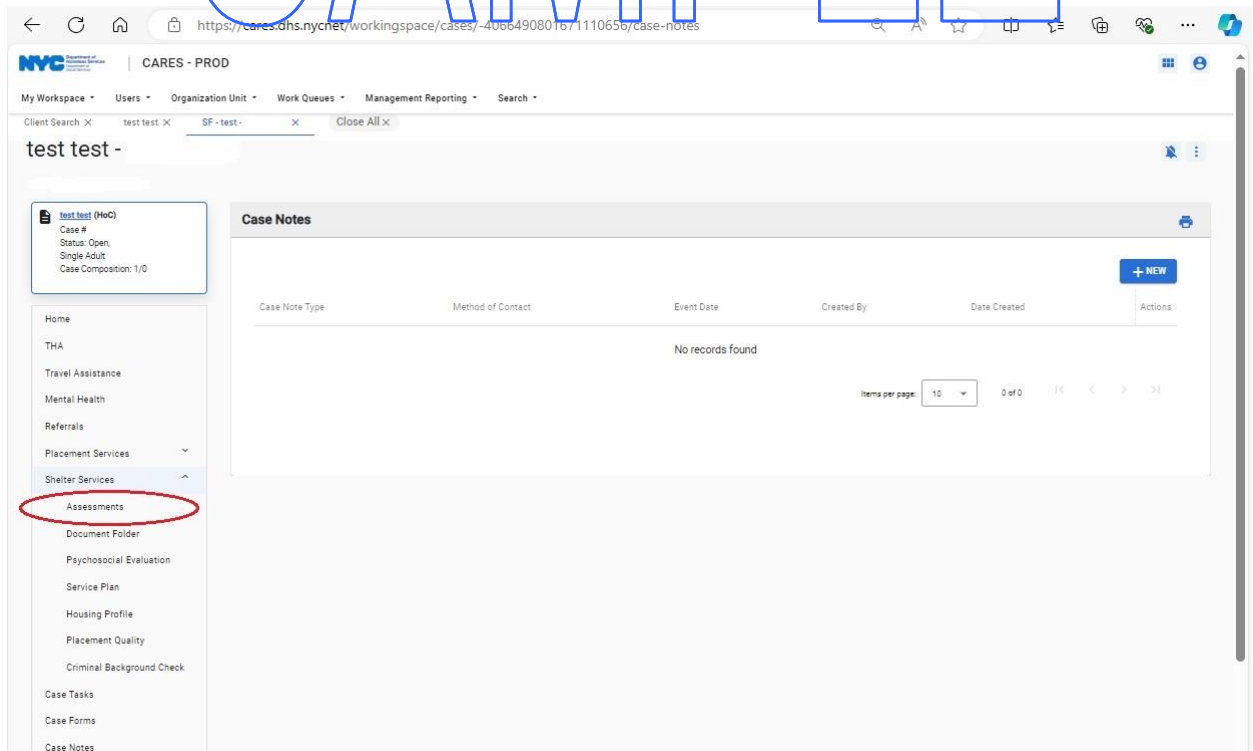
Joint Command Center (JCC)
Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System *(continued)*

10. Select "Alcohol, Substance Use and Mental Health Screening Tools".
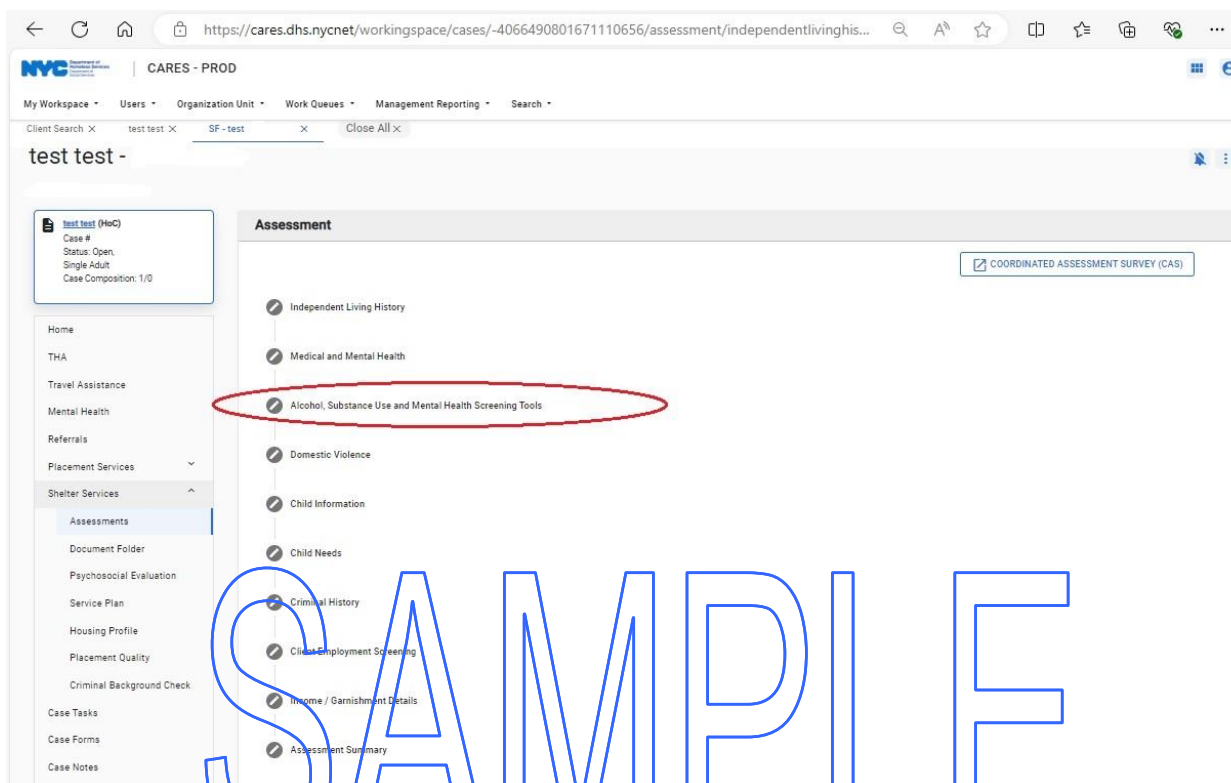
11. Review the client's Mental Health, Substance Use and Alcohol Use screenings. Placement recommendations may be based on these screenings and other pertinent information.
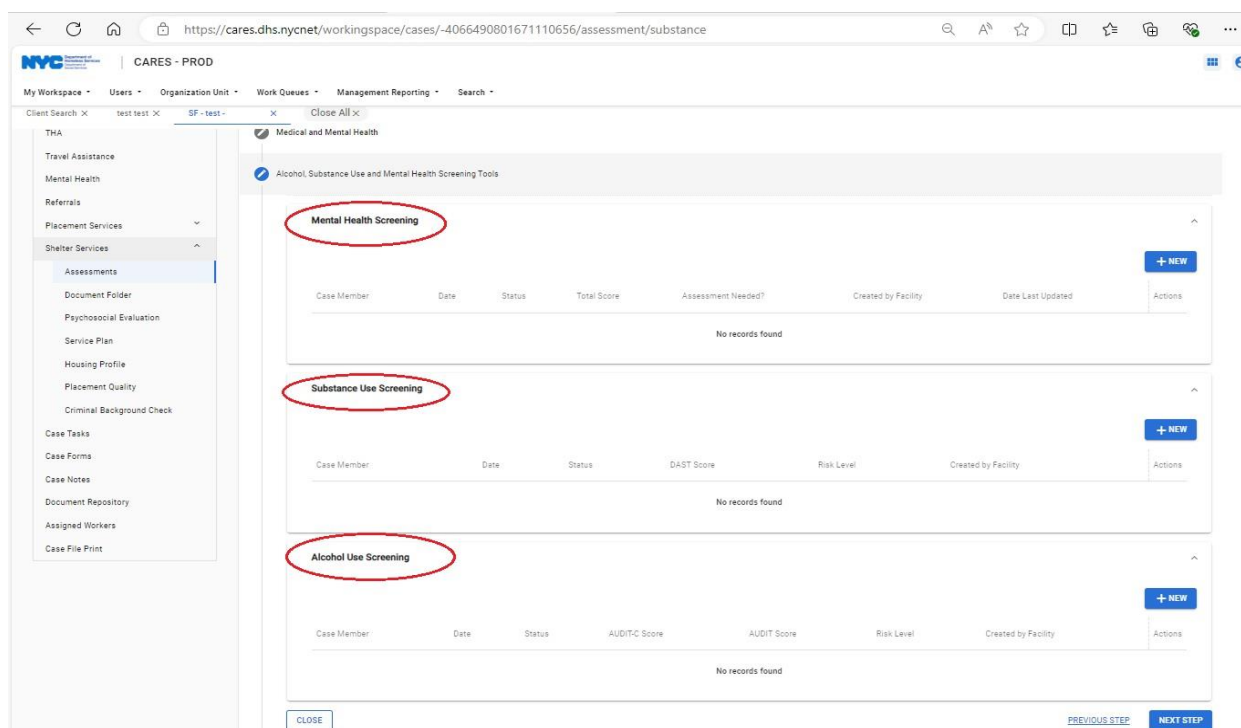
(Turn page)

Joint Command Center (JCC)

Outreach - Job Aid: Using CARES System *(continued)*

12. Click on "Psychosocial Evaluation".
    a. Carefully review the results of the client's Psychosocial Assessments. If the client does not have a Psychosocial Evaluation, the screen will be blank.

NYC **Department of Homeless Services**
Department of Social Services
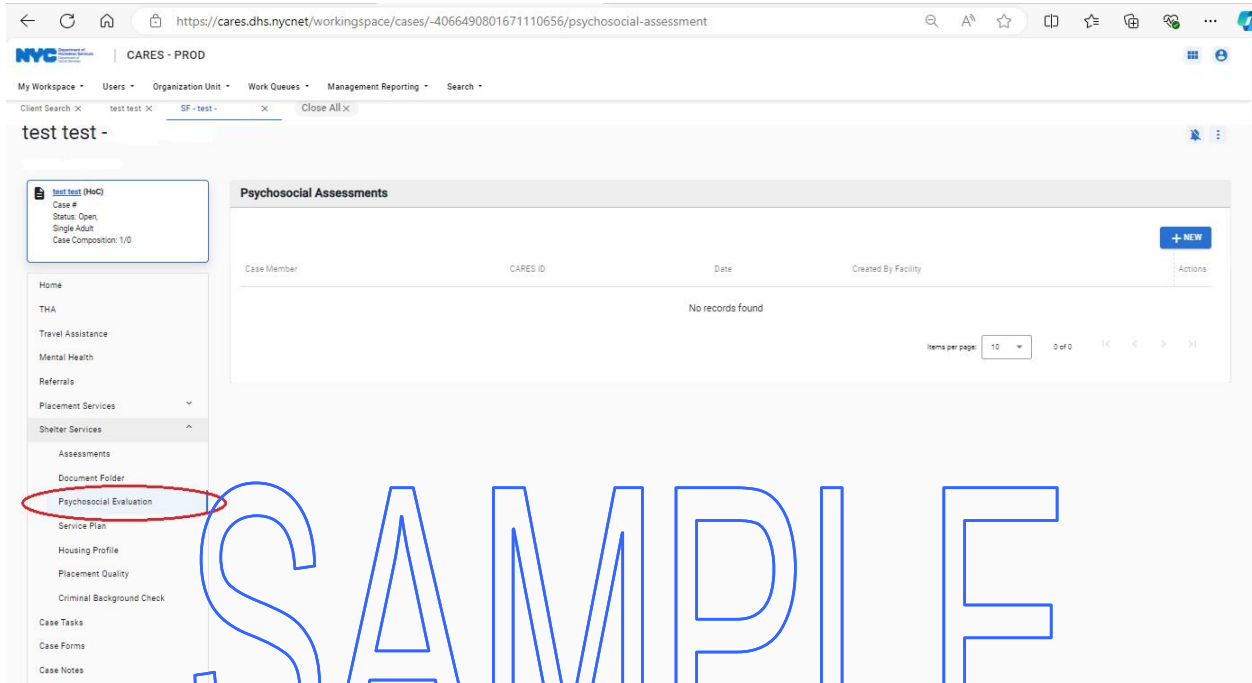
How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid

To verify documentation of mental health, medical illness, and substance use/abuse issues look in the Health Information Tab of StreetSmart

- Medical, Mental and Substance Abuse Details Subtab;
- Case Notes Subtab; and
- Client's Independent Living Plan (ILP)

1. To Access StreetSmart
   a. StreetSmart - Login (dhs.nycnet)
   b. Sign in with your Username and Password, click on the "Sign me in" tab
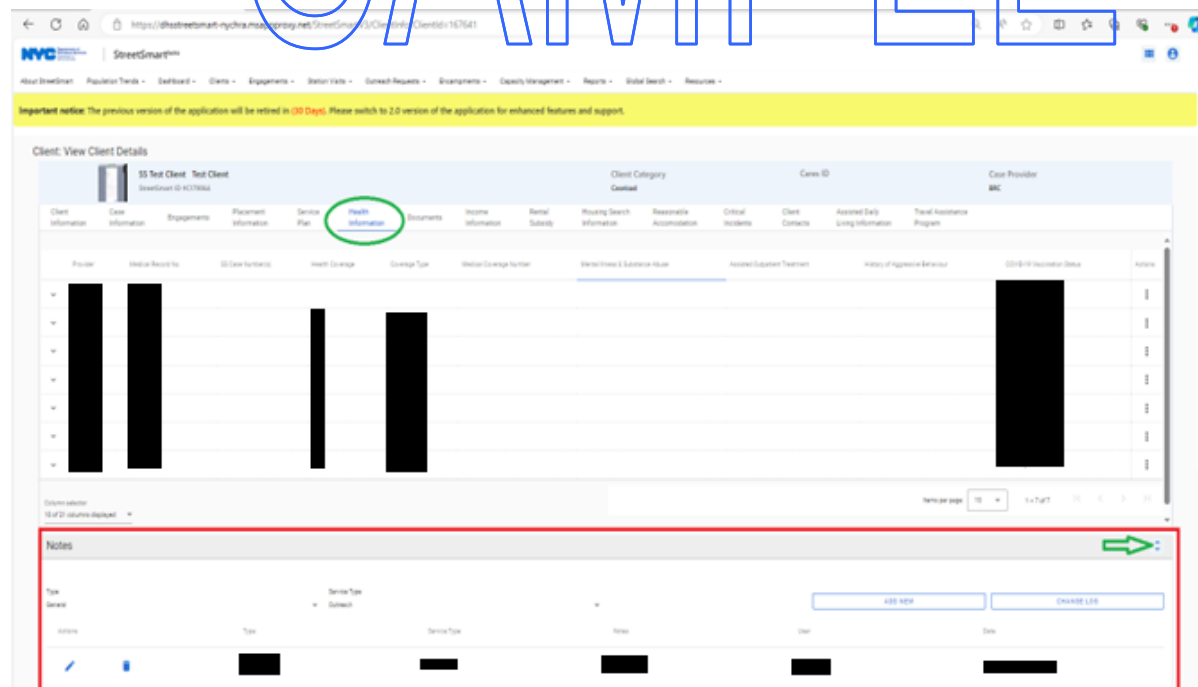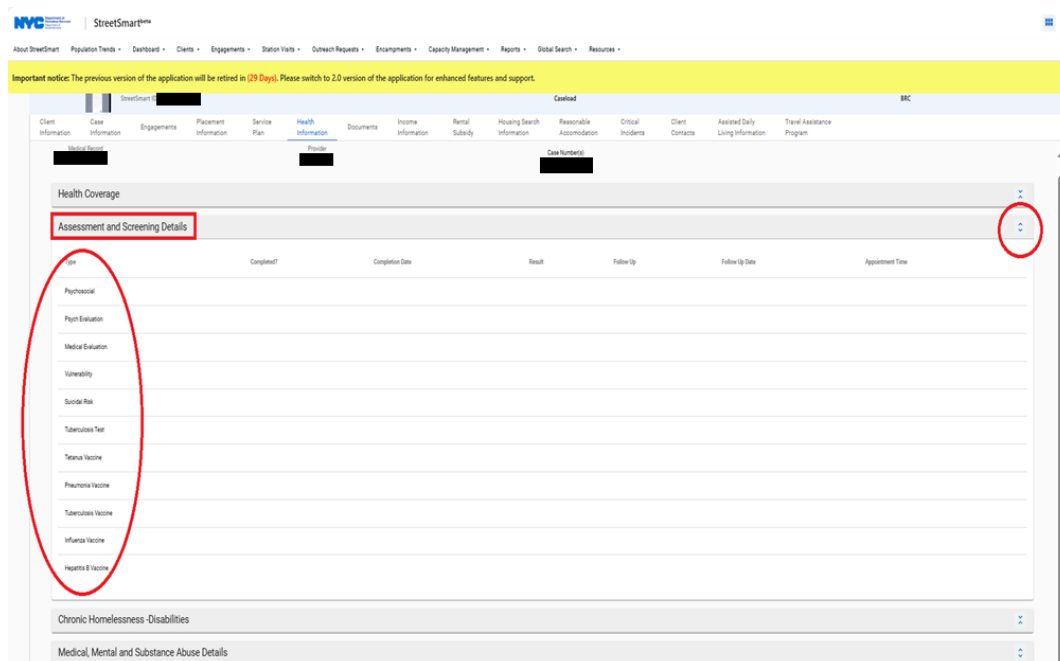   c. StreetSmart Landing page

(Turn page)

How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid *(continued)*

2. Select the Clients tab near the top of the page, then select "Client List 2.0" from the drop-down menu.
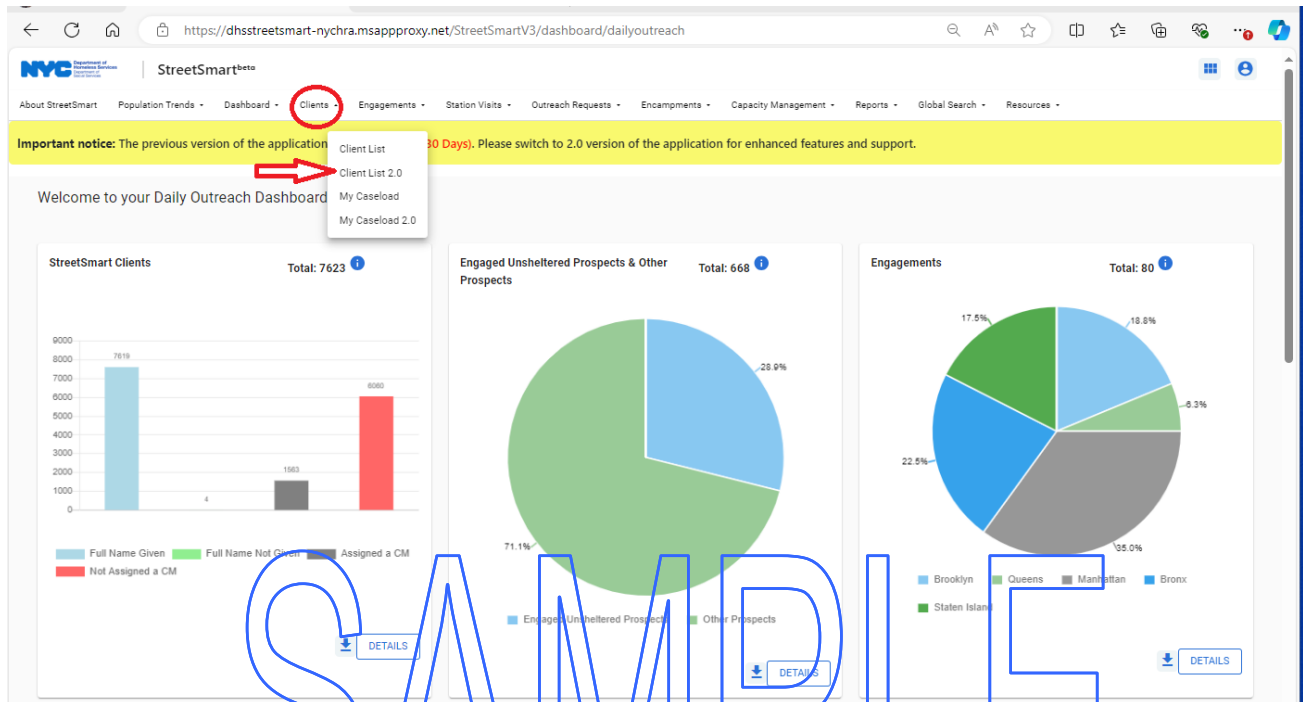
3. Search for a client:
   a. Type the client's name in the "search" field next to the magnifying glass, click enter; or
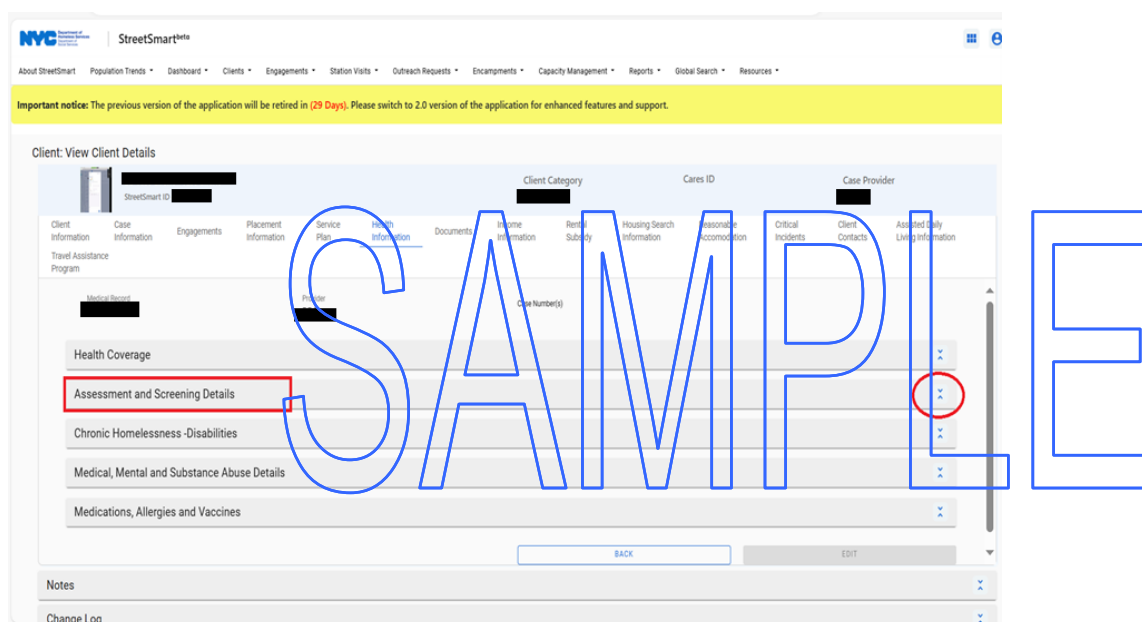   b. select the CARES ID number or the StreetSmart ID number; or
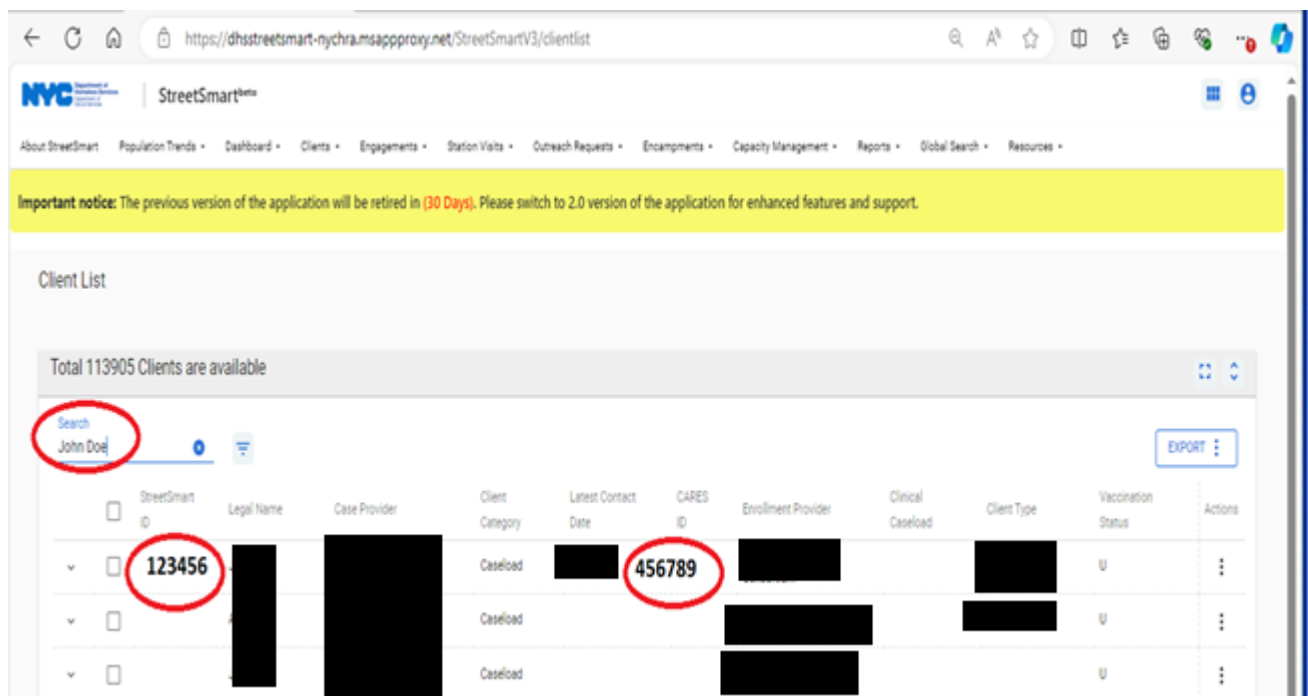
(Turn page)

How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid *(continued)*

3. Search for a client *(continued)*:

   c. Use the filter feature located to the right of the magnifying glass for advance filtering; or
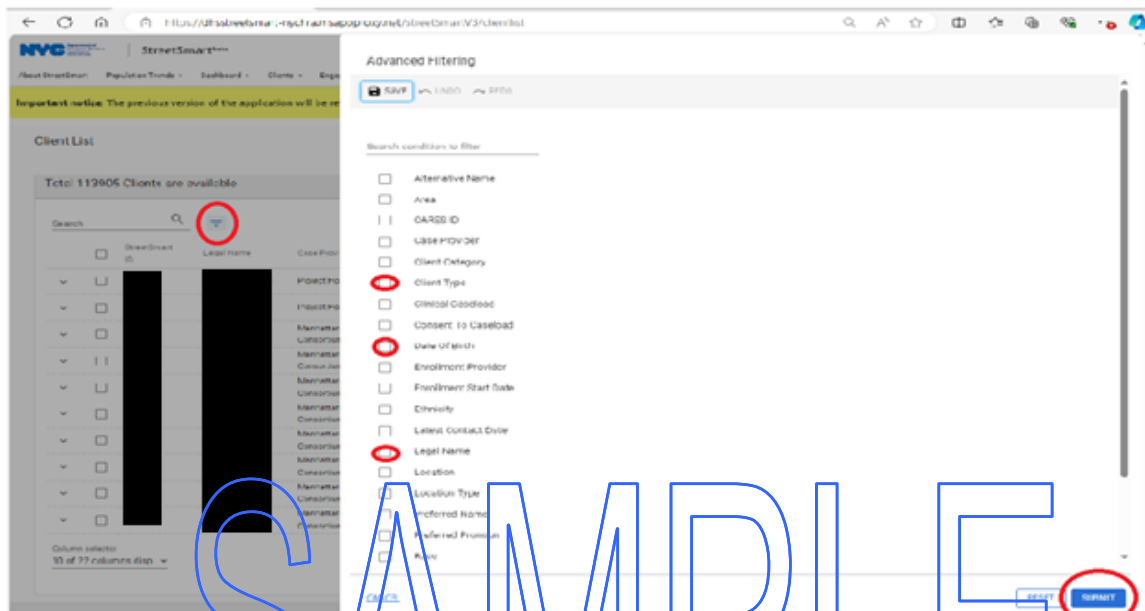
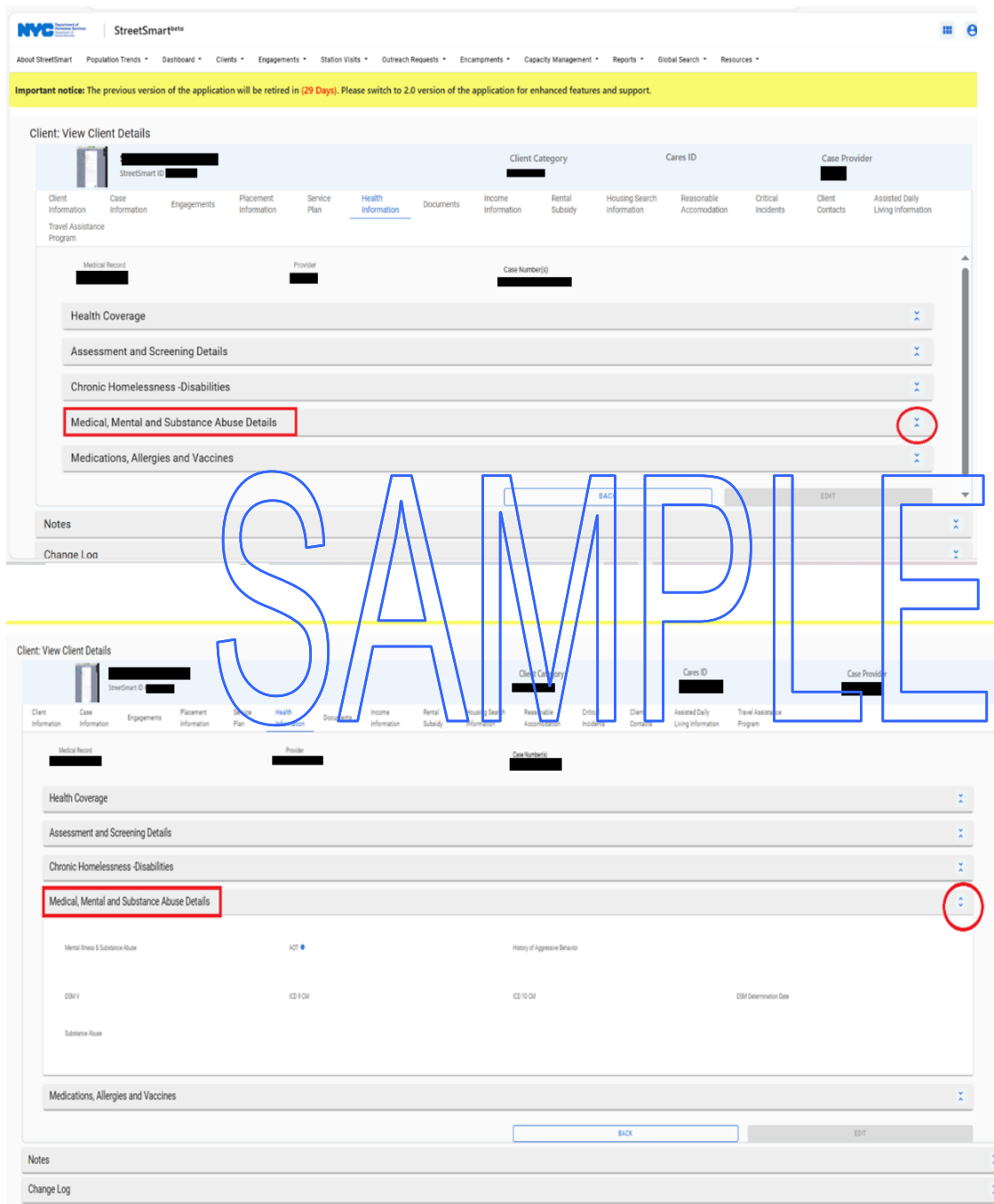   d. Click on the expansion arrow to the left of the check box to view more details of the client record.
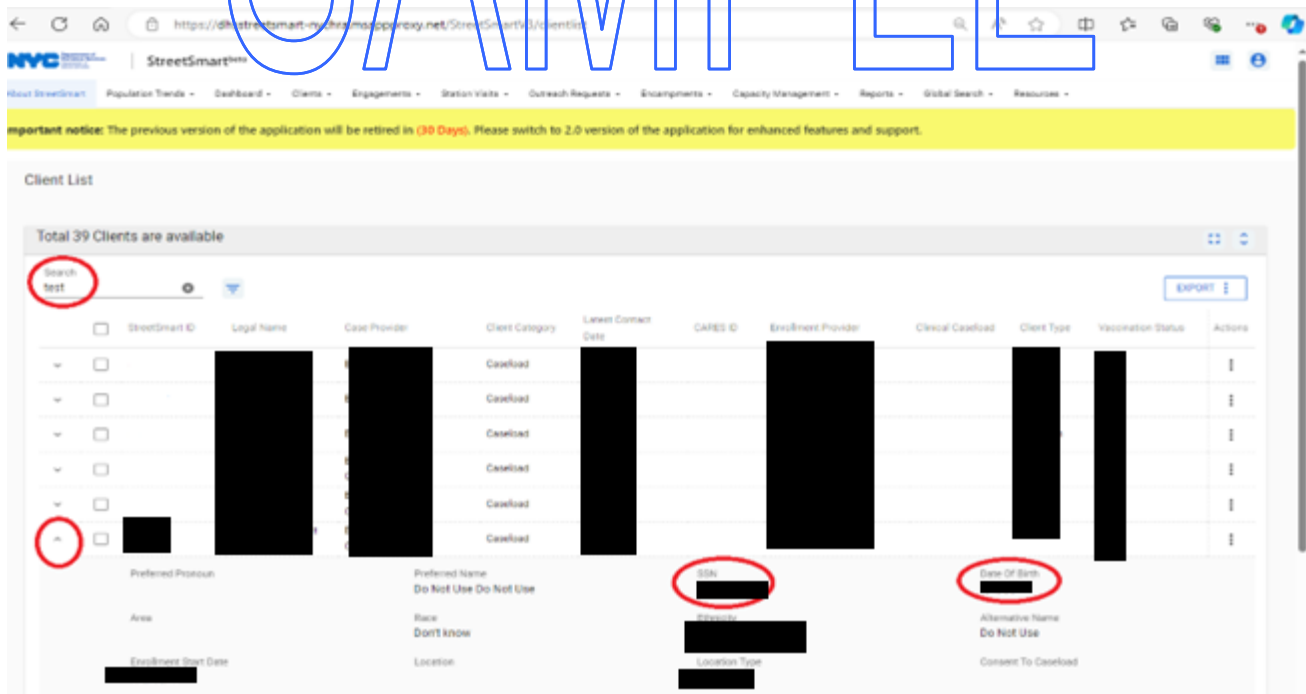
(Turn page)

How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid *(continued)*

4. Once you have located the client, click on the StreetSmart client ID Number which will take you to the "Client: View Client Details" page.
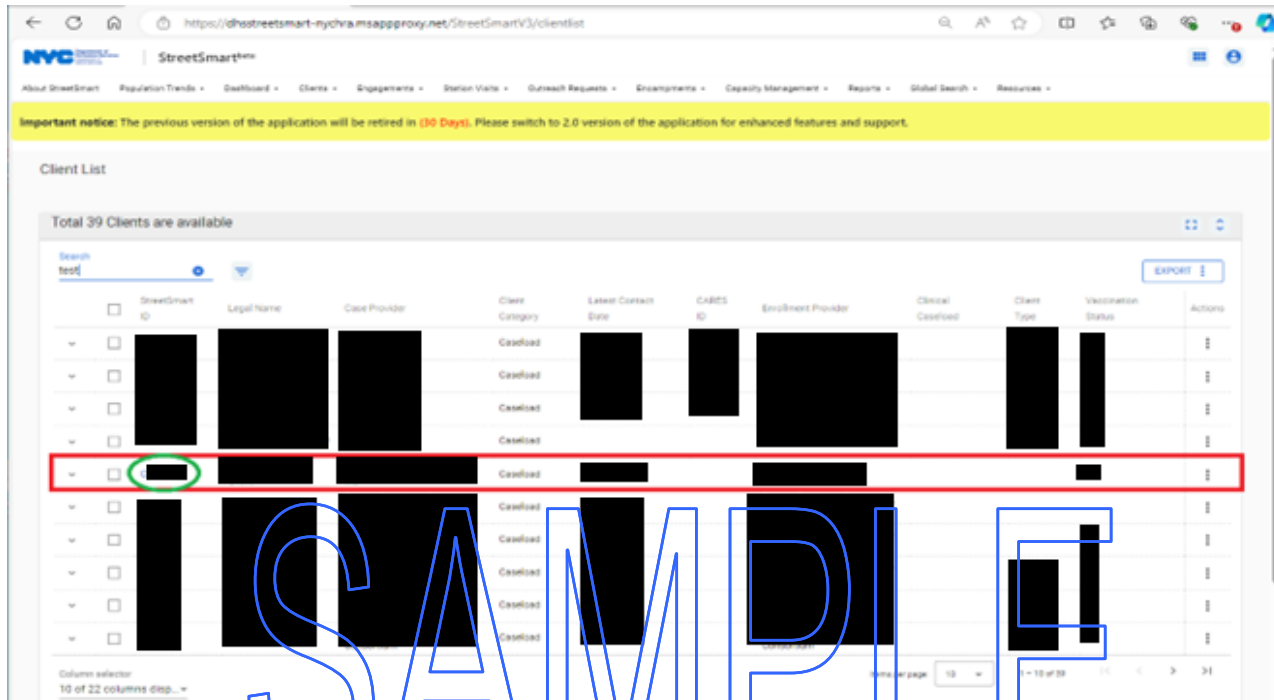
5. Click on the "Health Information" tab in the Client: View Client Details page.

(Turn page)

How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid *(continued)*

a. Scroll down to the "Notes" section to view any notes that may pertain to the client's mental illness or substance use/abuse issues. Expand the notes field by clicking on the double arrow on the right of the notes screen.

b. On the first row, under the "Actions" column on the right side of the screen, click on the three dots, then click on "detail" to view additional health information in the client's record.

6. Click the double arrow at the end of the Assessment and Screening Details tab to expand the "Assessment and Screening Details". You will be able to see the details of the types of assessments the client has completed.

How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid *(continued)*

7. Click the double arrows at the end of the "Mental Illness & Substance Abuse" tab to review the Medical, Mental and Substance Abuse Details.

Note: If the client has no documented mental illness or substance use/abuse recorded, no tabs will open, and you will see "No Record Found."

(Turn page)

How to Verify Documented Health, Mental Health or Substance Use in StreetSmart Job Aid *(continued)*

8. Click on the double arrows on the "Notes" tab to expand the field to review additional information.