

## GLOSSARY

**Active Term:** A *Taxonomy* term, with its associated codes, definitions, use and see also references and Related Concepts lists, that is currently available for attaching to services within a database. Active terms may or may not be currently in use. Active terms (and their use references) in use retrieve the attached services when end users select them for searches. Active terms not yet attached to services should be seen by data entry staff and should not be seen by end users.

**Agency:** A legally recognized organization, either incorporated or a government division, that delivers services. In the case of bureaucracies or affiliated organizations with multiple layers, an operational definition is the organization that issues paychecks. If this results in unwieldy database administration or confusing results, individual I&R services may choose to designate a middle level of the organization as the agency. For example, a city Department of Human Services may offer hundreds of services but is often recognized by the names of its component programs: Social Services, Health Department, etc. It is acceptable to use those components as Agencies as long as their relationship to the larger Department of Human Services is acknowledged in the description. Some I&R services may also choose to include unincorporated groups such as self-help support groups or community food pantries as agencies. This, too, is acceptable.

**Appendices:** Several lists of *Taxonomy* terms associated with target groups and/or problems that may or may not contain the exact word entered in a word search. These appendices in paper editions of the *Taxonomy* are referred to as Related Concepts lists in electronic versions. Standard Related Concepts lists are part of the nationally distributed *Taxonomy*. The user may also create Related Concepts lists.

**Attach a Taxonomy Term:** The process of indicating to a database that the selected term and its code are to be used to locate a particular service; the process of classifying one or more services.

**Crosswalk:** A table that systematically relates the possible equivalent terms of another classification system, such as keywords or UWASIS, to the *Taxonomy*. Crosswalks facilitate the conversion of human service databases to the *Taxonomy* or may even automate this process.

**Customized Data Extract/Reload Utility:** A software feature that removes all terms customized or modified by the user, plus their see also references, use references, user-generated Related Concepts lists (formerly appendices), or definitions prior to incorporating an update to the *Taxonomy* and reintegrates them into a user's database at the end of the updating process. See also: **Reload Utility**.

**Data Entry:** The process of classifying or indexing services within a database by assigning *Taxonomy* codes, with their associated terms, definitions, use and see also references, by which end users may locate services.

**Deactivate:** The process of flagging a *Taxonomy* term with its associated codes, definitions, use and see also references as not available for classifying or searching for services. Deactivating allows later reactivating a code for use without recreating it and all its relationships, as would be the case if unwanted codes were deleted. See also: **Inactive Terms**

**End Users:** Those using the software package or a website database to locate appropriate services.

**Global Search and Replace:** A software feature that automates the replacement of old *Taxonomy* codes with new ones in resource database records. This utility looks for occurrences of old *Taxonomy* terms or codes in the user's database, refers to a history file to determine the new term or code, and replaces the old term or code with the new term or code in all occurrences. If a term or code has been deleted and there is only one replacement, the utility processes the deletion as a code change. If the term or code has been deleted and has more than one replacement, the utility displays alternative terms or codes and allows the user to make a substitution for each service indexed with the old code until all deleted items have been replaced. This process is completed before the extract/reload utility reloads the updated *Taxonomy* from an

ASCII delimited file or database format and reintegrates the customized or modified terms, see also references, use references, user-generated Related Concepts lists or definitions.

**Hierarchical Display:** Shows the interrelationships among *Taxonomy* terms through use of codes that identify ten major service sections, plus target populations. Each section is broken down into up to 5 tiers getting more specific from level to level. Thus for any *Taxonomy* term from any level, the hierarchy can display all parent, sibling and child terms. The codes that determine the structure of the hierarchy may or may not be visible to end users.

**History File:** An electronic file containing *Taxonomy* code changes and deletions and, for the later, provides alternative suggested codes.

**Human Services:** The activities of human services professionals which help people to become more self-sufficient, sustain independence, strengthen family relationships, support personal and social development and ensure the well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities. Specific human services include ensuring that people have access to adequate food, shelter, clothing and transportation; financial resources to meet their needs; consumer education and decision support; criminal justice or legal services; education and employment; health and mental health care including substance abuse services; and environmental protection; both routinely and in times of disaster or other emergencies. Human services also facilitate the capabilities of people to care for children or other dependents; ensure that protective services are available to those who are vulnerable; provide for the support of older adults and people with disabilities; offer social, faith-based, and leisure time activities; provide for the cultural enrichment of the community; and ensure that people have the information they need to fully participate in community life.

**I&R (Information and Referral) Software Package:** The programs, routines, and symbolic languages that control the functioning of hardware and direct the operations that allow I&R users to link people in need of human services with appropriate service providers who can meet their needs. Information and Referral software may be designed for use on personal computers, over Local Area or Wide Area Networks (LANs or WANs), or on the Internet.

**Inactive Terms:** *Taxonomy* terms with their associated codes, definitions, use and see also references and relationships to Related Concepts lists (formerly appendices) which have been deactivated within a database. Inactive terms cannot be seen or selected by end users or data entry staff. The purpose is to reduce the number of terms from which data entry staff and end users must select when using the *Taxonomy*, while retaining the ability to later activate selected terms as needed. See also: **Deactivate**

**Level:** Relative position or rank on a scale. The *Taxonomy* uses a hierarchy with a maximum of five tiers of increasing specificity. The level of a *Taxonomy* term is indicated by the composition of its *Taxonomy* code.

**Primary/Secondary Services:** Primary services are entry point services that an individual can obtain without being required to enroll in other services whereas secondary services are those available to individuals already receiving primary services. In the examples described under "Programs" below, job training and domestic violence shelter are primary services. Unless people who are not receiving job training or who are not shelter residents can access them, the vocational assessment, job placement, domestic violence counseling, TRO assistance and program for the abused woman's child are all secondary services. Most organizations do not make the distinction between primary and secondary services – they are all activities they provide. A good way to help them give you the information is to ask whether they want referrals for each service. Primary services should be indexed; secondary ones should not. Both should be described in the narrative and the distinction between them drawn.

**Programs:** Sometimes agencies will provide a group of services (some primary and some secondary) and organize them as a program. One organization's job training program may, for example, also offer vocational assessment to help people determine the type of employment they are suited for and job placement assistance following training in addition to the training itself. This is a richer program than one that simply involves training. Another example is a domestic violence shelter. One shelter may only offer a safe place to stay for residents. Another may have counseling, TRO assistance, a program for the woman's

children, etc. While services are essentially the same across organizations, programs may differ significantly. Programs cannot be indexed using the AIRS/INFO LINE Taxonomy.

**Referral Giving:** The process of assessing the needs of the inquirer, evaluating appropriate resources, indicating organizations capable of meeting those needs, helping inquirers for whom services are unavailable by locating alternative resources, and, when necessary, actively participating in linking the inquirer to needed services by scheduling appointments, three-way calling, or negotiating for the inquirer.

**Reload Utility:** A software feature that erases the old version of the *Taxonomy* and loads an updated version containing all additions, changes and deletions from an ASCII delimited file, XML file or database format. The reload utility is used after all services have been reclassified using a global search and replace utility. The reload utility insures that there are no overlooked or orphan terms, codes, etc. within the master *Taxonomy* files in a database. See also: **Customized Data Extract/Reload Utility.**

**See Also Reference:** Points to terms in other parts of the *Taxonomy* related to the term selected.  
EXAMPLE: See also references for Home Health Care are Life Care Communities, Home Dialysis, In Home Hospice Care, and In Home Assistance, terms found in three different Level 1 sections (basic service categories).

**Services:** The discrete types of assistance an agency delivers to its clientele. Operationally, services are specific activities that can be classified using Taxonomy terms. Specific types of services should be essentially the same no matter what organization is providing them and should be indexed using the AIRS/INFO LINE Taxonomy.

**Sites:** The physical locations at which clients access services provided by an agency.

**Starter Taxonomy:** The *Taxonomy* with a standard but relatively small set of terms active and the remainder inactive. This offers a classification system appropriate for smaller databases or organizations with few staff available for database maintenance. The Starter *Taxonomy* has not yet been defined.

**Taxonomy:** *A Taxonomy of Human Services: A Conceptual Framework with Standardized Terminology and Definitions for the Field* copyrighted by 211 LA County and published jointly with the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS). The *Taxonomy* has been issued in three book editions with intervening paper supplements, each with an ASCII file of all codes, terms, definitions, use and see also references and Related Concepts lists (formerly appendices). The *Taxonomy* is available as an annual subscription with updates available for download from a website. The *Taxonomy* is organized into ten basic service categories plus target populations. Within each basic category, services are defined with increasing degrees of specificity in a hierarchical structure of up to five tiers.

Generically, a taxonomy is a classification system (or service taxonomy) is a structured indexing vocabulary that allows you to distinguish concepts, name concepts and put those concepts in order. It is used to index and access information about a subject in a systematic, unambiguous way. Using a standard taxonomy makes it possible to facilitate retrieval of community resource information, increase the reliability of planning data, make evaluation processes consistent and reliable, and facilitate national comparisons of data.

**Taxonomy Code:** A combination of letters, numbers and punctuation that creates the logic of the hierarchy by designating the place of any term within the *Taxonomy*. Space has been left in the lettering/numbering scheme to permit growth. *Taxonomy* codes may or may not be visible to end users.

**Taxonomy Term:** The label or title for a defined service; the preferred terminology.

**Taxonomy Term Definition:** A description of the primary characteristics of a particular type of service. Each preferred term in the *Taxonomy* has a definition. They are descriptive of the way services are provided not prescriptive for what services ought to be.

**Unused Term:** A *Taxonomy* term with its associated codes, definitions, use and see also references which has not been flagged as deactivated within a database but has not been attached to any services. Unused terms should be available for use in data entry but not be seen by end users.

**Update:** The process of adding new *Taxonomy* terms with their associated codes, definitions, use and see also references and relationship(s) to Related Concepts lists (formerly appendices); deleting terms no longer approved with their associated codes, definitions, use and see also references and relationship(s) to Related Concepts lists; amending terms and definitions; adding new use and see also references to existing terms and then applying the changes to the services classified in a database. Updates are issued by INFO LINE of Los Angeles and are available to those who subscribe to the *Taxonomy*.

**Use Reference:** Synonyms for preferred terms that allow users to easily find a type of service without knowing the exact wording used in the *Taxonomy*; or to find the preferred term using their own terminology. Use references have reciprocal used for references which are listed with the preferred wording for a term. Users can get a complete list of synonyms for any term by looking at the used for references.

**Word Search:** Locating a word or partial word within a list of *Taxonomy* terms and use references. The word search in electronic versions of the *Taxonomy* corresponds to the permuted index in print versions.