

Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Continuum of Care – Requests for Applications for Inclusion in the 2021 Collaborative Application for HUD Continuum of Care Funding

Date: September 1, 2021

Invitation to Bid

On behalf of the Cleveland/Cuyahoga County Continuum of Care, the Cuyahoga County Office of Homeless Services (OHS) the collaborative applicant, invites eligible organizations¹ to submit new or renewal applications for CoC funding to be included in the 2021 Collaborative Application to HUD. The only entities that may submit a renewal application are current HUD CoC grantees that have a grant with an end date in calendar year 2022. Additionally, to be eligible for renewal an existing grantee must enter into a contract with HUD for FY 2020 funding prior to December 31, 2021.

Any eligible organization may apply for new project funding. Eligible organizations include: nonprofit organizations, Public Housing Agencies (PHAs), or units of local government.

All new and renewal applications must be completed using HUD's online application platform, the E-SNAPS system. **Applications must be submitted in E-SNAPS by the following schedule:**

- **New and Renewal project applications** must be submitted in E-SNAPS no later than **5 pm EDT on October 1, 2021**
- Applications not submitted according to the above schedule may not be considered for funding.

Information and Resources

All information required for this competition will be posted on the CoC website, found here: <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/divisions/detail/office-of-homeless-services> . Information posted on the website includes:

- The NOFA published by HUD and supporting information provided by HUD.
- The CoC's policies for review and ranking of new and renewal applications
- CoC's policies regarding reallocation – including voluntary and mandatory reallocation.
- Scoring factors for the review of renewal applications
- Scoring factors for new project applications.
- Links to resources available from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in support of the competition.

Identified Priorities for New Project Applications

The CoC has identified the following project types as priorities for funding in the 2021 competition:

- Support to coordinated entry by providing navigational support to participants seeking housing

¹ Eligible organizations include nonprofit organizations and government entities including public housing agencies. Individuals and for-profit entities are ineligible to apply.

- Funding for HMIS to address increased system needs
- Permanent supportive housing to serve transition aged youth
- Services to assist participants in the Emergency Housing Voucher program
- Permanent supportive housing to serve either the chronically homeless or DedicatedPLUS eligible populations

Possible application types:

Eligible organizations may submit one or more of the following application types:

- **Renewal application.** Any organization with a CoC funded grant that is expiring in calendar year 2022 must submit a renewal application in order for the project to remain operational. If a renewal application is not submitted, the project will lose funding in 2022. The renewal application must be fully consistent with the total funding associated with the project as detailed in the Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW) provided by HUD. The amount requested for renewal grants may not exceed the total amount shown for the grant on the GIW. Renewal grants may elect to not renew or to renew at a dollar amount below that shown on the GIW. In these instances, the amounts not applied for will be added to the pool of funds made available to potential new projects through reallocation. Current grantees not intending to renew their grants or those willing to reduce the size of their grants should contact OHS as soon as possible so the unapplied for funds can be added to the pool available for relocation.

All renewal projects that have at least one full year of operational experience will be ranked in the competition according to the scores received in the renewal evaluation process. 2020 was a unique year in the history of the Continuum of Care program: there was no CoC competition and the COVID-19 pandemic upended homeless services. Accordingly, the CoC conducted renewal evaluations based on the last year in which there were no COVID-related disruptions. The CoC scored all renewal applications based on 2019 performance and that scoring will provide the primary basis for the renewal ranking.

- **New project application.** New project applications may be for any of the eligible new project categories:
 - Permanent Supportive Housing where 100% of the beds are either dedicated to serving chronically homeless or DedicatedPLUS² projects.
 - Rapid Rehousing projects serving individuals and families who meet the HUD homeless definition at Categories 1, 2, or 4.³
 - Joint TH-RRH projects also serving individuals and families who meet the HUD homeless definition at Categories 1, 2, or 4. The TH component should consist of short-term crisis housing and the resources earmarked for the RRH component should be twice those designated for the TH component.

² To understand who qualifies to reside in a 'DedicatedPLUS' project please see this FAQ from HUD:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/faqs/3284/what-is-a-dedicatedplus-project/>

³ See here:

https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HomelessDefinition_RecordkeepingRequirementsandCriteria.pdf for a quick guide to the HUD homeless definition and the four categories of homelessness.

Funding for new projects will come from bonus funding and from any funds that may be available from reallocation.

- **Transition application.** An existing renewal application may be submitted as a ‘transition’ application. A transition application will start the program year as one component (TH, for example) and through the course of the program year, the project will transition from that component to one of the eligible new project components. No more than 50% of the project funding may be used for the prior component and at the completion of the program year, the project will renew under the new component. A transition application may be the most effective way to accomplish a ‘voluntary’ reallocation where the grantee with funds to reallocate is also the planned grantee for the reallocated project. Grantees interested in the transition application process must contact and obtain approval from the CoC. Transition grants are **new project applications**, and the grant must ‘transition’ to an eligible new project activity during the program year.
- **Consolidated Application.** Another option is a consolidated application: a grantee with more than one grant with the same program component (e.g., RRH, PSH, TH) may consolidate those individual grants into a single grant. In 2021, up to ten grants can be consolidated through this process. To submit a consolidated application, applicants must submit renewal applications for each project and indicate which of the renewing grants will be the ‘surviving’ grant. If all the renewal grants are ranked so that each is funded by HUD, HUD will fund the single consolidated renewal grant. Each of the individual project applications must be given its own unique rank in the project priority list. Consolidated applications are **renewal applications**.
- **Expansion Applications.** Grantees may choose to submit a **new project application** that expands a currently funded CoC grant to serve additional persons, provide additional units, or provide additional services to existing program participants. HMIS may also be expanded. Applicants seeking an expansion grant must submit **two project applications: the renewal project application for the existing grant and a new project application identifying the expansion**. The process is simplified from prior competitions; only the renewal and new project applications need to be submitted.

Domestic Violence Bonus Projects

Applications may be submitted for a **Domestic Violence Bonus Project** in which all persons served are survivors of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking. Because there was no competition last year, the DV bonus funding from that year has been carried forward meaning that there is double the resources available for new DV Bonus projects this year. The following types of new projects may be submitted for the DV Bonus – please note, all projects applying for the DV bonus are required to follow trauma informed and victim-centered approaches, as well as Housing First:

- Rapid rehousing exclusively serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are defined as homeless.

- Joint TH-RRH projects exclusively serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are defined as homeless.
- Coordinated Entry-Supportive Services Only grants to support the coordinated entry process for DV survivors.

With the exception of the Coordinated Entry grant of which there can be only one, there is no limit on the number of each of the above project types that can be submitted provided that no grant is for less than \$50,000 and the total funded requested does not exceed the amount available to the CoC for the DV bonus. In order to receive DV bonus funding, the CoC application must demonstrate an unmet need for DV services and how the project will address that gap in services.

Rating and Ranking of Projects

Renewal projects will be ranked in the Collaborative Application according to the rating score provided as part of the renewal evaluation process. New project applications will be reviewed by an independent panel with subject matter expertise but no conflicts of interest with regard to the application. The new projects will be evaluated according to criteria set forth in the New Project Rating tool found on the CoC website.

Please note: the new project rating tool asks for some information that is not included in the ESNAPs application. To secure full points, new project applicants must attach a narrative that addresses the following criteria set forth in the rating tool:

- **Identify whether the project will comply with CoC requirements as noted**
- **Address the four questions listed under ‘Equity Factors’**
- **Identify whether the project qualifies for bonus points awarded in the 2021 competition.**

The CoC actively seeks applications from organizations that have not previously received HUD CoC funding. HUD places considerable requirements on grantees and the application process can be challenging. Organizations without CoC grant experience are invited to reach out to the CoC at: _____. Requirements on eligible participants and activities are very stringent and organizations are encouraged to discuss potential projects and the application process.

Presentation and Question and Answer Sessions

The CoC will conduct two information sessions for renewal and new project applicants. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend or view a recording of the session:

- Sept. 9, 2021, 12 noon, EDT Renewal Project Webinar– click on the link to attend:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84032319792?pwd=SStPM2RYSGw3Q1JLdzJsVnlPMXV3QT09>
- Sept. 13, 2021, 9:30 am EDT, New Project Webinar – click on link to attend:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88166078991?pwd=VjdFVXgvMVRacWdTMGxnays4RGp6UT09>

Funding Amounts

According to HUD, the Cleveland/Cuyahoga County CoC can apply for bonus funding for new projects up to:

- \$1,554,643 in Bonus funding for new projects is potentially available to the CoC;
- Up to \$3,830,507 may be applied for by projects seeking the DV Bonus;

- Tier 1 – the level of funding that is most assured of funding by HUD is \$31,092,866. This is sufficient to fund all current renewal grants.