CoC Ad-Hoc Committee Report
August 2, 2019

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Background

On March 27, 2019 the CoC Board approved the 2019 CoC NOFA Priorities to guide the upcoming NOFA with local priorities on reallocation, bonus funding and renewal funding. April 23, 2019, the CoC Board approved the 2019 Preliminary CoC Funding Application Process Recommendations that approved administrative processes for the Collaborative Applicant (County of Orange) to follow and appointed a NOFA Ad-Hoc Committee to move the 2019 NOFA process forward on behalf of the CoC.

On July 3, 2019 HUD Released the 2019 CoC NOFA. There were several elements for consideration in this year's NOFA:

- CoCs may apply for DV Bonus Projects to serve survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Types of projects allowable include: Rapid Re-Housing (PH-RRH), Joint TH and PH-RRH and SSO Projects for Coordinated Entry.
- Reallocation and CoC Bonus funding may submit application for new projects and may combine the projects. Types of projects allowable include: PS-PSH, PH-RRH, Joint TH and RH-RRH, HMIS and SSO-CE.
- Applicants may transition their project(s) from one CoC Program Component to another over a one-year grant cycle
- Applicants may consolidate two, three, or four eligible renewal projects into one project during the application process

HUD'S 2019 Policy Priorities:

CoCs will be evaluated based on the extent to which they further HUD's policy priorities. The policy priorities listed this year are:

1. Ending Homelessness for All Persons

To end homelessness, CoCs should identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness. CoCs should measure their performance based on local data that consider the challenges faced by all subpopulations experiencing homelessness in the geographic area (e.g., veterans, youth, families, or those experiencing chronic homelessness). CoCs should have a comprehensive outreach strategy in place to identify and continuously engage all unsheltered individuals and families. Additionally, CoCs should use local data to determine the characteristics of individuals and families with the highest needs and long experiences of unsheltered homelessness to develop housing and supportive services tailored to their needs. Finally, CoCs should use the reallocation process to create new projects that improve their overall performance and better respond to their needs

2. Creating a Systemic Response to Homelessness

CoCs should be using system performance measures such as the average length of homeless episodes, rates of return to homelessness, and rates of exit to permanent housing destinations to determine how effectively they are serving people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, CoCs should use their Coordinated Entry process to promote participant choice, coordinate homeless assistance and mainstream housing and services to ensure people experiencing homelessness receive assistance quickly, and make homelessness assistance open, inclusive, and transparent.

3. Strategically Allocating and Using Resources

Using cost, performance, and outcome data, CoCs should improve how resources are utilized to end homelessness. CoCs should review project quality, performance, and cost effectiveness. HUD also encourages CoCs to maximize the use of mainstream and other community-based resources when serving persons experiencing homelessness. CoCs should also work to develop partnerships to help CoC Program participants sustainably exit permanent supportive housing, such as through partnerships with Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and other government, faith-based, and nonprofit resources specializing in areas such as treating mental illness, treating substance abuse, job training, life skills, or similar activities, including those that help CoC Program participants, whenever possible, reach recovery, self-sufficiency, and independence. Finally, CoCs should review all projects eligible for renewal in FY 2019 to determine their effectiveness in serving people experiencing homelessness, including cost effectiveness.

4. Using an Evidence-Based Approach

CoCs should prioritize projects that employ strong use of data and evidence, including the cost-effectiveness and impact of homelessness programs on positive housing outcomes, recovery, self-sufficiency, and reducing homelessness. Examples of measures that CoCs may use to evaluate projects include, but are not limited to: rates of positive housing outcomes, such as reduced length of time homeless and reduced rates of return to homelessness; improvements in employment and income; and improvements in overall well-being, such as improvements in mental health, physical health, connections to family, and safety.

5. Increasing employment.

Employment provides people experiencing homelessness with income to afford housing. Employment also improves recovery outcomes for individuals with mental illness or addiction. CoCs and CoC-funded projects should work with local employment agencies and employers to prioritize training and employment opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. CoC's should also promote partnerships with public and private organizations that promote employment.

6. Providing Flexibility for Housing First with Service Participation Requirements.

The traditional Housing First approach has two basic parts: First, individuals are rapidly placed and stabilized in permanent housing without any preconditions regarding income, work effort, sobriety or any other factor. Second, once in housing, individuals never face requirements to participate in services as a condition of retaining their housing. The first part, placement into permanent housing without preconditions, is an important priority to ensure that federal funds are allocated to providers that serve the most vulnerable homeless individuals. This

NOFA maintains the commitment to unconditional acceptance of individuals into housing, especially for people with a high degree of vulnerability. At the same time, allowing service participation requirements once a person has been stably housed may promote important outcomes (e.g., employment, increased income, reduced substance use, and strengthened social connection), so this NOFA also provides communities and programs with flexibility, without penalty, to use service participation requirements after people have been stabilized in housing (consistent with 24 CFR 578.75(h)).

HUD'S 2019 Tiering and Ranking:

As in year's past, CoCs will be required to rank all new and renewal project applications submitted by project applicants in e-snaps. HUD will also continue the Tier 1 and Tier 2 funding process. HUD has established each CoC's Tier 1 and Tier 2 amounts based on the total amount of funds requested by eligible renewal project applications. This is referred to as the Annual Renewal Demand (ARD). This year HUD has determined that Tier 1 is equal to 100 percent of the combined Annual Renewal Amount (ARD) for all projects eligible for renewal for the first time plus 94 percent of the combined ARDs for all other projects eligible for renewal. Projects in this tier are conditionally selected from the highest scoring CoC to the lowest scoring CoC, provided the project applications pass both eligibility and threshold review. Any type of new or renewal project application can be placed in Tier 1.

Tier 2 is the difference between Tier 1 and the CoC's ARD plus any amount available for CoC Bonus Projects. This does not include the amounts available for CoC planning grants nor DV Bonus Projects. Project applications that must be ranked include: all new reallocation, CoC Bonus, DV Bonus, and renewal project applications. Project applications that are in Tier 2 will be selected for FY 2019 CoC Program funding using the process/formula described on page 10 in the NOFA. Projects placed in Tier 2 will be assessed for eligibility and threshold requirements, and funding will be determined using the CoC's overall score, CoC project ranking order, and a project's low barriers to entry.

If a project application straddles the Tier 1 and Tier 2 funding line, HUD will conditionally select the project up to the amount of funding that falls within Tier 1 as stated above; and then, using the CoC score and other factors described in the NOFA, HUD may fund the Tier 2 portion of the project. If HUD does not fund the Tier 2 portion of the project, HUD may award the project at the reduced amount, provided the project is still feasible with the reduced funding (e.g., is able to continue serving homeless program participants effectively).

Orange County CoC Funding

This year the funding available for the CA-602 Orange County CoC is as follows:

Annual Renewal Demand (ARD) - $23,388,929
Tier 1 (94% of ARD) – $21,985,593
Tier 2 (6% of ARD) – $1,403,336
CoC Bonus – $1,169,446
DV Bonus – $1,441,437
Planning Grant – $701,668

The Ad Hoc Committee met on June 21, 2019, July 8, 2019 and July 25, 2019 to review reallocation options, determine the Rating and Ranking Criteria, and review Performance Measures to create the recommendations described below.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Project Performance Thresholds

The Ad Hoc reviewed the Project Performance Reports for Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing to establish measures, thresholds and assign point-values to be used to evaluate project performance as part of the 2019 NOFA Rating and Ranking Process. It is recommended that the CoC Board approve the measures, scoring thresholds and point values for each measurement.

Recommendation 2 – 2019 NOFA Rating and Ranking Criteria

The 2019 NOFA Rating and Ranking Criteria uses comparable scoring criteria from the 2018 Rating and Ranking Criteria but is improved based on the 2019 CoC NOFA from HUD and local priorities. The rating criteria will be used to rate and rank all CoC renewal projects as part of the annual CoC grant application. If approved, the 2019 NOFA Rating and Ranking Criteria will be in part prepopulated with scores from the Agency Administrative Review, Project Performance Measures, and unspent funds. The remainder of the criteria, such as CES participation, housing first/low-barrier implementation and project effectiveness, will be scored by the Ad Hoc Committee. In addition, the Ad Hoc will not require presentations and as an alternative, recommends a presentation schedule be implemented outside the CoC NOFA competition to review CoC projects on a continual basis with the goal of ensuring programs coordinate with the larger system of care. It is recommended that the CoC Board approve the 2019 NOFA Rating and Ranking Criteria and it's process.

Recommendation 3 – Reallocation

The Orange County CoC has a voluntary reallocation from two Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) Shelter Plus Care programs. These programs will implement a Move-On Strategy for 12 households no longer in need of the intensive services component for housing stabilization. In addition, these households will retain a housing subsidy through a Housing Choice Voucher. It is recommended that funding from the following projects be reallocated toward the expansion of one existing project to improve the overall performance and better respond to the needs in Orange County:
- OCHA - Colette's Children's Home Shelter Plus Care - $66,861
- OCHA - Mercy House Permanent Bonus Shelter Plus Care - $257,139
- Total Available for Reallocation: $324,000

Continuum of Care Board Meeting – August 2, 2019

It is recommended that the total reallocated amount of $313,164 be used for a technical expansion for Supportive Service Only for Coordinated Entry. Once awarded, OCCR will release a competitive RFP for applicants to apply for the entire reallocation amount of funding available and with funds contributed from the current CES Grant.

This funding will be used for housing navigation, case management and diversion problem-solving interventions for all households on the CES Prioritization List. With a limited number of Permanent Supportive Housing, Shelter Plus Care and Housing Choice Vouchers, a "wait list" for these resources continues to grow on the Prioritization List. Intentional diversion problem-solving and housing navigation will support clients by identifying immediate alternate housing arrangements and exit strategies. This targeted strategy allows for system-wide diversion, problem solving and housing navigation services to be implemented with clients at point of CES engagement. The intention of the OC CES expansion funding is to maximize available resources and minimize length of time from CES assessment to housing. Diversion and problem-solving strategies are effective at helping clients resolve their housing crisis and align limited resources efficiently and effectively. This project expansion for SSO-CE will fill a gap in our system of care for households experiencing homelessness in Orange County.

Recommendation 4 –DV Bonus Funding

This year's estimated DV Bonus amount for Orange County CoC is $1,441,437. The types of project allowable under the DV Bonus are: PH-RRH, Joint TH and PH-RRH and SSO Projects for Coordinated Entry to implement policies, procedures, and practices that equip the CoC's coordinated entry to better meet the needs of survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. A CoC can only submit one project application for an SSO-CE project and for any number of PH-RRH and Joint TH and PH-RRH component provided each project is at least $25,000. HUD will only consider the highest ranked project that passes eligibility and quality threshold review for the DV Bonus and will consider any other project for funding as a regular bonus project. A CoC may apply to expand an existing renewal project that is not dedicated to serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to dedicate additional units, beds, persons served, or services provided to existing program participants to this population.

CoCs are required to rank all DV Bonus projects on the New Project Listing of the CoC Priority Listing with a unique rank number. If a project application designated as DV Bonus is conditionally selected by HUD with DV Bonus funds, HUD will remove the ranked DV Bonus project from the New Project Listing and all other project applications ranked below the DV Bonus project will slide up one rank position. If the DV Bonus project application is not conditionally selected with DV Bonus funds, the project application will remain in its ranked position and will be considered for conditional award under the regular bonus amount available to the CoC.

It is recommended that the CoC Board approve the release of the DV Bonus RFP with a focus on PH-RRH, Joint TH and PH-RRH and SSO-CE.

Recommendation 5 – CoC Bonus Funding

This year's estimated CoC Bonus amount for Orange County CoC is $1,169,446. HUD is allowing CoC Bonus projects to include all component types (including PH-PSH, PH-RRH, Joint TH and PH-RRH, HMIS and CES).

Continuum of Care Board Meeting – August 2, 2019

It is recommended that the CoC Board approve the release of the CoC Bonus RFP with a focus on PH-RRH that serves individuals with greatest needs on the CES Prioritization List.

The Ad-Hoc Committee ask that the CoC Board approve all recommendations and this document as presented.