



## **NY-508 Buffalo, Niagara Falls/ Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming Counties CoC FY2021 Request for Proposal for Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program Funding**

### **Introduction**

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s Continuum of Care fund is a nationwide competition for homeless funding. This competition is usually a two-step process. First, a local application has to be submitted in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) released by the Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY), the CoC lead agency of NY-508 Buffalo, Niagara Falls/ Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee and Wyoming Counties. Second, projects that make the selection list will advance to the federal application process through HUD's electronic program application and grants management system called *e-snaps*. Applicants are responsible for the preparation of both the local application and, if approved, the eventual electronic submission of their project application in *e-snaps*.

This document is a RFP in preparation of the local application process. It only applies to new project applications. Projects that are funded by HUD in FY2020 will follow the renewal procedure and will not need to follow this RFP. Expansion to existing CoC projects will be considered as a new project. **HAWNY must receive applications on or before September 17, 2021 4:00 PM EST unless otherwise notified. Notification will be posted on the HAWNY website at [wnyhomeless.org](http://wnyhomeless.org). Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered for funding. Organizations who have no current CoC contract MUST meet with Kexin Ma, Executive Director, to discuss the proposed project.**

New projects to be put forward with the FY2021 application to HUD will be selected by a non-bias Project Review Committee. Final decisions regarding awards will be made by HUD via the national competition. Local scoring criteria for all new projects can be found in the *FY2021 CoC Program Funding Guide* on our website.

### **Funding Types**

There are two funding opportunities included in this RFP: (1) New or expansion CoC Bonus projects and (2) New or expansion DV Bonus Projects. The amount of funding opportunities listed below are the maximum amount a CoC/region can apply through the federal competition. HUD will conditionally select new project applications created through these funds. It is a highly competitive grant. HUD will unlikely fund all projects that are submitted from each CoC.

#### **1. CoC Bonus**

A maximum of \$1,008,424 can be applied through the CoC bonus projects. We recommend each application/project not to exceed \$500,000, but it is not a requirement. Eligible project types include: Rapid rehousing (RRH), Joint Transitional-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and Supportive Service Only Coordinated Entry (SSO-CE). The proposed project could be a new project or an expansion project. It is unlikely we will receive the full bonus amount. The amount we will possibly receive depends on CoC's performance as well as the proposed project ranking. The Project Selection Committee reserves the right to reduce a funding request from the project applicant in order to better fit in our competition. Clients served must meet category 1 of the homeless definition.

## **2. DV Bonus**

A maximum of \$3,025,272 can be applied through the CoC bonus projects. We recommend each application/project not to exceed \$500,000, but it is not a requirement. This proposal must serve survivors of or those attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. Eligible project types include: Rapid rehousing (RRH), Joint Transitional-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH), and Supportive Service Only Coordinated Entry (SSO-CE). Any proposal applying for this funding must utilize the coordinated entry system and use a housing first approach. Projects must use a comparable database to HMIS to record all required data elements.

### **Eligible Project Components**

Below are definitions of all eligible components in this RFP:

#### **1. Joint Transitional Housing (TH) and Permanent Housing-Rapid Rehousing(PH-RRH)**

The proposed project will provide enough rapid rehousing assistance to ensure that at any given time a program participant may move from TH to RRH. This may be demonstrated by identifying a budget that has twice as many resources for the rapid rehousing portion of the project than the TH portion, by having twice as many PH-RRH units at a point in time as TH units, or by demonstrating that the budget and units are appropriate for the population being served by the project.

Projects will be required to adopt a Housing First Approach and commit to housing people as soon as possible without pre-conditions.

#### **2. Rapid Rehousing (RRH)**

Rapid Rehousing (RRH) is a program that intends to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing by providing housing search, ongoing case management, and short- to medium-term rental assistance. This program can serve individuals and families, including youth coming directly from the streets, emergency shelters, or fleeing domestic violence situations and other persons meeting the criteria of category (4) of the definition of homelessness. Individuals who are about to become homeless and living with family or friends will not be eligible.

Project preference will be given to projects that will strictly take clients from coordinated entry without any preference subpopulation. Recommended caseload per caseworker is 25-30 in this project type or 10-15 for the youth population.

#### **3. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) (CoC Bonus only. Not eligible for DV Bonus)**

CoC will only accept PSH applications dedicated to chronically homeless individuals and those who fit the [DedicatedPlus definition](#). However, if there are no chronically homeless persons found at any point in time when a bed is available, the PSH program will take clients based on Order of Priority stated in the Coordinated Entry Policy and Procedure. Project preference will be given to Project-based (site based) projects or leasing projects.

#### **4. Supportive Service Only Coordinated Entry Project (SSO-CE)**

To operate a centralized or coordinated assessment system to assess and prioritize based on the client's need and make referral to other housing programs.

### **Application Requirements**

- Applicants must be a nonprofit organization, local/state government, Indian Tribe and Tribally Designated Housing Entity, or public housing agency. For profit entities are ineligible to apply or to be subrecipients of the grant funds.
- All grant terms will be only 1 year.
- Projects must agree to use Housing First Approach
- Projects must agree to use coordinated entry
- Projects must agree to use HMIS or comparable database
- Project must demonstrate to have 25% match in cash or in-kind

### **Submission Requirements**

- Completed local new project applications (page 3-9) should be sent as a Word document or .pdf file. No scanned file or hard copy will be accepted.
- Completed budget workbooks should be sent as an Excel document.

**ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION BY E-MAIL IS REQUIRED.** Please attach completed application form, budget worksheet and other required documentation by email to: Kexin Ma [kexinma@wnyhomeless.org](mailto:kexinma@wnyhomeless.org) on or before **September 17, 2021 4:00 PM EST**. Please email Kexin if you have any questions.

## Appendix 1: Definitions:

### **HOMELESS DEFINITION (effective 1/4/2012 under the HEARTH act) has four categories:**

**Category 1 – (Homeless) Literally Homeless:** An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- (i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- (ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
- (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution (e.g., jail, hospital)
  - a. where he or she resided for 90 days or less **AND**
  - b. resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering the institution

**Category 2 – (Homeless) Within 14 days of losing home:** An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

- (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
- (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; **AND**
- (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks needed to obtain other permanent housing

**Category 3 – (Homeless) Youth/Children:** Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

- (iv) Meet the homeless definition under another federal statute; **AND**
- (v) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance; **AND**
- (vi) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the sixty day period immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance; **AND**
- (vii) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, OR chronic physical health or mental health conditions, OR substance addiction, OR histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect), OR the presence of a child or youth with a disability, OR two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment

**Category 4 – (Homeless) Fleeing Domestic Violence:** Any individual or family who:

- Is fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- Has no other residence; **AND**
- Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

## **CHRONICALLY HOMELESS:**

An unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition, or an adult member of a homeless family who has a disabling condition, who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR has had at least four (4) occasions of homelessness in the past 3 years, where all combined occasions has to total a length of time of at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least 7 nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven. The term “homeless,” in this case, means a person sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets), in an emergency homeless shelter, or in a Safe Haven as defined by HUD.

## **DISABLING CONDITION:**

A disabling condition is defined as: (1) a disability as defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act; (2) a physical, mental, or emotional impairment which is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration, substantially impedes an individual’s ability to live independently, and of such a nature that the disability could be improved by more suitable conditions; (3) a developmental disability as defined in Section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act; (4) the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any conditions arising from the etiological agent for acquired immune deficiency syndrome; or (5) a diagnosable substance abuse disorder. A disabling condition limits an individual’s ability to work or perform one or more activities of daily living.

## **HOUSING FIRST APPROACH:**

A programmatic and systematic approach that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed using a low barrier approach that emphasizes community integration, stable tenancy, recovery and individual choice.

## **LOW BARRIER APPROACH TO ENTRY:**

The Housing First Approach offers individuals and families experiencing homelessness immediate access to permanent supportive housing without unnecessary prerequisites. For example: a. Admission/tenant screening and selection practices do not require abstinence from substances, completion of or compliance with treatment, or participation in services. b. Applicants are not rejected on the basis of poor or lack of credit or income, poor or lack of rental history, minor criminal convictions, or other factors that might indicate a lack of “housing readiness.” c. Blanket exclusionary criteria based on more serious criminal convictions are not applied, though programs may consider such convictions on a case by case basis as necessary to ensure the safety of other residents and staff. d. Generally, only those admission criteria that are required by funders are applied, though programs may also consider additional criteria on a case by case basis as necessary to ensure the safety of tenants and staff. Application of such additional criteria should be rare, and may include, for example, denial of an applicant who is a high risk registered sex offender by a project serving children, or denial of an applicant who has a history of domestic violence involving a current participant.

## **COORDINATED ENTRY:**

The primary goals for coordinated entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present. Most communities lack the resources needed to meet all of the needs of people experiencing homelessness. This combined with the lack of well-developed coordinated entry processes can result in severe hardships for people experiencing homelessness. They often face long waiting times to receive assistance or are screened out of needed assistance. Coordinated entry processes help communities prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service needs to ensure that people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. Coordinated entry processes also

provide information about service needs and gaps to help communities plan their assistance and identify needed resources. More information can be found on our website: <https://wnyhomeless.org/continuum-of-care/coordinated-entry/>

**DedicatedPLUS PROJECT:**

A permanent supportive housing project where 100 percent of the beds are dedicated to serve individuals, households with children, and unaccompanied youth that at intake are:

- (1) Experiencing chronic homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;
- (2) Residing in a transitional housing project that will be eliminated and meets the definition of chronically homeless in effect at the time in which the individual or family entered the transitional housing project;
- (3) Residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven and had been admitted and enrolled in a permanent housing project within the last year but were unable to maintain a housing placement and met the definition of chronic homeless as defined by 24 CFR 578.3 prior to entering the project;
- (4) Residing in transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project and who were experiencing chronic homelessness as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 prior to entering the project;
- (5) Residing and has resided in a place not meant for human habitation, safe haven, or emergency shelter for at least 12 months in the last three years, but has not done so on four separate occasions and the individual or head of household meet the definition of 'homeless individual with a disability'; or
- (6) Receiving assistance through a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA's homeless assistance system.