FY2023 NY-508 CoC Funding Rank and Review Guide

Updated and approved by the HAWNY/CoC board on May 15, 2023 .
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Background/Introduction

HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) homeless assistance program serves as a source of funding for homeless services in Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming County. The lead agency coordinating these services (CoC Lead) is the Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY). HUD awards homeless assistance grants through an annual application process known as the CoC Program Funding Competition. The competition is a two-step process made up of local and national funding application. First, homeless service providers submit a local application in response to the Request For Proposal (RFP) released by the HAWNY, the CoC lead. Projects that make the selection list through the Rank and Review Process will advance to the federal application process. Second, projects selected submit a national application through E-snaps in response to HUD's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). HAWNY prepares the Collaborative Application for the CoC NOFO and provides technical assistance to projects applying for CoC funding, however, applicants are responsible for the preparation of both the local application and, if selected, the HUD electronic submission through e-snaps.

Projects that are eligible for the CoC funding are Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing(TH-RRH), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Supportive Service Only Coordinated Entry Project (SSO-CE), Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and CoC Planning. Renewal projects and new projects are reviewed separately based on the criteria and principles detailed in this document. The Local Request for Proposal, which details the funding opportunities and application process, will be

published on HAWNY's website.

Glossary

Continuum of Care (CoC) - The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program is designed to promote community wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and State and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness;

Project Review Committee - Review and rank applications for CoC annually. The committee also provides recommendations on funding reallocation and other strategies to use fundings. Committee members include people with lived experience as well as other community members who do not receive CoC funding to maintain fairness.

Request for Proposal (RFP) - A document to publicize a grant opportunity and request for proposed services. In the context of this document, the CoC local RFP follows HUD's CoC funding eligibility and outlines the local needs and application process.

E-snaps - The electronic Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Application and Grants Management System that HUD's Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) uses to support the CoC Program funding application and grant awards process for the CoC Program;

CoC Board - The Continuum of Care (CoC) Board is the governing body that determines policy and acts as the CoC's decision-making group. Mandated by HUD's Continuum of Care Program, the board is responsible for oversight of funds designated to the Continuum of Care and regional planning/policy development for addressing homelessness

eLoccs - The Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS) is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) primary grant disbursement system, involving disbursements for most HUD programs. Grant disbursements are facilitated via the Internet through the eLOCCS system;

Housing First - An approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements;

Coordinated Entry Process - Coordinated Entry is a streamlined system that provides quick access to individuals and families seeking assistance through a coordinated referral and housing placement process. Households are assessed using a standard and objective tool that identifies their vulnerability and barriers to housing. Those who are assessed as having the highest vulnerability and longest homeless history will be prioritized for access to available housing programs as vacancies occur;

HUD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) - Referring to HUD annual Continuum of Care competition of funding.

Annual Renewal amount - A total dollar amount that was awarded from HUD for combining all the CoC funded programs within a fiscal year excluding planning grant.

Guiding Principles on Project Review and Ranking

HUD awards homeless assistance grants through an annual application process known as the CoC Program Funding Competition. HUD requires that the CoC prioritize programs which most effectively serve the community at the local level. To reach this goal, a Rank & Review Process has been implemented for applicants who wish to renew their project/s and for new and/or bonus projects (if bonus funding is available). The process of ranking and reviewing projects is designed to help the CoC learn about each project's performance and effectiveness. Each year the CoC lead reviews the rank and review written process and makes any changes necessary to reflect changing priorities. The annual rank and review process is conducted in a transparent manner to ensure a fair and consistent way to prioritize projects. A non-bias Project Review Committee is charged with the rank & review process. The result of each year's ranking and applications' score is publicly announced by HAWNY, distributed in writing to CoC/HAWNY Membership, and posted publicly on the HAWNY's website.

- Priority will be given to programs that are most successful in ending homelessness and have a positive impact upon overall CoC system performance.
- The goal is to create new resources toward existing known service gaps, including geographic gaps.
- The goal is to provide an incentive to all funded providers to monitor and improve their performance in order to achieve the goal of ending homelessness and providing excellent services.
- The Project Review Committee will attempt to maximize funding available to end homelessness in the CoC, including reallocating lower performing projects.
- The Project Review committee shall have a minimum of 7 members

- - Committee should attempt to include members with lived experience of homelessness that may or may not be residing from a funded program. When this situation occurs, the member will be excluded in that particular program discussion.
    - Members must have no existing or perceived conflict of interest with any applicant and no direct relationship with any applicant or application subrecipient seeking CoC Program funds. Relationships include being an employee, contractor, vendor, or board of director, advisory board or similar relationship currently or in the past 3 years.
    - Member should knowledgeable about homeless services or active in services provision that targeting similar population
    - CoC Lead staff will participate in the meeting with the Project Review Committee but will not score any application.
- All projects that are approved in the local process will be ranked based on criteria listed below in this document.
- The review process focuses on equity during the review process, including people with lived experience, especially those who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) in the Project Review Committee.

Reallocation Process

Reallocation means partially reducing or eliminating a project and utilizing the funds for one or more new projects.Funds are reallocated to new projects whenever reallocation would improve outcomes, resulting in more efficient use of resources and/or reduce homelessness. The CoC Board establishes the project scoring standards to comprehensively review project quality, performance and cost-effectiveness annually. The standards are disseminated widely via email and posted on the web. The scoring standards for renewal projects use objective, performance-based scoring criteria and selection priorities that the CoC Board approves. The scoring standards determine how each project is improving CoC System Performance and successfully helping homeless people to quickly obtain and retain housing without unnecessary barriers.

Reallocation can occur under the following circumstances:
1.   A currently funded project declines to renew their project.
2.   A currently funded project adjusts their budget to a lower amount.
3.   A currently funded project voluntarily reallocates funding to do a new project that aligns better with HUD priorities and project design best practices.
4.   The Project Review Committee can make decisions on a partial or full funding cut on currently funded projects when a project has underperformed. Underperformed is defined as any of the following:

- continually has a substantial amount of unspent funds (5%).
- has performed poorly as it relates to local and federal performance outcomes;
- has a low occupancy rate;
- has not utilized coordinated entry;
- has not served the proposed target population;
- has a program design/model that no longer lines up with HUD goals;
- misuse of federal funds and not following federal regulations with no plans to come into compliance are grounds for immediate defunding;
- has program design that has a negative impact on system performance and /or overall CoC score.
- Has a higher cost per client/ cost per successfully housed client compared to a similar program.

The CoC Project Review Committee will try to make reallocation decisions prior to the release of the NOFA/release of local RFP if possible. The Project Review Committee will meet to determine which renewal projects may be reallocated in part or full, based on the circumstances above. Projects will then have 5 days after the receiving notification of the recommended reallocation to appeal. The appeal process can be found in the Appeals section in this guide.

HAWNY offers providers education & technical assistance regarding reallocation:
- HUD priorities and best practice models for different populations are discussed at monthly membership meetings.
- Performance reports are released quarterly to the public
- Low performing providers are scheduled to meet with HAWNY staff to discuss an improvement plan.

Renewal Scoring Standards

Renewal projects will receive their performance information during the renewal application period. Providers will then have at least two weeks to review and correct their performance data. HAWNY staff will provide technical assistance if needed. Providers are responsible to ensure their performance data is accurate before the set deadline. The Project Review Committee will not accept low performance due to data inaccuracy.

Renewing housing applications **must** meet the following **thresholds**:

- Use Coordinated Entry.
- Use a Housing First approach and low barriers to admission and retention in the program.

Renewal Scoring Sheet (Total Score including bonus is 120 points)

Project Type	Rating Factor	Data Source	Measure	Total Points
Annual Performance (70 Points)				
1. Occupancy				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of beds/units filled by households each night during the reporting period	Local HMIS data/Comparable database (entry/exit dates, application capacity info)	>= 95% = 10 90-94% = 8 85-89% = 5	10
PSH	Percent of beds/units filled by clients each night during the reporting period	Local HMIS data (entry/exit dates, provider's bed/unit count)	>= 90% = 10 85-89% = 8 80-84% = 5	
2. Exit to Permanent Housing				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of clients who move to permanent housing	APR Q23c - divide the number of exits to permanent destinations by the total number of exits minus excluded	>= 90% = 15 85-89% = 10 80-84% = 5	
PSH	Percent of clients who remain in or move to permanent housing	Calculation: 1) Refer to Q5a for the number of stayers 2) Refer to Q23c for the number of clients who exit to permanent destinations and 3) Add stayers (Step 1) and leavers to permanent housing destinations (Step 2) and divide by number of participants (Q7) minus the number of excluded leavers in Q23c	>= 95% = 7 90-94% = 5 85-89% = 2	15
	Percent of clients who exit to PH (Moving On)	APR Q23c - exits to permanent destination divided by all clients minus excluded leavers	>10%=8	
3. Quickly Housing Clients				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Average time to housing based on time between program entry date and move-in date	APR 22c - Average length of time to housing	<= 30 days = 10 31-45 days = 8	10
PSH	Average time to housing based on time between program entry date and move-in date (includes all clients who entered after 10/1/17)	APR 22c - Average length of time to housing	<= 45 days = 10 46-60 days = 8 61-90 days = 5	

4. Returns to Homelessness				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH (non DV providers)	Percent of clients who return to homelessness within 6 months after exiting to permanent housing	Local HMIS Data || Only considers clients who return to homelessness during the reporting period if the new entry is within six months of the original exit date	0-5% = 15 5-10% = 8	15
PSH (non DV providers)	Percent of clients who return to homelessness within 6 months after exiting to permanent housing	Local HMIS Data || Only considers clients who return to homelessness during the reporting period if the new entry is within six months of the original exit date	0-10% = 15 10-20% = 10 20-35% = 5	
5. Domestic Violence Providers only				
DV TH-RRH providers	Reduce the length of stay in transitional housing by 5%	Compare DV data length of stay from previous year to current year	5%=10	15
DV provider	Percentage of clients who have a safety plan	Report provided by DV provider	100% = 5	
6. Adults who maintained/increased earned income				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH and PSH	Percent of Adults who Maintained/Increased Earned Income	APR Q19a1 + Q19a2 – Add "Number of Adults with Earned Income" for "Retained Income Category But Had Less $...", "Retained Income Category and Same $...", "Retained Income Category and Increased $...", and "Did Not Have the Income Category at Start and Gained the Income Category…" for both Q19a1 + Q19a2 and divide by "Total Adults (including those with No Income) for both Q19a1 + Q19a2 + # Adults w/o Required Annual Assessment (Q18)" *APR only considers adults who have exited or have had an annual assessment. Data entered in a general interim "update" is not considered.	PSH 10-19%%=3 >=20%=8 RRH 15%-29%=3 >=30%=8	8
7. Adults who Maintained/Increased Any Income				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH and PSH	Percent of Adults who Maintained/Increased Any Income	APR Q19a1 + Q19a2 – Add "Number of Adults with Any Income" for "Retained Income Category But Had Less $...", "Retained Income Category and Same $...", "Retained Income Category and Increased $...", and "Did Not Have the Income Category at Start and Gained the Income Category…" for both Q19a1 + Q19a2 and divide by "Total Adults (including those with No Income) for both Q19a1 + Q19a2 + # Adults w/o Required Annual Assessment (Q18)" *APR only considers adults who have exited or have had an annual assessment. Data entered in a general interim "update" is not considered.	PSH 60%-79%=5 >=80%=12 RRH 30-49%=5 >=50%=12	12
HMIS data quality (15 Points)				
All Projects	Personally Identifiable Information	CoC APR Q 6a	< 5% =2 5-10% = 1	2
All Projects	Universal Data Elements	CoC APR Q 6b	<5%=2 5-10%=1	2
All Projects	Destination	CoC APR Q 6c	<5% =2	2
All Projects	Income	CoC APR Q 6c	<5% =2	2
All Projects	Timeliness	CoC APR Q.6e. Largest % of data falls the following day range.	%>0-3 days=5 %>4-6 days =3 %>7+ day=0	5
All Projects	HMIS user turnover	HAWNY Staff User Reports	>66%	2
Narrative Responses(questions developed in collaboration with people with lived experience) (25 points)				
Client wellbeing				5
Client safety				5

Involving clients in decision making process				10
Staff retention and continuation of services				5
			TOTAL	**110**

Bonus (10 points)				
PSH				
PSH	Percent of clients with 2+ disabilities	APR Q13b2 & Q13c2	>= 80%	5
PSH	Percent of persons that enter with zero income	APR Q16 clients with no income at entry divided by total number of Adults served	>40%	5
RRH Singles				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of clients with 1+ disabilities	APR Q13b2 & Q13c2	>= 50%	5
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of persons that enter with zero income	APR Q16 clients with no income at entry divided by total number of Adults served	>40%	5
RRH Families				
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of clients with 1+ disabilities	APR Q13b2 & Q13c2	>= 50%	3
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of households with 5+ members	Local HMIS data/comparable database data (household ID, entry/exit date)	10%+	2
RRH or Joint RRH-TH	Percent of persons that enter with Zero income	APR Q16 clients with no income at entry divided by total number of Adults served	>40%	5
Total including Bonus			120	

Programs that have been operating for less than 1 year will not be scored based on the measures above.

All projects that are lower-performing but given chances for improvement due to population or region considerations will be put on probation for a year. Projects on probation may be required to meet with the Homeless Alliance of WNY/Project Review Committee regularly.

New Project Scoring Standards

New Projects that do not meet threshold criteria or submit after the deadline stated in the local Request for Proposal (RFP) will not be reviewed or scored.
Threshold criteria:

1. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirement outlined in the Eligibility Requirements for All Applicants of HUD's Grants Programs[1].
2. Project applicants and potential subrecipients must meet the eligibility requirements of the CoC Program as described in the Act and the Rule and provide evidence of eligibility required in the application (e.g., nonprofit documentation).
3. Commitment to only take referrals from CoC Coordinated Entry
4. Using a Housing First and low barrier approach
5. Demonstrate secured minimum match
6. No more than 10% of the program expense budget can be for the administrative cost

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[1]
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/SPM/documents/EligibilityRequirementsGrantProgramsFiscalYear2022.pdf

7. Must use HMIS. For Victim Service Providers, must use a comparable database.
8. Have acceptable organization audit/financial review

New project scoring		
Alignment with HUD and Local Priority	● Proposed projects meets the local unmet needs ● Project proposed outcomes align with CoC system and project outcome	20
Organization Capacity and Experience	● Experience with proposed homeless population and previous performance ● Connections to partners and other entities ● Experience with grant management ● Presents a staffing plan for successful implementation	25
Project Design	● Provide sufficient supports to ensure clients obtain and remain in housing ● Assist participants to obtain mainstream benefits(Health, social, employment, childcare) ● Cost are reasonable and feasible ● Demonstrate program design meets the needs of the targeted population	35
Racial Equity		10
Leveraging Housing and HealthCare resources		10
Total Points		100

New project must meet the thresholds outlined above as well as score over 70% of the points (70 pts) to be considered to move forward in the national application. Projects may be rejected for the following reasons: 1. The proposed project did not meet one of the threshold 2. does not meet the eligibility outline in the local RFP. 3. did not score over 70% of the total points available. 4. maxed out of the bonus category and not able to support a program.

Ranking Policy

HUD requires that the CoC lead ranks projects into two tiers based on the funding allocation released in the NOFO. Tiering prioritizes projects for funding. YHDP projects and CoC planning projects are excluded in the ranking or tiers unless otherwise notified in the NOFO.

Tier 1:
1: Top scoring Renewal Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid rehousing, and Rapid Rehousing based on Project Score.
2: Programs that have been in operation for less than 1 year
3: Homeless Management Information System
4: Coordinated Entry
(Projects may be in Tier 1 or straddle between Tier 1 and Tier 2)

Tier 2:

1: Lower scoring PSH, Joint TH-RRH, and RRH
2. New projects created through reallocation process
3: Bonus projects based on Score

Projects that are within the Annual Renewal Amount will be relatively safe to receive funding regardless of tiers. Projects that are outsides of the annual renewal amount are not promised to be funded. Any new bonus projects that are selected locally to move forward to the national competition will be considered by HUD based on funding availability, CoC's application score and application score.

Funding Security for Regions

The CoC agrees to attempt to maintain the level of funds that are available to newly merged areas: Niagara and GOW(Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming) are able to seek opportunities to expand their funding if the programs perform well or through new applications. Renewal projects are still held to the same standards in terms of performance.

Appeals

An applicant organization that has been denied funding or awarded funds in an amount that is less than applied for or requested under the local application process may submit an appeal to the CoC Project Selection Committee under any of the following conditions:

a. If they were denied the right to reasonably participate in the local application process;

b. If the Project Selection Committee overlooked information in the application that would have caused the application to meet thresholds or be successfully scored. No additional application information may be submitted after the deadline stated in local RFP;

c. A decision made by the CoC Project Selection Committee regarding the ranking, rejection or funding of their project was unsubstantiated by the project performance standards.

If the applicant can prove it meets one of these criteria, the applicant organization may file an appeal to be reconsidered for inclusion in either the local competition or federal competition. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to address each area(s) identified as a factor(s) of the funding decision in a manner that could result in a more favorable decision. **An appeal shall not be used as a negotiation tool to extend a poor performing program with the promise to better in the future.**

A written appeal request must be submitted to HAWNY via email within **three business days** of the notice of the funding decision. The formal appeal must include detailed reasons, in accordance with the criteria above (a,b, or c). HAWNY staff will share the appeal with the Project Review Committee. The Committee will then determine if this appeal meets the above criteria. A response to the appeal will be given via email with a decision or schedule a hearing with the applicant within ten business days. The decision made by the Project Review Committee will be final.