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Continuum of Care
Written Standard for Rankings and Ratings Protocol
NY-505 Syracuse/Onondaga and Oswego Counties

I. Purpose: The Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHC) NOFA protocols for the Continuum of Care (CoC) establishes a transparent framework for the decision-making process guiding the annual CoC NOFA scoring, ranking and approval process. In order to best serve our community members through provision of effective projects and capturing the maximum funds available, projects which most closely align with the HUD and CoC priorities will be prioritized for funding.

A preliminary, quantitative review of each application submitted will be completed by the Ranking and Ratings Committee. The Committee will be comprised of non CoC-funded members who are familiar with the CoC projects and process. These members include: Onondaga County Department of Social Services – Economic Security Commissioner, Onondaga County Department of Social Services – Economic Security Deputy Executive Commissioner, City of Syracuse Neighborhood and Business Development Deputy Commissioner, City of Syracuse Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Coordinator, Onondaga County Single Point of Access (SPOA) Coordinator, Oswego County Department of Social Services Commissioner, Oswego County COACH (Homeless Coalition) Board Member, HHC Board President, Onondaga County Community Development Housing Program Coordinator, Onondaga County Runaway and Homeless Youth Coordinator, CNY Fair Housing Executive Director, HHC Consumer Advocate Board Member and the HHC Coordinator (non-voting).

The Committee will be convened for the purpose of ranking new bonus project proposals and renewal applications for the NOFA. This review will include:
- Confirm that application was submitted on time
- Confirm that all required attachments were submitted
- Calculate performance scores
- Confirm matching and/or leveraging fund requirements are met

II. Evaluation Process for (Scoring and Ranking Overview)

A. Evaluation Process
Performance measures and relative scoring is developed annually based on HUD priorities and national and local objectives. As approved by the HHC Board of Directors and General Membership, the scoring mechanism is established.

1. New projects
On behalf of the CoC, the HHC will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new projects soon after the NOFA is released by HUD. Each agency considering applying for a new project will be required to submit an application to the HHC Coordinator. The timing of submitting the RFP will be determined by the Ranking and Ratings Committee and determined by the timing of the NOFA application, but no less than

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10 days from the release of the RFP. The Ranking and Ratings Committee then reviews applications for adherence to the following of HUD and local threshold criteria:

- Project eligibility for the HUD bonus for permanent housing activities (Permanent Housing for Persons with Disabilities or Shelter Plus Care);
- Project ability to meet basic HUD criteria (e.g. serve eligible populations, meet cash match requirements, etc.);
- Project ability to meet local priorities and local threshold criteria;
- Demonstrate that the agency is able to meet project quality threshold criteria are met within the time frame specified by HUD.

2. Renewal Projects

All projects requesting renewal funding will be evaluated to determine their effectiveness in achieving the stated goals of the project and in addressing local and federal priorities.

- HHC meeting participation
- Adults exiting with Cash Resources
- Adults exiting with Non-Cash Benefits
- Adults exiting into permanent housing
- Adults exiting with employment
- Must be involved with the CoC's Coordinated Entry System or willing to be involved. Involvement is defined by signing on to the Coordinated Entry Policy and Procedures Manual located on the HHC website, accepting referrals through HMIS or otherwise by street outreach providers, shelter and transitional housing programs and attending Coordinated Entry Workgroup meetings.
- Demonstrating a plan in the renewal application for reaching homeless individuals and families (population applicant serves). Provide information that demonstrates that 100 percent of the geographic area is considered, and that describes the specific outreach procedures in place that are used by the homeless service agencies to identify and engage homeless individuals and families, including their efforts to provide meaningful outreach to persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. Programs must describe the procedures they will use to market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability, who are least likely to apply in the absence of special outreach.
- Other general project overview
  - Project overview
  - Grant amount, uses and changes over past year
  - HUD priorities
  - Target populations: outreach, engagement, geographic coverage
  - Efforts to access mainstream resources

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- o Educational assurances
- o Use of HMIS
- o Collaboration
- o Community involvement
- o Movement toward self sufficiency
- o Service coordination
- o Program participant driven services
- o Project budget
- o Leverage including match

The HHC has an Operations Committee that reviews and updates the monitoring tool used to score renewal projects on effectiveness and compliance annually. The monitoring tool is available on the HHC website. The Committee is comprised of representatives from CoC-funded agencies. Once the tool is completed and voted on by members of the Committee, the tool is then sent to the HHC Advisory Board for review and then for final review and voted on by the entire Coalition. The HHC Coordinator conducts monitoring visits to CoC-funded programs annually. Two client files are reviewed on-site and the Coordinator also visits housing projects and reviews APR data submitted to HUD and APR data from ServicePoint (the CoC's HMIS System). Performance and HMIS data are heavily weighted measures used by HUD in determining the overall CoC Application scores of local Continuums. Data taken from each project's Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted to HUD is used to calculate the overall CoC systems performance in moving to permanent housing, housing stability, and obtaining mainstream resources and employment resources.

Additionally, performance data collected helps the CoC to better define local homelessness issues and help to achieve the goal of ending homelessness. Participation in HMIS and quality data entry is mandatory for those agencies seeking new and renewal CoC funds. APR performance measurements provide an objective evaluation of current program performance. It provides the quantitative basis for scoring the performance of renewal projects in the CoC's local application process and is used by the CoC to assess the system-wide progress of the region in meeting established benchmarks.

The HHC Coordinator scores the projects accordingly from the monitoring tool with oversight by the Operations Committee Chair and HHC Chair. Total scores for each project are determined by adding up points in each section. The completed tools are provided to the programs and a score listing is generated by the Coordinator and sent to the Advisory Board along with any issues presented.
All project types (i.e., PSH/S+C, RRH, TH) are judged together in Ranking and Ratings Committee meetings, both new and renewals.

The HHC Coordinator may include low-scoring renewal applications in the CoC HUD application so as not to create service gaps within the CoC. However, low-scoring projects (scoring below the 50% threshold) will work with HHC to develop a Project Improvement Plan. A project working under a Project Improvement Plan will need to demonstrate progress toward identified outcomes to remain competitive in future NOFA competitions.

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C. Ranking protocol

A project ranking list is then generated from highest to lowest scores, in alignment with HUD, local CoC priorities and upon recommendation of the HHC Coordinator.

Projects will be recommended based upon the project application scores that fall within the final pro rata share for the CoC, split between Tiers 1 and 2, according to HUD's NOFA. Projects scoring highest will be ranked and placed into Tier 1 until all Tier 1 funds are allocated.

The remaining projects selected for funding will be ranked and placed into Tier 2 until all Tier 2 funds are allocated.

Renewal projects that are recommended for funding but did not meet the 50% threshold will work with HHC to develop a Project Improvement Plan. The CoC will work with these projects to develop a plan to improve program performance and monitor the progress with these efforts. If these efforts are not successful, appropriate measures will be taken, such as a reduction in funding or reallocation of the project in future NOFA competitions.

There also may be new projects which fail to meet Letter of Intent requirements that will be held out of the competition. These projects may request that the CoC provide them with technical assistance to assist them in improving their interest in submitting an application for future competitions. This process ensures that organizations that may lack the current capacity to receive a federal grant, can build their capacity for a future year.

New Projects will be ranked in conjunction with Renewal Projects to ensure that the best applications are forwarded to the federal competition. The CoC HMIS grant will be placed into Tier 1. The Planning Grant will not be ranked for the FY2015 NOFA. The Ranking and Ratings Committee will rank our current community's priorities which typically are as follows:

1. New PSH bonus application projects
2. New RRH bonus application projects
3. New PSH projects created through reallocation for 100 percent chronically homeless
4. New rapid re-housing projects created through reallocation
5. Renewal permanent housing projects, RRH and PSH
6. Renewal HMIS
7. Renewal transitional housing

III. Appeals Process

Once the HHC Coordinator in conjunction with the Ranking and Ratings Committee have ranked applicants' renewal applicants, the preliminary ranking will be emailed to all member agencies with specific scoring forwarded to the related applicant. Any new project proposal which has sufficient points, upon review by the Rankings and Ratings Committee, will be incorporated into the preliminary ranking as per the priority listing defined above.

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The Ratings and Rankings Committee's recommendation will be presented to the HHC Advisory Board for approval. An applicant may challenge the Ranking and Ratings' recommendation to the Board by emailing the HHC Coordinator a Notice of Appeal by the deadline of 48 hours prior to the Board Meeting. The HHC Coordinator will copy all other applicants with the appeal email. The appellant must attend the HHC Advisory Board meeting. The appellant will be allowed to make a 10 minute presentation to the Board. Any other applicant may make a 5 minute presentation to the Board. The Board's decision on the slate is final. No Board Member with a conflict of interest may participate in the discussion or vote on the slate.

NOTE: Appeals will only be considered in cases where applicants have concerns specific to the review process and scoring of their application. Appeals specific to the ranking or funding recommendation will not be considered. All notices of appeal must be based on the information submitted by the application due date. No new or additional information will be considered. Omissions to the application cannot be appealed.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 structures will be reviewed with the Ratings and Rankings Committee and HHC Advisory Board and, at the next general membership or a special meeting called to ensure voting is accomplished 15 days prior to the submission deadline for the CoC Application, approved by the HHC membership.

The recommendation of the HHC Coordinator with General Membership approval will be final.

IV. Reallocation protocol:
The CoC may use the reallocation process to shift funds in whole or part from existing renewal projects to new project applications without decreasing the CoC's annual renewal demand. HUD strongly encourages CoCs to take advantage of this option.

The funds may be reallocated to develop new permanent supportive housing projects, new rapid re-housing projects, HMIS funds, or Support Services Only (SSO) for Coordinated Assessment.

Upon recommendation by the HHC Coordinator and the Ranking and Ratings Committee, agencies with the lowest performing projects will be notified of the recommendation for either reallocation or development of a Project Improvement Plan. In the event that an agency has failed to make progress on a Project Improvement Plan, the agency will be notified of the recommendation for funding reduction, or non-renewal and reallocation.

Projects may be reallocated if they no longer meet HUD and/or local priority.

New Project Applications from Reallocated Dollars
When the NOFA is released, The HHC Ratings and Rankings Committee will convene within 10 days to review the score listing from the monitoring tools along with discussing HUD priorities for the current NOFA application and deliberate whether projects should be reallocated. Once the Committee decides to reallocate the funding from the CoC-funded agency, the Advisory Board is immediately notified by the

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HHC Coordinator along with the agency whose funding has been deemed as necessary to reallocate. The appeals process previously discussed will be applicable to the reallocation process. Agencies with projects that have been reallocated are highly encouraged to apply for the reallocated funds to be made available, however the funds will be competitive and subject to the RFP process similar to the bonus funding application process. The timing of submitting the RFP will be determined by the Ranking and Ratings Committee and determined by the timing of the NOFA application, but no less than 10 days from the release of the RFP. The Rankings and Ratings Committee reviews applications for adherence to the following of HUD and local threshold criteria:

- Project eligibility for permanent housing activities (Permanent Housing for Persons with Disabilities or Shelter Plus Care);
- Project ability to meet basic HUD criteria (e.g. serve eligible populations, meet cash match requirements, etc.);
- Project ability to meet local priorities and local threshold criteria;
- Demonstrate that the agency is able to meet project quality threshold criteria are meet within the time frame specified by HUD.

V. Recommendation for CoC funding:
If after resolution of any appeals, reallocations are to occur, the CoC consolidated application will include new projects for new permanent housing programs in the amount of the non-renewing grant(s).