

## **Baltimore County CoC Rating and Ranking Procedure**

Each year the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates funding for homeless assistance programs through the Continuum of Care (CoC) competition process. In order to receive funding, each CoC must submit a consolidated application for funding that describes how local activities meet or exceed HUD requirements and are aligned with community needs. The CoC is required to rank in order of priority funding requests from all eligible providers for inclusion in the Consolidated Application. In accordance with HUD's Homeless Policy and Program Priorities (as stated in the 2024 HUD CoC Program Application Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)), the CoC will prioritize project applications based on the extent to which they advance these goals:

### **1) End homelessness for all persons – CoCs should:**

- Identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness
- Measure their performance based on local data that consider the challenges faced by all subpopulations
- Partner with housing, health care, and supportive services providers to expand housing options, such as permanent supportive housing, housing subsidies, and rapid rehousing
- Use local data to determine the characteristics of individuals and families with the highest needs and longest experiences of homelessness to develop housing and supportive services tailored to their needs

### **2) Use a Housing First Approach**

- Prioritize rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing
- Housing must not be dependent of service participation or have other preconditions
- Landlord recruitment and retention strategy
- Reduce the length of time people experience homelessness

### **3) Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness**

- Explore resources to provide Permanent Housing for unsheltered homeless individuals
- Work with law enforcement and local government officials to eliminate policies that criminalize homelessness

### **4) Improving System Performance**

- Renewal and New Projects should be evaluated based on how they work to either support or hinder overall system performance measures (exits to PH, returns to homelessness, reducing length of time homeless, increasing income for program participants)
- Effective use of Coordinated Entry
- Renewal projects will be evaluated on their effectiveness in serving people AND cost effectiveness

### **5) Partnering with Housing, Health, and Service Agencies**

- CoCs are expected to leverage other available resources and funding outside of CoC or ESG to pay for both housing and services
- Close partnerships with public and private health agencies to analyze data and design approaches to reduce homelessness, improve the health of individuals experiencing homelessness and prevent disease outbreaks
- Partner with PHAs to utilize coordinated entry, develop housing units, and provide subsidies to people experiencing homelessness
- Partner with Workforce Development to improve employment opportunities

**6) Racial Equity**

- In nearly every community, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color are substantially overrepresented in the homeless population. HUD is emphasizing system and program changes to address racial equity within CoCs
- Projects should have policies that address racial disparities

**7) Improving Assistance to LGBTQ+ Individuals**

- CoCs should address the needs of LGBTQ+ in their planning processes
- CoCs should partner with LGBTQ+ serving organizations
- CoCs should ensure the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals are protected in all projects

**8) Persons with Lived Experience**

- Persons with lived experience should be involved in all aspects of planning, program design and policy development
- CoC leaders and stakeholders should prioritize hiring people with lived experience where their expertise is needed

**9) Building an Effective Workforce**

- Homeless assistance providers need effective, well-supported staff to provide high quality assistance.
- HUD is applying cost of living adjustments to supportive service activities and other staffing-focused budget lines to allow CoC budgets to better keep up with rising costs.
- HUD encourages CoCs to work with their funders and other community stakeholders to improve pay and support for people who work in the homelessness sector.

**10) Increasing Affordable Housing Supply**

The NOFO awards points for taking steps to engage local leaders regarding increasing the affordable housing supply. CoCs should be communicating with jurisdiction leaders and elected officials on the following:

- Importance of increasing the supply of affordable housing
- The harmful effects of a lack of affordable housing
- Need to reform zoning and land use reform to increase the supply

CoC (MD-505) is eligible to renew over \$3 million dollars through 13 projects for the 2024 HUD CoC Program Competition. Projects are eligible for renewal for FY 2024 funds if they have an executed grant agreement by December 31, 2024 and have an expiration date that occurs in Calendar Year 2025 (the period between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025). These projects are renewable under the CoC Program Competition as set forth in 24 CFR 578.33 to continue ongoing leasing, operating, supportive services, rental assistance, HMIS, and project administration costs.

The FY 2024 CoC Program Competition Estimated Annual Renewal Demand (ARD) Report for the MD-505 Competition reflects the following renewal amounts:

- Estimated ARD = \$3,057,805
- Tier 1 max = \$2,752,025
- Tier 2 max = \$1,756,101
- CoC Bonus = \$644,587
- DV Bonus = \$805,734

All applications will be ranked in two tiers and all new and renewal projects will be reviewed and ranked by the CoC Rating and Ranking (R&R) Committee. Tier 1 ranked projects will receive up to 90% of the ARD, as long as the CoC's application meets all threshold and eligibility requirements and the Federal

government provides sufficient funding. Tier 2 projects will be evaluated based on a combination of the CoC application score and ranking order. All applicants will be required to provide answers to supplemental application questions focused on Housing First, Addressing Racial Disparities, Contribution to overall system performance measures of the CoC, work with LGBTQ+ populations and work with those with lived experience. The rating and ranking score sheets will be posted on the website once the R&R Committee has begun their review.

HUD will select projects in order of point value until there are no more funds available. The CoC recognizes the necessity to ensure a functioning Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as well as the two Supportive Service Only (SSO) projects that benefit the entire CoC to meet HUD requirements. Thus, the HMIS and SSO renewal projects will automatically be ranked in Tier 1 above housing projects and will not be scored unless the Baltimore County CoC Governance Board seeks new project applicants to manage HMIS or the SSO projects. Both project types will be reviewed annually and affirmed as necessary by CoC Governance Board. The Rating and Ranking Committee will determine, based on CoC funding priorities, if other project types should be kept in Tier 1, based on overall CoC need.

Projects placed in Tier 2 are at the highest risk of not being funded. Each project application is scored individually with ranking priority determined by committee consensus. All applicants will be notified directly regarding final tiered score. If a project is not recommended for funding, the committee will notify the project applicant, in writing, of this decision. Once the committee has concluded its review and ranking, the recommendations will be presented to the entire CoC for discussion and ratification. At this time there will be an opportunity for any person or organization disagreeing with the ranking order to ask questions and propose alternative ranking. Final ratification will be determined by majority vote of the Governance Board of the CoC.

Applicants may appeal any of the following decisions of the CoC Rating and Ranking Committee:

- Placement of a project in Tier 2
- Reduction of a renewal grant amount (i.e. renewal grant partially re-allocated to a new project).
- Reallocation of a renewal grant (i.e. entire grant reallocated to a new project) if not previously notified that the grant was to be reallocated as a result of low performance.

Applicants may request a debriefing but may not appeal the following decisions of the CoC Rating and Ranking Committee:

- Non selection of a project for inclusion in the CoC application
- Applicants placed in Tier 1 may not appeal their rank on the Project Priority Listing.

Any agency that wishes to appeal or request a debriefing must notify the CoC Lead in writing via email at [kruppert@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:kruppert@baltimorecountymd.gov) and CC [hsheridan@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:hsheridan@baltimorecountymd.gov) no later than two business days after the priority ranking has been communicated in writing.

An appeal and/or debriefing request must state the following:

- Agency Name
- Project Name
- Reason for the appeal/debriefing (no longer than two pages)

If an appeal is filed, other agencies who rank may be affected will be notified as a courtesy. Such agencies will not be able to file an appeal until after the appeals process is complete.

The Rating and Ranking Committee will review all appeals and will make recommendations to the CoC Governance Board for final approval. All impacted applicants (if any) will be notified of the outcome within 3 days of receipt of their appeal.

If a debriefing is requested, the CoC Lead will schedule the meeting and provide comments to the applicant regarding their application submission and factors impacting non-selection. There is no impact on other applicants or the R+R Committee related to this administrative review.