

2018 CoC NOFA Competition Manual & Timeline

Mahoning County Homeless Continuum of Care



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Background and Introduction

HUD's Continuum of Care Program and the Annual Continuum of Care Competition

Every year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), makes available federal resources for homeless programming to communities around the country through its Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and its annual CoC Competition. CoC's access funds by completing consolidated applications on behalf of the federally funded homeless programs in their geographic area. For the Mahoning County Homeless Continuum of Care (MCHCoC), the Collaborative Applicant (The Board of Mahoning County Commissioners) and the MCHCoC Program Manager facilitate this process and submit the Consolidated Application. Any organization located within Mahoning County that wishes to access new or renewal CoC Program funds must participate in local homeless planning efforts and the annual MCHCoC Competition.

The Mahoning County CoC receives approximately \$1.9 million annually for new and renewing homeless programs and permanent housing programs.

Target Audience

The 2018 CoC Competition Manual and Timeline are only applicable to HUD CoC funded projects renewing their CoC project funding in 2018, or those organizations/agencies interested in applying for funding for a new CoC funded project.

Purpose of this Manual

This manual is intended to provide MCHCoC members with basic information about the 2018 CoC NOFA Competition including, but not limited to, the following:

- Priorities for New and Renewal Projects
- The Renewal Project evaluation process and timeline
- The process for completion of the 2018 MCHCoC consolidated application
- Preliminary priorities for ranking renewal and new CoC projects within the consolidated application

Goals and Priorities for 2018 CoC Competition

The MCHCoC has identified the following funding priorities for the 2018 MCHCoC Competition:

- Submit a consolidated application that meets the threshold requirements and maximizes available funding
- Fund projects that meet community needs
- Fund projects that are cost effective and that maximize program and mainstream resources
- Fund projects that are working toward successfully ending homelessness
- Promote the use of best practices
- Fund projects that will help the CoC achieve the Federal Strategic Plan goals of ending homelessness for the following: Veterans, chronically homeless, families, youth and all additional subpopulations

In addition, the MCHCoC has identified the following benchmarks and priorities to guide the final ranking process of new and renewal projects in the 2018 CoC Consolidated Application:

- Project Ranking Goal: To rank MCHCoC new and renewal projects in a way that helps continue to meet local homeless needs of the community while also helping the CoC strategize and maximize CoC Program funds and ensure continuing and ongoing national competitiveness.
 - The following benchmarks, in no particular order, will help guide development of a final ranking approach:
 - The CoC may seek to preserve low-ranking projects at the risk of losing funding as those projects represent the only CoC Program funding in the community
 - The CoC may seek to preserve low-ranking Permanent Housing (PH) Projects at risk of losing funding only if those projects represent the only CoC Program funding of its kind in the community.
 - The CoC will prioritize projects that have clearly demonstrated the use of Housing First practices
 - The CoC may consider reducing funding requests for the lower ranked projects as a means to maximize and preserve funding for higher ranked projects, if needed, while adhering with other priorities
 - The CoC may consider ranking New Projects higher, if necessary, than some Renewal Projects if the CoC deems it will help to meet the aforementioned ranking goals.

CoC NOFA Renewal Project Evaluation Process

The MCHCoC Program Manager and Evaluation Committee will develop and implement an annual renewal project evaluation process and develop a preliminary project ranking approach. The evaluation process and project ranking helps the CoC fully maximize CoC program funds, make informed decisions and continue to move the CoC towards the goal of ending homelessness.

The areas evaluated as part of the renewal project evaluation process are as follows:

Project Impact

- Housing stability –exits to permanent housing, returns to homelessness
- Access to income and benefits –employment and non-cash benefits
- Length of time homeless

Meeting Community Need

- Bed and unit utilization
- Targeting hard to serve persons/ households

Project Capacity

- Unspent Program Funding
- Cost Effectiveness
- HMIS Data Quality

Best Program Practices

- Use of Housing First practices
- Prioritization of Chronically Homeless (CH)

A complete list of projects eligible for renewal in the FY2018 CoC Competition can be found in Appendix A: 2018 Renewal CoC Projects

A complete list of project evaluation items and scoring details can be found in Appendix B: 2018 Project Evaluation Scorecard

HMIS Project Evaluation Report

HMIS is the primary data source for the project evaluation process for all renewing CoC Projects. Data Quality and Data Completeness Reports should be run for the period of January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017 and submitted with the CoC NOFA Project Component. Please ensure that all data is correct prior to submission.

Bed Utilization Report

The Bed Utilization Report should be run for the last Wednesday of every month between January 2017 and December 2017. The average bed utilization rate will be calculated for each project, only counting the months the project had active beds. All project recipients should run the Bed Utilization by Provider for the 2017 Project Component to ensure all client counts are accurate. Projects will be awarded points on whichever rate of utilization is higher between beds and units.

HMIS Data Quality

Since HMIS data supplied all CoC project performance data for the projects evaluation process, it is critical that all projects maintain quality HMIS data. For purposes of this projects evaluation process, reviewing CoC projects must not have more than 2% missing data for any evaluated item. Projects with more than 2% missing data rates on an evaluated item will be considered to have failed to meet the goal and will receive zero points on that particular scored item. For example, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects can receive 10 points if at least 85% of their project leavers (in the 1/1/17-12/31/17 reporting period) received 1 or more sources of non-cash benefits or health insurance. If the Projects Evaluation 2018 Report shows a CoC PSH project with an 85% rate of leavers receiving non-cash benefits and health insurance, but their missing data rate for that item was 4% then the PSH projects will receive 0 points for the evaluated item because their data quality was too poor (i.e., their missing data rate was too high) to evaluate performance on the scored item.

The only exception to the missing data rate standard are the project evaluation items looking at destinations at exit. The only missing data in HMIS associated with this data element would be associated with end users recording 'no exit interview/data not collected' in HMIS for the leaver's destination. Since missing data associated with this response is not an indicator of data quality, these missing data rates will not prohibit evaluation or performance on the scored item.

For additional information on data quality scoring criteria, refer to Appendix E: *HMIS Data Quality Information*.

Special Considerations

When a project evaluation item is solely based on those who exited the project, projects with only one (1) or no leavers (*i.e., no one exited the project during the reporting period*) will be considered to have met the goal and will receive full points for the particular evaluation item. In cases where a participant dies during their program stay, that 'deceased' exit will be excluded from any evaluation item that is based on leavers.

Newly operating projects that have less than nine (9) months of client level data will not be scored as part of this COC NOFA Evaluation Process and will be ranked within Tier 1.

Evaluating Housing First

Renewal CoC projects are evaluated on the adoption of Housing First practices. Projects are required to submit program documents in order to demonstrate implementation of Housing First practices. Refer to Appendix C: Implementing Best Practices, which provides details on the submittal requirements.

CoC projects can receive up to 15 points for providing evidence of Housing First practices. CoC projects that are required but fail to submit documentation for this item will have 10 points deducted from their project evaluation score.

Evaluating Prioritization of Chronically Homeless in Permanent Supportive Housing Projects

Renewal CoC PSH projects are evaluated on their demonstrated practices for prioritizing chronically homeless persons, which includes the use of Chronically Homeless Order of

PSH projects can receive up to 10 points for providing evidence of chronically homeless prioritization. CoC project recipients failing to submit documentation for this item will have 5 points deducted from their project evaluation score.

Evaluating Cost Effectiveness

CoC NOFA Renewal Projects will be evaluated on cost effectiveness – namely, the annual cost to retain or move someone into permanent housing. In order to evaluate cost effectiveness, CoC Evaluation Committee will review the total annual funding request amount plus the required minimum 25% match amount, as shown in the project's most recent CoC application, against the number of project participants who exited to or remained in permanent housing during the reporting period.

CoC projects can receive up to 10 points for cost effectiveness.

Evaluating Unspent Funds

Renewal CoC projects are evaluated on their capacity to manage and expend their grant award. In order to evaluate this item, CoC staff will review historical and current grant expenditure information. The source for this data will be HUD's LOCCS.

Agency and Project Components

Agencies are required to complete a pre-application for their agency and a project pre-application for each project applying for funds. These pre-applications encompass threshold requirements as well as best practices. The pre applications are not scored, if concerns are

noted they will be addressed with the agency when the 2018 NOFA is released, with threshold guidelines. Pre-applications are sent to agencies and can be found on the MCHCoC website.

CoC Renewal Project Ranking

After the completion of all project evaluations, the MCHCoC Evaluation Committee will preliminarily rank all Renewal Projects according to their evaluation scores. The MCHCoC Evaluation Committee and MCHCoC Board will not make final ranking and/or recommendations until HUD releases the 2018 MCHCoC Competition Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). The CoC NOFA will include details regarding the total of CoC funds available for renewal and new projects as well as HUD's priorities for ranking and funding projects.

Appeal Process for CoC Project Evaluation Results or Preliminary Ranking

CoC NOFA Renewal Project recipients may submit appeals of final project evaluation results and/or CoC project ranking. Appeals must be submitted to MCHCoC Program Manager, Colleen Kosta at ckosta@helpnetworkneo.org by **Aug. 10, 2018**

Submitted appeals must clearly indicate, in detail, what is being appealed (*project evaluation results and/or ranking decisions*) and must clearly demonstrate and explain the reason for the appeal.

The Mahoning County CoC Evaluation Committee will review all timely accepted appeals and will communicate all decisions regarding those appeals by **Aug. 24, 2018**. All CoC Board decisions are final.

Renewal CoC Project Application Submission Process

Organizations needing to apply for CoC project funding in 2018 must follow the MCHCoC process. This document will be updated to reflect the process for renewal projects once HUD opens the 2018 CoC Competition.

New CoC Project Application Submission Process

The document will be updated once the 2018 CoC NOFA Competition opens. It is projected that Rapid Re-Housing with a focus on housing domestic violence victims will be a focus of this year's competition.

Final Submission of CoC NOFA Consolidated Application

After all renewal projects, project conversions and new CoC project applications have been received, reviewed and ranked, the MCHCoC Collaborative Applicant (The Board of Mahoning County Commissioner) will prepare the CoC Project Ranking List on behalf of the MCHCoC. Once the MCHCoC Executive Board has approved the listing, The Board of Mahoning County Commissioners will electronically submit the project applications and the Mahoning County CoC Consolidated Application via e-snaps to HUD.

It is anticipated that HUD will open the 2018 CoC Competition in the summer of 2018.

Any questions about the MCHCoC 2018 CoC Competition Process Plan or Timelines can be directed to Colleen Kosta, Program Manager, at ckosta@helpnetworkneo.org or (330)746-7721 x407.

Mahoning County Homeless CoC 2018 NOFA Competition Timeline

The following is the timeline for the 2018 CoC Competition as of May 2018, including dates and deadlines associated with the project evaluation process. Please note, these timelines will be updates once HUD opens the 2018 CoC Competition.

	HUD NOFA Registration Announcement
May 15, 2018	MCHCoC Registration updated and completed
May 8, 2018	MCHCoC Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW) finalized
May 23, 2018	NOFA Pre-Application sent to qualified applying applicants
June 20, 2018	NOFA Pre-Application due
Will be scheduled separately with each agency	NOFA Applicant Site Visits
Aug. 3, 2018	MCHCOC announcement of results of Project Evaluation & Preliminary ranking
TBD	HUD's 2018 CoC Competition Opens
TBD	MCHCOC Project Applications due in e-snaps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm all budget amounts and the total funding requests & narratives. • Obtain leverage/match commitment letters and MOUs (as appropriate). • Submit in e-snaps
TBD	Review of all eSnaps submitted applications
TBD	Corrections to Project Applications due in e-snaps
TBD	Final Project Listing and completed NOFA Application submitted to HUD via e-snaps.
TBD	Final completed application sent via Email to CoC and posted on CoC website

Appendix A:

Grantee Name	Project Name	Project Type	First Time Renewal ?
Beatitude House	Beatitude House Permanent Supportive Housing Program	PH	
Beatitude House	Beatitude House CH Permanent Supportive Housing	PH	
Catholic Charities Regional Agency	Homeless Management Information System	HMIS	
Help Hotline Crises Center	Coordinated Entry 2017-2018	SS	
Mahoning County Mental Health and Recovery Board	PSH Vouchers 2017-2018	PH	
Meridian Healthcare	Homestead House	PH	
Meridian Healthcare	Meridian Women's Center South	PH	
Meridian Healthcare	Phoenix Court	PH	
Meridian Healthcare	Samaritan Housing	PH	
Meridian Healthcare	SRO II	PH	
Ursuline Center	Merici Housing	PH	Yes
YWCA Mahoning Valley	YWCA Permanent Housing for Families with Disabilities	PH	
YWCA Mahoning Valley	YWCA Scattered-Site 2 Permanent Housing for Disabled Families	PH	

Appendix B:

APPENDIX : 2018 Project Evaluation Scorecard			
Mahoning County Homless CoC PSH Projects			Reporting Period 1/1/17 - 12/31/17
Project Evaluation Item	Goal	Points Possible	Data Source
Project Participant Impact (Maximum Points = 30)			
Housing Stability			
% participants who remained in project as of end of reporting period or exited to PH during the reporting period	≥ 90%	10	HMIS Project Eval Report
	≥85% - <90%	7.5	
	≥80% - <85%	5	
	<80 %	0	
Accessing Mainstream Resources and Income			
%participants with 1+ source of non-cash benefits or health insurance at exit	≥85%	10	HMIS Project Eval Report
	≥80% - <85%	7.5	
	≥75% - <80 %	5	
	<75%	0	
% adult participants who gained or increased their total income (from all sources) as of the end of the reporting period or at program exit.	≥30%	10	HMIS Project Eval Report
	≥27% - <30%	7.5	
	≥24%-<27%	5	
	<24%	0	
Meeting Community Need (Maximum Points = 30)			
Project Demand			
Average daily bed/unit utilization	≥90%	10	2017 Bed/ Unit Utilization Report
	≥85% - <90%	7.5	
	≥80%- <85%	5	
	<80 %	0	
Targeting Hard to Serve			
% entries from streets/ emergency shelter (adults only)	≥85%	10	HMIS Project Eval Report
	≥80%- <85%	7.5	
	≥75%-<80%	5	
	<75%	0	
% entries with no income	≥40%	10	HMIS Project Eval Report
	≥37% - <40 %	7.5	
	>34% - <37%	5	
	<34%	0	
Median Homeless History Index Score for head of household participants who entered during the reporting period (Homeless History Index is based on number of past homeless episodes and total duration of homelessness)			
	not scored	not scored	not evaluated this year
Implementing Best Practices (Maximum Points =25)			
Housing First Practices			
Removed Barriers to Entry (list not exhaustive) *Minimum income and/or employment not required at entry *Sobriety and/or drug testing not required for entry *Past interaction with homeless services is not a reason for denial of assistance *Only violent and very recent criminal histories may be reason for denial of assistance *People with greater needs are prioritized for assistance		Up to 5 points	Required program documents submitted by grantee
Voluntary Supportive Services (All the following practices must be documented and in place) *The only requirement is participation in basic case management for purposes of development and making progress on a housing plan *Participation in parenting classes, budgeting classes, AA, etc are all voluntary		Up to 5 points	Required program documents submitted by grantee
Housing Focused Assistance (all of the following practices must be documented and in place) *Primary goal of project is to move people into permanent housing, regardless of other personal issues or concerns *To the extent able, services and assistance are provided in an individualized manner based on client needs and desires		Up to 5 points	Required program documents submitted by grantee
If required program documents are not submitted for review for Housing First compliance,		minus 10 points	
10 points will be deducted from the overall project evaluation score.			

Implementing Best Practices (Maximum Points =25)			
Housing First Practices			
Removed Barriers to Entry (list not exhaustive) *Minimum income and/or employment not required at entry *Sobriety and/or drug testing not required for entry *Past interaction with homeless services is not a reason for denial of assistance *Only violent and very recent criminal histories may be reason for denial of assistance *People with greater needs are prioritized for assistance		Up to 5 points	Required program documents submitted by grantee
Voluntary Supportive Services (All the following practices must be documented and in place) *The only requirement is participation in basic case management for purposes of development and making progress on a housing plan *Participation in parenting classes, budgeting classes, AA, etc are all voluntary		Up to 5 points	Required program documents submitted by grantee
Housing Focused Assistance (all of the following practices must be documented and in place) *Primary goal of project is to move people into permanent housing, regardless of other personal issues or concerns *To the extent able, services and assistance are provided in an individualized manner based on client needs and desires		Up to 5 points	Required program documents submitted by grantee
If required program documents are not submitted for review for Housing First compliance, 10 points will be deducted from the overall project evaluation score.		minus 10 points	
Prioritizing Chronically Homeless			
Chronic dedicated projects will receive 5 points minimum; they will receive the full 10 points if their Policies and Procedures demonstrate full compliance with the PSH Order of Priority outlined in the Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures		10	Policies and Procedures submitted by grantee, and designation on most recent CoC Program application that beds are Chronic dedicated
Project Capacity (Maximum Points = 20)			
Cost Effectiveness			
Annual cost per exit to or retention of PH (rounded to the nearest dollar)			Annual CoC Funding Request (+25% match) and HMIS Project Evaluation Report
Cost per PH exit or retention ≤ \$8,000		5	
Cost per PH or retention = \$8,001 - \$12,000		2	
Cost per PH exit or retention > \$12,000		0	
If 24 month return to homelessness rate is greater than 5%, 0 points will be awarded			
If required program budget information is not submitted for review, 5 points will be deducted from the overall project evaluation score		minus 5 points	
Unspent Funds			
2016-2017 Total CoC Expenditures =	≤ 5% of unspent funds	5	HUD LOCCS
On track to spend 2017-2018 CoC Award	yes	5	HUD LOCCS
HMIS Data Quality			
% of HMIS client records with errors:			Data Quality Report
0% errors		5	
>0% and <2% errors		4	
>2% and <5% errors		3	
>5% and <8% errors		2	
>8% and <10% errors		1	
>10% errors		0	
Total Project Score (Maximum Points = 105)			

Appendix C:

As part of the annual CoC renewal project evaluation process, CoC projects will be evaluated on implementation of Housing First practices and/ or prioritizing or dedicating Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) beds for the chronically homeless. This appendix provides pertinent information related to what projects/ recipients need to understand, have in place and submit.

Housing First Practices

When evaluating for Housing First practices implementation, the CoC Evaluation Committee will review program documents for evidence of the following:

Low Barriers to Entry:

- Project admission is not contingent on pre-requisites such as abstinence of substances, minimum income, health/mental health history, medication adherence, criminal justice record (within reason), financial history, completion of treatment, participation in services, 'housing readiness', or other unnecessary conditions unless required by law.
- Past clients of homeless programs are not denied assistance based on past usage of services (unless required by law)
- Project admission process is not overly burdensome to clients by requiring, for example, completion of unnecessary paperwork, or sharing of applicant documents/information that are neither required by HUD nor directly relevant to project eligibility or prioritization efforts
- Project has policies that outline some method for prioritizing for assistance those persons with greater levels of need and/ or greater barriers

Provision of Services that are Individualized and Voluntary:

- Participation in supportive services (other than regular care management for purposes of ongoing needs assessment and housing plan development/progress) is voluntary, and access to housing is not contingent on compliance with services or a treatment plan
- Service planning is individualized and driven by client needs and desires

Housing Focused

- Project intake processes and general policies and procedures are focused on moving applicants/clients into housing as quickly as possible
- The overall focus of the project is on helping clients obtain and move into housing quickly, and providing supports and services to help them retain housing
- All services offered. Provided are first and foremost centered around helping clients obtain and retain housing
- Leases and occupancy agreements do not include provisions that would not be found in a standard rental agreement

Reasonable Termination of Assistance Policies

- Project avoids involuntary termination of assistance to clients whenever possible. This includes having policies in place that require the project to make multiple attempts to try to engage clients and/or provide ongoing assistance

Submitting Evidence of Housing First Practices

All renewing CoC projects must submit ***all of the following items*** to be evaluated on the Housing First item:

1. Formal written project policies and procedures documents
2. Blank project intake and/or assessment forms
3. Client responsibility documents, rules, participant handbook, etc.
4. Blank individualized service planning documents
5. Blank rental/occupancy/lease agreements (or sub-occupancy/sub-lease agreements)

Failure to submit ANY of the documents references above may result in 10 points being deducted from the project evaluation score. If your project does not have one of the above-mentioned items as part of its formal project documents, you should indicated which items are lacking and why.

Prioritizing PSH Beds for Chronically Homeless

Prioritizing Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) beds for chronically homeless person means that the PSH project is actively assessing for an documenting chronic homeless status and that the project places those chronically homeless person into their PSH beds as a priority before other eligible but non-chronically homeless persons.

PSH Projects that are prioritizing chronically homeless persons within their project have the following policies/processes in place:

- Assess for chronic homeless status during intake
 - Collect information on length of time on the streets, in emergency shelter, hotel/motel paid for by an agency or faith-based vouchers, or safe haven
 - Collect information about disability status
- Documents chronic homeless status
 - Collect third-party written verification of previous homeless episodes that contribute to the length of time homeless determination
 - Or, if self-certification or other types of documentation are used, provide evidence of due diligence to collect third part written verification or previous homeless episodes
 - Collect documentation of disability status that confirms the disability is of long-continuing or indefinite duration
- Have policies and procedures in place that outline how chronically homeless persons are prioritized and placed into PSH beds

Submitting Evidence of Chronically Homeless Prioritizations

All PSH projects that are required to submit evidence of chronically homeless prioritizations must submit ***all of the following items*** to be evaluated on the chronically homeless prioritization item:

1. Formal written project policies and procedures documents
2. Blank Project intake and/or assessment forms
3. Blank Homeless verification forms
4. Blank Disability verification forms

Failure to submit ANY of the documents referenced above may result in 5 points being deducted from the project evaluation score.