



# FY 2025 CoC Program CoC Application Process

## CONTRA COSTA COC APPLICATION PROCESS

### Document Purpose

This document is a tool to support the fair, transparent, and objective administration of the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Competition process. The following sections outline the Council on Homelessness's policies as related to designing, operating and following a collaborative local process for the development of HUD Continuum of Care Program applications and approval of submission of applications as required by C.F.R. 578.9.

**2026 Late Application Policy:** Late applications will be considered under extenuating circumstances (i.e., failure to accept the application would result in a significant loss of housing resources or system capacity for the CoC) and will be reviewed and determined on a case-by-case basis by the Review and Rank Panel..

To maintain fairness in the competition process, the following scoring reductions will apply to approved late applications:

- Applications submitted up to 24 hours after the established deadline will receive a 5-point deduction from the final application score.
- Applications submitted more than 24 hours, but no more than 48 hours, after the established deadline will receive a 7-point deduction from the final application score.
- Applications submitted more than 48 hours after the established deadline will not be accepted or reviewed.

Incomplete applications cannot be cured for the CoC Review and Rank Panel scoring process but must be corrected prior to HUD submission.

### Section 1. APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The Council on Homelessness (Council) prepares and oversees the applications for funds administered by HUD under the HEARTH Act. The Council on Homelessness is designed to assist individuals—including unaccompanied youth—and families experiencing homelessness and to provide the services needed to help individuals move into transitional and permanent housing, with the goal of long-term stability. The Council's HUD CoC Program funds are granted annually based on a national competition following the release of a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFO). It is a primary responsibility of the Council to oversee the application for those funds.

### Section 2. COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT



## FY2025 COC PROGRAM- COC APPLICATION PROCESS

The Council designates Contra Costa Health – Health, Housing, and Homeless Services as the annual HUD CoC Program Collaborative Applicant. The Collaborative Applicant (or its designee) is responsible for leading and supporting all aspects of the annual HUD CoC Program application process, including submission of the Consolidated Application consisting of 1) the CoC Application; 2) the CoC’s Priority List of Projects; and 3) all Project Applications.

The Collaborative Applicant may identify and designate a neutral third party to facilitate the CoC Program Competition, including facilitating the development of scoring tools, implementation of technical assistance, support drafting the CoC application, and administration of the project application review and ranking process.

### **Section 3. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS AND APPLICATION SUBMISSION TIMELINE**

Immediately after HUD’s Continuum of Care Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFO) is released, the Collaborative Applicant (or its designee) will coordinate and carry out all of activities needed to successfully submit an application on behalf of the CoC. The following is an overview of the local competition process and tasks for CoC Program application submission. The process and timeline are subject to change annually, depending on HUD’s requirements as outlined in the NOFO.

- Funding Committee meets to discuss and approve scoring criteria and competition policies for project applications
- Selection of non-conflicted Review & Rank Panelists
- Project Applications are submitted through a designated portal
- Review & Rank Panel convenes to evaluate and score project applications
- Review & Rank Panel ranks projects on a Priority List and recommends projects for inclusion in the CoC Application for funding from HUD
- Priority Listing is publicized
- Council approves the Priority Listing
- Collaborative Applicant drafts CoC Application, if applicable
- Final Priority Listing, CoC Application, and Project Applications are made available for public comment
- Collaborative Applicant submits final Consolidated Application to HUD

### **Section 4. SCORING TOOLS**

Prior to the NOFO release, the Funding Committee will convene to design and/or revise scoring tools and any corresponding local application materials to assist in the CoC review and ranking of all renewal and new project applications. The Funding Committee reviews data and analytics from the local HMIS and Coordinated Entry System, year-over-year CoC project and funding information, funding and project opportunities and strategies available in the current HUD NOFO release, and local demographic trends. That data and information is then used to develop and update scoring tools and competition policies for



## FY2025 COC PROGRAM- COC APPLICATION PROCESS

the purpose of effectively evaluating the current local need for subpopulation focuses and project and bed type, as well as project performance and impact.

The scoring tools and competition policies will take into consideration both local and HUD priorities, including projects serving populations with severe needs and vulnerabilities, such as persons experiencing chronic homelessness, mental illness, substance use disorders, and survivors of domestic violence.

The scoring tools and competition policies may also establish threshold criteria reflective of local and HUD priorities, which all project applications are expected to meet. This criteria may include factors such as coordinated entry and HMIS participation.

The scoring tools and competition policies will be finalized and approved by the Funding Committee, a subcommittee of the Council.

### **Section 5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Upon HUD release of the NOFO, a third-party facilitator will schedule and announce a time and date for a Technical Assistance Workshop, if time permits. These details will be distributed to the entire CoC.

All potential applicants must participate in the HUD CoC Program Technical Assistance Workshop and/or receive technical assistance from the third-party facilitator or the Collaborative Applicant. At the workshop, the third-party facilitator will present an overview of the HUD CoC NOFO, including details about available funding and any major changes in the application from previous years. Applicants will also be oriented to the process for reviewing and ranking applications, which will cover any supplemental local application materials, the scoring tool, and relevant dates and deadlines. Applicants will also have an opportunity to ask any questions about both the local and HUD application processes.

Throughout the CoC Program Competition technical assistance will be available to all project applicants. Technical assistance for new and returning project applicants is designed to:

- explain the application process, including use of the application submissions portal,
- explain the current year's funding opportunities, and
- provide training and support for prospective applicants to ensure eligible and competitive applications.

### **Section 6. PROJECT APPLICATIONS & SUBMISSION**

Project applications are submitted online through a designated application portal.

The project applications mirror the new and renewal project scoring tools and solicit information necessary for the Review & Rank Panel to consistently score applicant responses using the objective criteria outlined in the tools. The application may include requests for quantitative and qualitative data. Typically, the applications require information related to: consistency with HUD and local priorities, agency capacity and readiness, project scope and design, and efficient use of funds.



## FY2025 COC PROGRAM- COC APPLICATION PROCESS

Incomplete applications cannot be cured for the CoC Review and Rank Panel scoring process but must be corrected prior to HUD submission.

Note that the CoC will accept and consider proposals that meet requirements from organizations that have not previously received CoC funding (including faith-based).

### **Section 7. LOCAL REVIEW & RANK PROCESS**

The next stage in the competition requires an evaluation of project applications. The Review and Rank Panel is responsible for conducting this evaluation and ranking process.

#### **A. PANEL MEMBERSHIP**

The Council designates between three and five of its members to serve as CoC Review and Rank Panelists. CoC Review and Rank Panelists must be:

- Knowledgeable about homelessness and housing in the community and broadly representative of the relevant sectors, subpopulations, and geographic areas;
- “Non-conflicted,” meaning that they are not employees, staff, or otherwise have a business or personal conflict of interest with the applicant organizations;
- Familiar with housing and homeless needs within Contra Costa County; and
- Willing to review projects with the best interest of homeless persons in mind.

To serve on the CoC Review and Rank Panel, members must:

- Sign a statement declaring that they have no conflict of interest and a confidentiality agreement; and
- Be able to dedicate time for application review and CoC Review and Rank Panel meetings as scheduled by the Collaborative Applicant.

Qualified, non-conflicted CoC Review and Rank Panel members are recruited and oriented to the local review and ranking process.

#### **B. REVIEW & RANK METHODOLOGY**

The CoC Review and Rank Panel members receive all local application and scoring materials and evaluate and score each program’s application.

Panel members are encouraged to individually review and pre-score applications using the scoring tools prior to the Review and Rank Panel meeting collectively. The CoC Review and Rank Panel meets to collectively evaluate each application and interview applicants.



## FY2025 COC PROGRAM- COC APPLICATION PROCESS

The ranked list is created by the following procedures:

- Project applications are evaluated based on the scoring tool. Those applications that do not meet certain threshold requirements (as detailed on the scoring tool) will not be included on the ranked list.
- The Review and Rank Panel evaluates the quantitative and qualitative data consistent with the objective criteria in the scoring tool and assigns a score.
- Projects are ranked in the Priority Listing in order of their assigned score.
- Renewal HMIS and Coordinated Entry projects are automatically ranked at the bottom of Tier 1. Renewal projects with less than 12 months of data are automatically ranked at the bottom of Tier 1.
- Based on community priorities as defined in the scoring tools, the CoC Review and Rank Panel may determine whether any renewal project should be decreased or reallocated. Any funding captured from an existing project will be prioritized for permanent housing projects that meet the requirements in the NOFO application, to the fullest extent allowed in the NOFO.
- **If HUD releases a CoC NOFO that includes a cap on permanent housing (PH) funding:**
  - The CoC Lead Agency will meet with each renewal PSH provider to develop a PH cap shortlist (prioritized for Tier 1) aligned with the CoC's overall strategy of prioritizing permanent supportive housing projects.
  - Prioritization of renewal PH projects applying for a transition grant to convert to a Transitional Housing project over new projects.
  - Reallocated funding will be prioritized for PH to the fullest extent allowed in the NOFO
- **If HUD releases a CoC NOFO that only allows for a competition period of 75 days or less:**
  - The Funding Committee can approve revisions to scoring tools and competition policies.
    - Note that if the competition period is more than 75 days, but the Council is unable to achieve quorum in sufficient time to approve the scoring tools and competition policies, the Funding Committee may approve those documents to ensure timely completion of the competition process.
  - Priority Listing will be approved by the CoH – an emergency CoH meeting may be convened as needed to complete the competition process within HUD-required timelines.

Scoring results are sent to applicants with information about the appeals process, if applicable in a given competition year. Appeals will be considered in compliance with the Appeals Process detailed in Section 9 below.



## FY2025 COC PROGRAM- COC APPLICATION PROCESS

A final ranked project list (i.e., the Priority List) is submitted to the Council for review and approval. Upon approval, the Priority List is published.

The Collaborative Applicant collects all final Project Applications and submits them to HUD, along with the CoC Application and Priority List, as part of the CoC's Consolidated Application.

### **Section 7. REALLOCATION OF FUNDS**

HUD allows CoCs to reallocate funds from non- and/or under-performing projects to higher priority community needs that also align with HUD priorities and goals. The CoC Review and Rank Panel facilitates the reallocation discussion and process, in consultation with the CoC, the Council, the Collaborative Applicant, and the CoC Program recipients and subrecipients who may be impacted. The third-party facilitator may be asked to support community discussions and provide technical assistance around the strategic benefits or consequences of reallocation decisions. The Council or the designated Council representative must approve all final decisions about reallocation.

If HUD releases a CoC NOFO that includes a cap on permanent housing funding, any reallocated funding will be prioritized for permanent housing projects to the fullest extent allowed in the NOFO.

### **Section 8. USING ALL AVAILABLE FUNDS**

The Collaborative Applicant and third-party facilitator will do everything possible to ensure that the community applies for all funds available to the CoC. Thus, if all on-time applications have been submitted and it appears that either: 1) the community is not requesting as much money as is available from HUD, 2) no bonus (or other special project as defined by HUD) projects have been submitted, or 3) there are reallocated funds available, then:

- The Collaborative Applicant and third-party facilitator will communicate with the Council, CoC, and other interested parties (all homeless service and housing providers in Contra Costa County) with details about the available funding.
- The Collaborative Applicant and third-party facilitator will provide technical assistance and guidance, as needed, to ensure applicants understand the funding requirements.
- Any additional applications for these funds will be due as soon as possible after this communication is distributed, in compliance with CoC Program submission deadlines.

### **Section 9. APPEALS PROCESS**

If HUD releases a CoC NOFO that includes a cap on permanent housing funding, renewal projects cannot appeal the following decisions:

- 1) Reallocation amounts for projects included in the PH cap shortlist, and
- 2) Renewal projects excluded from the PH cap shortlist.



## FY2025 COC PROGRAM- COC APPLICATION PROCESS

Renewal projects who apply for a transition grant and new projects are eligible to appeal given they meet specific criteria.

This policy will be reviewed and reconsidered in future years.

### **Section 10. FINAL PRIORITIZED LIST OF APPLICATIONS**

The Council must approve the final ranked list of all Project Applicant proposals. If the full Council approves the final ranked list, any Council members with a conflict of interest must recuse himself/herself from all related discussions and abstain from the vote approving the priority list. The Collaborative Applicant will then submit this prioritized list to HUD by the CoC Program Competition deadline as part of the Consolidated Application. Conditional award funding is typically based upon the prioritized list of Project Applicants that are submitted; however, HUD determines actual awards and funding amounts.