2018 HUD CoC NOFA Ranking Policy

Lynn Continuum of Care

DRAFT

It is the policy of the Lynn Continuum of Care (LCoC), to select annually a Ranking and Review Committee whose purpose is to review the Ranking Policy annually, make recommendations regarding revisions to the LCoC, and perform the Ranking and Review of project applications in the annual Notice of Funding Availability process used to fund CoC projects.

It is also the policy of the LCoC to use the application ranking process to achieve success in pursuit of the following LCoC and HUD priorities:

1.   End homelessness for all persons in the LCoC geography.
     a.   Using local data, the LCoC will focus on subpopulations identified including, but not limited to, individuals and families who are chronically homeless, unaccompanied youth and young adults under 25, Veterans, individuals and families of diverse races, ethnicities and cultural identities, and those who are survivors of domestic violence or currently fleeing.

     b.   The LCoC will support outreach strategies designed to identify and engage unsheltered individuals and families.

     c.   The LCoC Ranking Committee will use local system performance measures data in evaluating new and renewal projects to identify those with the strongest performance and demonstrated ability to prevent homelessness, shorten the length of time program participants are homeless and demonstrate an ability to tailor services and housing to participant need.

2.   Create a systemic response to homelessness by:

     a. Coordinating system planning efforts throughout the LCoC;

     b. Encourage and support participation from persons with lived homeless experiences;

     c. Ensure equal and fair access to all CoC Program-funded projects;

     d. Promote participant choice, privacy and dignity;

     e. Implement and operate an effective Coordinated Entry process;

     f. Measure system performance; and

     g. Continue to support and encourage the delivery of homeless assistance within the CoC in an open, inclusive and transparent manner.

3.   Strategically allocate resources within the LCoC region.

> a. The LCoC will undertake comprehensive and regular reviews of CoC project quality, performance and cost effectiveness.

> b. The LCoC membership will support and encourage the achievement of self-sufficiency for households experiencing homelessness by maximizing the use of mainstream and other community-based resources (housing, employment/income, non-cash benefits), and resource- and referral-sharing among LCoC members.

4.   Implement Low Barrier Practices (CoC Program participants will not be screened out based on the following):

> a. Having too little or no income;

> b. Active or history of substance use;

> c. Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions;

> d. History of victimization (e.g. domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and/or stalking); or

> e. Having a history of eviction from rental housing.

5.   Implement a Housing First Approach (CoC Program participants will not be terminated for the following reasons):

> a. Failure to participate in supportive services;

> b. Failure to make progress on a service plan;

> c. Loss of income or failure to improve income; or

> d. Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found for unassisted persons in the project's geographic area.

6.   Quickly house and rehouse persons experiencing homelessness.

7.   Develop and maintain relationships with property owners/managers and landlords.

8.   Prioritize CoC Program funds to serve populations based upon severity of needs and vulnerability. This includes, but is not limited to:

> a. Individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness;

> b. Persons with one or more disabling conditions of long duration;

> c. Persons fleeing and/or with a history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and/or stalking;

> d. Households with children under 18 years of age;

> e. Unaccompanied youth and young adults under 25;

f. Households with low or no income;

g. Current or past substance use; or

h. Criminal histories.

Threshold Requirements

In order to be included, all projects, both renewal and new, must meet the threshold requirements in the FY18 CoC NOFA for project applicant eligibility, project component eligibility, project quality threshold and project renewal threshold.

In addition, applications must be submitted in esnaps no later than August 16, 2018. Applications must be consistent with the Plan to End Homelessness and the Consolidated Plan. The agency can have no outstanding HUD monitoring or OIG Audit findings that are overdue. The Project must comply with the requirements of the CoC Interim rule (24 CFR part 578), including requirements to participate in the Coordinated Entry (CE) System and the LCoC HMIS (ETO).

The project ranking tools for new and renewal projects will be developed in consultation with the LCoC membership. The Ranking Committee will develop the final tool which will be presented to the full LCoC membership for approval. It will be made available through email distribution and on the Collaborative Applicant's (CA), (LHAND) website as well as on partner websites.

Ranking Tools

The following elements will be present in new and renewal project ranking tools:

Severity of needs and vulnerabilities of populations served

Project performance results

Housing type and cost effectiveness

Target population and HMIS Data Quality

Implementation of Housing First and Low Barrier Entry

All renewal applicants will also be required to submit the following.

1) The most recent APR for the renewal being requested.
2) A System Performance Measures report covering October 01, 2016 to September 30, 2017.
3) A current eLOCCS report showing drawdowns for the last 12 months.
4) A Housing First narrative which provide a description of the use of low barrier entry and the Housing First model of housing. The description should include:
   - What is the screening process?
   - Please provide an example of someone who:
     - Exited to permanent housing
     - Was evicted, why that occurred and what efforts were made to avoid eviction
     - Went to another form of housing and what those circumstances were. documentation as appropriate.
   - If vacancies were not filled by Coordinated Entry, explain why.

- How many vacancies were there in the last year and how many were filled through Coordinated Entry?

The sources of information to complete the ranking tool may include, but are not limited to, HUD Priorities, this Ranking Policy, HMIS, Annual Performance Reports, match documentation, bed/unit utilization, HMIS Data Quality Reports, Project System Performance Measure reports, Annual CoC PIT counts and other need-based reports, CoC project applications, Request for Proposals, and calls with project applicants during Ranking Committee meetings.

The LCoC has defined the following ranking priorities for funding under the FY18 HUD CoC NOFA.

Upon review of LCoC continued need, applicant performance, and compliance with LCoC monitoring policies and procedures, a renewal project application for Coordinated Entry (CE) will also be reviewed for threshold criteria as defined in the FY18 HUD NOFA. If there are no issues, it will be placed as the last fully funded project in Tier 1. New CE applications will be placed after the last renewal project in Tier 2.

Upon review of LCoC continued need, applicant performance, and compliance with LCoC monitoring policies and procedures, a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) renewal project application will also be reviewed for threshold criteria as defined in the FY18 HUD NOFA. If there are no issues it will be placed as the second to last fully funded project in Tier 1. New HMIS project applications will be ranked in Tier 2 after renewal projects and new Coordinated Entry projects.

The FY2018 HUD NOFA is still using a 2-Tier approach, with 94% of the LCoC ARD going into Tier 1, and the remaining 6% into Tier 2.

Projects will be ranked according to the score received on the Ranking Tool developed in conjunction with this policy. The last funded project in Tier 1may 'straddle' Tiers 1and 2 if the amount of Tier 1 exceeds 94% of the LCoC ARD, with the portion in excess of 94% going into Tier 2.

The ranking tool will determine the position of the project in Tiers 1 and 2, and in the Priority Listing which accompanies the Consolidated application.

The last funded project in Tier 1may 'straddle' Tiers 1and 2 if the amount of Tier 1 exceeds 94% of the LCoC ARD, with the portion in excess of 94% going into Tier 2.

Project Determinations and Appeals Process:

Applications which do not meet the minimum threshold requirements identified by HUD in the FY18 NOFA will not be ranked or included in the CoC Consolidated Application submitted to HUD.

If the CoC receives more Request for Proposal responses than can be supported with available CoC funding, the CoC Ranking Committee will rank the grants in order of scoring using the Ranking Tool as approved by the LCoC.

New projects that have not yet begun or completed their grant term will be held harmless and ranked in Tier 1, unless determined otherwise by the CoC Ranking Committee due to special circumstances (i.e. non-compliance of HUD regulations and/or CoC policies, violation of state/federal laws, withdrawal, etc.), or, due to their ranking with other projects, fall below the 94% cutoff.

The Collaborative Applicant (CA) will send formal notification of a preliminary determination made by the LCoC Ranking Committee to each project applicant along with: individual project ranking summary, individual project ranking number, and any potential budget reduction or increase.

The CA will provide all appeals to the LCoC Project Ranking Committee to make a final determination that will be sent to the LCoC for a review, vote (minus any and all voting members with a bias or conflict of interest) and posting to the CA and partner websites.