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2021 San Mateo County Continuum of Care Competition
AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING FOR NEW PROJECTS

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I.   General Information

On August 18, 2021, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the *Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY 2021 Continuum of Care Competition.*

The NOFO can be accessed at https://www.grants.gov. It establishes this year's funding criteria for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Assistance Programs (sometimes also referred to as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs).

All CoCs and project applicants are required to apply for the 2021 CoC competition electronically through HUD's e-snaps system at https://esnaps.hud.gov/. The deadline for San Mateo County to submit our CoC application to HUD is November 16, 2021.

II.   Available Funding

As in past funding rounds, communities can create new projects through bonus funding and re-allocated funding:

- San Mateo County is eligible to request up to $684,255 for bonus permanent housing projects, which may include: (1) permanent supportive housing (PSH) serving people experiencing chronic homelessness; (2) rapid re-housing (RRH) projects serving homeless single adults or families with children and (3) joint transitional housing/rapid re-housing (TH/RRH) projects serving homeless single adults or families with children.

- San Mateo County may also create new projects through the re-allocation of funds from lower performing existing grants. The availability of re-allocated funds will depend on the performance of currently funded projects and whether there are underperforming projects identified by the CoC Review Panel for reallocation. Re-allocated funds may be used for the same types of projects as the permanent housing bonus (described above) and may also be used by the CoC Lead Agency, San Mateo County Human Services Agency (HSA), for dedicated HMIS projects or Coordinated Entry projects.

- San Mateo County may receive up to $491,550 for one or more bonus projects serving victims of domestic violence (DV), dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Eligible project types under the DV bonus are: (1) Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) projects; (2) joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH/RRH) projects; or (3) Supportive Services Only (SSO) for Coordinated Entry to improve the ability of the CES to meet the needs of DV households.

- Applicants may combine bonus and re-allocation funding in a single project.

All essential information relating to the local CoC competition will be available on the Center on Homelessness website at: https://hsa.smcgov.org/continuum-care-NOFOnofo

III. Eligible Project Types and Requirements

A. Project Requirements

The table below summarizes requirements for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), and Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH/RRH) projects created using bonus funds or reallocated funds. The information presented below is only a general summary and applicants are strongly encouraged to review the 2021 CoC NOFO, New Project Application Detailed Instructions, and the Interim CoC Rule (24 CFR 578) for further information. All are available at: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/

Category	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH/RRH)
Eligible Applicants	Non-profits, government entities, public housing authorities		
Eligible Participants	• For regular PSH: persons experiencing chronic homelessness • For DedicatedPlus Projects: persons experiencing chronic homelessness plus some additional categories of participants (see below)	• Persons who qualify as homeless under paragraphs (1), (2) and (4) of the HUD Homeless Definition, 24 CFR 578.3 • Additional information on youth eligibility is provided below.	
Participant Selection	All projects must participate in coordinated entry, and selection of program participants must be consistent with the CoC's Coordinated Entry process.		
Eligible Activities/ Expenses (24 CFR 578.37-578.63)	• Acquisition • Rehabilitation, • New construction • Leasing • Rental Assistance (TRA, SRA, PRA) • Operating Costs • Support Services • Project Administration	• Short Term Rental Assistance (up to 3 months) • Medium Term Rental Assistance (3 to 24 months) • Support Services • Project Administration	• Leasing • Short- or Medium-Term Rental Assistance • Supportive Services • HMIS • Project Administration
Support Services	Grant funds may be used for any supportive service listed as eligible under 578.53		
Grant Term	Applicants are strongly encouraged to request 1-year grants so as to maximize available funding. Some project types may request initial terms of 2-5 or 15 years (see NOFO). HUD will allow new projects to request a 1 year of funding with a longer initial grant term not to exceed 18 months. HUD has determined that most new projects requesting 1 year of funding normally take approximately 3 to 6 months to begin fully operating the new project (e.g., hiring staff, developing partnerships with landowners if leasing or renting).		

Category	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH/RRH)
	Therefore, a new project requesting 1 year of funding may request a grant term of 12 months to 18 months that will allow for the additional start-up process. Additional details can be found in NOFO and applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the document for additional details.		
Timeliness	Must begin operations in a timely manner. HUD strongly encourages all rental assistance to begin within 12 months of award.		
Match	25% of total grant request. Leasing funds do not have to be matched. Match can be cash or in-kind and must be spent on eligible project costs.		
Youth	Any youth-serving provider funded under this NOFO may serve unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under (or families headed by youth aged 24 and under) who have an unsafe primary nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. Applicants should review the NOFO for additional information on definitions of youth-serving provider.		

Dedicated Plus PSH Projects: PSH Projects that elect to apply as Dedicated Plus Projects are not restricted to serving only chronically homeless people and may serve an expanded set of participants:
1. Experiencing chronic homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;
2. Residing in a transitional housing project that will be eliminated and meets the definition of chronically homeless in effect at the time in which the individual or family entered the transitional housing project;
3. Residing in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, or safe haven; but the individuals or families experiencing chronic homelessness as   defined at 24 CFR 578.3 had been admitted and enrolled in a permanent housing project within the last year and were unable to maintain a housing placement;
4. Residing in transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project and who were experiencing chronic homelessness as defined at 24 CFR 578.3 prior to entering the project;
5. Residing and has resided in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or emergency shelter for at least 12 months in the last three years, but has not done so on four separate occasions and the individual or head of household meet the definition of 'homeless individual with a disability; or
6. Receiving assistance through a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA's homeless assistance system.

B.   Domestic Violence Bonus Projects

This year's NOFO includes a set aside of $102 million for bonus projects serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. San Mateo County can receive up to $491,550 for one or more DV bonus projects. DV bonus funds can be used for Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH/RRH), or Support Services Only (SSO) for Coordinated Entry to implement policies to ensure CES meets the needs of domestic violence survivors.

DV bonus projects must meet all the requirements of the applicable project component (RRH, Joint TH/RRH) – see chart above. DV bonus projects are restricted to serve only those households in the target population.

Additional requirements:
- CoC's may submit multiple projects in the RRH and Joint TH/RRH categories, but only one SSO project for Coordinate Entry.
- The minimum DV bonus grant will be $50,000.
- All DV bonus projects must be ranked on the Project Priority List.
- HUD will select DV projects for funding based on the overall CoC score, need for the project, and quality of the project applicant.
- DV bonus projects selected for funding will be funded from the DV bonus pot and removed from the Priority List. All remaining projects will move up in Rank.
- DV bonus projects not selected for funding by HUD will retain the ranking provided by the CoC and be considered as a normal ranked project.

C. Expansion Projects

Applicants that already have an existing CoC funded PSH or RRH project may apply to use either bonus or re-allocation funding to create new projects that are expansions of existing projects. This provides an opportunity for the CoC to expand capacity for projects that are high performers and for which additional capacity is needed. The expansion project must be of the same project-type as the existing project – PSH projects can add more PSH units and RRH projects may add more RRH slots. Existing TH projects may not add RRH slots to become a joint TH/RRH project. Joint TH/RRH projects must be created as entirely new projects.

Project applicants may expand an existing renewal project that is not currently dedicated to serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking that meet the definition of homeless in 24 CFR 578.3 to dedicate additional beds, units, persons served, or services provided to existing program participants to this population.

D. Transition Grants

Applicants that want to transition one of their existing projects to a new project component (e.g., TH becomes RRH or RRH becomes PSH) can do so by voluntarily re-allocating their existing grant and creating a new project. Unlike regular re-allocation, with Transition Grants there will be no "lag time" between the end of the old project and the beginning of the new project. Some other restrictions apply (see NOFO).

E. Threshold and Project Quality Requirements

The 2021 HUD NOFO requires that all projects (new and renewal) must meet Threshold Requirements as listed in Section V.C.3 (page 44-50). Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Section V.C.3. of the NOFO to ensure that threshold requirements are met.

In addition, all new PSH, RRH and Joint TH/RRH projects will be scored by HUD for Project Quality using the criteria listed below.

<u>PSH and RRH</u> projects must receive a minimum of 3 out of 4 points. Projects that do not receive at least 3 points and the point under the third criteria will be rejected.

1. Whether the type of housing, number, and configuration of units will fit the needs of the program participants (e.g., two or more bedrooms for families) (1 point);

2. Whether the type of supportive services that will be offered to program participants will ensure successful retention or help to obtain permanent housing—this includes all supportive services, regardless of funding source (1 point);

3. Whether the proposed project has a specific plan for ensuring that program participants will be individually assisted to obtain benefits from the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible to apply (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, SSI, Food Stamps, local Workforce office, early childhood education) (1 point); and

4. Whether program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs (e.g., provides the participant with some type of transportation to access needed services, safety planning, case management, additional assistance to ensure retention of permanent housing) (1 point).

<u>Joint TH/RRH</u> projects must receive a minimum of 4 out of 6 points. Projects that do not receive at least 4 out of 6 points and the point under the fourth criteria will be rejected.

1. Whether the type of housing, number, and configuration of units will fit the needs of the program participants (1 point);

2. Whether the proposed project will provide enough RRH assistance to ensure that at any given time a program participant may move from transitional housing to permanent housing (1 point);

3. Whether the type of supportive services that will be offered to program participants will ensure successful retention or help to obtain permanent housing—this includes all supportive services, regardless of funding source (1 point);

4. Whether program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs (e.g., provides the participant with some type of transportation to access needed services, safety planning, case management, additional assistance to ensure retention of permanent housing) (1 point).

5. Whether program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs (e.g., provides the participant with some type of transportation to access needed services, safety planning, case management, additional assistance to ensure retention of permanent housing) (1 point); and

6. Whether the project adheres to a housing first model as defined in the NOFO (Section III. B.2.o). (1 point).

IV. Application Process for New Project Applicants

A.   Application Format for New Projects

Interested applicants must complete the <u>New Project Application in HUD's e-snaps website and the CoC's New Project Application Narrative</u>. The CoC's review panel will use the information provided in the e-snaps Project Application and New Project Application Narrative to determine whether a new project will

be included in this year's application, and where it will be ranked. The New Project Application Narrative is a Word document containing responses from the e-snaps Project Application as well as written responses to additional questions for submission to the CoC Review Panel. HSA will provide a template for the New Project Application Narrative (the template will be posted online at HSA's NOFO website at https://hsa.smcgov.org/2019-continuum-care-NOFO-notice-funding-availability

Applicants should email the following documents to HSA_Homeless_Programs@smcgov.org no later than October 6, 2021 by 5:00 pm . Note: do **NOT** click the "submit" button in-snaps.

1. PDF of Project Application from e-snaps (see Section V, below for more information)
2. New Project Application Narrative in Word using the template provided by HSA

B. Application Timeline for New Projects

Following is the application timeline for 2021. Note that dates are subject to change. Any changes to the timeline will be emailed to renewal applicants and posted on the HSA website for the 2021 CoC NOFO at https://hsa.smcgov.org/continuum-care-NOFOnofo

Date	Activity
August 18, 2021	2021 CoC NOFO released
September 10, 2021	CoC Steering Committee meeting to approve review, ranking and tiering criteria/strategy (the Project Review and Ranking Process)
September 15, 2021 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.	Informational Meeting for Applicants (new and renewal). For Zoom link, please go to: https://hsa.smcgov.org/continuum-care-NOFOnofo
October 6, 2021, by 5:00 pm	**Project Applications due to HSA by email to HSA_Homeless_Programs@smcgov.org no later than October 6, 2021 by 5:00 pm. Applicants must submit the following documents by email.** **A PDF of the completed project applications from e-snaps** **The completed New Project Application Narrative in Word**
Week of October 18, 2021	Review panel meeting; rating and ranking of applications
By October 22, 2021	Applicants notified whether their application is included on the Project Priority List
By October 22, 2021	Applicants receive technical corrections to e-snaps submission
October 27, 2021, by 5:00 pm	**Appeals due to HSA via email to: HSA_Homeless_Programs@smcgov.org**
October 29, 2021	**Corrected applications due in e-snaps**
November 2, 2021	Applicants receive response to appeals
November 8, 2021	CoC Steering Committee Meeting to approve final project ranking
November 8, 2021	Final corrections due in e-snaps
November 12, 2021	HSA staff submit final application to HUD
November 16, 2021	Application due date

C. Rating and Ranking Process and Criteria

On September 10, 2021, the CoC Steering Committee will approve a written project review and ranking criteria and process, including an adopted strategy relating to putting projects into Tier 2 (the Project Review and Ranking Process). The objective of the tiering strategy will be to position the CoC to retain as much funding as possible, while taking a broad, system-wide approach to identifying which elements of the system to put at-risk. Projects will be rated on the following key rating factors:
1. Alignment with HUD System Performance Objectives
2. Targeting and Outreach
3. Appropriateness of Housing
4. Housing First Model
5. Service Plan
6. Timing
7. Applicant Capacity
8. Financial Feasibility and Effectiveness
9. Project Type Prioritization

The specific scoring system and detailed rating factors may be found in the *San Mateo County CoC 2021 CoC Competition Project Review and Ranking Process.* This document will be posted on the HSA website for the 2021 CoC NOFO at: https://hsa.smcgov.org/continuum-care-NOFOnofo and emailed widely to CoC members and other community stakeholders.

D.   Bonus Points for Projects Leveraging Housing and Healthcare Resources

In the FY 2021 NOFO, HUD will provide additional points in the overall CoC application for communities that include one or more permanent housing projects (PSH or RRH) on the Project Priority List demonstrating coordination with housing providers and health care organizations. To align with this HUD priority, bonus points will be awarded to new PSH or RRH projects with the following features:

- Project utilizes housing subsidies or subsidized housing units not funded through the CoC or ESG program, such as through private organizations, State or local government (including HOME funds from the American Rescue Plan), Public Housing Agencies, faith-based organizations or federal programs other than CoC or ESG.

    o For PSH projects, at least 25% of units must be funded by a non-CoC source

    o For RRH projects, at least 25% of participants must receive housing through a non-CoC source

- Project utilizes healthcare resources (including behavioral health) to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Sources of healthcare resources may include: direct contributions from a public or private health insurance provider to the project; or provision of healthcare services by a private or public organization tailored to the participants of the project.   Eligibility for the project may not be restricted by the eligibility requirements of the health care service provider.

    o Amount equivalent to 25% of funding requested from HUD for the project must be covered by a healthcare organization (cash or in-kind)

To receive bonus points, applications must provide written documentation of commitment of resources from the housing or healthcare provider.

Organizations considering applying for a new PSH or RRH program should prioritize developing a partnership with either a housing or healthcare provider (or both) to secure these leveraged resources. Applicants may also enter into a partnership with one or more subrecipients that can leverage these needed resources.

V.   Submitting a New Project in e-snaps

Completing a new Project Application in e-snaps is a multi-step process that can be complex for applicants who are unfamiliar with HUD's online application system. Below are links to HUD instructional resources that explain how to navigate the system.

- *Creating an E-snaps User Profile*. This describes how to set up an account in e-snaps, which is the first step in the application process.
  https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Create-an-e-snaps-User-Profile.pdf

- *Accessing the Project Application*. This provides instructions on how to access and set up Project Applications. https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/FY-2021-Accessing-the-Project-Application.pdf

- *New Project Application Detailed Instructions and Navigational Guide*: This provides instructions about how to access the Project Application in e-snaps and provides screenshots of all the application screens. https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/FY-2021-New-Application-Detailed-Instructions.pdf

- *Common Issues Encountered in E-Snaps*. A useful troubleshooting guide.
  https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Common-Issues-Encountered-in-e-snaps.pdf

VI. Information Sources Available

HUD has made available several information sources regarding this year's Continuum of Care process at the following webpage: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/. This page links to many different resources, including:
  - The 2021 CoC NOFO
  - e-snaps Navigational Guides and Detailed Project Instructions
  - FAQs about the 2021 CoC Competition

Please note that this year, HUD is NOT using the AAQ help desk for CoC competition questions. Applicants may email questions directly to HUD as follows:
- For questions relating to the competition: CoCNOFO@hud.gov
- For questions relating to e-snaps functionality: e-snaps@hud.gov

If you have questions, the Center on Homelessness recommends first directing any questions to our local team, before reaching out to HUD.

VII. Technical Assistance for Applicants

Applicants may contact the CoC with any questions about the application process or how to complete the application. Questions should be directed to Kate Bristol, Focus Strategies (kate@focusstrategies.net), Jessica Silverberg (JSilverberg@smcgov.org) and Lody Saba (lsaba@smcgov.org). Please include Kate, Jessica and Lody on all emails.