

PA-511 Bucks County CoC Review and Ranking Process 2021

Introduction

The Bucks County Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) is the Collaborative Applicant, CoC Lead Agency, and HMIS Lead for the PA-511 Bristol, Bensalem/Bucks County CoC. HCD oversees and facilitates the local application process in the CoC for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care funds consistent with the requirements in 24 CFR 578.9. In an effort to maintain a clear and transparent process during the annual competition, the CoC has created the following process for the review, rating and ranking of all new, renewal and bonus project applications received in the FY2021 CoC Program Competition.

Project Application Reviews

Project applications are reviewed for the following:

1) Threshold Review

Project Applications will be reviewed to determine whether they meet eligibility thresholds. Projects that do not meet the threshold criteria will not be scored. Applications will be rejected and not considered for review for any of the following reasons: 1) application was not submitted in e-snaps by the CoC established deadline of October 12th, 2021 2) the organization does not have an acceptable audit/financial review and/or does not document financial stability 3) the project does not comply with the requirements of the CoC interim rule (24 CFR part 578), including requirements to participate in the Coordinated Entry System and Bucks County HMIS 4) Applicant is an active CoC participant 5) Complete application including meeting minimum match requirement

2) Quality Review

Project Applications that pass the threshold review as outlined above will then undergo a quality review by HCD staff to ensure that the CoC is submitting high quality applications to HUD. This review ensures that project applications have followed the HUD detailed instructions and consistency throughout the application. If any quality deficiencies are identified, the project application will be released back to the applicant in e-snaps and the Authorized Representative and Contact Person will be emailed and will have 3 business days to correct the identified deficiencies and resubmit in e-snaps. HCD staff will not be able to provide further assistance beyond identification and notification of the deficiency that requires correction.

Project Application Scoring

The CoC will utilize HUD's Rating and Ranking Tool with customized local criteria as well as a CoC developed sliding scale (renewal applications only) to complete the scoring for new and renewal applications. The CoC uses objective, performance-based criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of new and renewal projects in reducing homelessness.

Renewal Projects

Renewal projects will be scored using criteria that is system performance and objective based. This includes the following:

- Length of time from RRH project entry to housing move-in
- Successful housing placement and retention
- Returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit
- Income growth
- Fiscal management – project is effectively utilizing its funds
- HMIS data quality
- Following a Housing First model
- Participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process
- Equity in Agency Leadership, Governance, and Policies

Data used for this criteria includes the project applicant's most recently submitted APR for the renewal project as well as HMIS data for recidivism and information from the project's application and financial documentation. Domestic Violence projects utilizing a comparable database will use their comparable database generated APR as well as data for recidivism.

New Projects

New projects will be scored using the following criteria:

- Experience – 1) working with the proposed population 2) utilizing a Housing First approach 3) Experience in effectively utilizing federal funds including HUD grants and other public funding
- Design of Housing & Supportive Services – 1) Demonstrates understanding of needs of clients and type/location of housing to fit client's needs 2) Describes plan to assist clients to rapidly secure and maintain safe, affordable housing that is acceptable to their needs 3) Describe how clients will be assisted to increase income and connection to mainstream benefits to maximize ability to live independently
- Timeliness – 1) Describe plan for rapid implementation of program and detailed schedule of proposed activities 60, 120, and 180 days after grant award
- Financial – 1) Project is cost-effective 2) Organization's most recent audit is acceptable 3) Documented match meets HUD requirements 4) Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable
- Coordinated Entry Participation – 1) 100% of project entries will use the CoC's coordinated entry process
- Equity in Agency Leadership, Governance, and Policies – 1) Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial positions 2) Recipient's board of directors includes representation from more than one person with lived experience 3) Recipient has relational process for receiving and incorporating feedback from person with lived experience 4) Recipient has reviewed internal policies and procedures with an equity lens and has a plan for developing and implementing equitable policies that do not impose undue barriers

Project information for scoring will be obtained through the project's application information and narrative responses, as well as the organization's financial documents.

Victim Service Providers and Projects focused on serving Domestic Violence Survivors

New and renewal projects submitted by Victim Service Providers and projects that are focused on serving victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and/or sex trafficking will have the following specific methods for evaluating/scoring/ranking projects:

New Projects

New projects focused on serving this population will be reviewed and scored based on new project rating criteria as listed above as well as an emphasis on trauma-informed and person-centered practices included in the proposed project(s).

Renewal Projects

Due to the unique needs and circumstances of domestic violence survivors, renewal projects focused on serving this population will have the opportunity to submit an optional narrative to the Collaborative Applicant as an opportunity to earn back points in the same category in which the points were lost. No additional points beyond the maximum number of possible points in each category will be awarded.

Project Applicant Ranking

Once each new and renewal project is scored, the CoC Collaborative Applicant as well as the CoC Executive Committee will review the scores and rank each application for the CoC Priority Listing. The CoC Executive Committee membership includes under-represented individuals and person with live experience in order to promote equity within the CoC Competition process.

Once this review and scoring is completed, the CoC Executive Committee will vote to approve the proposed project ranking. Once the vote is complete, the CoC Collaborative Applicant will notify via email all applicants 15 days before the competition deadline of whether their project was accepted, rejected or reduced as well as be provided a copy of their final project scores. The final Priority Listing and CoC Consolidated Application, including the CoC Application with attachments and a list of all project applications the CoC accepted and ranked or rejected will be posted to the CoC's website at least 2 days before the application deadline.