PA-511 Bucks County CoC Review and Ranking Criteria and Process

FY 2023 Program Competition

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. 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 FY2023 CoC Program Competition.

Project Application Reviews

Project applications are reviewed for the following:

1) Eligibility Threshold Review

New and Renewal 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:

➢ Project applicants and potential subrecipients must meet the eligibility requirements of the CoC Program as described in the Act and the Rule and provide evidence of eligibility required in the application (e.g., nonprofit documentation).
➢ Project applicants and subrecipients must demonstrate the financial and management capacity and experience to carry out the project as detailed in the project application and the capacity to administer federal funds. Demonstrating capacity may include a description of the applicant and subrecipient experience with similar projects and with successful administration of SHP, S+C, or CoC Program funds or other federal funds.
➢ Project applicants must submit the required certifications specified in the NOFO.
➢ The population to be served must meet program eligibility requirements as described in the Act, the Rule, and Section I.B.3.m of the NOFO.
➢ Project applicants, except Collaborative Applicants that only receive awards for CoC planning costs and, if applicable, UFA Costs, must agree to participate in the Bucks County HMIS system. However, in accordance with Section 407 of the Act, any victim service provider that is a recipient or subrecipient must not disclose, for purposes of HMIS, any personally identifying information about any client. Victim service providers must use a comparable database that meets the needs of the local HMIS.

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2) Quality Review

New Project Applications that pass the eligibility threshold review as outlined above will then undergo a quality review by HCD staff to ensure that the project meets HUD's quality threshold requirements as outlined in the NOFO. Each new project must meet the following quality threshold in order to be scored and ranked in the project priority listing. Projects that do not meet the quality threshold will be rejected.

Permanent Supportive Housing or Rapid Rehousing Projects must receive all 5 points available for this project type. Projects that do not receive all 5 points will be rejected.

➢ 1 Point – The type of housing proposed, including the number and configuration of units, will fit the needs of the program participants
➢ 1 Point – The type of supportive services that will be offered to program participants will ensure successful retention in or help to obtain permanent housing, including all supportive services regardless of funding source
➢ 1 Point – The proposed project has a specific plan for ensuring program participants will be individually assisted to obtain the benefits of mainstream health, social, and employment programs, for which they are eligible to apply, that meet the needs of the program participants
➢ 1 Point – Program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs
➢ 1 Point – The average cost per household served is reasonable, meaning that the costs for housing and services provided by the project are consistent with the population the project plans to serve

Joint TH/RRH Projects must receive all 8 points available for this project type. Projects that do not receive all 8 points will be rejected.

➢ 1 Point – The type of housing proposed, including the number and configuration of units, will fit the needs of the program participants
➢ 2 Points – The proposed project will provide enough RRH assistance to ensure that at any given time a program participant may move from TH to PH.
➢ 1 Point – The type of supportive services that will be offered to program participants will ensure successful retention or help to obtain permanent housing, including supportive services regardless of funding type
➢ 1 Point – The proposed project has a specific plan for ensuring program participants will be individually assisted to obtain the benefits of mainstream health, social, and employment programs, for which they are eligible to apply, that meet the needs of the program participants
➢ 1 Point - Program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs
➢ 1 Point – The project adheres to a housing first model as defined in Section I.B.2.b.(15) of the NOFO

SSO-Coordinated Entry Projects must receive all 4 points available for this project type. Projects that do not receive all 4 points will be rejected.

➢ 1 Point – The CE system is easily available/reachable for all persons within the CoC's geographic area who are seeking homelessness assistance. The system must also be accessible for persons with disabilities within the CoC's geographic area.
➢ 1 Point – There is a strategy for advertising that is designed specifically to reach homeless persons with the highest barriers within the CoC's geographic area.
➢ 1 Point – There is a standardized assessment process.
➢ 1 Point – Ensures program participants are directed to appropriate housing and services that fit their needs.

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CoC Planning (Collaborative Applicants Only) Projects must receive all 5 points available for this project type.

➢ 1 Point - Governance and Operations-The CoC conducts meetings of the entire CoC membership that are inclusive and open to members and demonstrates the CoC has a written governance charter in place that includes CoC policies.
➢ 1 Point - CoC Committees-The CoC has CoC-wide planning committees, subcommittees, or workgroups to address homeless needs in the CoC's geographic area that recommends and sets policy priorities for the CoC.
➢ 2 Points - The proposed planning project that will be carried out by the CoC with Planning grant funds are compliant with the provisions of 24 CFR 578.7.
➢ 1 Point - The funds requested will improve the CoC's ability to evaluate the outcome of both CoC Program-funded and ESG-funded projects.

Project Application Scoring

The CoC will utilize a customized Rating and Ranking Tool with local criteria as well as a CoC-developed sliding scale for renewal applications to complete the scoring for new and renewal applications. A CoC New Project Review Committee comprised of representatives within the geographic area that serve over-represented or special population households experiencing homelessness will review and score all new project applications. The CoC Executive Committee, as the governing board, will review and approve the scoring, ranking, rejection, and reduction of all new and renewal project applications on the Project Priority Listing prior to submission to HUD.

Renewal Projects Scoring

Renewal projects will be scored using system performance measures and other objective based criteria. Data used for this includes the project applicant's most recently submitted APR for the renewal project as well as HMIS data for recidivism. Project applications and supplemental questionnaire will also be utilized to determine scores. Domestic Violence projects utilizing a comparable database will use their comparable database generated APR, recidivism data from the comparable database, project applications, and supplemental questionnaire. Applicants must submit supplemental questionnaire separately outside of e-snaps via email to HCD@buckscounty.org by 8/11/2023.

Renewal projects that have been in operation for less than a year and have not yet submitted an APR will not be scored and will be ranked at the bottom of Tier 1. Renewal projects for coordinated entry and HMIS are not scored and ranked at the top of Tier 1 due to their need for ongoing system operation and tracking system performance. The following criteria and maximum point values will be used for scoring. Refer to the included sliding scale for partial point values.

Rapid Rehousing Project Criteria	Point Value
Length of time from RRH project entry to housing move-in is 60 days or less	10
Successful housing placement and retention of 85% of households	10
4% or less returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit	15
At least 35% of project leavers with new or increased earned income at exit	5
At least 25% of project leavers with new or increased non-employment income at exit	5
100% participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process	5
Commits to following a Housing First model	14
HMIS data quality – missing data at or below 0%	10
Project fully expended grant in most recent APR	10
Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial, leadership, or CoC leadership positions	4
Recipient's board of directors includes representation from one or more persons with lived homeless experience (2 points for 1 person with LE, 4 points for more than 1 person with LE)	4

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Recipient has an active working group for DEI	4
Recipient has DEI statement that has been approved by their board of directors	4
Total Points Available	100

Permanent Supportive Housing Project Criteria	Point Value
95% of program participants remain in or move to permanent housing	15
4% or less returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit	10
At least 25% of project leavers with new or increased earned income at exit	5
At least 25% of project stayers with new or increased non-employment income	5
100% of program participants are chronically homeless	10
100% participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process	5
Commits to following a Housing First model	14
HMIS data quality – missing data at or below 0%	10
Project fully expended grant in most recent APR	10
Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial, leadership, or CoC leadership positions	4
Recipient's board of directors includes representation from one or more persons with lived homeless experience (2 points for 1 person with LE, 4 points for more than 1 person with LE)	4
Recipient has an active working group for DEI	4
Recipient has DEI statement that has been approved by their board of directors	4
Total Points Available	100

Joint TH/RRH Project Criteria	Point Value
Successful housing placement and retention of 85% of households	15
15% or less returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit	20
At least 35% of project leavers with new or increased earned income at exit	5
At least 25% of project leavers with new or increased non-employment income at exit	5
100% participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process	5
Commits to following a Housing First model	14
HMIS data quality – missing data at or below 0%	10
Project fully expended grant in most recent APR	10
Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial, leadership, or CoC leadership positions	4
Recipient's board of directors includes representation from one or more persons with lived homeless experience (2 points for 1 person with LE, 4 points for more than 1 person with LE)	4
Recipient has an active working group for DEI	4
Recipient has DEI statement that has been approved by their board of directors	4
Total Points Available	100

New Projects

New projects that met the eligibility and quality thresholds will be scored using the following criteria and maximum point values. Due to limited availability of CoC and DV bonus funds, new projects will be scored against each other to determine the order in which new project(s) will be included in the ranking based on funding availability.

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Maximum point values will only be awarded if applicant fully responds to all parts of each rating criteria. Partial point values will be awarded if applicant effectively responds to parts of each rating criteria. Each part is worth 5 points unless otherwise noted. Project information for scoring will be obtained through the project's application information, narrative responses, and supplemental equity questionnaire. Applicants must submit supplemental questionnaire separately outside of e-snaps via email to HCD@buckscounty.org by 8/11/2023.

Rapid Rehousing & Permanent Supportive Housing	Point Value
Project Type: Projects that meet the CoC's project type preferences are eligible for an additional 15 bonus points	
Applying for PH (RRH or PSH) as the CoC's priority housing type	15
Experience	
Working with the proposed population	5
Utilizing a Housing First approach with best practice examples	5
Experience in effectively utilizing federal funds including HUD grants and other public funding	5
Project Description	
Describe the need for the project and how it will improve system performance	5
Demonstrates understanding of needs of clients and type/location of housing to fit client's needs	4
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision-making Advance racial equity in the homeless service system and Improve assistance to LGBTQ+ individuals	4
Advance racial equity in the homeless service system and Improve assistance to LGBTQ+ individuals	4
Reduce unsheltered homelessness within the CoC	4
Increasing Affordable Housing Supply; and/or Addressing an identified gap in services for clients who are pregnant or post-partum; households with pets; households with seniors age 55+; clients with substance use; transportation; or clients with medical frailty.	4
Financial	
Project is cost-effective – Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	5
Supportive services and administrative costs account for no more than 40% of the total HUD assistance request	5
Coordinated Entry Participation	
100% of project entries will use the CoC's coordinated entry process	5
Housing First Approach	
Project Commits to following a Housing First Approach	5
Supportive Services	
Describe plan to assist clients to rapidly secure and maintain safe, affordable housing that is acceptable to their needs	5
Partnerships with service agencies including Workforce Development Agencies to increase income and connection to mainstream benefits and housing to maximize ability to live independently	5
Leveraging Housing Resources	
Describe how project will utilize housing subsidies or subsidized housing units for at least 25% of anticipated program participants for program. Must include letter(s) of commitment, contract, or formal document demonstrating the number of subsidies or units being provided to support the project	5

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Partnerships or coordination with healthcare organizations including substance abuse and mental health treatments and assist program participants with receiving healthcare services. Must include MOU or formal agreement of partnership.	5
Equity Factors	
Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial, leadership, or CoC leadership positions	1
Recipient's board of directors includes representation from one or more persons with lived homeless experience (1 point for 1 person with LE, 2 points for more than 1 person with LE)	2
Recipient has an active working group for DEI	1
Recipient has DEI statement that has been approved by their board of directors	1
Total Points Available	**100**

TH/RRH Joint Projects	Point Value
Project Type: Projects that meet the CoC's project type preferences are eligible for an additional 15 bonus points	
Applying for PH (RRH or PSH) as the CoC's priority housing type	15
Experience	
Working with the proposed population	5
Utilizing a Housing First approach with best practice examples	5
Experience in effectively utilizing federal funds including HUD grants and other public funding	5
Project Description	
Describe the need for the project and how it will improve system performance	5
Demonstrates understanding of needs of clients and type/location of housing to fit client's needs	4
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision making	4
Advance racial equity in the homeless service system and Improve assistance to LGBTQ+ individuals	4
Reduce unsheltered homelessness within the CoC	4
Increasing Affordable Housing Supply; and/or Addressing an identified gap in services for clients who are pregnant or post-partum; households with pets; households with seniors age 55+; clients with substance use; transportation; or clients with medical frailty.	4
Financial	
Project is cost-effective – Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	10
Coordinated Entry Participation	
100% of project entries will use the CoC's coordinated entry process	5
Housing First Approach	
Project Commits to following a Housing First Approach	5
Supportive Services	
Describe plan to assist clients to rapidly secure and maintain safe, affordable housing that is acceptable to their needs	5
Partnerships and coordination with housing and service agencies including PHAs and Workforce Development Agencies to increase income and connection to mainstream benefits and housing to maximize ability to live independently	5

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Partnerships or coordination with healthcare organizations including substance abuse and mental health treatments, and assist program participants with receiving healthcare services. Must include MOU or formal agreement of partnership	5
Prioritization	
Project prioritizes serving at least one vulnerable population	5
Equity Factors	
Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial, leadership, or CoC and leadership positions	1
Recipient's board of directors includes representation from one or more persons with lived homeless experience (1 point for 1 person with LE, 2 points for more than 1 person with LE)	2
Recipient has an active working group for DEI	1
Recipient has DEI statement that has been approved by their board of directors	1
Total Points Available	**100**

Coordinated Entry Projects	Point Value
Project Type: Projects that meet the CoC's project type preferences are eligible for an additional 15 bonus points	
Applying for PH (RRH or PSH) as the CoC's priority housing type	15
Experience	
Working with the proposed population	5
Utilizing a Housing First approach with best practice examples	5
Experience in effectively utilizing federal funds including HUD grants and other public funding	5
Project Description	
Describe the need for the project and how project will improve system performance	4
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision making	4
Advance racial equity in the homeless service system and improve assistance to LGBTQ+ individuals	4
Reduce unsheltered homelessness within the CoC	4
Increasing Affordable Housing Supply; and/or Addressing an identified gap in services for clients who are pregnant or post-partum; households with pets; households with seniors age 55+; clients with substance use; transportation; or clients with medical frailty.	4
Financial	
Project is cost-effective - Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	10
Accessibility	
Describe the advertisement strategy for the CE process	5
How it is designed to reach those with the highest barriers to accessing assistance	5
Describe how the project will serve persons with limited English proficiency and disabilities	5
Standardized Assessment	
Describe the standardized assessment	5
Describe the referral process that directs households to appropriate housing and services	5
Expansion of Services	
What new services will be added to increase or better serve households contacting the Coordinated Entry System	10

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Equity	
Recipient has under-represented individuals (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.) in managerial, leadership, or CoC and leadership positions	1
Recipient's board of directors includes representation from one or more persons with lived homeless experience (1 point for 1 person with LE, 2 points for more than 1 person with LE)	2
Recipient has an active working group for DEI	1
Recipient has DEI statement that has been approved by their board of directors	1
Total Points Available	**100**

Victim Service Providers and Projects focused on serving Domestic Violence Survivors

New and renewal projects submitted by Victim Service Providers and projects that are 100% dedicated to serving victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and/or sex trafficking can receive up to 10 bonus points if the project description in their application addresses the following criteria:

Bonus DV Project Criteria	Point Value
Trauma-informed – Describe approach to serving program participants will be trauma-informed and how this will be incorporated into policies, procedures, and settings.	5
Victim-centered– Describe how the project will be victim-centered and how this will be incorporated into policies and practices of the project and organization.	5
Total Bonus Points Available	**10**

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 lived experience to promote equity within the CoC Competition process.

At this meeting, the Executive Committee will review renewal scores and determine whether any renewal projects should be reallocated to new projects based on performance and system needs based on the CoC's approved Process for Reallocation Guidance. If no renewal projects are determined to be reallocated through either involuntary or voluntary reallocation, the renewal projects will be ranked based on scores in Tier 1 unless otherwise noted in this document for coordinated entry, HMIS, and newly awarded projects. New projects will be ranked in Tier 2 based on scores and bonus type until no bonus fund amounts remain. Any new projects that are not ranked due to funding availability will be rejected.

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.

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