



## **PA-511 Bucks County CoC Review and Ranking Criteria and Process FY 2024/2025 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 FY2024/2025 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.k of the NOFO.
- Project applicants, except Collaborative Applicants that only receive awards for CoC planning 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.

#### 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.

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*Permanent Supportive Housing or Rapid Rehousing Projects* must receive 4 out of 5 points available for this project type. Projects that do not receive at least 4 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 6 out of 8 points available for this project type. Projects that do not receive at least 6 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
- 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

*SSO-Coordinated Entry Projects* must receive at least 2 out of the 4 points available for this project type. Projects that do not receive at least 2 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.

*HMIS Projects* must receive at least 3 out of the 4 points available for this project type. New HMIS projects that do not receive at least 3 points will be rejected.

- 1 Point – How the HMIS funds will be expanded in a way that is consistent with the CoC's funding strategy for the HMIS and furthers the CoC's HMIS implementation
- 1 Point – The HMIS collects all UDE's as set forth in the HMIS Data Standards
- 1 Point – The ability of the HMIS to un-duplicate client records

- 1 Point – The HMIS produces all HUD-required reports and provides data as needed for HUD reporting and other reports required by other federal partners

CoC Planning (Collaborative Applicants Only) Projects must receive at least 3 out of 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 and/or have lived experience of homelessness will review and score all new project applications as well as supplemental questionnaires for renewal applications. The CoC Executive Committee, as the governing board, will review and approve the scoring, ranking, rejection, reallocations, 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 **9/20/2024**.

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 unless the recipient chooses to voluntarily reallocate their project. The following criteria and maximum point values will be used for scoring. Refer to the included sliding scale in scoring rubric for partial point values.

Rapid Rehousing Project Criteria	Point Value
Length of time from RRH project entry to housing move-in is 90 days or less	10
Successful housing placement and retention of 70% of households	10
4% or less returns to homelessness within 6 months of successful program exit	10
4% or less returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit	10
At least 35% of project leavers with new or increased earned income at exit	10
At least 60% of project leavers with new or increased non-employment income at exit	10

100% participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process	5
Project does not commit to following a Housing First model	-15
HMIS data quality – missing data at or below 5%	10
HMIS data timeliness - 100% at 10 days or less	10
Project fully expended grant in most recent APR	10
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>

<b>Permanent Supportive Housing Project Criteria</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
100% of program participants are chronically homeless	10
100% of program participants remain in or move to permanent housing	10
2% or less returns to homelessness within 6 months of successful program exit	10
2% or less returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit	10
At least 35% of project leavers with new or increased earned income at exit	10
At least 35% of project stayers with new or increased non-employment income	10
100% participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process	5
Project does not commit to or following a Housing First model	-15
HMIS data quality – missing data at or below 5%	10
HMIS data timeliness - 100% at 10 days or less	10
Project fully expended grant in most recent APR	10
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>

<b>Joint TH/RRH Project Criteria</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
On average, participants spend 90 days from project entry to residential move-in	10
Successful housing placement and retention of 70% of households	10
4% or less returns to homelessness within 6 months of successful program exit	10
4% or less returns to homelessness within 1 year of successful program exit	10
At least 35% of project leavers with new or increased employment income at exit	10
At least 60% of project leavers with new or increased non-employment income at exit	10
100% participation in CoC's Coordinated Entry process	5
Does not commit to following a Housing First Model	-15
HMIS data quality – missing data at or below 5%	10
HMIS data timeliness - 100% at 10 days or less	10
Project fully expended grant in most recent APR	10
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>

## 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.

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. 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 **9/20/2024**.

<b>Rapid Rehousing</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
<b>Experience</b>	
Working with and addressing the proposed populations housing and supportive services needs	5
Identifying and securing matching funds from a variety of sources	5
Developing and implementing relevant program system and services	5
Managing basic organization operations including financial accounting systems	5
<b>Project Description</b>	
Describe the need for the project and how it will improve system performance	5
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision making	4
Describes project plan for addressing identified housing and supportive service needs	4
Identifies anticipated project outcomes	4
Reduce unsheltered homelessness within the CoC	4
Demonstrates meaningful coordination with other organizations (e.g. federal, state, nonprofit)	4
<b>Coordinated Entry Participation</b>	
100% of project entries will use the CoC's coordinated entry process	5
<b>Housing First Approach</b>	
Project does not commit to following a Housing First Approach	-15
<b>Expansion Project or New Project</b>	
Expansion project will increase number of households served by 10% in RRH OR Non-expansion project will serve at least 16 households	5
<b>Housing &amp; Services</b>	
Acknowledges the needs of the target populations	5
Includes a plan for assisting the target population in determining right type of housing	5
Includes a plan to set goals towards successful retention of permanent housing	5
<b>Coordination &amp; Integration with Benefits and Services</b>	
Project describes a specific plan to coordinated and integrate with other mainstream health, social services, and employment programs for which participants may be eligible.	5
<b>Financial Information</b>	
Project is cost-effective - Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	7
Supportive services and admin costs account for no more than 40% of the total HUD assistance request	3
<b>NOFO Priorities: Leveraging Housing Resources</b>	

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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. Units must not be subsidized with COC or ESG.	5
Describe how the project will uses healthcare resources to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Must include letter(s) of commitment, contract, or formal document demonstrating the relationship with healthcare entity. Value of healthcare resources being provided must be at least 25% of the funding being requested.	5
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>

<b>Permanent Supportive Housing</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
<b>Experience</b>	
Working with and addressing the proposed populations housing and supportive services needs	5
Identifying and securing matching funds from a variety of sources	5
Developing and implementing relevant program system and services	5
Managing basic organization operations including financial accounting systems	5
<b>Project Description</b>	
Describe the need for the project and how it will improve system performance	5
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision making	4
Describes project plan for addressing identified housing and supportive service needs	4
Identifies anticipated project outcomes	4
Reduce unsheltered homelessness within the CoC	4
Demonstrates meaningful coordination with other organizations (e.g. federal, state, nonprofit)	4
<b>Coordinated Entry Participation</b>	
100% of project entries will use the CoC's coordinated entry process	5
<b>Housing First Approach</b>	
Project does not commit to following a Housing First Approach	-15
<b>Expansion Project or New Project</b>	
Expansion project will increase number of households served by 10% OR Non-Expansion project will serve at least 6 households	5
<b>Housing &amp; Services</b>	
Acknowledges the needs of the target populations	5
Includes a plan for assisting the target population in determining right type of housing	5
Includes a plan to set goals towards successful retention of permanent housing	5
<b>Coordination &amp; Integration with Benefits and Services</b>	
Obtaining and increasing employment, mainstream services, social service connections, and access to healthcare benefits	5
<b>Financial Information</b>	
Project is cost-effective - Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	10
<b>NOFO Priorities: Leveraging Housing Resources</b>	
Describe how project will utilize housing subsidies or subsidized housing units for at least 25% of anticipated program participants for program. Must	5

include letter(s) of commitment, contract, or formal document demonstrating the number of subsidies or units being provided to support the project. Units must not be subsidized with COC or ESG.	
Describe how the project will use healthcare resources to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Must include letter(s) of commitment, contract, or formal document demonstrating the relationship with healthcare entity. Value of healthcare resources being provided must be at least 25% of the funding being requested.	5
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>

<b>Joint Transition-Rapid Rehousing</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
<b>Experience</b>	
Working with and addressing the proposed populations housing and supportive services needs	5
Identifying and securing matching funds from a variety of sources	5
Developing and implementing relevant program system and services	5
Managing basic organization operations including financial accounting systems	5
<b>Project Description</b>	
Describe the need for the project and how it will improve system performance	5
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision making	4
Describes project plan for addressing identified housing and supportive service needs	4
Identifies anticipated project outcomes	4
Reduce unsheltered homelessness within the CoC	4
Demonstrates meaningful coordination with other organizations (e.g. federal, state, nonprofit)	4
<b>Coordinated Entry Participation</b>	
100% of project entries will use the CoC's coordinated entry process	5
<b>Housing First Approach</b>	
Project does not commit to following a Housing First Approach	-15
<b>Expansion Project or New Project</b>	
Expansion project will increase number of households served by 10% in RRH; or Expansion project will increase number of transitional housing beds by 10% or 1, whichever is higher; or Non-expansion project will serve at least 16 households in RRH; or Provide at least 4 beds of transitional housing	5
<b>Housing &amp; Services</b>	
Acknowledges the needs of the target populations	5
Includes a plan for assisting the target population in determining right type of housing	5
Includes a plan to set goals towards successful retention of permanent housing	5
<b>Coordination &amp; Integration with Benefits and Services</b>	
Obtaining and increasing employment, mainstream services, social service connections, and access to healthcare benefits	5
<b>Financial Information</b>	
Project is cost-effective - Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	7
Supportive services and admin costs account for no more than 40% of the total HUD assistance request	3

NOFO Priorities: 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. Units must not be subsidized with COC or ESG.	5
Describe how the project will uses healthcare resources to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Must include letter(s) of commitment, contract, or formal document demonstrating the relationship with healthcare entity. Value of healthcare resources being provided must be at least 25% of the funding being requested.	5
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>

Non-Housing Projects (HMIS)	Point Value
<b>Experience</b>	
Describe experience in performing the activities proposed in the application	6
Identifying and securing matching funds from a variety of sources	6
Developing and implementing relevant program system and services	6
Managing basic organization operations including financial accounting systems	6
<b>Project Description</b>	
Describe the need for the project and how it will improve system performance	10
Incorporation of persons with lived experience in design, planning and decision making	6
Describes the design and implementation of the HMIS system	6
Identifies anticipated project outcomes	6
Demonstrates meaningful coordination with other organizations (e.g. federal, state, nonprofit)	6
<b>Increased Functionality</b>	
Expansion will increase HMIS functionality, or increase number of participating programs or agencies	6
Describe how the project will increase functionality of the current dedicated HMIS project	10
<b>HMIS Meets all Current Requirements</b>	
HMIS collects all required UDEs	1
HMIS produces all HUD-required reports and provides data as needed for HUD reporting	1
HMIS produces all reports required by Federal partners	1
HMIS can un-duplicate client records	1
HMIS Lead conducts security training and follows-up with recipients and subrecipient organizations	1
<b>Process for Stakeholder Involvement</b>	
Describe the process and stakeholder involvement for updating HMIS governance charters and HMIS policy and procedures, including the CoC's policy and procedures for managing a breach of PII	6
<b>Financial Information</b>	
Project is cost-effective - Budgeted costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable	10
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>95</b>



## CoC Local Priority Bonus Points

Renewal projects can receive up to 30 bonus points and new projects up to 40 points for CoC local priorities which include component type (new projects only), addressing critical need, equity, and partnerships/best practices:

<b>Project Type: New projects that meet the CoC's project type priority are eligible for an additional 10 bonus points</b>	
New Projects Only: Project Type is PH-PSH	10
<b>Critical Need: All projects are eligible for an additional 15 bonus points for addressing local critical needs</b>	
Project designed to specifically support clients that are chronically homeless	1
Project has partnerships to support households with pets	1
Project has partnerships to support households with seniors age 55+	1
Project has partnerships to support clients with mental health, substance use disorder, medical frailty, co-occurring or tri-morbidity	1
Project has components that specifically address transportation barriers for clients	1
Describe how the project will specifically address the identified critical needs. If components will be through a partner organization, letter of commitment, contract or formal document demonstrating the how the partner will provide those services to program participants must be included. If components will be part of project design offered by the project itself, please outline the project component, how clients will be advised of the options at intake and throughout their enrollment, and how success for the component will be measured.	10
<b>Equity: All projects are eligible for an additional 6 bonus points for working towards equity goals</b>	
Applicant's board of directors includes representation from more than one person with lived homeless experience	1
Applicant's organization has more than one person with lived experience of homelessness represented in managerial, leadership, or COC leadership positions	1
Applicant's organization explicitly targets persons with lived experience for employment or internship opportunities in their job descriptions and recruiting practices	1
Applicant's organization routinely gathers feedback from persons with lived experience at least once per year and uses this feedback to adjust project design, policy, or procedures.	1
Applicant's organization has an active working group for DEI	1
The applicant's organization actively recruits people from populations overrepresented in homelessness for job and internship opportunities (BIPOC, mental health, substance use disorder, LGBTQIA+, seniors 55+)	1
<b>Partnerships &amp; Best Practices: All projects are eligible for an additional 9 bonus points for demonstrating partnerships</b>	
Please briefly describe how the organization actively supports the efforts of the COC in creating, converting, or obtaining more affordable units.	3
Please describe how a housing first best practice is reflected in the project's policy and procedures	3
Please describe how the organization supports staff in order to recruit and retain qualified personnel. Please provide specific examples. Examples can include financial or non-financial support provided.	3
<b>Total Bonus Points Available</b>	<b>40</b>

## 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:

<b>Bonus DV Project Criteria</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
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
<b>Total Bonus Points Available</b>	<b>10</b>

### 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 an individual 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. A copy of the project ranking, showing all accepted applications, will also be posted on the CoC website at this time. 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.