

HAMPDEN COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

2015 Request for Proposals

Questions and Answers from the October 8, 2015 Bidders' Conference

Types of New Projects

1. Q: What types of new projects can receive funding?

A: The following types of new projects are allowed in this competition:

- Permanent supportive housing where all units are dedicated for use by chronically homeless individuals and families
- Rapid rehousing for homeless individuals and families who enter directly from the streets or emergency shelters, youth up to age 24, and persons who meet the criteria of paragraph (4) of the definition of homeless (which is people fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence)
- A Supportive Services Only (SSO) project specifically for a centralized or coordinated assessment system

SSO Projects may only be funded through *reallocation*, which means funding taken away from projects that would otherwise be renewed. All other projects may be funded through reallocation or through bonus funds.

Number of Years of Funding to Request

2. Q: Does the CoC have a preference regarding the number of years of funding a new project requests?

A: No.

In considering how many years to apply for, agencies should be aware that the CoC automatically prioritizes first-year renewals of one-year new grants, because these programs would not have any performance data yet to enable the CoC to determine level of performance.

SSO Project for Coordinated Assessment

3. Q: How much money does the CoC anticipate may be available for an SSO Project for Coordinated Assessment?

A: It is not possible to say at this point, because there are so many variables. First, there are a few projects which do not spend down all funds each year. Some of this is because of the way that the funding streams are set up—the HUD default is to fund rental assistance at the full FMR, even though the only way that an agency would spend the full FMR is if no tenants made any rent payments. This year, the CoC is encouraging those projects to either request less money in the competition, or agree to house more people with the grant. Those agencies have not made a final determination as to what they will do. There is potential to “free up” \$100,000+ from these programs if they reduce their funding requests.

In addition, in the Hampden County CoC competition, all renewal projects compete against new projects. So, a high-scoring new project can be prioritized for funding over an existing renewal. Because it is a competition, it is impossible to say in advance if this factor will make funding available for a new SSO Project for Coordinated Assessment.

4. Q: Is there any research or literature on the range of appropriate cost for a coordinated assessment project/system?

A: The CoC does not know of any resources on this issue.

5. Q: Does a coordinated assessment project need to serve all of Hampden County?

A: Yes.

6. Q: What technical assistance is there for creation of a Coordinated Assessment system?

A: The CoC is able to apply for \$103,957 in planning funds. The CoC expects that some or all of these funds will be used to support TA for coordinated assessment for the CoC.

Impact of Not Renewing a Current Program on Application for a New Program

7. Q: If an agency with a current renewing grant is applying for SSO for Coordinated Assessment, can the agency allocate its current grant funding to the new project? That is, by not renewing the current project, does that enable the agency to use those funds for the new SSO project?

A: Because this is a competition, there is no guarantee that opening up funds for reallocation by not renewing a current project will mean that those funds will be allocated to a new project from the same agency.

Verification of DMH Match

8. Q: DMH is currently re-procuring services which are used as match for some CoC projects, and will not make announcements of new funding recipients and amounts until Nov. 30, 2015, after the deadline for the CoC competition? How can agencies verify match for existing programs when next year's funding is in the middle of a procurement?

A: In previous competitions, some agencies have identified themselves as a source of match, which is a commitment to come up with match funds from other sources. That is one way that agencies in the procurement can verify match—although there is obviously some risk, because the agency will be held to the commitment, even if it is not awarded the DMH contract.

In addition, the CoC will reach out to the state to see if it is possible for them to expedite the decision-making on the procurement, so that it coordinates with the CoC competition.

Standards for Providing Rapid Rehousing Assistance

9. Q: Has the CoC created standards for provision of rapid rehousing assistance?

A: Yes, the Board of Directors approved standards at its May 15, 2015 meeting. The standards have been set on an interim basis, indicating that the CoC expects experience and data analysis may lead to refinement of these standards, so the Board expects to revisit the standards. The approved standards for rapid rehousing are on page 11 of this document:

<http://westernmasshousingfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/CoC-Coordinated-System-Policies-and-Procedures.-Adopted-Interim-5-15-2015.pdf>.

Information About Existing CoC RRH Grants

10. Q: For the CoC's existing RRH grants, what are the grant amounts and numbers of people served?

A: The Hampden County CoC funds two RRH programs, both of which are for families.

Program 1 has a CoC grant of \$135,229 a year. It serves 10 family households at a point-in-time, and those families receive rental assistance for up to 12 months.

Program 2 has a CoC grant of \$47,940 a year. It serves 2 family households at a point-in-time, and those families may receive rental assistance for up to 12 months.

RFP Appendix C Documents

11. Q: Appendix C of the RFP provides a list of documents that must be submitted for each application. If an agency is submitting multiple applications, does it need to provide multiple sets of these documents?

A: No. The agency can submit a single set.

12. Q: Can the Appendix C documents be submitted electronically?

A: No. Please deliver the documents.

Esnaps Web Browser Issues

13. Q: There seem to be problems with the esnaps site that make it difficult to access—any advice?

A: HUD has provided some guidance which may help:

<http://us5.campaign-archive1.com/?u=87d7c8afc03ba69ee70d865b9&id=4ac9d28d6a&e=642de14775>

Requirement re Formerly Homeless Person on the Board of Directors

14. Q: Are CoC programs required to have a homeless/formerly homeless person on the Board of Directors?

A: The CoC Interim Rule, at 24 CFR 578.75(g)(1) provides:

Each recipient and subrecipient must provide for the participation of not less than one homeless individual or formerly homeless individual on the board of directors or other equivalent policymaking entity of the recipient or subrecipient, to the extent that such entity considers and makes policies and decisions regarding any project, supportive services, or assistance provided under this part. This requirement is waived if a recipient or subrecipient is unable to meet such requirement and obtains HUD approval for a plan to otherwise consult with homeless or formerly homeless persons when considering and making policies and decisions.