



FY2019 TX-503 Continuum of Care: Review, Rating and Ranking Policy and Procedure

Background:

Annually, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) holds a national competition for Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Funds. This competition brings funds into the Austin/Travis County to provide housing and services to individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness. The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO), the Collaborative Applicant for the Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care, is the lead agency responsible for completing and submitting the Consolidated Application for funding on behalf the CoC. The Consolidated Application consists of CoC Application, Priority Listing, and Project Applications.

For the FY19 competition, new projects may be created through reallocation and/or eligible bonus projects. The amount of bonus funds available to the Austin/Travis County community will be announced by HUD in the FY 19 NOFA.

Through reallocation or bonus funding, CoCs may create the new projects as defined by the FY19 NOFA that are aligned with the Community Funding Priorities, as adopted by Membership Council, and that align with HUD's Policy Priorities as determined in the FY19 HUD Continuum of Care NOFA.

The Membership Council (CoC Board) annually reviews and approves all NOFA related policies and procedures, including this Review, Rating, and Ranking Policy. Membership Council appoints an Independent Review Team (IRT) to review and objectively score all renewal and new project applications. The IRT provides recommendations for funding, reallocations, and ranking to the Membership Council, who approves the final funding ranking of projects before submission to HUD.

Review, Rating and Ranking Policy:

All HUD CoC Program Renewal and New projects must be reviewed, scored and ranked annually in preparation for the HUD CoC Collaborative Application submission. All projects must be ranked by priority based on performance and within the threshold outlined in the HUD Continuum of Care NOFA. See below for ranking procedure for both renewal and new projects.

1. Renewal Projects:

- a. Each quarter, the Membership Council will review the objective Project Performance Scorecard¹ that measure 12 months of performance data.
- b. Renewal projects that have a Project Performance Scorecard that meets or exceeds 60%, will be prioritized in project ranking before any additional new projects submitted and approved.
- c. Renewal projects that fall below the Project Performance Score of 60% will be ranked purely according to their score, which could result in a higher scoring new project ranking higher.,

¹ See Appendix B: CoC Performance Scorecards



- d. In addition, the Membership Council can rank the project lower than a bonus/new project if there are other justifications, according to policies set forth in the Review, Rating, and Ranking Policies and/or the Reallocation Policies for ranking the project lower.

2. New Projects (Bonus and Reallocation)

- a. All New projects will be ranked lower than Renewal projects who meet or exceed threshold performance.

Procedure:

Scoring Instructions and Components:

ECHO develops Scoring Instructions for both renewal and new projects to measure performance and capacity using objective scoring criteria, including the HEARTH Performance Measures. The Independent Review Team (IRT) is designated by the Ending Community Homeless Coalition Membership Council (CoC Board) to review and score all local project applications. Both renewals and new projects are scored according to the following categories:

- Renewal Projects: existing renewing projects that have operated for a full 12-month period
- First Time Renewal Projects: renewing projects that have not yet begun operating or have begun operating, but not yet completed a full 12-month period; and
- New Projects: bonus or projects created through reallocation

In order to be considered, all projects must pass the Threshold Criteria that included: (1) Application materials were received by the deadline, (2) the Project is consistent with the ECHO CoC Funding Priorities, Community Plan to End Homelessness and the Consolidated Plans for the requesting area (City of Austin, Travis County and/or Pflugerville, TX), (3) the agency does not have any outstanding HUD monitoring and/or OIG Audit findings, and (4) the Project complies with the request of the CoC interim rule (24 CFR part 578), including, but not limited to accepting referrals from the Coordinated Entry System (CES), participation in the annual Point in Time Count, Housing Inventory Count, and HUD CoC & ESG Committee in addition to an active SAMS registration and DUNS number and participation in the CoC HMIS (or equivalent HMIS data management system for Victim Service Providers only).

The IRT's primary responsibility is to (1) objectively review, rate, and rank all new and renewal project applications and agency presentations (2) submit ranking recommendation of project priority for Tier 1 and Tier 2, and (3) IRT Chair must report to ECHO Membership Council for final ranking decision.

Renewal Project Scoring Components:

- Must meet Threshold Component ensured compliance with HUD organizational recommendations and HMIS implementation
- 65% of Total Renewal Project Score: 12 month, Annual Performance Scorecard Measurement
- 35% of Project Score: Local Project Application

First Time Renewal Projects OR New Project Scoring Components:



- Must meet Threshold Component ensured compliance with HUD organizational recommendations and HMIS implementation
- 100% of Project Score: Project Application

Project Ranking and Approval:

The Independent Review Team (IRT) Chair presents ranking recommendations to the ECHO Membership Council. The Membership Council approves the final project priority ranking recommendation and has the discretion to amend the recommendation made by the IRT no more than 15 days prior to the application deadline. If applicable, project applicants may follow the Grievance Procedure outlined in Appendix A.

Project Ranking Appeals Process:

The CoC Lead Agency must notify project applicants, in writing outside of *e-snaps*, of any rejected project applications **no later than 15 days (or by the timeline as indicated by HUD in the FY19 NOFA) before the application deadline** to allow any eligible project applicant(s) that attempted to participate in the CoC's planning process and believe they were denied the right to participate in the CoC process in a reasonable manner time to appeal the CoC's decision to HUD as a Solo Applicant (see the 2019 CoC Program Competition NOFA for more information)



Austin/Travis County TX-503 Continuum of Care (CoC) Independent Review Team (IRT)

Purpose: To provide objective review of all local HUD Continuum of Care grant applications and provide preliminary ranking recommendations to the TX-503 ECHO Membership Council for voting approval. IRT members may also make policy recommendations to Membership Council regarding Continuum of Care NOFA policies and procedures.

Composition:

- **City of Austin**
- **Travis County**
- **United Way of Greater Austin**
- **St. David's Foundation**
- **Membership Council Representative**
- **AHAC – Person with Lived Experience**

Membership Council will approve annually prior to the Continuum of Care NOFA the IRT slate, between 5 and 7 people, including potentially from the composition above. The Membership Council will also appoint the IRT chair.

Qualifications for Members

- A commitment to the fair and sufficient distribution of HUD CoC funding to local homeless-serving agencies.
- Time to participate in the review of applications and site visits (when they occur).
- Ability to participate in a fair and equitable process without agency or programmatic preferences.
- Ability to participate in a respectful, consensus-driven and problem-solving process.
- Significant knowledge of issues and services related to solutions to homelessness.
- **Individuals who are employees, contractors, or board members of service providers that receive HUD CoC funding are not eligible to serve on the IRT.**

Confidentiality: Members will be required to sign the Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality policies annually to help ensure the integrity of the IRT review process.

Tenure: IRT representatives may serve up to three years, with an annual review of their commitment.