

Austin / Travis County CoC Policy Regarding Special Projects

The Austin / Travis County Continuum of Care has adopted the following policies regarding Special Projects. Special Projects, also referred to as demonstration projects, are defined as Projects originally funded through HUD or other federal funding sources to provide services to persons experiencing homelessness. Special Projects are awarded funds for the specific purpose of supporting a specific initiative within the local homeless response system through demonstrating innovative practices or prioritizing resources to specific activities or populations in order to effectively move the needle toward ending homelessness. Special Projects are used to demonstrate and bolster a system-wide response to preventing and ending homelessness and are opportunities to expand community resources and partnerships. Depending on the funding source and requirements outlined in the NOFA the project was awarded under, Special Projects may vary in how their services and program activities align with CoC Program regulations (e.g., eligible activities, Project Types, data entry and outcomes reporting).

This policy applies to the local exemptions provided to Special Projects related to performance evaluation and reporting requirements when transitioning and operating as a CoC-funded Program and through the CoC NOFA Competition. Special Projects will be provided additional timing to ensure successful transition into new funding sources when a Special Project is awarded under a time-limited funding source; and the project is eligible to either renew or apply as a new project under the Continuum of Care NOFA Competition; and federal funds are used to support the continued program operations under federal funding sources as a CoC-funded project. Special Projects will be exempt from participating in required reporting activities related to the local performance evaluation tools and procedures used to competitively rank projects. Exemptions are used to ensure projects focus on adjusting operations and meeting requirements needed to be in compliance under CoC program regulations.

CoC NOFA Competition Exemption

Special Projects will follow the procedures outlined below to successfully transition to operating as a CoC-funded project without penalty if allowable by the NOFA in which the Special Project is funded under and the Special Project activity period has ended:

Scoring, Rating, and Ranking during the CoC NOFA Competition:

- Special Projects that operated as a HUD special community funded initiative will be evaluated and scored as new/bonus project during the CoC NOFA Local Competition until the project has 12 months of Performance data as a CoC funded project.
- Performance data used during the CoC NOFA Local Competition to evaluate and rank projects either using Performance Scorecards or other performance evaluation tools will not be used to rank Special Projects until they have completed 12 months of project operations as a CoC-funded project.
- Special Project must complete CoC NOFA Competition materials as outlined in the CoC NOFA Detailed Instructions applicable for the Special Project by HUD.

Once a special project is funded under a CoC Program NOFA, the project will be required to complete quarterly scorecards with a start date of the project's operating date as a CoC project.