



## **FY2025 TX-503 Continuum of Care Program NOFO: Review, Scoring, and Ranking Policy**

### **Review, Score, and Ranking Policy**

The Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care (CoC) will competitively rank projects based on project applications and projects' previous system performance. The Austin/Travis County CoC seeks to facilitate a coordinated, and outcome-oriented community process for the solicitation, review, ranking, and selection of project applications, and a process by which renewal projects are reviewed for performance and compliance with 24 CFR 578. This adopted policy supersedes any other historical TX-503 Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care Review, Scoring, and Ranking Policy.

### **Background**

The Leadership Council, as the CoC Board, or its designated representatives, approves all NOFO related policies and procedures, including this Review, Scoring, and Ranking Policy. The Leadership Council appoints an Independent Review Team (IRT) to review and objectively score all competitive Renewal and New Project applications.

### **HUD's FY 2025 NOFO introduces the following national rules affecting ranking:**

- Tier 1 limited to 30% of Annual Renewal Demand (ARD)
- Permanent Housing (PH) (PSH + RRH + Joint TH/RRH) capped at 30% of the Annual Renewal Demand (ARD)
- YHDP projects must be ranked
- DV Bonus projects have unique ranking/selection rules
- RRH renewal projects must be submitted as TH (local rule aligned with NOFO priorities)

### **Ranking**

#### **Tier 1 (30% of ARD)**

Tier 1 includes the highest-ranked project applications up to 30% of ARD.

HUD will conditionally select projects in Tier 1 if they meet:

- Eligibility standards
- Quality threshold requirements
- Required alignment with FY25 NOFO priorities

#### TIER 1 PLACEMENT RULES

- Projects are ranked by score
- Only PH projects able to fit under the 30% PH cap may remain PH.
- Site-based PSH renewal projects will be prioritized over other PSH projects for Tier 1
- All RRH renewals must be resubmitted as TH.
- DV renewal projects are ranked normally in Tier 1 or Tier 2 based on score.
- DV Bonus new projects:
- If selected for DV Bonus → removed from Tier 1/Tier 2 → lower projects shift up o If not selected →



remain in their original ranked position

- YHDP renewal/replacement projects must be ranked according to score and NOFO criteria.

## **Tier 2**

- Tier 2 includes:
  - All remaining ranked renewal projects including HMIS
  - New projects (CoC Bonus, Reallocation, DV Bonus if not awarded from DV pool)
  - YHDP projects not placed in Tier 1
- HUD will score each Tier 2 project on a point scale, considering:
  - CoC Application score
  - Local ranking order
  - HUD FY25 priorities
  - Project quality, design, and accountability measures
- DV Bonus new projects follow the same Tier 2 movement rules as Tier 1.

## **Additional Requirements**

- PH CAP CONTROLS PLACEMENT

PH must  $\leq$  30% of ARD

- RRH MUST BE SUBMITTED AS TH
- Renewal PSH projects must be aligned with the FY 2025 new PSH project requirements
- The CoC Planning Grant is not ranked (HUD Requirement)

## **Scoring for Renewals**

Objective Criteria will make up at least 50% of the renewal score

- At least 25% of those points will include:
  - a. Returns to Homelessness
  - b. Employment Income Performance Measure
  - c. Supportive Service Participation Requirement
- Additional Objective Criteria will be captured in the Renewal FY2025 NOFO Scoring Rubric.

## Local Application

An Independent Review Team (IRT) will score and review a local application in e-snaps based on the priorities of the HUD FY2025 NOFO.

## **Scoring for New Project Applications**

New Projects are defined as projects created through CoC Bonus, DV Bonus, or Reallocation. New Projects, including Expansion and Transition Projects, will be scored based on alignment with the FY 2025 CoC NOFO.



New PSH projects will not be accepted for the FY 2025 CoC NOFO competition. Only PSH projects from current renewals will be accepted for consideration.

Objective Criteria will make up at least 50% of the new project score captured in the New Project FY 2025 Scoring Rubric.

### Local Application (in e-snaps)

An Independent Review Team (IRT) will score and review a local competition based on the priorities of the HUD FY2025 NOFO.

## **IRT**

Scoring is conducted by the Independent Review Team (IRT) after the Project Applications have been reviewed for Project Eligibility Threshold and Project Quality Threshold by ECHO staff. All projects except the CoC Planning Grant will be scored and ranked.

### A. IRT

1. IRT members must disclose any conflicts of interest prior to joining the IRT. Individuals who are employees, contractors, or board members of service providers that receive HUD funding are not eligible to serve on the IRT.
2. IRT members must disclose any conflicts of interest prior to joining the IRT. Individuals who are employees, contractors, or board members of service providers that receive HUD CoC funding are not eligible to serve on the IRT.
3. Members of the CoC Lead Agency are eligible to serve on the IRT so long as:
  - a) The CoC Lead Agency does not submit any applications that are competitively scored and ranked.
  - b) Members of the CoC Lead Agency do not make up more than fifty percent of the total IRT membership.
4. Each Project Application will be reviewed and scored by at least three (3) separate IRT members, and the final score for the application will be the average of the scores.
5. IRT members who have lived experience of homelessness will be compensated at a rate of \$80 per application scored.

## **Project Ranking Appeals**

An appeal can only be made by an applicant regarding the scoring of their own application. Any discrepancies or errors found by applicants must be reported to the Collaborative Applicant and such corrections will not constitute an appeal, unless the discrepancy or error is deemed an incurable deficiency resulting in exclusion of the project application from consideration.

### B. Eligible Appeals



Appeals can be requested by any agency which has a project submitted for participation in the FY25 CoC Program NOFO in the Austin/Travis County CoC geographic area. If they are not funded or receive less funding than the amount in the application.

C. **Appeals Procedure**

Applicants must follow the following process to submit appeals:

1. Applicants will have two business days to appeal after being notified by email of the ranking by Leadership Council, or its appointed representative.

An appeal must be in the form of a letter on the applicant agency's letterhead and must clearly state the reasons for the appeal and specify all issues being contested. The appealing agency must specify facts and evidence sufficient for the CoC Board, or its representative, to determine the validity of the appeal. The CoC Board, or its representative, will review and adjudicate all appeals.

2. Agencies will receive, in writing, the appeal decision before the CoC Collaborative Application submission deadline. ECHO will be responsible for ensuring that projects have received proper notice of all final funding decisions.
3. As prescribed by HUD in the CoC NOFO, applicants may appeal the local CoC competition decision to HUD if the project applicant would like to further appeal the CoC Board's decision.
4. Applicants may ask ECHO for summary scoring information prior to the submission of the appeal letter. Individual IRT member scores will not be released to applicants.

**Review**

To ensure that all projects submitted to HUD for funding consideration are of a high quality, ECHO staff will complete a Project Eligibility Threshold and Project Quality Threshold review of all project applications.

D. **Project Eligibility Threshold Review**

ECHO staff will review submitted applications to ensure all applications meet the requirements of 24 CFR 578.15 and any additional threshold requirements outlined in the FY2025 CoC NOFO. Renewal projects are expected to pass threshold criteria as evidenced by their previous contracted award. All projects, including renewal projects must affirmatively attest they will not engage in racial preferences or other forms of illegal discrimination and will not operate drug injection sites or "safe consumption sites," knowingly distribute drug paraphernalia on or off of property under their control, permit the use or distribution of illicit drugs on property under their control, or conduct any of these activities under the pretext of "harm reduction." Failing to attest to these affirmatively will result in a rejected application.

E. **Project Quality Threshold Review**

ECHO staff will review submitted applications to confirm all projects ensure:



1. All proposed program participants will be eligible for the program component type selected;
2. The information provided in the project application and proposed activities are eligible and consistent with program requirements at 24 CFR part 578;
3. Each project narrative is fully responsive to the question being asked, and it meets all criteria outlined in the FY 2025 CoC NOFO;
4. The data provided in various parts of the project application are consistent;
5. All required attachments correspond to the list of attachments in *e-snaps* and contain accurate and complete information;

F. **Deficiencies**

Applicants may correct a curable deficiency with timely action. To be curable, the deficiency must:

2. Not be a threshold requirement, except for documentation of applicant eligibility;
3. Not influence how an applicant is ranked or scored versus other applicants; and,
4. Be remedied within the time frame specified in the notice of deficiency.

All applicants whose projects have identified curable deficiencies must be given at least until the end of business the following day to address and adequately resolve any deficiencies. If deficiencies cannot be sufficiently addressed, the applicant cannot move forward in the process. Applicants can appeal the determination based on the appeal policy outlined below.