



TX-503 Continuum of Care Local Funding Priorities and Review and Ranking Policy for the FY2026 YHDP NOFO

Purpose

This Policy establishes the local community priorities for the FY 2024 and FY 2025 YHDP local competition and Review and Ranking policy for projects submitted to Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) for inclusion in the FY2024 and FY 2025 YHDP Collaborative Application.

Background

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released the FY 2024 & FY 2025 YHDP NOFO on June 10, 2026. Nationally, HUD expects to select approximately 12 YHDP Community Recipients from the FY 2024 funds, and approximately 12 YHDP Community Recipients from the FY 2025 funds and approximately 120 total YHDP awards.

YHDP projects fund direct housing and services for homeless youth. More than one project can be selected by ECHO to submit, but those projects must be ranked.

ECHO is responsible for ensuring youth with a lived experience of homelessness are part of the application and review process and the approval of all YHDP-related policies and competition materials, including this Local Funding Priorities and Review and Ranking Policy. ECHO, as the CoC Lead Agency, is responsible for the review of all project applications in accordance with this policy. ECHO will also convene an Independent Review Team (IRT) made up of ECHO staff and youth with a lived experience of homelessness to objectively review and score all project applications. Final ranking of projects is determined by Leadership Council based on this policy and the FY 2024 & FY 2025 YHDP NOFO.

Local Funding Priorities

This local competition is for new YHDP project applications under HUD's FY2024/FY2025 Youth Homelessness NOFO.

Local YHDP priorities include:

- Transitional Housing (TH), including Crisis Residential Housing and Shared Housing



- Supportive Services Only (SSO), including, but not limited to, projects dedicated to coordinated entry; Host Homes and Kinship Care; housing search and placement services; case management; supportive services connected with Foster Youth to Independence vouchers; or street outreach
- SSO-Coordinated Entry (SSO-CE)
- HMIS
- Planning

Review

To ensure 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.

1. Project Eligibility Threshold Review

To meet threshold all projects, including projects must

- a) 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.
- b) Agencies are eligible for federal funding under the requirements of the FY 2024 & 2025 YHDP NOFO,
- c) Agencies will be likely to pass the Risk Review of the FY 2024 & 2025 YHDP NOFO,
- d) Project has preliminary match documentation attached, or a match strategy/match expectation explanation provided
- e) Transitional Housing projects must include a plan for supportive service participation agreements with residents.

2. Project Quality Threshold Review

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

- a) All proposed program participants will be eligible for the program component type selected;
- b) The information provided in the project application and proposed activities are eligible and consistent with the FY 2024 & 2025 YHDP NOFO;



- c) Each project narrative is fully responsive to the question being asked, and it meets all criteria outlined in the FY 2024 & 2025 YHDP NOFO;
- d) The data provided in various parts of the project application are consistent;
- e) All required attachments correspond to the list of attachments in *e-snaps* and contain accurate and complete information;

3. Deficiencies

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

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

All applicants whose projects have identified curable deficiencies must be given 2 business days from the notification date to address and adequately resolve any deficiencies. If deficiencies cannot be sufficiently addressed, the applicant cannot move forward in the process.

Scoring

All project applications that have passed the review stage will be scored using a written scoring tool designed by ECHO for the Austin/Travis County CoC and published in advance of local competition applications being due.

Independent Review Team

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. ECHO appoints the IRT team to conduct the scoring process with the below understanding:

- a) 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 or are applying for HUD funding are not eligible to serve on the IRT.
- b) Members of the CoC Lead Agency are eligible to serve on the IRT so long as The CoC Lead Agency does not submit any applications that are competitively scored and ranked.
- c) 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.



- d) IRT members who have lived experience of homelessness will be compensated at a rate of \$50 per application scored.

Ranking

After threshold review and scoring are completed, the Leadership Council will rank all scored project applications on the YHDP Priority Listing in order of score and strategic priority according to the priorities of the FY 2024 & 2025 YHDP NOFO. All ranked projects will receive a unique rank number. Leadership Council may consider how projects fit within the needs of the Austin/Travis County Homelessness Response System, the goals of the FY 2024 & 2025 YHDP NOFO, and creating a balance of project types within the ranking.

Ranking Criteria will include:

- Project creates new or expanded capacity in the Homelessness Response System (HRS) and does not repackage existing organizational services.
- Applicant demonstrates dedicated full-time programming and staff capacity for the YHDP initiative. The project does not rely primarily on current organizational capacity, or fractional FTE added onto an existing program.
- Applicant identifies clearly the youth population served and the system need, including data, youth feedback, provider experience or other evidence.
- Project model is clear, youth-centered, feasible, and likely to support safe and stable housing, education/employment/income, permanent connections, and social/emotional well-being
- Budget - Project model is clear, youth-centered, feasible, and likely to support safe and stable housing, education/employment/income, permanent connections, and social/emotional well-being
- Applicant demonstrates capacity to operate the project, manage federal funds, meet reporting requirements, hire/launch within the expected timeframe, and address implementation dependencies
- Project demonstrates coordination with the Homelessness Response System in Austin/Travis County and relevant youth-serving systems, such as workforce, education, child welfare, justice, behavioral health, SUD, DV/trafficking, PHA/FYI/FUP, and housing partners.
- Applicant describes how youth with lived experience will inform project design, implementation, or continuous improvement
- Applicants who meet the priorities of the NOFO for community coordination

