



TX-503 Austin/Travis County CoC FY2024/FY2025 YHDP Project Scoring Tool Navigational Guide

The purpose of this document is to guide applicants in structuring their YHDP local project applications to align with TX-503 Austin/Travis County CoC expectations, HUD YHDP NOFO requirements, and local competition priorities.

This scoring guide outlines the threshold requirements, objective scoring criteria, system performance expectations, and qualitative information that the Independent Review Team may use to score each YHDP project application for inclusion on the local YHDP Project Priority Listing.

This Navigational Guide should be used alongside the YHDP Local Project Application and the YHDP Local Project Scoring Tool.

1. Threshold Requirements

The pass/fail categories below will determine whether your project moves to the scoring stage. To proceed to scoring, your project must pass all applicable threshold requirements. Failing any required threshold item may result in the project being rejected from the local YHDP competition.

Category	Details / Attachments Needed
Eligible Applicant	Attach documentation showing your organization is an eligible YHDP project applicant. Eligible project applicants may include state governments, county governments, city or township governments, special district governments, Indian Tribes, Tribally Designated Housing Entities, and eligible nonprofit organizations. Attach IRS determination letter, government documentation, Tribal documentation, or other eligible entity documentation.
Active SAM.gov Registration	Attach proof of active SAM.gov registration and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). SAM.gov registration must be active at the time of application and remain active throughout the award period.
Required HUD Forms and Certifications	If selected for the YHDP Priority Listing, your agency must complete all required HUD forms, assurances, certifications, and e-snaps project application requirements. Applicants should confirm readiness to complete these forms and provide any requested documentation.
Eligible Youth Population	The project must serve eligible youth under the YHDP NOFO. Youth means age 24 or younger. Projects should identify whether they will serve unaccompanied youth, pregnant or parenting youth, transition age youth, youth exiting foster care or justice systems, trafficked or exploited youth, youth fleeing violence, youth with behavioral health needs, or youth living in unsafe situations when applicable.
Match Requirement	Identify required match, if applicable. Attach cash match letters, in-kind match letters, or MOUs. YHDP project recipients must meet match requirements under 24 CFR 578.73 unless otherwise modified by Appendix II of the NOFO.
Coordinated Entry Participation	Projects must commit to participating in the CoC's Coordinated Entry process unless operating under an approved alternative process, such as appropriate processes for victim service providers. The selection of program participants must be consistent with applicable CoC policies and project eligibility requirements.



HMIS or Comparable Database Participation	Projects must participate in HMIS unless prohibited by law or federal requirements. Victim service providers must use a comparable database and must not enter personally identifying information into HMIS. Attach HMIS participation documentation or comparable database policy, if applicable.
Youth Participation	Housing and service projects must demonstrate that the project design incorporates youth-centered, trauma-informed, and developmentally appropriate approaches. Applicants should describe how youth safety, choice, engagement, and well-being are integrated into the project.
Youth Safety Certification	Site-based housing projects serving youth under age 18 must certify that registered sex offenders or individuals with violent criminal records will not live in the housing, except in justice system re-entry programs.
Affirmative Legal Certifications	Applicant must certify that the project will not engage in illegal racial preferences or discriminatory practices.
Drug-Free / Safe Consumption Site Certification	Applicant must certify that it will not operate drug injection sites or safe consumption sites, knowingly distribute drug paraphernalia, permit the use or distribution of illicit drugs on property under its control, or conduct these activities under the pretext of harm reduction.

2. Project Scoring

The application is scored out of 100 points, distributed across four sections. To maximize your score, use this Navigational Guide as a checklist while developing your application.

Section I: Organizational Capacity (Maximum Points: 20)

Criteria and Objective Scoring Criteria	Max Points	Details / Attachments Needed
Previous Experience Serving Youth 0 — No youth-serving experience described. 1 — Minimal general human services experience, with no clear youth homelessness experience. 2 — Some experience serving youth, but limited connection to homelessness or housing instability. 3 — Clear experience serving youth or young adults experiencing homelessness or housing instability. 4 — Strong youth homelessness experience with examples of outcomes or project performance. 5 — Strong experience serving high-need youth populations with documentation, such as grant awards, monitoring reports, APRs, program data, or letters confirming experience.	5	Describe your agency's experience serving youth age 24 and younger, especially youth experiencing homelessness, housing instability, family conflict, trafficking, domestic violence, substance use, mental health needs, foster care involvement, or justice system involvement. Attach documentation where available.
Federal, State, or Local Grant Experience 0 — No grant experience described. 1 — Minimal experience or only informal funding experience. 2 — State/local grant experience but no federal grant experience. 3 — Three or more years of federal/state grant experience. 4 — Six or more years of relevant grant experience with successful monitoring or performance history. 5 — Ten or more years of grant experience or strong federal grant management record with documentation.	5	List previous grant experience, including funding agency, award amount, project type, years administered, and performance outcomes. Attach monitoring reports, APRs, award letters, or grant closeout documents if available.



Financial Management 0 — No evidence of financial management capacity. 1 — Limited or outdated financial documentation. 2 — Informal financial processes without formal audit or review. 3 — Audit, financial statement, or internal financial review is provided. 4 — Audit or financial statement demonstrates strong financial management and no major unresolved findings. 5 — Strong financial documentation plus clear narrative showing internal controls, grant accounting, cost allocation, match tracking, procurement procedures, and leveraged funding.	5	Attach audits, financial statements, fiscal policies, cost allocation plan, procurement policy, or documentation of leveraged funds. Explain how your agency will track YHDP funds, match, eligible costs, and documentation requirements.
Staffing and Organizational Management 0 — No staffing or management information provided. 1 — Basic staff list only. 2 — Staffing described but reporting lines, supervision, or project roles are unclear. 3 — Organizational chart and staffing structure provided. 4 — Staffing plan includes role descriptions, supervision, quality assurance, and project-specific responsibilities. 5 — Full staffing plan with position descriptions, supervision plan, training plan, lived experience roles, recruitment/backfill strategy, and how staffing supports project outcomes.	5	Attach organizational chart, board roster, staffing plan, position descriptions, supervision plan, training plan, and any policies related to youth service delivery, staff safety, confidentiality, or quality assurance.

Section II: Project Design and YHDP Alignment (Maximum Points: 60)

Criteria and Objective Scoring Criteria	Max Points	Details / Attachments Needed
Project Description and Alignment with YHDP NOFO Priorities 0 — Project is not described or is not aligned with YHDP. 1 — Project description is minimal and unclear. 2 — Project is described but lacks clear connection to YHDP goals. 3 — Project clearly describes activities and basic alignment with youth homelessness goals. 4 — Project includes strong alignment with YHDP goals, implementation approach, target population, and service/housing model. 5 — Project provides a complete, data-informed, and compelling description showing how the project contributes to a comprehensive approach to reducing youth homelessness.	5	Describe the project type, model, service area, number of youth served, project goals, implementation plan, and how the project will reduce youth homelessness. Strong responses should connect the project to HUD's emphasis on self-sufficiency, education, employment, behavioral health, safety, supportive services, and long-term stability.
Target Population and Demonstrated Need 0 — Target population not described. 1 — Incorrect or ineligible population. 2 — Population described but not clearly tied to YHDP eligibility. 3 — Target population clearly aligns with YHDP eligibility. 4 — Target population aligns with YHDP eligibility and local need is supported by data or experience. 5 — Strong, documented need statement with local data, youth input, system gaps, and clear	5	Identify the specific youth population served and explain how they meet YHDP eligibility. Include local data, PIT/HIC/HMIS/CE data, provider data, youth feedback, or community needs assessment information. Discuss pregnant/parenting youth, trafficked or exploited youth, youth fleeing violence, youth involved with foster care or justice systems, and youth with behavioral health needs when applicable.



explanation of how the project addresses unmet needs.		
Supportive Services and Self-Sufficiency Plan 0 — No supportive services plan. 1–2 — Services listed but no engagement strategy. 3–4 — Services described but not clearly tied to youth stability or self-sufficiency. 5–6 — Services plan includes case management and basic referrals. 7–8 — Strong services plan tied to education, employment, behavioral health, income, recovery, and life skills. 9–10 — Comprehensive supportive services model with clear participation expectations, partner commitments, staffing, service delivery structure, youth engagement strategy, and measurable outcomes.	10	Describe how youth will be connected to supportive services that promote stability and self-sufficiency. Include education, job training, employment, behavioral health, substance use support, family counseling, life skills, childcare, transportation, peer support, and mainstream benefits. Attach MOUs or letters from service partners. HUD expects communities to prioritize supportive services and awards points when at least 20% of YHDP funds, excluding planning and HMIS, are allocated to supportive services costs.
Youth Leadership and Youth Voice 0 — No youth involvement described. 1 — General statement of youth-centered practice, but no evidence of youth input. 2 — Youth input mentioned but not described. 3 — Youth with lived experience were consulted during project design. 4 — Youth input shaped project design and youth will have an ongoing advisory or feedback role. 5 — Youth had meaningful involvement in project design and will have leadership, decision-making, paid advisory, evaluation, or governance roles during implementation.	15	Describe how many youth were consulted, how they were engaged, what they recommended, and what changed as a result. Attach focus group notes, meeting summaries, youth advisory recommendations, compensation plan, or youth leadership structure. HUD awards points for meaningful youth participation and leadership.
Coordinated Entry and Referral Process: 0 — No response provided. The application does not describe how youth will access the project or how youth will be screened, assessed, identified, or referred. 1 — Minimal response. The application generally states that youth will access the project through Coordinated Entry or referrals, but does not describe the screening or assessment process and does not identify the required youth subpopulations. 2 — Basic response. The application describes a general access or referral process, but the screening and assessment process is unclear, incomplete, or does not fully address all required youth subpopulations. 3 — Adequate response. The application describes how youth will access the project and explains how screening or assessment tools identify most of the required youth subpopulations, including pregnant/parenting youth, youth exiting foster care or justice systems, trafficked or exploited	5	Applicants should clearly explain how youth will access the project and how referrals will be made, tracked, and completed. The response should describe whether youth will access the project through Coordinated Entry, outreach, schools, child welfare, juvenile justice, victim service providers, behavioral health providers, crisis response partners, or other youth-serving systems.



youth, and youth with substance use or mental health service needs. 4 — Strong response. The application provides clear access, screening, assessment, and referral workflow. The response explains how all required youth subpopulations are identified, how information is documented, and how youth are connected to appropriate services based on their needs. 5 — Comprehensive response. The application provides a complete and well-documented access and referral process, including youth-specific screening and assessment tools, referral timelines, warm handoff procedures, documentation practices, follow-up steps, and protocols for matching youth to appropriate housing and supportive services. The response clearly demonstrates how the project will identify and appropriately serve pregnant/parenting youth, youth exiting foster care or justice systems, labor or sexually exploited or trafficked youth, and youth needing substance use or mental health services.		
Specialized Youth Subpopulations 0 — No subpopulations identified. 1 — General statement that project serves youth. 2 — Subpopulations listed but no specialized strategy. 3 — Project identifies specific subpopulations and service needs. 4 — Project includes specialized services or referral pathways for priority subpopulations. 5 — Project provides a clear preference or specialized service model for youth subpopulations with documented need and appropriate partners.	5	Describe whether the project serves or prioritizes pregnant or parenting youth, youth fleeing domestic violence, trafficked or exploited youth, youth with substance use disorder, youth with mental health needs, youth exiting foster care, or youth exiting justice systems. Explain the specialized services provided and attach partner documentation where applicable.
Family Reunification and Preservation 0 — No family reunification or preservation strategy. 1 — Family reunification mentioned only generally. 2 — Basic referral strategy. 3 — Clear strategy for family mediation or reunification when safe. 4 — Strong strategy with trained staff or partner agencies. 5 — Comprehensive, youth-centered, safety-informed reunification and preservation plan with counseling, mediation, kinship connections, safety planning, and documentation.	5	Describe how the project will support family reunification, family preservation, kinship connections, counseling, or mediation when safe and appropriate. The strategy must prioritize youth choice, youth safety, and survivor safety.
Building Safe Communities and Crisis Coordination: 0 — No response provided. The application does not describe how the project will support youth safety, crisis coordination, or partnerships with crisis response, outreach, behavioral health, substance use, victim service, or first responder partners.	10	Describe how the Project will Contribute to safer conditions for youth experiencing homelessness and support coordination with local crisis response, first responders, outreach teams, behavioral health providers, substance use providers, victim service providers, and other relevant partners.



1–2 — Minimal response. The application generally references safety or crisis response but does not describe specific partnerships, workflows, referral processes, or how youth will be connected to appropriate services. 3–4 — Basic response. The application identifies some relevant partners, such as outreach teams, crisis response providers, behavioral health providers, substance use providers, victim service providers, or first responders, but provides limited detail on how coordination will occur in practice. 5–6 — Adequate response. The application describes a clear coordination strategy to support youth safety, including how staff will identify youth in unsafe situations, connect youth to crisis response or supportive services, and coordinate with relevant partners. The response includes some discussion of youth experiencing unsheltered homelessness, public substance use risks, behavioral health needs, victimization, or crisis situations. 7–8 — Strong response. The application provides a strong and practical plan for contributing to safer conditions for youth experiencing homelessness. The response describes specific partnerships, referral pathways, crisis response procedures, safety planning practices, warm handoffs, and coordination with outreach, behavioral health, substance use, victim service, first responder, and other relevant partners. 9–10 — Comprehensive response. The application provides a complete, well-documented, and youth-centered safety and crisis coordination plan. The response demonstrates how the project will help identify and connect youth in encampments, public spaces, unsafe housing situations, crisis situations, or substance use/behavioral health-related emergencies to appropriate services. The project includes clear protocols, partner roles, confidentiality protections, safety planning procedures, referral timelines, follow-up practices, and documentation methods. The response also explains how the project will coordinate with community partners while maintaining youth safety, dignity, privacy, and appropriate trauma-informed engagement.		
---	--	--

Section III: Performance Planning and Data (Maximum Points: 20)



Criteria and Objective Scoring Criteria	Max Points	Details / Attachments Needed
Housing Stability and Positive Exit Outcomes 0 — No housing stability strategy. 1 — Minimal statement about housing outcomes. 2 — Basic housing referral strategy. 3 — Clear plan to support stable housing outcomes. 4 — Strong plan with specific pathways, partners, and follow-up. 5 — Comprehensive plan showing how youth will achieve safe and stable housing, avoid returns to homelessness, and connect to long-term supports.	5	Describe housing stability strategies appropriate to the project type, including housing navigation, landlord engagement, family reunification if safe, connection to TH, permanent housing, longer-term treatment or residential care, benefits, and post-exit follow-up.
Education, Employment, and Income Growth 0 — No education/employment strategy. 1 — Minimal referral-only approach. 2 — Basic service connections but no clear workflow. 3 — Clear education/employment/income strategy. 4 — Strong strategy with workforce or education partners. 5 — Comprehensive strategy with documented partners, measurable outcomes, and support for education, job training, employment, income growth, and career advancement.	5	Describe how the project will support school enrollment, GED/diploma completion, post-secondary education, job readiness, employment, income growth, financial literacy, childcare, transportation, and career advancement. Attach workforce, employer, school district, community college, or benefits partner documentation where available.
Social and Emotional Well-being 0 — No response provided. 1 — Minimal response. No explanation about how these practices will be implemented. 2 — Basic response. Describes some activities but lacks detail, specificity, or a clear connection to youth outcomes. 3 — Adequate response. Describes a clear approach that includes some elements of Positive Youth Development, Trauma-Informed Care, behavioral health referrals, peer support, or permanent connections. 4 — Strong response. Provides a practical plan with specific services, staffing, partnerships, and practices that support resilience, healthy relationships, emotional stability, and long-term connections. 5 — Comprehensive response. Provides a complete, youth-centered plan addressing Positive Youth Development, Trauma-Informed Care, peer or mentoring support, behavioral health and crisis services, and permanent connections. It also explains how youth feedback will be used to improve services.	5	Applicants should describe how the project will support social and emotional well-being for youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability. A strong response should include: • How the project incorporates Positive Youth Development; • How the project uses Trauma-Informed Care in service delivery; • How staff will support youth resilience, self-determination, and emotional stability; • How the project will help youth build permanent connections with family, kin, mentors, peers, or other supportive adults; • How the project will connect youth to behavioral health, mental health, substance use, or crisis supports when needed; • How peer support, mentoring, group activities, or community-building activities will be incorporated; • How youth feedback will be collected and used to improve services; • How the project will support youth experiencing trauma, family conflict, exploitation, violence, behavioral health needs, or isolation.



HMIS, Data Quality, and Continuous Quality Improvement 0 — No data plan. 1 — Minimal HMIS or reporting description. 2 — Basic data collection plan. 3 — Clear HMIS/comparable database participation and data quality process. 4 — Strong plan with data review, performance tracking, and client/youth feedback. 5 — Comprehensive data and continuous quality improvement plan with HMIS/comparable database workflow, data quality reviews, performance measures, youth feedback, reporting schedule, and improvement process.	5	Confirm HMIS or comparable database participation. Describe staff roles, data entry timeline, quality checks, confidentiality, performance reporting, youth feedback, corrective action, and how data will be used to improve the project.
--	---	---