

City of Winston-Salem

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Continuum of Care

2021 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Assistance

Bonus Funding

Request for Proposals for New Programs

Issue RFP: September 1st, 2021

Deadline: September 13th, 2021 - 12:00 pm (Noon)

No late, incomplete, or faxed applications will be accepted.

All questions must be submitted in writing via email to: hcsd@cityofws.org

Community Development Department
City of Winston-Salem
100 East First Street, Suite 423, PO Box 2511
Winston-Salem, NC 27102



BACKGROUND:

HUD publishes a CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for each funding year. The 2021 NOFA was released August 20th, 2021, with a deadline of November 16th, 2021. To take advantage of additional bonus funding, and to allow time for the local review and decision-making process, the City is publishing this RFP in advance of the NOFA. The City reserves the right to publish additional information subject to NOFA publication.

A single, consolidated submission of all selected projects in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County will be submitted to HUD by the City of Winston-Salem. Funding will be derived from Federal Fiscal Year 2021 allocations of HUD funds and is subject to funding availability under the NOFA. The City reserves the right to request that applicant organizations submit adjusted project budgets based on the amount of funding made available by HUD.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

This Request for Proposals is to solicit new proposals for Bonus funds (new reallocation, CoC Bonus, and Domestic Violence Bonus funds).

To expend funds within statutorily required deadlines, applicants funded for sponsor-based and project-based rental assistance must execute the grant agreement and begin providing rental assistance within 2 years. However, HUD strongly encourages all rental assistance to begin within 12 months of award.

New Projects for DV Bonus. New projects that want to be considered for the DV Bonus, may be:

- (a) Permanent Housing-Rapid re-housing projects dedicated to serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are defined as homeless
- (b) Joint Transitional Housing and Permanent Housing-Rapid ReHousing component projects dedicated to serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who are defined as homeless or
- (c) Supportive services only-coordinated entry project to implement policies, procedures, and practices that equip the CoC's coordinated entry to better meet the needs of survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

DV Bonus available amounts: Project applicants may expand an existing renewal project that is not currently dedicated to serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that meet the definition of homeless to dedicate additional beds, units, persons served, or services provided to existing program participants to this population.

Expansion. The process by which a renewal project applicant submits a new project application to expand its current operations by adding units, beds, persons served, services provided to existing program participants, or in the case of HMIS, increase the current HMIS activities within the CoC's geographic area. For the new expansion project to be selected for a conditional award, the renewal project application must also be selected for conditional award.

DV Bonus funds can only be used to expand an existing renewal project if the expansion project is dedicated to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who qualify under paragraph (4) of the definition of homeless at 24 CFR 578.3; however, only the new project application for the expansion will be considered for DV Bonus funds. For projects that are expanding their current CoC Program-funded project, project applicants will be required to submit the renewal project application that will be expanded and a new project application with the expansion information.

CoC Bonus Project. Applicants may include new project. New projects created through the CoC Bonus must meet the project eligibility and project quality threshold requirements established by HUD.

Bonus funds may be used to create or expand the following types of new projects:

1. Permanent supportive housing projects that will primarily serve chronically homeless individuals and families;
2. Rapid rehousing projects that will serve homeless individuals and families who enter directly from the streets or emergency shelters, including youth up to age 24, and includes persons fleeing violence as defined by HUD; and
3. Joint component projects, which combine transitional housing and rapid re-housing into a single project to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

The City of Winston-Salem and HUD has adopted policy and program priorities for the FY 2021 CoC Program Competition. The following Policy and Program Priorities were adapted from HUD's Policy and Program Priorities from the previous FY 2021 CoC Program Competition:

1. **End homelessness for all persons.** To end homelessness for all persons, CoCs should:
 - a. Identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness;
 - b. Measure their performance based on local data that consider the challenges faced by all subpopulations experiencing homelessness in the geographic area (e.g., veterans, youth, families, or those experiencing chronic homelessness);
 - c. Have a comprehensive outreach strategy in place to identify and continuously engage all unsheltered individuals and families;
 - d. Use local data to determine the characteristics of individuals and families with the highest needs and longest experiences of homelessness to develop housing and supportive services tailored to their needs; and
 - e. Use the reallocation process to create new projects that improve their overall performance and better respond to their needs.
2. **Improve system performance.** CoCs should be using system performance measures (e.g., average length of homeless episodes, rates of return to homelessness, rates of exit to permanent housing destinations) to determine how effectively they are serving people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, CoCs should use their Coordinated Entry process to promote participant choice, coordinate homeless assistance and mainstream housing, and services to ensure people experiencing homelessness receive assistance quickly, and make homelessness

assistance open, inclusive, and transparent. CoCs should review all projects eligible for renewal in FY 2021 to determine their effectiveness in serving people experiencing homelessness, including cost-effectiveness. CoCs should also look for opportunities to implement continuous quality improvement and other process improvement strategies. HUD recognizes the effects of COVID-19 on CoC performance and data quality and, compared to previous CoC NOFOs, reduces the points available for rating factors related to system performance. However, HUD plans to significantly increase the points available for system performance rating factors in the FY 2022 and subsequent CoC NOFOs.

3. Reduce unsheltered homelessness. In recent years, the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness has risen significantly, including a rising number of encampments in many communities across the country. People living unsheltered have extremely high rates of physical and mental illness and substance use disorders. CoCs should identify permanent housing options for people who are unsheltered.

4. Partnering with Housing, Health, and Service Agencies. Using cost performance and outcome data, CoCs should improve how all available resources are utilized to end homelessness. This is especially important as the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan have provided significant new resources to help end homelessness. HUD encourages CoCs to maximize the use of mainstream and other community-based resources when serving persons experiencing homelessness and should:

- a. Work closely with public and private healthcare organizations and assist program participants to obtain medical insurance to address healthcare needs;
- b. Partner closely with PHAs and state and local housing organizations to utilize coordinated entry, develop housing units, and provide housing subsidies to people experiencing homelessness. These partnerships can also help CoC Program participants exit permanent supportive housing through Housing Choice Vouchers and other available housing options. CoCs and PHAs should especially work together to implement targeted programs such as Emergency Housing Vouchers, HUD-VASH, Mainstream Vouchers, Family Unification Program Vouchers, and other housing voucher programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness. CoCs should coordinate with their state and local housing agencies on the utilization of new HOME program resources provided through the Homelessness Assistance and Supportive Services Program that was created through the American Rescue Plan;
- c. Partner with local workforce development centers to improve employment opportunities; and
- d. Work with tribal organizations to ensure that tribal members can access CoC-funded assistance when a CoC's geographic area borders a tribal area.

5. Racial Equity. In nearly every community, Black, Indigenous, and emphasizing system and program changes to address racial equity within CoCs. CoCs should review local policies, procedures, and processes to determine where and how to address racial disparities affecting individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

6. Persons with Lived Experience. HUD is encouraging CoCs to include in the local planning process people who are currently experiencing or have formerly experienced homelessness to address homelessness. People with lived experience should determine how local policies may need to be

revised and updated, participate in CoC meetings and committees as stakeholders, provide input on decisions, and provide input related to the local competition process CoCs should seek opportunities to hire people with lived experience.

7. Use a Housing First approach.

Housing First prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and does not have service participation requirements or preconditions. CoCs should:

- a. Help individuals and families move quickly into permanent housing;
- b. Measure and help projects reduce the length of time people experience homelessness;
- c. Engage landlords and property owners;
- d. Remove barriers to entry; and
- e. Adopt client-centered service methods.

FUNDS AVAILABILITY

The amount of bonus funding available from HUD is \$2,348,774. Bonus funds are in addition to the amount previously awarded by HUD for CoC projects. New projects can be funded through reallocation of existing project funding or through bonus funds.

PROJECT RANKING PROCESS

HUD requires that all projects be ranked and prioritized in a two-tiered list developed through the local CoC process. Tier 1 will be the top priority projects. Tier 2 will be lower priority projects. Either new or renewal projects may be ranked in Tier 1 or Tier 2. The placement of each project on the priority list will be determined through a multi-stage process including review by the Continuum of Care Rating Panel, Continuum of Care Operating Cabinet and the Commission on Ending Homelessness, prior to review by the Winston-Salem City Council.

Based on the highly competitive nature of the grant program, ranking of each project will be critical in determining the likelihood of funding. Projects ranked in Tier 2, particularly at the bottom of Tier 2, have a low probability of funding. New projects created through reallocation or bonus funding may be included in either Tier 1 or Tier 2.

New project proposals will be reviewed in reference to experience of project applicant, support services, outreach for participants, organizational capacity, strategic priority, project approach and design, and cost effectiveness.

HUD PROGRAM INFORMATION

All parties intending to apply for funding are strongly encouraged to review the program regulations, including those organizations that are currently or were previously funded. Proposals that do not conform to the regulations will not be considered for funding. The regulations and other information for the Continuum of Care Program may be found at <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/>.

FUNDS AVAILABILITY

Once awarded by HUD, grant funds are estimated to be made available by HUD by **mid-year in calendar year 2022**. However, the awarding of funds and the timing of awards and grant-making by HUD is outside of the control of the City of Winston-Salem. Agencies seeking renewal funding must be aware of all operating year start and end dates and must make arrangements to accommodate any period for which a HUD funding award is denied or delayed. It should be noted that new projects created through reallocation are not renewal projects and may have different start dates than the grants from which funds were reallocated. Therefore, the HUD award for the new project may not begin at the ending of the current grant. There may be a gap in time during which the agency will be responsible for continuing operations or services until a contract for the new HUD funds can be executed.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To be eligible, all applicants must meet the following conditions:

1. Must have documentation of having served HUD-eligible homeless persons or families, through activities that are eligible under the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) regulations, during the twelve months prior to the deadline stated in the Request for Proposals;
2. Must propose an eligible activity for an eligible homeless population, pursuant to HUD requirements;
3. Must be an eligible contractor for federal funds per <https://www.sam.gov/>, must have a current tax exempt status as verified by the IRS and must not owe any overdue tax debts, as documented on IRS 990 submissions to the IRS;
4. Must not propose to use HUD funds to supplant current funding;
5. Must identify matching funds prior to application submission;
6. Must provide the information listed below and must have satisfactory organizational status, experience and capacity to submit, implement and operate the proposed project, as determined by the City of Winston-Salem.
7. Applicants, its officers, and/or employees must not be debarred or suspended from doing business with the Federal Government.

Sponsors of CoC projects must provide the following items to the City for review, unless the organization has already submitted these items to the City within the last 90 days:

1. Signed Board resolution authorizing application for CoC Funding
2. Organizational By-Laws;
3. Last 3 years of IRS 990, as submitted to the IRS;
4. Most recent audited financial statements;
5. Last three (3) years of financial statements;
6. By-Laws;
7. Articles of Incorporation;
8. IRS 501(c)3 designation letter (status in place for at least one year prior to application deadline);
9. Current Board roster;
10. NC Secretary of State- Evidence of Active Status of Corporation

11. Organizational Chart which includes CoC- funded positions
12. Copies of budgets for last year, current year and next year (if available);
13. Copies of the following:
 - Code of Conduct
 - Fair Housing Policy
 - Anti-Discrimination Policy
 - Conflict of Interest Policies
 - Personnel Policies
 - Accounting and Procurement Policies

Other documents if requested by the City

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Please apply using the New Project Application form in the Neighborly System.

New Project Applications also will be accepted from agencies seeking to provide services without seeking CoC funding. For example, an agency might consider becoming the service provider for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Program participants, using non-CoC resources, in order to obtain PSH housing assistance for eligible homeless persons who are the agency's clients. In this arrangement, the housing assistance would be administered by another provider. Such agency does not have to currently be receiving CoC funding or currently providing services to CoC program participants. If such an arrangement is approved, the agency would execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the City and housing provider to assume relevant responsibilities, which may include but not be limited to:

1. Accepting referrals only from the CoCs coordinated entry system;
2. Determining eligibility and processing applications for assistance;
3. Becoming a participating agency in the CoCs Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and entering all participant data;
4. Keeping participant records and participating in monitoring activities required by HUD, the State, and the City, as appropriate;
5. Providing or coordinating services for participants;
6. Providing at least the minimum required cash or in-kind matching resources;
7. Reporting to the City, State and HUD, as appropriate.

To request funds, please complete and submit an application using the Neighborly Software online portal at this [link](#). The Neighborly Software "Getting Started Guide" found at this [link](#) provides instructions for registering an account to submit an application.

The City may request additional information, if needed pursuant to the requirements described in the CoC NOFA. If your project is selected for submission to HUD, you will be requested to provide additional information within a timeframe to be specified by the City of Winston-Salem.

Please direct any questions to Mellin Parker at (336) 734-1310 or mellinp@cityofws.org or Shereka Floyd at (336) 734-1305 or sherekaf@cityofws.org.

CONTRACT CONDITIONS:

- Contractors will be required to comply with conditions set forth by the City of Winston-Salem and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as outlined in the Federal Register and in this RFP;
- The City must have an executed contract with HUD and an executed contract with each sub-grantee prior to reimbursement of funded activities under this RFP. Agencies will NOT be reimbursed for eligible costs incurred prior to the operational period. The City will not reimburse any agency for incurred project costs beyond the contract operational period;
- Applicants approved for funding will be required to maintain and submit to the City of Winston-Salem adequate information necessary to monitor program accountability and progress in accordance with Federal Regulations under HUD for CoC Programs, and as detailed in an executed City contract;
- Maintain the following records in an orderly fashion by contractor's fiscal year until audited by the City:
 1. Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliation;
 2. Deposit slips and supports;
 3. Checks and supports;
 4. Payroll records;
 5. Cash receipts and disbursements journals;
 6. Monthly financial statements;
 7. Requests for reimbursements from the City and appropriate supporting documents;
- Maintain individual participant files in accordance with all applicable HUD regulations including, but not limited to, proof of homelessness, proof of disability (as applicable), income status, proof of resident rent calculations, and/or savings programs, intake forms, assessments and documentation of services;
- Maintain proper tracking, documentation, client savings programs and resident rent calculations;
- Contractor shall allow representatives of the City of Winston-Salem or HUD to inspect facilities, which are used in conjunction with the contracts made to implement programs funded under this proposal; and
- Contractors shall participate in local CoC planning, networking, training, capacity building, advisory boards and coordination meetings as appropriate.