

City of Winston-Salem

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Continuum of Care

2023 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Assistance

Issue RFP: June 5, 2023

Deadline: June 30, 2023

1:00 PM

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

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

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



BACKGROUND:

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program (24 CFR part 578, the CoC Program interim rule) is a community wide system of care with the goal of ending homelessness. Efforts toward reaching this goal include: providing funding for community based organizations and local governments to quickly rehouse those experiencing homelessness while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; promoting access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs; and optimizing self- sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness within the jurisdictions of the City of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. As the Collaborative Applicant for the WinstonSalem/Forsyth County Continuum of Care, the City of Winston-Salem is accepting proposals for Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This RFP is available to all eligible agencies that wish to participate in the FY 2023 Collaborative Application to operate a project within the Winston-Salem/ Forsyth County CoC jurisdiction.

HUD publishes a CoC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for each funding year. The 2022 NOFO was released August 1, 2022, with a deadline September 30, 2022. 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 NOFO. The City reserves the right to publish additional information subject to NOFO 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 2022 allocations of HUD funds and is subject to funding availability under the NOFO. The City reserves the right to request that applicant organizations submit adjusted project budgets based on the amount of funding made available by HUD.

CURRENT NEED

The 2023 City of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Annual Point in Time Count identified 396 individuals experiencing homelessness on the streets, in emergency shelter, or transitional housing on January 25th, 2023. Of these, it is estimated that 73 individuals were experiencing chronic homelessness. The City has strived to address the needs of homeless individuals and families through a process that engages a broad base of community stakeholders. This process encompasses the work of leaders from non-profits, faith-based, business, and educational organizations, employees and volunteers to plan and provide a dynamic, comprehensive, and coordinated system of services and programs that meet the specialized needs of people experiencing homelessness. This effort demands that each funded agency operate not only in terms of the agency's mission, but also within the broader City-wide effort to end homelessness. Therefore, each project must consider how it functions in the broader CoC system to deliver results related to:

1. Street outreach and community education efforts;
2. Active participation in the City of Winston-Salem Coordinated Entry System in compliance with HUD's Coordinated Entry Notice;
3. Real-time Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) usage, data quality, and performance with HUD/ local goals;
4. Increasing participant's household income and linkage to mainstream benefits;
5. Educational linkages for all children in families and unaccompanied youth;
6. Reduced length of stay in transitional and supportive service programs;
7. High program occupancy and utilization rates;
8. Expedited permanent housing placements for all project component types.
9. Increase access to mental health and other mainstream services.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The City of Winston-Salem and HUD has adopted policy and program priorities for the FY 2023 CoC Program Competition. The following Policy and Program Priorities were adapted from HUD's Policy and Program Priorities from the previous FY 2022 CoC Program Competition:

1. **End homelessness for all persons.** To end homelessness, CoCs should identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness. CoCs should 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, those experiencing chronic homelessness, and people with disabilities, including those living with HIV/AIDS). CoCs should partner with housing, health care, and supportive services providers to expand housing options, such as permanent supportive housing, housing subsidies, and rapid rehousing. Additionally, CoCs should 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.
2. **Use a Housing First approach.** Housing First prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and does not have service participation requirements or preconditions. CoC Program funded projects should help individuals and families move quickly into permanent housing, and CoCs should measure and help projects reduce the length of time people experience homelessness. Additionally, CoCs should engage landlords and property owners to identify housing units available for rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing participants, remove barriers to entry, and adopt client-centered service methods. HUD encourages CoCs to assess how well Housing First approaches are being implemented in their communities.
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 explore all available resources, including CoC and ESG funded assistance, housing subsidies, and supportive services to provide permanent housing options for people who are unsheltered.

4. **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 2022 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 recognized the effects of COVID-19 on CoC performance and data quality and reduced the points available for rating factors related to system performance in the FY 2021 CoC NOFO. In the FY 2022 CoC NOFO HUD significantly increased the points available for system performance rating factors.

5. **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.

6. **Racial Equity.** In nearly every community, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color are substantially overrepresented in the homeless population. HUD is emphasizing system and

program changes to address racial equity within CoCs. Responses to preventing and ending homelessness should address racial inequities to ensure successful outcomes for all persons experiencing homelessness using proven approaches, such as: developing a coordinated community response created in partnership with a racially diverse set of stakeholders and people experiencing homelessness and partnering with organizations with experience serving underserved populations. CoCs should review local policies, procedures, and processes with attention to identifying barriers that result in racial disparities, and taking steps to eliminate barriers to improve racial equity and to address disparities.

7. **Improving Assistance to LGBTQ+ Individuals.** Discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation manifests differently for different individuals and often overlaps with other forms of prohibited discrimination. CoCs should address the needs of LGBTQ+, transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary individuals and families in their planning processes. Additionally, when considering which projects to select in their local competition to be included in their application to HUD, CoCs should ensure privacy, respect, safety, and access regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation in projects. CoCs should also consider partnering with organizations with expertise in serving LGBTQ+ populations.
8. **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. People with lived experience should determine how local policies may need to be revised and updated to improve the effectiveness of homelessness assistance programs, including participating in planning and oversight activities and developing local competition processes. CoC leaders and stakeholders should also prioritize hiring people who have experienced homelessness in areas where their expertise is needed (e.g. peer outreach and support).
9. **Increasing Affordable Housing Supply.** The lack of affordable housing is the main driver of homelessness. CoCs play a critical role in educating local leaders and stakeholders about the importance of increasing the supply of affordable housing and the specific consequences of the continued lack of affordable housing. CoCs should be communicating with jurisdiction leaders, including for the development of Consolidated Plans, about the harmful effects of the lack of affordable housing, and they should engage local leaders about steps such as zoning and land use reform that would increase the supply of affordable housing. This FY2022 CoC NOFO awards points to CoCs that take steps to engage local leaders about increasing affordable housing supply.

BONUS FUNDS

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.

REALLOCATED FUNDS

Continuums of Care may reduce or eliminate funds from eligible renewal projects and reallocate the funds to create or expand the following types of projects:

1. Permanent supportive housing projects that will primarily serve chronically homeless individuals and families including youth experiencing chronic homelessness;
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;
3. Joint component projects, which will combine transitional housing and rapid re-housing into a single project to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness;
4. Supportive Services projects for centralized or coordinated assessment systems; and
5. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) projects.

Funding for projects is contingent upon award of the funds to the City by HUD. The term for all projects is one year.

FUNDS AVAILABILITY

The estimated amount of funding available from HUD is \$2,676,735. Any bonus funds made available by HUD would be in addition to that amount. 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. Tier 1 is equal to 95 percent of the CoC's Annual Renewal Demand (ARD).

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. Consistent with the requirements of the Consolidated

Appropriations Act, 2022 requests for new CoC project applications are not allowed, other than through reallocation, unless the CoC evaluates and competitively ranks projects based on how they improve system performance. HUD prioritizes funding for CoCs that have demonstrated the capacity to reallocate funding from lower to higher performing projects.

Renewal projects will be reviewed and ranked through the CoC process based on experience and satisfactory past performance, support services offered, and outreach for participants. 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 2024**. 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:

1. Signed Board resolution authorizing application for CoC Funding
2. Organizational By-Laws;
3. Last three (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
14. Other documents if requested by the City

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

There are 3 options to apply:

1. Renewal (use the Renewal and Expansion application form)
2. Renewal and Expansion (use the Renewal and Expansion application form)
3. New Project (Use the New Project Application form)

Eligible renewal grants are listed in an exhibit which is attached to the renewal application form. Agencies may submit expansion funding requests under renewal grants for which they currently receive funds, as well as under renewal grants in which they participate as a partner through a Memorandum of Understanding. For example, an agency may request funding to provide additional services to participants of a permanent supportive housing grant under which the agency does not currently receive funding.

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. **Please submit all grants with the project name, including FY24-25.** For example a project named, Forsyth End Homelessness application name will be titled "ForsythEndHomelessnessFY24-25."

The City may request additional information, if needed pursuant to the requirements described in the CoC NOFO. 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 Shereka Floyd at (336) 734-1305 or sherekaf@cityofws.org.

KEY INFORMATION

Participants in CoC-funded projects must meet HUD's eligibility requirements, which vary by program component, and include the following:

- a. All CoC funded projects are required to participate in the CoC' coordinated entry system. This means that all referrals to CoC-funded projects must come through the Community Intake Center.
- b. Permanent supportive housing projects may serve families or individuals.
- c. Projects may not charge participants program fees in any program.
- d. Funds are not available for transitional housing, except in the HUD component which combines transitional housing and rapid re-housing.
- e. Funds are available for supportive services only for projects in which the proposed supportive services activities are part of a rapid re-housing or permanent supportive housing project or a new project created through reallocation for coordinated assessment.
- f. Emergency shelter and services are not eligible for funding under the CoC Program.
- g. Prior to submission to HUD, you will be asked to provide letters to the City documenting match. Please do not submit them until requested. All eligible funding costs except leasing must be matched with no less than a 25 percent cash or in-kind match. Leasing costs are not required to be matched. An applicant may use funds from any source, including any other federal sources (excluding CoC program funds), as well as State, local, and private sources, provided that funds from the source are not statutorily prohibited to be used as a match.

Cash match must be used for the costs of activities that are eligible under subpart D of 24 CFR 578. The applicant must ensure that any funds used to satisfy the matching requirements of this section are eligible under the laws governing the funds in order to be used as matching funds for a grant awarded under this program. If applications include third-party in-kind match, applicants should attach Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) documentation that confirms the in-kind match commitment. If the MOU documentation is not available at application submission, it will be a condition for grant execution if HUD conditionally awards the project.

Services provided by individuals must be valued at rates consistent with those ordinarily paid for similar work in the subrecipient's organization. If the subrecipient does not have employees performing similar work, the rates must be consistent with those ordinarily paid by other employers for similar work in the same labor market. Match must be spent on program activities that would be eligible for CoC grant funding (e.g. supportive services, rental assistance, operating costs, HMIS costs, and administrative costs.) Sources of Match: Cash: any funds that come from private or public resources (as long as they are not statutorily prohibited from being used as match). In-kind: services (counseling, legal advocacy, etc.), physical goods/equipment (food, furniture, clothing, etc.), and real property (donated land or buildings). To be counted as match, the funds, goods, or services need to come directly from the contributing source to the

organization. Items provided directly to and for individuals/program participants are not eligible as match.

h. All projects will be limited to requests for one year of assistance. Upon expiration, projects may be renewed subject to HUD requirements, local priorities, satisfactory performance, and availability of funds.

i. Collaborative efforts by community agencies are encouraged.

j. All CoC-funded projects must participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

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.