**MA BALANCE OF STATE CoC FEDERAL GRANT PROJECT RANKING AND REVIEW POLICY**

1. **PURPOSE**

All HUD-Funded CoC Projects are reviewed, scored, and ranked to ensure the MA BoS Continuum of Care is strategically allocating the HUD-funded grant across high-performing projects to meet the critical needs and highest priorities of the CoC, in alignment with Federal funding objectives for ending homelessness.

The MA BoS CoC Ranking and Review Policy for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Competition establishes a transparent and unbiased framework for the decision-making process guiding the bi-annual CoC collaborative grant application. This document will be used to assist in the Ranking and Review of projects and is largely based on the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Homeless Policy and Program Priorities as outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Continuum of Care Program Competition. The goal is to ensure that there are written procedures in place that provide regulations for a comprehensive Ranking and Review of all projects.

1. **KEY TERMS**

RANKING

The process of prioritizing projects for funding in rank order. The rating scores are generally an important input into the ranking process (e.g., projects might be ranked according to their score), but the CoC might want to add other factors to inform ranking. For instance, ranking might be prioritized based on project type, population groups served, relative levels of unmet need, or other local funding priorities.

REVIEW

The process of scoring projects based on standardized criteria. Projects are generally scored relative to other projects of the same type.

CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)

The CoC Program is designed to assist individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families experiencing homelessness and provide the services needed to help such individuals move into transitional and permanent housing, with the goal of long-term stability. More broadly, the CoC Program is designed to promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to address homelessness; improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness; improve data collection and performance measurement; and allow each community to tailor its programs to the strengths and challenges in assisting homeless individuals and families within that community.

CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAM COMPETITION

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Competition occurs annually. Each Fiscal Year (FY) Competition process begins with Registration of CoCs by CoC designated Collaborative Applicants, followed by the CoC’s review of Grant Inventory Worksheets (GIW) and the release of the CoC Program NOFO. Documents related to each process are listed below and additional Competition related materials are posted once the process opens and as documents become available. The FY Competition ends when the final funding announcement is released by HUD.

NOFO

Each year the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issues a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for federal funding under the Continuum of Care program. As the CoC Collaborative applicant, EOHLC is responsible for the design, operation, and execution of a local collaborative application process.

COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT

EOHLC is the Collaborative Applicant of the CoC and is responsible for submitting the CoCs application for funding to The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). EOHLC leads the planning and coordination efforts to develop the CoCs application and ensures that it meets HUD's requirements. EOHLC serves as the primary point of contact with HUD and is responsible for managing the CoCs grant funds.

Primary responsibilities of EOHLC include:

* Applying for CoC and/or UFA (Unified Funding Agency) Planning funds,
* Coordinating and submitting the annual application to HUD for CoC program funding, and
* Coordinating and administering the activities and responsibilities of the CoC as specified in the Governance Charter.

1. **THE PROJECT EVALUATON COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLITIES**

This Committee oversees the development and maintenance of performance evaluation/Ranking and Review tools to ensure that projects are being measured for regulatory compliance and for outcomes that reflect the priorities of HUD and the Continuum. The committee meets to review and revise the tools annually. The Committee is made up of subrecipients’ staff members (at various management and staff levels), staff members from the EOHLC Federal Grants Unit, and HMIS staff. Care is taken to assure no project application is assigned where a member of the small group may have a conflict of interest.

The PE Committee makes recommendations regarding final project ranking for Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the NOFO submission. It will make a minimum of two recommendations – one that is solely reliant on the scores of the projects, and another based upon a review of the projects and the needs of the CoC. It may present more recommendations if it is determined there are other factors to consider.

1. **REVIEWER/EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITES**

The reviewers who are representatives of EOHLC, current subrecipients, and non-funded CoC members complete the Ranking and Review tool. They will provide the following support:

* Complete the Ranking and Review tool.
* Verify that all required data is entered and accurate.
* Report any issues/problems to team lead.

1. **REVIEWER/EVALUATOR AND TEAM LEAD STRUCTURE**

The MA BoS CoC currently manages an average of 45 projects annually. For the Rating and Ranking, the structure of the team evaluators will be determined by the number of volunteers and the number of projects that should be reviewed. Every effort will be made to ensure no team reviews more than 6 applications.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Team** | **Number of Members + Lead** | **Number of Projects** | **Program Components** |
|  |  |  | **Equally Distributed (PSH, RRH, TH)** |
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1. **ADVISORY BOARD RESPONSIBLITIES**

The Massachusetts Balance of State (BoS) Advisory Board is the decision-making body of the MA Balance of State Continuum of Care. The Advisory Board votes whether to approve the ranking as submitted by the PE committee. The Advisory Board may make adjustments to the ranking in cases where a project’s score was substantially hampered by conditions that have been rectified via the monitoring process, but only in those circumstances where doing so will impact the project’s tier within the application.

1. **CRITERIA AND EVALUATION**

There are 9 factors used to review and rank projects for the Continuum of Care Application:

1. Threshold Criteria
2. Performance Measures
3. Project Effectiveness
4. Equity Factors
5. PLEE Involvement
6. Serving High Need and Priority Populations
7. CoC Monitoring Score
8. Bonus
9. Penalties
10. **RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Source** |
| APR | Kelly (Laura |
| VESTA report | Kelly |
| Application | eSNAPs (Desiree/Karen) |
| CE vulnerability score | Chris |
| Monitoring score | Lamine |
| Late application submission | Reviewer (included in workbook) |
| Failure to use CE | Chris |
| Contribution to committee | Desiree |
| GIW | Sharepoint (Lamine) |
| DEI | Lamine/Troy |
| Late billing submission (Possible) | Joanna/Troy |
| Quarterly drawdown | Application |
| Housing first | Application |
| 100% Dedicated/Dedicated Plus | Application |
| Units already secured in new projects or expansions | Application |
| Community partnerships | Application (attachments) or Survey |

1. **TIER DETERMINATION**

After completing individual project rating, the PE committee must establish a CoC Priority Listing of projects to include in the annual CoC Application to HUD. It will produce a ranked list that reflects both the ranking and review tool results and funding priorities.

1. **APPEAL**

Rating Scores

Providers may appeal Ranking and Review outcomes/scores. The PE Committee will accept any appeal submitted within 24hr after results are completed/submitted and must be related to the following only:

* Issues due to formulas errors (TOOL)
* Issues due to source documentation errors (APR, Monitoring Results Report, Application, and other relevant reports)

Such errors must be clearly identified and adequately documented.

If a provider wishes to appeal Ranking and Review scores, they must do the following:

1. submit a notification of appeal to the group lead via email.
2. Clearly describe the nature of the appeal.
3. Provide all relevant documentation to support the appeal.

The PE Committee will decline any appeal and will maintain current scores if the appeal is not properly submitted. No delays will be allowed or accommodated in this process.

The PE Committee appeal review will be as followed:

1. Review and assess the appeal.
2. Make a decision within 48hr after receipt of the appeal and notify the provider via email.
3. Make any changes to the provider score accordingly.

TIER Classification

Providers may appeal TIER classification. The PE Committee will accept any appeal submitted within 24hr after results are completed/submitted and must be related to the following only:

* Dispute committee overall decision to classify project in TIER2

If a provider wishes to appeal TIER classification, they must do the following:

1. submit a notification of appeal to the committee lead via email.
2. Clearly describe the nature of the appeal.
3. Provide all relevant documentation to support the appeal (narrative, reports, etc.)

The PE Committee will decline any appeal and will maintain the current TIER class if the appeal is not properly submitted. No delays will be allowed or accommodated in this process.

The PE Committee appeal review will be as followed:

1. Review and assess the appeal.
2. Make a decision within 48hr after receipt of the appeal and notify the provider via email.
3. Make any changes to the provider classification accordingly.