

Western PA Continuum of Care (CoC) FY2018 Request for Proposals – DV Bonus Transitional Housing/ Rapid Re-Housing Joint Component for Domestic Violence Survivors

Preliminary Application due by Close of Business on August 17, 2018

The Western PA CoC submits an annual application to HUD in order to secure federal funding for new and existing projects that work to reduce and end homelessness throughout the CoC's 20-county geographic area. This year, HUD has made an additional \$50M available nationally to specifically fund Domestic Violence projects, through a "DV Bonus".

The Western PA CoC is soliciting Preliminary Applications from agencies interested in applying for the Transitional Housing/ Rapid Re-Housing Joint Component, specifically to serve individuals and families fleeing domestic violence. Per the HUD CoC NOFA, only one TH-RRH project can be submitted under the DV Bonus.

Projects that will be considered through this RFP are limited to organizations currently operating Transitional Housing programs. This includes TH projects receiving CoC-funding and projects not receiving CoC-funding.

- **TH Projects not funded through the CoC:** CoC funding is available to support the Rapid Re-Housing portion of the proposed project (case management and rental assistance). You will be expected to operate the TH portion of the project with existing funding; CoC funding will not be awarded to operate Transitional Housing. By converting the project from TH to TH-RRH Joint Component, project participants will have the resources to exit homelessness and obtain permanent housing more quickly.
- **TH Projects receiving CoC-funding:** If you apply for TH-RRH Joint Component, you will be required to reallocate your current TH project and submit a new project application. By converting the project from TH to TH-RRH Joint Component, project participants will have the resources to exit homelessness and obtain permanent housing more quickly.

To indicate your interest in a new project, please submit a Preliminary Application by close of business on **August 17, 2018**.

- The application should be emailed to westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org
- Please use the e-mail subject line: "DV Bonus TH/RRH Application – **YOUR AGENCY NAME**"

Please review the information provided below regarding project type, eligible participants, eligible activities, expectations and requirements of the project recipient, and selection/scoring criteria to be used in the selection of new project applicants.

Information about the Transitional Housing (TH) – Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Joint Component:

The TH-RRH Joint Component project includes two program types –transitional housing and rapid rehousing– in a single project to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness. When a program participant is enrolled in a TH/RRH Joint Component project, the grant recipient must be able to provide both components, including the units supported by the transitional housing component and the tenant-based rental assistance and services provided through the RRH component, to all participants. A program participant may choose to receive only the transitional housing unit or the assistance provided through the RRH component, but the recipient must make both types of assistance available.

- For more information about this model and its intent, see:
<https://www.hudexchange.info/news/snaps-in-focus-the-new-joint-transitional-housing-and-rapid-re-housing-component/>

Who is eligible to participate in the TH-RRH Joint Component Project?

- The DV Bonus is available to a participant who meets the definition of 24 CFR 578.3 paragraph (4) who is fleeing, attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions.
- The language from the FY 2018 HUD Appropriations Act also includes those who are survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking as eligible to be served by projects funded through the DV Bonus.
- Persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee human trafficking, including sex trafficking, are eligible to be served by projects funded through the DV Bonus.

Considerations:

- What are the needs of the clients that I am serving and is the TH/RRH Joint Component going to address those needs?
- Will expanding my TH project to include RRH allow project participants to obtain permanent housing more quickly?
- Does my organization have the capacity to provide both TH and RRH to project participants, including providing housing location and tenancy supports to ensure the successful retention of permanent housing?
- Do I need the assistance of community providers in order to conduct Housing Quality Standard inspections, manage rental assistance or other housing related aspects of the Rapid Re-Housing component?

What will the grant pay for? The HUD grant can be used towards:

- Housing Costs:
 - **Leasing or Operating dollars will only be awarded to an TH projects already receiving CoC-funding.** All other TH projects will be expected to continue operating the TH portion of the project with other funds.
 - **Rental Assistance** to assist a household pay their rent;
- Supportive Services Costs: Case management to assist households in obtaining and maintaining their housing.

- **HMIS:** While Victim Service Providers are not permitted to enter into HMIS, data must be entered into a HMIS comparable database. If your organization has not added the HMIS Program enhancements to your ETO site, this cost can be included under the HMIS Budget Line Item.
- **Administrative Costs:** To provide funding for your agency to manage the grant including drawing down funds and reporting to HUD.

Are there match requirements? The grantee must provide a 25% match – either cash or in-kind. The only exception is that leasing dollars do not require a match.

Are there any special considerations that I need to be aware of?

- Housing First in a DV Context (or DV Housing First). All projects funded through the CoC are expected to operate in accordance with a Housing First approach, which includes:
 - Participants are not screened out based on the following:
 - Having too little or no income
 - Active or history of substance use
 - Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions
 - History of domestic violence
 - Participants are not terminated from the program based on the following:
 - Failure to participate in supportive services
 - Failure to make progress on a service plan
 - Loss of income or failure to improve income
 - Being a victim of domestic violence
 - Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found in the project’s geographic area
 - The National Alliance for Safe Housing has materials available on their website that further explain Housing First in a DV context. Two specific examples include:
 - Webinar recorded on June 27, 2018 - <https://youtu.be/kFB1TBYjj8g>
 - Domestic Violence Housing First Toolkit - <https://safehousingpartnerships.org/node/344>
- All providers are expected to provide tailored services to each project participant, based on the survivor’s individual needs, using a trauma-informed and victim-centered approach.
 - **Trauma-informed:** This includes approaches delivered with an understanding of the vulnerabilities and experiences of trauma survivors, including the prevalence and physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma. A trauma-informed approach recognizes signs of trauma in staff, clients, and others and responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings. Trauma-informed approaches place priority on restoring the survivor's feelings of safety, choice, and control.
 - **Victim-centered:** Placing the crime victim's priorities, needs, and interests at the center of the work with the victim; providing nonjudgmental assistance, with an

emphasis on client self-determination, where appropriate, and assisting victims in making informed choices; ensuring that restoring victims' feelings of safety and security are a priority and safeguarding against policies and practices that may inadvertently re-traumatize victims; ensuring that victims' rights, voices, and perspectives are incorporated when developing and implementing system- and community-based efforts that impact crime victims.

- All project participants enrolled must come from the CoC's Coordinated Entry Prioritized Waiting List.
 - To learn more about the Western PA CoC's Coordinated Entry System, visit <http://www.pennsylvaniacoc.org/westerncommittees/coordinated-entry/>
- Data entry into a HMIS comparable database, including adherence to the data quality and data timeliness expectations outlined within the HMIS User Agreement.
- Applicants in the Southwest region will be expected to participate in Regional Homeless Advisory Board (RHAB) meetings. Applicants in the Northwest region will be expected to participate in NW provider meetings. In addition, all applicants must be or must become a member of the Western PA CoC, attend semi-annual meetings of the full CoC, and attend trainings provided through the CoC.
- Applicants must have the capacity to operate the project in accordance with HUD requirements including:
 - Timely submission of Annual Progress Report (APR)
 - Draw down funds at least quarterly
 - Expend all of your grant funds within the 12-month grant period

How will projects be selected for submission to HUD? All Preliminary Applications will be reviewed by the Western PA CoC Funding Committee based on the following criteria.

- **Threshold:** to be considered, applicants must:
 - Use a Housing First approach
 - Have experience working with the population to be served
 - A minimum of monthly case management meetings are required as part of the Rapid Re-Housing program. This can be facilitated through mobile advocacy where the advocate or counselor meets with the survivor, in person, at an agreed upon interval and location that works for both the survivor and the grantee.
 - Participate in the Western PA CoC Coordinated Entry System
 - Once finalized, follow the CoC's written standards for providing assistance
 - Enter data into HMIS comparable database
 - Participate in regional and CoC meetings
 - Ensure that service delivery is individualized, trauma-informed and victim-centered and culturally competent

- **Selection Criteria:** Projects will be scored based on several factors, including the below listed criteria:
 - Demonstration of need, and how the TH/RRH project will address that need.
 - Experience with DV Housing First.
 - Experience providing homeless assistance to the identified target population.
 - Experience providing client-centered and culturally competent services.
 - Approach to case management, including case management ratio
 - Ability to provide housing search and location services, using either staff funded through the proposed CoC-funded project or services subcontracted through community partners or leveraged through other resources
 - Organizational capacity to ensure successful program operation. This includes new organizations not currently receiving CoC-funding, as well as organizations already receiving funds.
 - For current CoC grantees, considerations will include meeting HUD's grant management requirements, implementation of HUD policy priorities such as housing first, as well as performance outcomes of current/previous grants
 - Additional consideration will be given to agencies that have not previously received CoC funding
 - Leveraging services from community providers
 - Cost effectiveness of approach, as compared to similar projects within the geographic area

What is my project budget? Please propose the amount of CoC-funded needed to operate this project successfully. One key consideration is to ensure that the proposed project will provide enough rapid re-housing assistance to ensure that at any given time a program participant may move from TH to permanent housing (through RRH). This may be demonstrated by identifying a budget that has twice as many units for the RRH portion of the project than the number of TH units. If your project is selected, the CoC's Funding Committee and Governing Board reserve the right to approve an amount other than what was requested.

If my project is selected for submission, what is the next step? You will be notified no later than **August 31** if your project has been selected for inclusion in the FY2018 CoC Application and the amount of funding that you can request. At that time, you will receive instructions for submission of an application on esnaps, HUD's online application.

Note: Funding is not guaranteed to the organization(s) selected through this RFP. Funding will be made available by HUD based on the performance of the Western PA CoC in the 2018 Continuum of Care competition. Projects funded by HUD will initially be 1-year grants and will be eligible for annual renewal, dependent on the availability of funding from HUD and program performance.

If I have questions about this who should I contact? Send an e-mail to westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org and DMA will get back to you as quickly as possible.