

Eastern PA Continuum of Care (CoC) FY2024 Request for Proposals New project RFP – Annual CoC NOFO

Preliminary Application due by 12pm (noon) on Thursday, August 29th

The Eastern PA CoC submits an annual application¹ to HUD in order to secure federal funding for new and existing projects that work to reduce and end homelessness throughout the CoC's 33-county geographic area. The Eastern PA CoC is soliciting Preliminary Applications from agencies interested in applying for new projects to be submitted as part of the FY2024 Continuum of Care (CoC) Application this fall. The official total amount of the CoC Bonus funds that the Eastern PA CoC can apply for has not yet been released from HUD. We anticipate that the amount will be approximately **\$2,737,899**, plus any funds recaptured by the CoC through reallocation. The CoC may choose to release a revised RFP if the available amount differs significantly from this estimate.

Important note: As of the FY24 CoC Competition, HUD will be moving from an annual competition to a biennial competition (every 2 years). Depending on funding available from Congress, there may not be new CoC project funding in 2025. The CoC encourages applicants interested in new projects to apply this year, as there may not be an opportunity to apply in 2025.

In the Eastern PA CoC, the eligible program types under the CoC Bonus are limited to:

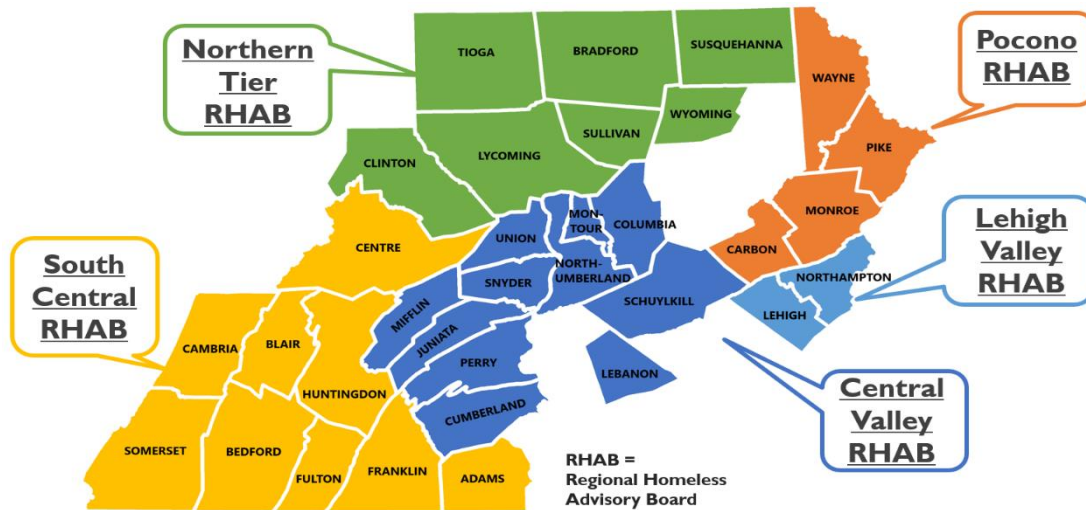
- **Permanent Supportive Housing Projects serving Chronically Homeless Individuals and/or Families**
- **Rapid Re-Housing projects**
 - *In addition to traditional Rapid Re-Housing projects, the CoC is specifically soliciting applications for a Rapid Exit pilot project (maximum amount \$300K). Please see Appendix A for a full description of this pilot. Interested applicants will apply via the Alchemer link as described below.*
- **Joint Transitional Housing – Rapid Re-Housing Component**
- **Expansion of existing projects (existing CoC grantees only)**
- **Transition Grants (existing CoC grantees only)**

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 Eastern PA CoC in the 2024 Continuum of Care national 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

¹*NOTE: As of the FY24 CoC Competition, HUD will be moving from an annual competition to a biennial competition (every 2 years)

program performance.

The Eastern PA CoC includes 33 counties located in five regions, represented by Regional Housing Advisory Boards (RHABs):



- Central Valley – Columbia, Cumberland, Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union
 - Lehigh Valley – Lehigh, Northampton
 - Northern Tier – Bradford, Clinton, Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming
 - Pocono – Carbon, Monroe, Pike, Wayne
 - South Central – Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Somerset
- The CoC is open to receiving Preliminary Applications to serve single counties or multiple counties.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the CoC’s 2024 Gaps Analysis to identify needs and gaps within the CoC. The 2024 Gaps Analysis (including recording of webinar presentation and link to Tableau data) can be found here: <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/resources/eastern-pa-coc-2024-gaps-analysis>. Applicants can also review 2024 Point in Time Count data here: <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/2024-point-time-pit-count-and-housing-inventory-count-hic>.
 - Applicants may apply for projects to serve multiple counties. This may include surrounding counties, counties throughout the entire RHAB, or the entire CoC. If applying to serve multiple counties, applicant will be asked to describe their capacity to implement a regional project, either directly or through partnerships with other organizations throughout the region.
 - If an applicant is interested in applying for a multi-county or regional project,

but have questions related to operating this type of project, they can email their question(s) to DMA following instructions at end of this NOFO.

- New projects seeking to operate solely within one county must provide clear data to demonstrate the need for a single county project.
- Leveraging housing or healthcare: Applicants are highly encouraged to submit new housing projects that will leverage housing or healthcare resources. New projects that will leverage housing or healthcare resources within the project will receive additional points when being evaluated by the Funding Committee. See pages 6-7 of this RFP for additional details.
- ***Due to reallocations in these regions, the CoC strongly encourages applicants serving counties in the Pocono RHAB (Monroe, Carbon, Wayne, Pike counties) and Lehigh Valley RHAB (Lehigh, Northampton counties) to apply.***

To indicate your interest in a new project, please submit a Preliminary Application by **12pm (noon) on Thursday, August 29th**.

- **The Preliminary Application will be submitted via Alchemer (online survey system) at the following link:** <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7832937/Eastern-PA-CoC-FY2024-New-Project-Preliminary-Application-Annual-CoC-NOFO>
- **You will also be asked to attach a budget using the Excel template provided, which you can attach/upload in Alchemer:**
https://mcusercontent.com/e1a442ef49ad7761f7575387a/files/45995a68-5ead-2283-05c7-376100ac1757/Eastern_PA_CoC_2024_CoC_New_Project_Budget_Form.xlsx
- **A copy of the Preliminary Application** is available at https://mcusercontent.com/691833f4d20a0417787b47dbe/files/0897afd8-0a0c-7bb6-90bd-14627a5b414b/HARD_COPY_Eastern_PA_CoC_FY2024_New_Project_Application_Annual_CoC_NOFO.docx, so the questions can be reviewed prior to beginning the application in Alchemer.

Training: The CoC conducted a 2-part new project training series on April 16th and April 18th, 2024. ***Any applicant interested in applying for a new project is strongly encouraged to watch the recording and view the materials from this training.*** Materials can be found at: <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/eastern-pa-coc-fy2024-coc-nofo-competition> (under New Project Training heading).

Webinar: A webinar to review the 2024 CoC Competition NOFO for the Eastern and Western PA CoCs will be held on Tuesday, August 13th from 9am-11am. You can join the webinar by registering at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYqdOygrjkuG9RweubhOzuI3sxEQsfb7cK>.

The webinar will cover various issues related to this year's CoC NOFO, including:

- An overview of the 2024 CoC NOFO and HUD priorities
- Important updates to the NOFO process
- Available funding, tiering and ranking
- Timelines for NOFO activities
- New projects options and process
- Renewal project application options and process
- Q&A

Target Audience for Webinar: Current CoC grantees; Organizations interested in applying for new project funds; Any CoC partner who is interested in learning more about the 2024 CoC NOFO

Additional Information to review prior to submitting a Preliminary Application

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.

Who is eligible for homeless assistance under the CoC? Project participants are limited to the categories 1 and 4 of the [HUD Homeless Definition](#). Category 1 includes individuals and families experiencing literal homelessness in an emergency shelter or in a location not appropriate for sleeping (e.g. street, tent, car, etc.). Category 4 includes persons fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Under certain circumstances, Category 4 may also include persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee human trafficking, including sex trafficking. More information about Category 4 eligibility can be found at https://nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Library_Policy_HEARTH_Creating_Access_for_Survivors.pdf.

Eligible Project Types through this RFP:

- **Rapid Re-Housing:** Rapid Re-Housing is a model of housing assistance that is designed to assist those experiencing homelessness, with or without disabilities, move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. Rapid Re-Housing assistance is time-limited, individualized, and flexible.
 - Eligibility for Rapid Re-Housing in the Eastern PA CoC is limited to households qualified under Categories 1 and 4 of the HUD Homeless Definition. This includes those who are:
 - Residing in a place not meant for human habitation;
 - Residing in an emergency shelter or coming directly from the streets;
 - Persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking situations.
 - ***NOTE: Please see Appendix A for additional information related to Rapid Exit pilot.***
- **New Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH) Joint Component Projects:**

- The Joint TH and PH-RRH component project (also known as TH-RRH) combines two existing program components—transitional housing and permanent housing-rapid rehousing—in a single project to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Recipients should prioritize those with the highest needs using an evidence-based approach designed to provide stable housing and services that, to the greatest extent possible, move the participant towards self-sufficiency and independence.
 - When a program participant is enrolled in a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project, the recipient or subrecipient 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 PH-RRH component, to all participants. A program participant may choose to receive only the transitional housing unit or the assistance provided through the PH-RRH component, but the recipient or subrecipient must make both types of assistance available. For more information about the Joint TH and PH-RRH component project, see HUD materials at <https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/joint-th-rrh-component-projects/2941/>
 - **Note:** Any agencies interested in creating a Joint Component Project will need to describe (in narrative and data) why the Transitional Housing component of the project is needed in their community.
- Permanent Supportive Housing Projects serving Chronically Homeless Households: Units must be dedicated specifically to individuals and families who meet the chronically homeless definition. When a program participant exits the project, the bed must be filled by another household that meets the definition unless there are no chronically homeless persons located in or seeking assistance within the CoC’s geographic area.
 - How is chronic homelessness defined? An individual or family head of household has a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability.
 - AND
 - Is currently living in a place not meant for human habitation, or in an emergency shelter.
 - AND
 - Has been homeless for at least 12 months. This includes:
 - 12 Months Continuous: At least 12 months of continuous homelessness living in a place not meant for human habitation, or in an emergency shelter;
 - OR
 - 12 Months Cumulative: Has experienced homelessness during at least 4 separate occasions in the last three years, where these 4+ occasions equal a total of at least 12 months.

- **Expansion Project:** A renewal project applicant (existing CoC grantee) may submit a new project application to expand current operations **by adding units/beds, increasing the number of persons served, increasing the intensity or type of services provided** to existing program participants. If both the renewal project and new expansion project are funded by HUD, the FY2024 grant agreement will include the existing and expansion activities, and the combined budget.
- **Transition Grant:** A renewal project applicant (existing CoC grantee) may apply for a Transition grant in order to change the project type, for example from Permanent Supportive Housing to Rapid Re-Housing. This should be considered if the needs within your community have changed and/or if you believe that a different project type would increase the project and system performance outcomes.
 - To create a Transition Grant, the CoC must wholly eliminate one or more projects (through reallocation) and use those funds to create the single, new transition grant.
 - The project applicant will have one year to fully transition from the current project type to the new project type.
 - Transition grants funded through the FY24 NOFO Competition are eligible for renewal in subsequent fiscal years for activities eligible under the new project type.
 - To be eligible to receive a transition grant, the renewal project applicant must have the consent of its Continuum of Care and meet the standards.

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

- **Housing Costs:**
 - **Operating funds** to operate a site owned or leased by your agency
 - **Rental Assistance** to assist a household pay their rent;
 - **Note:** If applying for Rapid Rehousing, Rental Assistance is the only eligible housing cost. It cannot be combined with Operating.
 - Under a Rental Assistance model, the program participant enters into the lease with the landlord and pays 30% of their income to the landlord with the provider paying the balance of rent owed.
 - **Leasing** of a single site or scattered site housing units;
 - Under a Leasing model, the provider enters into the lease with the landlord and has a sublease or rental agreement with the program participant. The provider pays 100% of the rent (up to Fair Market Rent) and the program participant pays 30% of household income to the provider.
 - **Note regarding eligible housing costs:**
 - Permanent Supportive Housing projects may request operating funds, rental assistance, or leasing dollars, depending on the structure of the project.
 - Rapid Re-Housing projects may only request rental assistance. Operating and leasing are not eligible costs under this component type.
 - Transitional Housing Rapid Rehousing Joint Component projects may request

operating funds, rental assistance, or leasing dollars, depending on the structure of the project.

- The CoC new project training series from April provides more detail about eligible housing costs: Materials can be found at:

<https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/resources/coc-new-project-training-sessions-april-2024-easternwestern-pa-cocs>

- o **Leveraging housing costs:** HUD is providing CoCs with additional points for submitting Rapid Re-Housing and/or Permanent Supportive Housing project applications that utilize non-CoC resources to cover housing and healthcare costs. Specifically, to receive points under this RFP for leveraging housing costs:
 - PSH projects need to provide housing subsidies or subsidized housing units for at least 25% of the units included in the project.
 - RRH projects must provide housing subsidies or subsidized housing units to serve at least 25% of the participants anticipated to be served in the project.

These housing resources may come from private organizations, state/local government, Public Housing Agencies, including use of a set aside or limited preference, Faith-Based organizations, and/or Federal programs other than the CoC or ESG Programs. Examples of leveraging housing resources may include: an allocation of Section 8/ Housing Choice Vouchers from your local Public Housing Authority, versus utilizing CoC funding to provide Rental Assistance; an allocation of units at a Low Income Housing Tax Credit building that provides subsidized housing; among other opportunities. See the FY2024 NOFO for more information or reach out to DMA with specific questions.

Please note that any project proposing to bring in housing leveraging must be able to provide a formal MOU/letter outlining this agreement. This MOU/letter is not required as part of the preliminary application; however, this will be required if your new project is selected for funding when you complete your application to HUD. DMA will provide TA around the requirements for this MOU/letter to ensure it meets HUD's requirements.

- **Supportive Services Costs:** Case management to assist households in obtaining and maintaining their housing. Where possible, applicants are encouraged to leverage existing services provided through your own organization and/or community partners to provide supportive services. In addition, connecting program participants to mainstream benefits is expected. Per 24 CFR § 578.53 Supportive services, eligible supportive service costs include:
 - o Annual Assessment of Service Needs
 - o Assistance with moving costs
 - o Case management
 - o Child care
 - o Education services
 - o Employment assistance and job training
 - o Food

- Housing search and counseling services
- Legal services
- Life skills training
- Mental health services
- Outpatient health services
- Outreach services
- Substance abuse treatment services
- Transportation
- Utility deposits

Note: Housing Search services (costs of assisting eligible program participants to locate, obtain, and retain suitable housing) are eligible costs under Supportive Services for projects utilizing Rental Assistance. ***Applicants are encouraged to design PSH, RRH, and TH-RRH projects that incorporate housing navigation and housing search assistance, separate from case management roles (e.g., housing navigator in addition to case management staff).***

- **Leveraging healthcare costs:** HUD is providing CoCs with additional points for submitting Rapid Re-Housing and/or Permanent Supportive Housing applications that that utilize non-CoC resources to cover housing and healthcare related costs. Specifically, to receive points for leveraging healthcare costs in the Eastern PA CoC's new project scoring process, applicants must demonstrate that they are housing healthcare resources that are direct contributions from a public or private health insurance provider to the project, or provision of health care services by a private or public organization tailored to the program participants of the project. Note: Eligibility for the project must be based on HUD CoC Program fair housing requirements and cannot be restricted by the health care service provider. As such, the Eastern PA CoC is interested in partnering with organizations that can leverage 25% or more of the project's healthcare/ service needs through community partnerships. Examples of leveraging healthcare services may include: in the case of a substance abuse treatment or recovery provider, it will provide access to treatment or recovery services for all program participants who qualify and choose those programs. Services may also be mental/behavioral health or other types of services. See the FY2024 NOFO for more information or reach out to DMA with specific questions.

Please note that any project proposing to bring in healthcare leveraging must be able to provide a formal MOU/letter outlining this agreement. This MOU/letter is not required as part of the preliminary application; however, this will be required if your new project is selected for funding when you complete your application to HUD. DMA will provide TA around the requirements for this MOU/letter to ensure it meets HUD's requirements.

- Administrative Costs: Eligible administrative costs are limited to: the general management, oversight and coordination of the grant; training on CoC requirements; and environmental review. Admin costs do not include staff and overhead costs directly related to carrying out eligible activities, as these are eligible under the corresponding Budget Line Items. Please review 24 CFR § 578.59 for more information about eligible administrative costs.
- There are two additional eligible budget line items under the FY2024 CoC NOFO:
 - These budget line items can be requested for new projects, or for expansion projects.
 - **VAWA Costs Budget Line Item**
 - The NOFO indicates that this budget line item can be used for “Facilitating and coordinating activities to ensure compliance with the emergency transfer plan requirement in 34 U.S.C. 12491(e) and monitoring compliance with the confidentiality protections in 34 U.S.C. 12491(c)(4).”
 - While the CoC is not limiting this budget line item to Victim Services Providers, both Victim Services Providers and non-Victim Services Providers must provide a justification for why they are requesting this budget line item, and how the activities will be carried out. This information will be requested within the budget template form.
 - More details on eligible activities can be found in **Appendix B of this RFP**.
 - **Rural Costs Budget Line Item**
 - The NOFO indicates that this budget line item can be used for the following activities, if the project is operating in a rural area as defined by HUD.
 - (a) Payment of short-term emergency lodging, including in motels or shelters, directly through vouchers.
 - (b) Repairs to units in which homeless individuals and families will be housed; or are currently not fit for human habitation.
 - (c) Staff training, professional development, skill development, and staff retention activities.
 - **See Appendix C of this RFP for more information.**
 - Providers requesting this budget line item must provide justification for why they are requesting this budget line item, and how the activities will be carried out. This information will be requested within the budget template form.
 - The list of HUD-defined rural counties can be found here: <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/CoC/FY-2023-Rural-Area-Report.pdf>. Applicant can review this list of HUD-defined rural areas to determine if the area the project is serving may be designated as rural. See **Appendix C of this RFP**.

More detail on these two additional budget line items can be found in Appendices B and C

of this RFP. If applicants are interested in requesting either of these new budget line items as part of their new project application, this can be included in the budget template.

- More details on all eligible costs are available in HUD’s CoC Binder: <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-eligible-activities/coc-eligible-activities-overview/>
- The CoC new project training series from April 2024 also provides more detail about eligible costs. Materials can be found at: <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/resources/coc-new-project-training-sessions-april-2024-easternwestern-pa-cocs>

What is my project budget? Projects may apply for a maximum of **\$2,737,899**, which is the approximate maximum amount of funds the CoC is eligible to apply for through the CoC Bonus/reallocated funds. While a budget is requested in the Preliminary Application, if your project is selected, the CoC’s Funding Committee reserves the right to approve an amount other than the amount requested.

Are there match requirements? The grantee must provide a 25% match – either cash or in-kind. In-kind match, for example, can be any of the eligible services listed above. Match commitments require an MOU and documentation.

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

- Applicants must follow the [Eastern PA CoC’s Written Standards for providing assistance](#).
- The [Eastern PA CoC’s Written Standards](#) include Case Management Standards for all project types. The frequency of case management services should depend on the unique needs and situation of every program participant. Case Managers should be in direct contact with their clients at least once a month. The frequency of direct contact may increase due to the household’s homeless status, acute needs, and overall lack of housing stability. Per HUD CoC regulation, a minimum of monthly case management is required for participants in Rapid Re-Housing projects.
- 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
 - Being a survivor 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 survivor of domestic violence
 - Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found in the project's geographic area
- All project participants enrolled must come from the CoC's Coordinated Entry (Connect to Home) By Name List, following the CoC's prioritization order.
 - To learn more about the Eastern PA CoC's Coordinated Entry System (Connect to Home), visit <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/balance-stateeastern-pa-coc/connect-home-coordinated-entry-system-eastern-pa>.
- All CoC Program funded projects must enter complete, accurate, and timely data into the PA Homeless Management Information System (PA-HMIS). This will include adhering to the data quality and data timeliness expectations outlined within the [PA HMIS User Agreement](#). Victim services organizations must enter data into a DV comparable database.
- All CoC Program funded projects will be expected to participate in the meetings of the local Regional Homeless Advisory Board (RHAB) and Coordinated Entry By Name List (BNL) meetings. In addition, all applicants must be or must become a member of the Eastern PA CoC, attend semi-annual meetings of the full CoC, and attend trainings provided through the CoC.
- All CoC Program funded projects will be expected to have the capacity to operate this program in accordance with HUD requirements including:
 - Submitting an Annual Progress Report (APR) to HUD on time/ no more than 90 days after the end of the grant period
 - Drawing down funds at least quarterly
 - Expending all of grant funds within the 12-month grant period
- All CoC Program funded projects will be expected to comply with the CoC Program Interim Rule. Those unfamiliar with the CoC Program Interim Rule are advised to carefully review "Subpart F—Program Requirements" of the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>

Application Review & Selection Information

All Preliminary Applications will be reviewed by the Eastern PA CoC Funding Committee based on the following criteria.

Please note that the CoC's Funding Policies can be found here:

<https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2024-03/Eastern%20PA%20CoC%20-%20FY2024%20CoC->

[funding%20Process%20and%20Policies_Final%2026_24.pdf](#). The Funding Policies outline the new project selection process that is followed by the Eastern PA CoC Funding Committee.

- Threshold: to be considered, applicants must:
 - Project must be submitted by an eligible applicant (non-profit, state or local government or instrumentality of state or local government, public housing authority)
 - Application must be for an eligible project type and eligible geography (as outlined in the RFP)
 - Use a Housing First approach
 - Provide program participants with assistance securing Mainstream Benefits and health insurance
 - Have experience working with the population to be served
 - Provide ongoing case management for all participants, following the guidance as outlined in the [Written Standards](#). See project-type specific sections of the Written Standards for specific case management expectations by project type. A minimum of monthly case management meetings are required as part of the Rapid Re-Housing program.
 - Participate in the Eastern PA CoC Coordinated Entry System (Connect to Home)
 - Follow the CoC's [written standards](#) for prioritizing and providing assistance
 - Enter data into PA-HMIS or DV comparable database
 - Participate in the RHAB/CoC
 - Ensure that service delivery is client-centered and culturally competent
 - Must be in good standing with HUD and PA DCED, with no outstanding monitoring findings or debts.

- Selection Criteria/Scoring Factors: Projects will be scored based on several factors, including the below listed criteria:
 - Demonstration of need, through both data and narrative.
 - Geographic area: Preference given to projects that can clearly support the need for the project within a specific geographic area. Applicants should provide data to support the need for the project.
 - Organizational capacity to operate a CoC-funded project, including fiscal capacity and grant management capacity.
 - Preference may be given to projects located in and/or covering communities that have lost funding due to underperformance and/or underutilization, if applicable.
 - Being able to serve all household types (households with children, households without children, and couples)
 - Note: Data collected through the coordinated entry system has shown a significant demand for homeless assistance among single individuals. The CoC is interested in funding programs that have the capacity and expertise to serve all household types, including single individuals (households without children). This may include projects that are interested in shared housing.

See data presented on the [CoC's 2024 Gaps Analysis webinar](#).

- **Strategic partnerships with community providers, including:**
 - **the ability to document leveraged housing cost (maximum points awarded for 25% or more of your housing costs from community housing partners)**
 - **the ability to document leveraged healthcare/services cost (maximum points awarded for 25% or more of your budget leveraged from community service partners)**
- Approach for providing case management and supportive services, including case management ratio
- Coordination and integration with other mainstream health, social services, and employment partners
- Cost effectiveness of approach, as compared to similar projects within the CoC
- Experience operating programs with using a Housing First approach
- Experience providing client-centered and culturally competent services
- Experience providing community-based housing/homeless assistance, either directly or with the assistance of a community partner, including the ability to provide housing search and location services
- Strategy for providing housing search and location services, using either staff funded through the proposed CoC-funded project or services leveraged through other resources or community partners
- If applicable, capacity of the applicant to implement a regional project, either directly or through partnerships with other organizations throughout the region
- Organizational capacity and experience to ensure successful and inclusive program operation. Specifically, the CoC will determine if the applicant organization has experience serving and improving outcomes for communities that have been historically marginalized (e.g. people of color, LGBTQ+, people that do not speak English as their primary or first language) and experience providing culturally responsive services.
 - **Note: the new project application will include questions about organizational capacity to promote racial equity, including within the project design and the delivery of services; organizational diversity; and what financial commitments they are making to promote equity.**
- Experience incorporating persons with lived experience of homelessness into project decision-making, including design and delivery of services
- For current and previous CoC/ESG project providers, considerations will include meeting HUD/DCED's grant management requirements, implementation of HUD policy priorities such as housing first, as well as performance outcomes of current/previous grants
- Applicant's documented strong performance outcomes with other projects (those who are not current/former CoC/ESG grantees or for whom there is no data in HMIS)
- Additional consideration will be given to agencies that have not previously received CoC funding.

The CoC Funding Committee will use a new project scoring tool to evaluate new project applications. A blank copy of the scoring tool will be posted on the [CoC website 2024 CoC Competition page](#). Please note that the score awarded to each applicant via the scoring tool is one component of how the Funding Committee will determine new projects that are selected to be submitted for funding under the CoC Competition. The Funding Committee will also factor in need for the project based on gaps analysis data, when compared to other projects submitted under this RFP, as well as prior performance of the applicant operating CoC or ESG-funded projects.

Next Steps if Selected

- You will be notified if your project has been selected and your final budget amount no later than September 20th, 2024. At that time, you will receive instructions for submitting the new project application in [e-snaps, HUD's CoC Program Applications and Grants Management System](#). This process will require your organization to be registered with [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) and have a UEI (Unique Entity ID) Number (Note: The UEI Number replaced the DUNS Number. The Unique Entity ID is assigned automatically to entities when they register on SAM.gov or when they [request a Unique Entity ID](#)).
- **If your project has been selected, there will be a mandatory briefing meeting on Tuesday, September 24th from 10am-11:30am.** The meeting will be recorded. If you are applying for new project funding through this RFP, please save the date for this meeting. Additional details will be sent out when new projects are notified of whether they are selected.

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

Appendix A – Rapid Exits Pilot

The Eastern PA CoC is specifically soliciting new project(s) to operate one or more Rapid Exit pilot projects. Interested applicants will apply through the Alchemer new project application link as described in the RFP.

Overview of Rapid Exit:

Rapid exit strategies are appropriate after a household has entered emergency shelter or stayed in an unsheltered setting and serve to help them move as quickly as possible back into housing with the support of services and a minimal level of financial assistance.

Pilot Project within the Eastern PA CoC

- Project Type = Rapid Re-Housing
- Maximum Budget = \$300,000
- Project must include housing search assistance, or describe how it will be provided
- In addition, the project can include:
 - Case management (limited)
 - Assistance with moving costs
 - Transportation
 - Utility deposits
- The bulk of the budget will be allocated to rental assistance, as each household served can be provided with up to three months' rent: (1) security deposit; (2) first month's rent; (3) last month's rent.

Important Considerations and Practices

Rapid exit interventions are provided to a household as soon as possible after the household enters a shelter, a transitional housing program, or an unsheltered setting. A focus on rapid exit approaches is built upon the recognition that many people who experience homelessness can effectively resolve their own homelessness independently or with very limited help. By utilizing strengths-based, housing-focused case management, rapid exits can be facilitated for households that would not likely be prioritized for a housing intervention such as rapid re-housing or supportive housing, both of which involve deeper and longer-term rent assistance.

Rapid exit approaches often take the form of housing-focused services intended to help the person identify ways to exit homelessness quickly and, when possible, without utilizing homelessness-dedicated resources. Even when the exit does not occur quickly, attempts at resolving a person's housing crisis with housing-focused services should continue. And, because rapid exit depends primarily on case management skills, it is critical to invest in training that equips staff to provide effective light touch services and implement progressive engagement with all those in shelters and other temporary programs and through outreach. Depending on the community and funding streams, limited short-term financial assistance may also be used, when necessary, to facilitate returns to housing.

Benefits

By integrating effective homelessness prevention, diversion, and rapid exit approaches into systems, our focus is on providing assistance earlier in a household's housing crisis. It is the goal of these approaches to lessen trauma, identify and create new pathways to housing, reduce isolation, preserve scarce housing resources, and empower households to be partners in their housing plans. This reduces the prevalence of homelessness, the length of episodes of homelessness, and trauma, all of which better serve people facing housing crises.

Because these interventions better serve households in crisis, they also improve system effectiveness by reducing inflow and expediting outflow. With system-wide prevention, diversion, and rapid exit approaches, communities will see improvements in their system performance measures – shorter lengths of time people experience homelessness, reduced numbers of households experiencing homelessness for the first time, and fewer households returning to the system.

Implementation in the Eastern PA CoC

Rapid exit could begin as a pilot within the Eastern PA CoC by identifying a single county or a few counties that have the capacity to quickly identify households with income who are in shelter, entering shelter, and experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Households with sufficient income to support their rent, but lack savings adequate to secure a rental unit. In this case, households may have some, all or no funds saved to execute a lease.

Some households will need assistance with housing search, which should be a service provided through the project.

The basic structure of the project is to provide quick identification of eligible households, quickly enroll them in Coordinated Entry (if not already enrolled), quickly enroll them into the project and provide housing search assistance. Once a rental unit has been identified, all CoC-funded regulations still apply, meaning there is still the requirement for a Housing Quality Standards inspection, etc.

The household is provided with up to three months rental assistance – first, last and security deposit. A review of benefits should also occur in order to ensure that the household is enrolled in all eligible entitlements – health insurance, food stamps, childcare assistance, etc. At that point, the household is closed out.

Additional details, including next steps if the household fails in Rapid Exit, would need to be determined through a process of creating Written Standards for this project type.

Questions

If you have specific questions about this pilot, please email easterncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org.

Appendix B –VAWA Costs Budget Line Item

Excerpt from pages 47-48 of the [FY2024 CoC NOFO](#) related to this budget line item:

(2) Section 605(a)(2) of VAWA 2022 amended section 423(a) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to add the following eligible activity to the CoC program: “Facilitating and coordinating activities to ensure compliance with the emergency transfer plan requirement in [34 U.S.C. 12491(e)] and monitoring compliance with the confidentiality protections in [34 U.S.C. 12491(c)(4)].”

HUD has determined that eligible activities paid for under the VAWA costs category are not subject to the CoC program’s spending caps on administrative costs under section 423(a)(10), (11), and (12). This activity may be included in new project applications, added to eligible renewal projects through expansion or added to eligible renewal projects by shifting up to 10 percent of funds from one eligible activity to the VAWA costs line item.

(a) Examples of eligible costs for emergency transfer facilitation include the costs of assessing, coordinating, approving, denying and implementing a survivor’s emergency transfer which includes:

(i.) Assistance with moving costs. Reasonable moving costs to move survivors for an emergency transfer.

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(ii.) Assistance with travel costs. Reasonable travel costs for survivors and their families to travel for an emergency transfer.

(iii.) Security Deposits. Grant funds can be used to pay for security deposits of the safe units the survivor is transferring to via an emergency transfer.

(iv.) Utilities. Grant funds can be used to pay for costs of establishing utility assistance in the safe unit the survivor is transferring to.

(v.) Housing Fees. Fees associated with getting survivor into a safe unit via emergency transfer, includes but not limited to application fees, broker fees, holding fees, trash fees, pet fees where the person believes they need their pet to be safe, etc.

(vi.) Case management. Grant funds can be used to pay staff time necessary to assess, coordinate and implement emergency transfers.

(vii.) Housing navigation. Grant funds can be used to pay staff time necessary to identify safe units and facilitate moves into housing for survivors through emergency transfers.

(viii.) Technology to make an available unit safe. Grant funds can be used to pay for technology that the individual believes is needed to make the unit safe, including but not limited to doorbell cameras, security systems, phone and internet service when necessary to support security systems for the unit, etc.

(b) Examples of eligible costs for monitoring compliance with the VAWA confidentiality requirements include the costs of ensuring compliance with the VAWA confidentiality requirements which includes:

- (i.) Monitoring and evaluating compliance with VAWA confidentiality requirements.
- (ii.) Developing and implementing strategies for corrective actions and remedies.
- (iii.) Program evaluation of confidentiality policies, practices and procedures.
- (iv.) Training on compliance with VAWA confidentiality requirements.
- (v.) Reporting to Collaborative Applicant, HUD and other interested parties on compliance with VAWA confidentiality requirements.
- (vi.) Costs for establishing methodology to protect survivor information.
- (vii.) Staff time associated with maintaining adherence to confidentiality requirements.

Appendix C– Rural Costs Budget Line Item

Excerpt from pages 48-49 of the [FY2024 CoC NOFO](#) related to eligible activities under this budget line item:

requirements:

(3) Section 5707 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (PL 117-263, December 23, 2022, 136 Stat 2395) amended section 423(a) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to allow projects in rural areas [as defined in section I.B.2.b.(26) of this NOFO] to use program funds to pay for the following eligible Continuum of Care Program activities:

(a) Payment of short-term emergency lodging, including in motels or shelters, directly or through vouchers.

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(b) Repairs to units in which individuals and families experiencing homelessness will be housed; or are currently not fit for human habitation.

(c) Staff training, professional development, skill development, and staff retention activities.

HUD has determined that eligible activities paid for under the Rural costs category may be included in new project applications or added to eligible renewal projects through expansion.

HUD will publish a list of CoCs located in rural areas as defined in section I.B.2.b.(26) of this NOFO.

The list of HUD-defined rural counties can be found here:

<https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/CoC/FY-2023-Rural-Area-Report.pdf>.

Applicant can review this list of HUD-defined rural areas to determine if the area the project is serving may be designated as rural.