



Contra Costa Council on Homelessness
Governance Charter

Approved and Adopted by the Contra Costa Council on Homelessness on: June 11, 2015

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Article I. Collaborative Applicant

Section 1. DEFINITION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Contra Costa Homeless Program is the collaborative applicant for the Contra Costa Continuum of Care (CoC). The collaborative applicant's role is to:

- A. Submit the consolidated application
- B. Apply for CoC planning funds on behalf of the CoC
- C. Develop a governance charter with the CoC

Section 2. COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

The Collaborative Applicant designated by the Council on Homelessness must comply with HUD regulations for the CoC Program by keeping records documenting compliance with HUD requirements. The Collaborative Applicant will keep evidence of the following according to the Council's approved record-keeping requirements:

- A. The Council meets the structural requirements:
 1. Approved copy of a governance charter establishing the Council and including a written process to select a CoC board, and
 2. Board roster (including Council members' affiliations/representation(s)).
- B. The CoC has been established and operated in compliance with HUD regulations, including:
 1. Published agendas and meeting minutes, and
 2. Monitoring reports of recipients and subrecipients.
- C. The CoC has prepared the application for funds in compliance with HUD regulations.
- D. The Council is compliant with HUD's conflict of interest requirements, including documentation of a conflict of interest policy signed by all Council members.

Article II. Continuum of Care (CoC) Application Process

Section 1. APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The Council on Homelessness prepares and oversees the applications for funds administered by HUD under the HEARTH Act. The Council on Homelessness is designed to assist individuals—including unaccompanied youth—and families experiencing homelessness and to provide the services needed to help individuals move into transitional and permanent housing, with the goal of long-term stability. The Council's HUD CoC Program funds are granted annually based on a national competition following the release of a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). It is a primary responsibility of the Council to oversee the application for those funds.

The following sections outline the Council's policies as related to designing, operating and following a collaborative local process for the development of HUD Continuum of Care Program applications and approval of submission of applications as required by C.F.R. 578.9.

Section 2. COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT

The Council designates Contra Costa County Behavioral Health Homeless Program as the annual HUD CoC Program Collaborative Applicant. The Collaborative Applicant (or its designee) is responsible for leading and supporting all aspects of the annual HUD CoC Program application process, including submission of the Consolidated Application consisting of 1) the CoC Application (formerly Exhibit 1); 2) Project Applicant's Priority List; and 3) all Project Applications (formerly Exhibits 2).

Section 3. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS AND APPLICATION SUBMISSION TIMELINE

Immediately after HUD's Continuum of Care Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is released, the Collaborative Applicant (or its designee) will coordinate and carry out all of activities needed to successfully submit an application on behalf of the CoC. The following is an overview of the timeline of tasks for CoC Program application submission. The timeline is subject to change annually, depending on HUD's requirements as outlined in the NOFA.

Prior to the NOFA release, the Council will request that the HUD Grantees Committee convene to design and/or revise scoring tools and any corresponding local application materials to assist in the CoC review and ranking of all renewal and new project applications. These materials will take into consideration both local and HUD priorities.

The scoring tools will be finalized and presented to the Council for review and approval. The Council may initiate additional revisions to the scoring tools and local application materials if warranted based on new information about HUD priorities or process requirements contained in that year's NOFA.

Upon HUD release of the NOFA, the Collaborative Applicant will schedule and announce a time and date for a Technical Assistance Workshop. These details will be distributed to the entire CoC.

All potential applicants must participate in the HUD CoC Program Technical Assistance Workshop. At the workshop, the Collaborative Applicant will present an overview of the HUD CoC NOFA, including details about available funding and any major changes in the application from previous years. Applicants will also be oriented to the process for reviewing and ranking applications, which will cover any supplemental local application materials and the scoring tool and applicable dates. Applicants will also have a chance to ask any questions about both the local and HUD application processes.

Applicants complete local application materials by a date announced at the Technical Assistance Workshop, typically within four to six weeks of the NOFA release (and generally not less than 30 days prior to the NOFA submission deadline).

- Any late application received within 48 hours of the due date/time will receive a 15 point score reduction. Late applications received after 48 hours will not be accepted.
- Incomplete applications cannot be cured for the CoC Review and Rank Panel scoring process but must be corrected prior to HUD submission.

Qualified, non-conflicted CoC Review and Rank Panel members are recruited and oriented to the local review and ranking process.

The CoC Review and Rank Panel members receive all local application and scoring materials and review and score each program's application.

The CoC Review and Rank Panel meets to jointly discuss each application, interview applicants, and to comment on ways to improve individual applications. Panel members individually score applications based on the scoring tools. The ranked list is created by the following procedures:

- One ranked list is prepared based on a compilation of CoC Review and Rank Panel raw scores for each application.
- Those applications that do not meet certain threshold requirements (as detailed on the scoring tool) will not be included on the ranked list.
- The highest scoring and eligible new permanent housing project will be selected to apply for any bonus funding available through the NOFA.
- Based on community priorities established by the scoring tools, the CoC Review and Rank Panel may determine whether any renewal project should be decreased or reallocated. Any funding captured from an existing project will be made available for reallocation to a new project that meets the requirements in the NOFA application.

Scoring results are sent to applicants with a reminder of the appeals process at least 15 days before CoC Application deadline. In addition, projects are given feedback from the CoC Review and Rank Panel on the quality of their application and ways they can improve their final submission to HUD.

Appeals, if any, are considered in compliance with the Appeals Process detailed below.

A final ranked project list is submitted to the Executive Board for review and approval.

The Collaborative Applicant collects all final Project Applications and submits them to HUD, along with the CoC Application, as part of the CoC's Consolidated Application

Section 4. CoC REVIEW AND RANK PANEL MEMBERSHIP

The Council designates between three and five of its members to serve as CoC Review and Rank Panelists. CoC Review and Rank Panelists must be:

- Knowledgeable about homelessness and housing in the community and broadly representative of the relevant sectors, subpopulations, and geographic areas;
- "Neutral," meaning that they are not employees, staff, or otherwise have a business or personal conflict of interest with the applicant organizations;
- Familiar with housing and homeless needs within Contra Costa County; and
- Willing to review projects with the best interest of homeless persons in mind.

To serve on the CoC Review and Rank Panel, members must:

- Sign a statement declaring that they have no conflict of interest and a confidentiality agreement; and
- Be able to dedicate time for application review and CoC Review and Rank Panel meetings as scheduled by the Collaborative Applicant.

Section 5. REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

HUD allows CoCs to reallocate funds from non- and/or under-performing projects to higher priority community needs that also align with HUD priorities and goals. The CoC Review and Rank Panel facilitates the reallocation discussion and process, in consultation with the CoC, the Council, the Collaborative Applicant, and the CoC Program recipients and subrecipients who may be impacted. The Council must approve all final decisions about reallocation.

Section 6. USING ALL AVAILABLE FUNDS

The Collaborative Applicant will do everything possible to ensure that the community applies for all funds available to the CoC. Thus, if all on-time applications have been submitted and it appears that either: 1) the community is not requesting as much money

as is available from HUD, 2) no bonus (or other special project as defined by HUD) projects have been submitted, or 3) there are reallocated funds available, then:

- The Collaborative Applicant will communicate with the Council, CoC, and other interested parties (all homeless service and housing providers in Contra Costa County) with details about the available funding.
- The Collaborative Applicant will provide technical assistance and guidance, as needed, to ensure applicants understand the funding requirements.
- Any additional applications for these funds will be due as soon as possible after this communication is distributed, in compliance with CoC Program submission deadlines.

Section 7. APPEALS PROCESS

All eligible applicants have the opportunity to appeal both their score and preliminary ranking prior to the ranked list being finalized and approved by the Council. The Appeals Panel will only be established if an applicant requests an appeal.

A. THE APPEALS PANEL

The Appeals Committee will be comprised of four impartial members of the Council: three voting members and one non-voting member. The three voting members will not have participated in the original CoC Review and Rank Panel. The non-voting member must have been a member of the original CoC Review and Rank Panel.

No member of the Appeals Committee may have a conflict of interest with any of the agencies applying for CoC Program funding. All members of the Appeals Committee must sign conflict of interest and confidentiality statements. If there are insufficient Council members who qualify for the appeals committee, a member of the CoC may be designated by the Council to participate in the Appeals Committee.

B. ELIGIBLE APPEALS

An applicant may be eligible to appeal the decision of the CoC Review and Rank Panel if their project application:

- Is rejected from inclusion as part of the CoC Consolidated Application submission, or
- Receives decreased funding (e.g., through reallocation).

To appeal, the applicant must demonstrate that:

- Their score is not reflective of the application information provided, or
- There was bias or unfairness in the process that warrants the appeal.

All appeals must be based on information submitted by the applicant agency by the application due date. No new or late information will be considered. The omission of

information (inadvertently or otherwise) from a project application is not grounds for an appeal.

C. SUBMITTING AN APPEAL

Any and all appeals must be received in writing with supporting documentation within three business days following the notification of ranking to projects.

The notice of appeal must include a written statement specifying in detail the grounds asserted for the appeal. The statement must be signed by an individual authorized to represent the agency (i.e., Executive Director) and submitted to the Collaborative Applicant or its administrative designee. The notice of appeal is limited to two single-sided, single-spaced pages in 12-point font. The notice of appeal must include a copy of the project application in question and all accompanying materials submitted to the CoC Review and Rank Panel.

D. THE APPEALS PROCESS

The Appeals Panel will meet with a representative(s) of the agency/collaborative making the notice of appeal to discuss the appeal. A face-to-face meeting is preferred, but if time conflicts require it, the conversation can occur by conference telephone.

All appeals submitted in compliance with Section 7.B will be read, reviewed and evaluated by the Appeals Panel. The role of the Appeals Panel is to read and review only those areas of the application that are being appealed.

The Appeals Panel will then meet to deliberate. All project applicants will be invited to attend any appeal and each applicant may make a 10-minute statement regarding the appeal.

The Appeals Panel will review the rankings made by the CoC Review and Rank Panel only on the basis of the submitted project application, the two-page appeal, any statements made to the Appeals Panel during the appeals process, and the materials used by the CoC Review and Rank Panel. No new information can be submitted by the applicant or reviewed by the Appeals Panel.

The decision of the Appeals Panel must be supported by a simple majority vote of voting members.

The appealing agency will receive, in writing, the decision of the Appeals Panel within two business days of the Appeals Panel Meeting. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

Section 8. FINAL PRIORITIZED LIST OF APPLICATIONS

The Council must approve the final ranked list of all Project Applicant proposals. Any Council members with a conflict of interest must recuse himself/herself from all related discussions and abstain from the vote approving the priority list. The Collaborative Applicant will then submit this prioritized list to HUD by the CoC Program Competition deadline as part of the Consolidated Application. Conditional award funding is typically

based upon the prioritized list of Project Applicants that are submitted; however, HUD determines actual awards and funding amounts.

Article III. Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Application Process

Section 1. APPLICATION OVERVIEW

In addition to the CoC Application Process, the Council also coordinates with the recipients of Emergency Solutions Grant funds. While HUD distributes some ESG funds directly to entitlement jurisdictions, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) administers the remaining non-entitlement funding for California. In recent years, HCD has required the Council, as the collaborative applicant, to prioritize applications within Contra Costa and submit portions of the application.

The following sections outline the CoC's policies as related to designing, operating and following a local process for the review, rank, and approval of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) applications.

Section 2. REVIEW PROCESS

The Council designates and authorizes its ESG Review and Rank Panel to review, score and rank the ESG project submissions. Only neutral ESG Review and Rank Committee members will participate in the scoring and ranking of project submissions; neutral means individuals who are not employees, staff or otherwise have a business or personal conflict of interest with the applicant organizations. The scores and rankings for projects must be approved by a majority of members of the ESG Review and Rank Panel, approved by the Council, and submitted to the Continuum of Care Coordinator.

The Council authorizes the Continuum of Care Coordinator to ensure:

- A process timeline in compliance with HCD requirements is communicated to applicants and followed;
- Verification is made that each proposed project will operate, or facilities will be located, within an eligible Contra Costa County city (Antioch, Concord, Pittsburg, Richmond and Walnut Creek);
- Each project submission is complete;
- The Attachment D forms are signed;
- The Attachment D packages, including the Attachment D, a copy of these Review Process and Scoring Criteria, and a Summary Table, are delivered to HCD by the due date in compliance with its application process;
- Each project applicant is informed by separate email notification that its Attachment D has been submitted to HCD.

Section 3. SCORING CRITERIA & APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants will be required to submit to the Continuum of Care Coordinator (or its administrative designee) a copy of their ESG application, Attachment D, and a supplemental questionnaire that asks for information needed to inform the ESG Review and Rank Panel in reviewing and scoring applications based on the following criteria.

A. Leverage: (50 point Maximum)

1. Projects will be awarded a maximum of 50 points if the project leverages ESG with other funding and services (50 pts maximum).
2. Points for this criterion will be assigned as follows:
 - i. Total Project Budget \div Proposed Total ESG Budget = “Leverage Ratio”
 - ii. If Leverage Ratio \geq 2, then 50 pts
 - iii. If Leverage Ratio $<$ 2, then $([\text{Leverage Ratio} - 1] \times 50)$ pts

B. Priority Alignment: (50 point Maximum)

1. Component Priority: Is the project in alignment with County priorities; i.e., does the Proposed Project include one of the following program components (ranked in the following order) (15 points):
 - i. Rapid Re-Housing
 - ii. Street Outreach
 - iii. Emergency Shelter
 - iv. HMIS
2. Target Population: Is the project’s target population aligned with County priorities (ranked in the following order): (15 points)
 - i. Families
 - ii. Youths under 25
 - iii. Chronically Homeless
3. Organization Capacity: Consider the following (20 points):
 - i. Does the applicant organization have past experience administering State or federal housing grants?
 - ii. What is the proposed ratio of individuals served to project budget for the project? How does the ratio compare to other projects proposing to perform the same activities?
 - iii. What is the overall experience of the applicant agency and its key staff?

Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Contra Costa Council on Homelessness Timeline

1986

Concerned people in the county begin drafting, “A Plan for Dealing with Homelessness in Contra Costa County”.

1991

A symposium is held to address homelessness in Contra Costa County.

1997

The Board of Supervisors officially establishes the Homeless Continuum of Care Advisory Board (CoCB) under Board Order C.87.

1999

The CoCB meets to oversee the planning process, to review the original plan, and to update the 2001-2006 Contra Costa Continuum of Care Homeless Plan.

2001

The plan is adopted. The CoCB is the lead agency for the Continuum of Care Planning Process, setting new objectives in response to changing circumstances.

2004

The Board of Supervisors approves *Ending Homelessness in Ten Years: A County-wide Plan for the Communities of Contra Costa County*. This plan embraces key concepts of the Five Year Plan but does not replace it. HIJIDWG, a newly formed group, is charged with the implementation of the Ten Year Plan provisions. This group begins meeting regularly.

2014

Using the ten-year plan as a foundation, CCICH develops a strategic plan update, *Forging Ahead*, outlining the guiding principal that homelessness is first a housing issue, and necessary supports and services are critical to help people remain housed.

1987

The Task Force on Homelessness reports to the Board of Supervisors on Homelessness in Contra Costa County and includes Recommendations for Action.

1994

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors mandates that a comprehensive, integrated plan for homeless services must be developed for the County. In response, the Ad Hoc Homeless Task Force is created to coordinate a countywide planning process and write the county’s first official Homeless Plan.

2000

Contra Costa County begins the process of developing a new five-year Homeless Continuum of Care Plan. The CoCB coordinates the planning process.

2003

The CoCB adopts by-laws that include assuming all previous functions of the Contra Costa Homeless Advisory Committee and the new responsibilities under federal and state regulation of the Homeless Continuum of Care Boards.

2005

On parallel tracks the CoCB and HIJIDWG continue to work towards ending homelessness, with similar issues and membership.

2008

The CoCB and HIJIDWG merge to become the Contra Costa Interjurisdictional Council on Homelessness (CCICH).

2015

CCICH rebrands as the Council on Homelessness, adopting new by-laws and governance charter to reflect the role of the CoC and the Council.