

Dutchess County Housing Coalition: 2021 RANK AND REVIEW PROCESS

Background

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) homeless assistance program serves as a source of funding for homeless housing and services in Dutchess County. The CoC's planning body is the Dutchess County Housing Consortium (DCHC) which is supported by staffing from Dutchess County, the Collaborative Applicant, and CARES of NY, Inc. (CARES), the selected Planning Lead.

HUD requires the CoC prioritize programs which most effectively serve the community at the local level. To reach this goal, a Rank and Review Process has been implemented for applicants who wish to renew their existing project(s) and/or apply for new project(s) (if new funding is available). The process of ranking and reviewing projects is designed to help the CoC learn about each project's performance and effectiveness.

The CoC is charged with overseeing the Rank and Review Process which includes tools by which existing and new projects will be ranked. The Steering Committee is also responsible for establishing a Review Team for the Rank and Review Process.

CoC Transparency

The annual Rank and Review Process is conducted in a transparent manner to ensure a fair and consistent way to prioritize projects. *The process is publicly announced by the CoC, distributed in writing to CoC Membership, and posted publicly on the CARES, Inc. website for all community members to review and comment.*

FY 2021 Rank and Review Application

The CoC emphasizes the importance and impact of using the Rank and Review Tools as the primary basis for determining the Project Listing submitted to HUD as part of the CoC Consolidated Application. The Rank and Review Process is revised annually to meet both HUD and CoC standards and priorities, and balance objective performance measures with subjective narrative descriptions of project operations.

Program Review Committee

The CoC has an independent Program Review Committee composed of five (5) members selected by the CoC Steering Committee.

The Program Review Committee:

- Reviews all APRs for performance and work with agencies to improve performance, as necessary.
- Review applications for funding and recommend project ranking

Program review and ranking will be conducted against CoC's performance review standards which form the basis of each Rank and Review Tool.

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Project Ranking

HUD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) requires that the CoC conduct a transparent and objective process to review and rank all Renewal and New projects. Using the applicable CoC-approved Rank and Review Tool, all applications seeking funding are ranked in numerical order by scores. Any new project that is created through reallocated renewal funding complete a new project application but will be ranked above bonus and other new projects. New and bonus projects will be ranked in numerical order *beneath Renewal Projects*. The Program Review Committee's rankings are reviewed and approved by the CoC's Steering Committee. All agencies receive their project scores and are offered the opportunity to debrief with *the Collaborative Applicant*.

Ranking Announcement

All applicants will be notified via e-mail of their project's ranking and score. Rankings and scores will also be posted on the CARES website.

Appeal Process

Who May Appeal?

An agency may appeal a decision concerning its project application. If the applicant was a collaboration of agencies, only one joint appeal may be made.

What can be Appealed?

- ✓ Mathematical Errors on the data portion of the applications.

What May Not Be Appealed?

An appeal may not be submitted if the basis of the appeal is one of the following:

- ✓ the applicant did not answer all the questions on the application,
- ✓ the applicant did not submit the application with all required attachments, or
- ✓ the applicant did not submit by the required deadline,
- ✓ the applicant's APR data was not correct.

The appeals process applies only to project ranking. There is no appeal for project tiering.

Timing of an Appeal

Formal appeals can only be submitted by a project within three business days after a debriefing has been completed. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Collaborative Applicant who will forward them on to the Review Team. The written appeal must consist of a short statement of its appeal, no longer than one page. The written appeal can be in the form of a letter, memo or email. Any appeal via email must be sent to asaylor@dutchessny.gov.

Renewal Projects

Using the CoC-approved Renewal Project Rank and Review Tool, renewal agencies complete a draft renewal ranking tool for each project based on the Annual Performance Report (APR) for the most recent federal fiscal year (10/1/2019 – 9/30/2020). The ranking tool drafted by the agency will be reviewed by CARES staff for accuracy prior to the information being provided to the Program Review

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Committee for final ranking. The Program Review Committee will then score and rank all Renewal projects in numerical order by scores which are then reviewed and approved by the CoC's Steering Committee.

New Projects

Depending on availability, new projects may be funded through one of two mechanisms: bonus funding provided by HUD or reallocation of funding from an existing CoC project(s)(voluntary or involuntary).

An application is required for Bonus and Reallocated project proposals. Bonus and Reallocation applications are reviewed and ranked by the Program Review Committee using the CoC's New Project Rank and Review Tool. The Committee rankings are reviewed and approved by the CoC's Steering Committee.

If, after the ranking process, additional money becomes available through reallocation, and if all new projects have been approved, the new project RFP will re-open for submission in efforts to utilize all available funding. RFPs submitted during the second application process will automatically be ranked below projects from the first round.

Bonus Projects

Each year, HUD may offer bonus funding and the NOFA outlines how the funds may be spent. Bonus project proposals must fill an unmet need and HUD priorities. The community's goal is to apply for the maximum amount of available funding.

Reallocation

Reallocation is the process by which the CoC shifts funds, in whole or in part, from existing eligible renewal grants to create new projects to fill an unmet need within the community. Reallocation is one of the most important tools by which communities can make strategic improvements to their homeless services system. Reallocation can be voluntary or involuntary.

Involuntary - Projects that can be flagged by the CoC for involuntary reallocation include those which have demonstrated inadequate financial management, a lack of full expenditure of funds, and those which consistently score low on the Rank and Review Process. Reallocation may be recommended for any project not participating in Coordinated Entry, HMIS or the annual Point-in-Time.

Voluntary - Agencies may voluntarily choose to reallocate funds from their own projects to a new project. New project proposals developed by agencies through voluntary reallocation of their own funds will be prioritized during the ranking process. All other proposed projects using reallocated funds will be ranked according to general ranking procedures.

Project proposals developed with reallocated funds must respond to a Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by the CoC.

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Project Tiering

HUD requires that the CoC ranks projects into two tiers based on the funding allocation released in the NOFA. Tiering prioritizes projects for funding using project ranking. The Program Review Committee and Collaborative Applicant tiers projects. Reallocated funds are part of the CoC's annual renewal amount. Consideration is given to preserve the communities current HUD funding. Reallocated projects will be ranked before other new or bonus projects. New and bonus project are placed at bottom of Tier 2. HUD priorities outlined in the NOFA may be strategically applied by the CoC to revise project tiering. Final tiering results are presented to the Steering Committee for approval.