CoC NY-511
FY26 CoC Program Competition
Written Process

SOUTHERN TIER
HOMELESS COALITION
Solutions for homelessness
in the Southern Tier

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I. Introduction

Each year, HUD releases a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) which details the requirements for applying for Continuum of Care (CoC) Program funding. One requirement of the NOFO is that each application is reviewed and ranked in order of local priority by a group of community stakeholders. In New York's Southern Tier, representing Broome, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, & Tioga Counties, the group of stakeholders is CoC NY-511's (NY-511) NOFO Committee. A Rating and Ranking Panel, appointed by the STHC Membership, is tasked specifically with the CoC's evaluation process which partially determines each project's ranking. CARES of NY, Inc. serves as the facilitator of the Rating and Ranking Panel's evaluation process as the collaborative applicant.

In anticipation of the FY26 CoC Program Competition NOFO, NY-511 is issuing the following Written Process to be used as part of the *Renewal Project Application* and *New/Bonus Project Application* ranking process. To ensure that the CoC's application is competitive and fully funded, NY-511 reserves the right to amend these requirements and/or issue additional requirements as needed and in response to criteria issued in the FY26 CoC Program Competition NOFO. When the NOFO is released, priorities outlined in the application may be strategically applied by the CoC to project tiering. Final tiering results are presented to the Board for approval and membership is informed of the results.

II. Highlights for the FY26 Evaluation Process

The 2026 Rank and Review Application process will occur in two (2) parts, with the intent to allow agencies adequate time to complete the full Rank and Review Application. *Completed applications (including required attachments) for each CoC project must be submitted to CARES of NY, Inc. by the stated deadline to be considered complete and sent to the Rating and Ranking Panel.*

Renewal Projects

The FY26 *Renewal Project* evaluation process will commence with the distribution of Parts 1 & 2 of the Rank and Review Tool, Evaluation Instructions, and data attachments. Any applications that are submitted after the deadline and/or missing attachments will receive a 5-point deduction.

The data source will consist of projects' HMIS data from the previous HUD fiscal year (Oct. 1-Sept.30) This HMIS data used in Part 1 has been cleaned and reviewed for data quality errors when submitted to HUD for the Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) report. The tool will indicate where agencies can find data for relevant questions. Agencies will also receive a data attachment to assist in completing their application. Data on this attachment will be based on the FY24 LSA's submitted in the beginning of the year. Only projects with one full year of fiscal data are required to complete the Renewal Tool. HMIS will determine if a project has enough data to move forward with the renewal application. Consolidated programs can still participate in the Rank and Review Process by combining the data from both programs. FY26 Project Applications will be reviewed by Rating and Ranking Panel members. Coordinated Entry, Planning and HMIS are not required to complete a renewal application as they are considered vital infrastructure to the CoC. CE and HMIS projects will be ranked at the bottom of the FY 26 Ranking and Tiering. Programs that do not have enough data to participate in the Rank & Review process will be placed in Tier 1 following CE and HMIS renewal applications.

Part 1

Part 1 focuses on project and system outcomes, using project data entered in HMIS and objective questions to "rate" projects. The HMIS data used in Part 1 is from the previous HUD fiscal year (oct. 1- Sept. 30). The

HMIS data used in Part 1 has been cleaned and reviewed for data quality errors when submitted to HUD for the Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) report. Agencies serving victims of domestic violence will provide the APR from the comparable database to the HMIS Administrator and CARES, the Collaborative Applicant. CARES will develop the Part 1 Data Attachment with data that is pulled by the HMIS administrator ICA. Data Attachments are distributed to agencies with the Part 1 Tool. During the Part 1 Data Training Session, agencies will be instructed on how to confirm the accuracy of the Data Attachment values.

If errors are identified on the Data Attachment, the agency must contact CARES by the deadline noted when the data attachment is released. If the request is a calculation error, CARES staff will correct the error and resubmit the Data Attachments for the agency's review. Note that scores for Part 1 are done by the agency completing the tool and verified by CARES staff.

Part 2

Part 2 includes narratives allowing agencies to explain unique circumstances which may affect project performance.

***Parts 1 & 2 of the Application along with any requested supporting documentation must be submitted to CARES of NY, Inc. by the stated deadline to be considered complete; CARES will send all applications to the Rating and Ranking Panel. Any applications submitted past the deadline or missing required attachments will receive a 5-point deduction.**

An optional Part 3 form may be released following the release of the annual NOFO for the CoC to demonstrate the incorporation of HUD priorities into our annual Rank & Review process. If there are no significant HUD priorities identified or all major priorities are addressed in Part 1 and Part 2, this form will not be released.

New/Bonus Projects

Each year, HUD *may* offer bonus funding and the NOFO outlines how the funds may be spent. New/Bonus project proposals must fill an unmet need as noted within the CoC's Strategic Plan or locally determined priorities. New/Bonus applications will be ranked and approved by the Board and presented to Membership. The community's goal is to apply for the maximum amount of available funding. The same appeals process that applies to Renewal applications applies to New/Bonus project applications.

The FY26 *New/Bonus Project* evaluation process will commence with the distribution of an RFP Application as well as 2026 Evaluation Instructions and NY-511's Written Process. The project ranking process will be completed by Rating and Ranking Panel members' review of RFP responses and project performance data. If additional money becomes available through reallocation after the ranking process, a new project RFP may re-open.

RFPs submitted during the second application process will automatically be ranked below projects from the first round at the bottom of Tier 2. The Review Team reviews and scores all New/Bonus project applications submitted. New project applications will be integrated into the ranking according to project type and the PH–TH–SSO rotational sequence.

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, such as balancing the types of projects available

throughout the continuum. Reallocation is one of the most important tools by which communities can make strategic improvements to their homeless services system.

The CoC determines candidates for reallocation due to low performance or less needed projects as an important tool to make strategic improvements to the homeless system. The reallocation process is outlined in the Rank & Review Written Process, which is reviewed, updated, posted for public comment, and approved by the NOFO Committee and CoC Membership on an annual basis. The NOFO Committee and project review team flags projects that demonstrate inadequate financial management, a history of expending funds on ineligible activities, a history of returning funds that could have been utilized, ongoing poor project performance outcomes, and consistently low scores on the Rank & Review tool. From Rank & Review and monitoring, recommendations are made regarding reallocation to the Board. The Board makes the final decision to reallocate funding to create a new high performing project by reviewing the project's performance outcomes, populations served and the need for the project and shares its decision with CoC Membership. If a project is considered needed in the community (i.e. uniquely serves a hard-to-serve population), the Board works with the Planning Lead to provide TA to the agency to address underperformance. If it is decided reallocation would be a better use of CoC funds to best serve homeless clients, funding is made available through the new project Rank & Review process.

Project proposals developed with reallocated funds must fill an unmet need and submit a New/Bonus application. Reallocated and Bonus applications will be evaluated alongside Renewal Projects within a unified competitive ranking process. Each project will be scored using the appropriate tool and placed in the overall PH–TH–SSO rotational sequence. Reallocated projects will receive additional points to support HUD's intent to incentivize reallocation. The final ranking will be approved by the Board presented to CoC Membership.

III. Evaluation Review Process

The goal of the evaluation process is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the CoC programing and help identify potential areas of improvement. Results from the evaluation will contribute to the CoC competitive application and identify lower performing programs that could benefit from technical assistance.

All projects with one full year of fiscal data and one complete APR are required to complete the *Renewal Project* evaluation process. Projects that were not renewed in the FY25 NOFO do not have to complete the evaluation process. Any project that believes they should be exempt from the evaluation process should contact CARES to establish eligibility.

Only projects recommended or approved *by the NOFO Committee* will be considered eligible to submit *a New/Bonus Project* application for reallocated funds. For agencies that may voluntarily choose to reallocate funds from their own projects, New Project Proposals developed through reallocation of their own funds will be prioritized during the ranking process. All other projects using reallocated funds will be ranked according to general ranking procedures. The following outlines key steps and aspects of the FY26 *Renewal Project* and *New Project* evaluation processes:

i. Rank and Review Applications and Back-up Documentation Submission

- Back up documentation that is required for this Rank and Review application is identified in the application and incudes:
- Copies of a program's last 3 drawdowns from ELoCCS
- The last drawdown from ELoCCS from the most recently ended contract period
- Copies of any service agreements or MOU's identified in the application
- A copy of section 3B from your project's most recent Esnaps application

ii. Rank and Review Evaluations by Rating and Ranking Panel Members

Rating and Ranking Panel members are appointed by the Membership and approved by the Board. The chosen reviewers are then invited by CARES to participate in the Rank and Review Process. Rating and Ranking Panel members must be individuals from the community who are not CoC-funded or from neighboring communities and knowledgeable about the CoC process, services, and providers. Panel members are provided a copy of each project's full application for review and score forms to complete. Scores for each application are averaged between the scores provided by the reviewers to create the final score. Following the completion deadline for the initial score cards for each project, the Rating and Ranking Panel will then meet to discuss and finalize scores for each project application before scores are considered final. In the event project applications initially receive the same score, it is the responsibility of the Rating and Ranking Panel to break the tie. Because HMIS and CE projects are required CoC infrastructure, they are not required to submit a renewal application for scoring and are ranked at the top of Tier 1.

Threshold Review

To ensure CoC projects are high performing, all project applications must also meet a minimum scoring threshold of 50% of total possible application points. The Threshold Review will be conducted by the Rating and Ranking Panel members after the Rank and Review process is complete and final project scores determined. If the pre-determined threshold is not met, the Rating and Ranking Panel may recommend the to the Board to consider reallocation or amendments to the project application/s with said agency. The Board will then discuss these recommendations and will make recommendations to the STHC Membership regarding reallocation or amendments to the project application/s with said agency.

Ranking and Tiering

The NOFA requires that the CoC conduct a transparent and objective process to review and rank all Renewal and New/Bonus projects. Using the CoC-approved Rank & Review Tool, all projects; Renewal, Reallocated, and Bonus, will be scored, within a unified competitive ranking process, using tools with the same total possible points. After scoring, projects will be grouped and ranked within their project type (PH, TH, SSO). These ranked lists will then be combined into the final ranking using a rotational sequence (PH - TH - SSO - Infrastructure), starting with Renewal Projects. Infrastructure grants –Coordinated Entry, HMIS, and DV Coordinated Entry projects will be placed into the overall ranking (in that order) according to the rotational sequence, following each PH, TH, and SSO grouping. Results of the rating and ranking process will be posted to the CARES website. CARES will facilitate the Rating and Ranking Panel's review of New/Bonus Project applications and back-up documentation utilizing the 2026 Project Rating and Ranking Tool.

Debrief

All agencies receive their project scores and are offered the opportunity to debrief with CARES. Debriefing allows agencies the opportunity to request clarification regarding how/why application question/s received certain scores. Debriefings are required if agencies are considering an appeal. Agencies may choose to appeal project score/s within the allotted time frame (see the **Appeals Process** outlined below). After all debriefings with CARES are completed and appeals considered by the Rating and Ranking Panel, renewal project applicants that fall into Tier 2 will be notified and then the project ranking is presented to the Board for approval. If the board determines that changes to project ranking should be made on behalf of the CoC, the board must make those determinations unanimously and inform all agencies whose ranking may be impacted by the changes.

Appeals Process

- **Who May Appeal?**
  An agency may appeal a decision concerning a Renewal or New/Bonus project application submitted by that agency.
- **What May Be Appealed?**
  The appeals process applies to project scoring and ranking ***only***. *There is no appeal for project tiering.* An appeal may ***not*** be based on the following:
  - Failure to answer any question/s on the application.
  - Failure to submit required attachments to the application.
  - Failure to submit the application by the required deadline.
- **Any mathematical errors found by an applicant will be corrected by CARES.**

- **Timing of an Appeal**
  Formal appeals may be submitted by a project within **three (3) business days** of debriefing. Appeals must be submitted in writing to CARES (tgillespie@caresny.org), who will then forward them to the Rank and Review Panel determined by the CoC Membership. The written appeal must consist of a brief statement no longer than one page, and can be in the form of a letter, memo or email.
- **Appeals Decisions**
  Appeals will be considered by the Rating and Ranking Panel. Appeals are decided by majority vote of the Rating and Ranking Panel, and once decided, are final and may not be overturned by the NOFO Committee, Board or Membership.

Results

- Renewal Projects demonstrating low performance or that do not achieve the applicable housing outcome goal or other specific performance minimums established by the NOFO Committee/Rating and Ranking Panel may be considered for Reallocation per NY-511's NOFO Reallocation Process.
- Evaluation results, in conjunction with the policy priorities and eligible components identified by HUD upon the issuance of the FY26 CoC Program Competition NOFO, will be used to determine the final project ranking and tier assignment, as applicable, for the FY26 CoC Program Competition CoC Priority Listing.

V. Project Evaluation Methodology

Achievement

Performance data indicated in NY-511's Project Rating and Ranking Tool will be compared to achievement benchmarks and given a corresponding score. Unless otherwise indicated in the evaluation tool, a goal is "achieved" when the benchmark is met.

Project Performance Results

Results will be based on the overall score as a percentage of the total possible points for each project (which varies by project type). The thresholds for inclusion in each category will be determined based on the final distribution of scores. Projects with scores resulting at the bottom 10% of all projects will be considered "low" performers. Projects with results in the top 10% will be considered "high" performers. The remaining projects will be considered "medium" performers.

Each performance measure is weighted differently based on the relative importance of the measure to the overall performance and quality of CoC housing and support services. The maximum point value is indicated alongside each

measure in the Project Rating and Ranking Tool. Project scores are then calculated as a percentage of the total possible points for the project type.

Identical overall *Renewal Project* scores will be decided through a review of the value achieved starting with the following indicators: Exits to Permanent Housing, Serving High Need Populations, and Income Factors. Programs with the same overall score will be weighed against each other on the individual measures listed above followed by the remaining Rating Factors on the evaluation tool. In the unlikely event that there is still a tie, the Rating and Ranking Panel will decide on a tie-breaking measure based.

VI. Specific Instructions and Data Source – Renewal Projects

Where the source is listed as APR, the data source will consist of each project's most recent APR submitted in Sage prior to March 31, 2026 and provided by the HMIS Systems Administrator.

Rating and Ranking Panel members will review the following APR Questions for Renewal Project submissions:

Exits to Permanent Housing: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR Q22a1 (*Leavers)*, Q23a, and Q23b.

Returns to Homelessness: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR/System Performance data Measure 2 by project.

Earned Income for Project Stayers: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR Q19a1 for all projects.

Non-Employment Income for Project Stayers: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR Q19a1 for all projects.

Earned Income for Project Leavers: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR Q19a2 for all projects.

Non-Employment Income for Project Leavers: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR Q19a2 for all projects.

More Than One Disability Type: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review APR Q13a2 for all projects.

Applicant Narrative: Rating and Ranking Panel members will review application responses.

VII. Score Summary Table

(see NY-511 Southern Tier Homeless Coalition Rank & Review Application 2023 Part 1: System Performance and Data Quality Questions)

VIII. Technical Assistance and Contact Information

For additional questions related to NY-511's 2026 CoC Program Competition evaluation process, deadlines, and applications, please contact:

Taylor Gillespie – CARES Planning Lead – tgillespie@caresny.org; 518-489-4130 x 725
Andrea Jacobs – HMIS System Administrator – andrea.jacobs@icalliances.org; 515-721-7567

If you have specific questions regarding HUD project guidelines, you may contact NY-511's local HUD field office (Buffalo, NY). Please do not contact the HUD office regarding our local application deadlines or process as the individuals identified above are available to answer those questions.

IX. 2026 NY-511 CoC Evaluation Process Appeal Form

This form must be completed and sent to CARES (tgillespie@caresny.org)

How to Appeal: If you appeal your score, please write a few short sentences describing what you are appealing and attach evidence demonstrating why you think that the appeal should be granted. For example, if your appeal involves information from your data system, please submit a copy of the page from your data system.

Name of Agency: _____
Program Name: _____
Program Address: _____
_____

Part I
Section and Question (Measurement and Source/Score) being appealed and why.
Section:_____Question: _____
Explanation:

Section and Question (Measurement and Source/Score) being appealed and why.
Section:_____Question: _____
Explanation:

Section and Question (Measurement and Source/Score) being appealed and why.
Section:_____Question: _____
Explanation:

Part II
Executive Director /Other Executive Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

X. Rank and Review Panel Conflict of Interest Form

Definition of Conflict of Interest

No person with a "conflict of interest" may serve on the Rating & Ranking Committee. A conflict of interest exists if:

1) You are now, or within the last year have been, or have a current agreement to serve in the future as, a Board member, staff member or paid consultant of an organization making a proposal for funding; or

2) Your employer or an organization on whose Board of Directors you sit, now has, or within the last year has had, a contractual relationship with an organization making a proposal for funding. However, under this second definition of "conflict of interest," no conflict exists if your employer, or the organization on whose Board of Directors you sit, is a funding entity or organization whose mission includes providing services and/or funding to other service providers; or

3) Any other circumstance exists which impedes your ability to review and rank the proposals for funding objectively, fairly, and impartially.

Confidentiality

In addition to avoiding Conflicts of Interest, the Rating & Ranking Committee should maintain confidentiality surrounding the rating and ranking process. To demonstrate respect for the organizations being considered, Rating & Ranking Committee discussions and information about specific applications should be kept confidential.

Acknowledgement

I have read and understand the definition of "Conflict of Interest." No conflict of interest prohibits me from serving on the Rating & Ranking Committee. Should I later become aware of a conflict of interest, I immediately will resign from the Rating & Ranking Committee.

_____ _____

Signature Date