



North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

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NC Balance of State CoC Project Review Committee Meeting 8.8.18

Project Review Committee Members Present: Carl Thompson, Andrea Merriman, Jaquetta Bullock, Kay Johnson, Ken Backer, Chris Berg, Destri Leger, Deniece Cole, Parker Smith, Angela Battle

NCCEH Staff Present: Brian Alexander, Ehren Dohler, Jenn Von Egidy

Overview of CoC Application Process

- The NC Balance of State CoC is one of twelve Continuums of Care (CoCs) in North Carolina. CoCs are regional or local planning bodies that coordinate housing and services funding for homeless programs.
- The NC Balance of State CoC covers 79 counties. Because it is so large, it is split into 13 Regional Committees that coordinate local-level planning and work.
- CoCs promote a community-wide commitment to ending homelessness, prioritizing getting homeless people back into housing as quickly as possible.
- CoCs are tasked by HUD with organizing two funding processes: CoC funding (which is the process we are discussing today) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funding.
 - In the CoC funding process, agencies applying for funding submit their applications to their CoC, which is responsible for reviewing these applications and prioritizing the applications that will be submitted to HUD for funding consideration. The Project Review Committee is part of this CoC-level review and prioritization process.
- The Project Review Committee is composed of one representative from each Regional Committee that nominates a representative and any interested At-Large Steering Committee members. To avoid conflict of interest, people from agencies applying for CoC funding may not serve on the committee.
- The Project Review Committee uses new and renewal scorecards, which were created by the Scorecard Committee, to review and score all project applications from agencies. Once scoring is complete, the Project Review Committee has a final meeting to create a ranked list of applications in order of priority for funding. This list is presented to the NC BoS CoC Steering Committee for approval. The approved applications are then submitted to HUD for funding consideration.

- Scoring and ranking applications allows CoCs to prioritize limited CoC funds for projects that meet the CoC's priorities and needs, are performing well, and are managing the funds effectively. The scoring and ranking process is also required by HUD for all CoCs.
- In the 2018 CoC competition, the NC BoS CoC is eligible to apply for almost \$9 million in project applications. The CoC's Annual Renewal Demand (ARD), which is the amount needed to renew all existing projects, is \$8,388,382. The CoC may also apply for up to \$699,562 in Bonus funds, \$4,165,937 in DV Bonus Funds, and \$349,781 in CoC Planning funds.
- Project applications must be placed into two tiers:
 - Tier 1: 94% of ARD amount (\$7,885,079)
 - Tier 2: 6% of ARD amount + Bonus amount (\$1,202,865)
 - HUD has indicated that Tier 1 is the relatively "safe" tier, and projects placed in Tier 1 are likely to receive funding from HUD. Tier 2 is the riskier tier, and projects placed in Tier 2 may or may not receive funding. In the past, the NC Balance of State CoC has had projects placed in Tier 2 that did not receive funding from HUD.
- Deniece Cole asked if DV-RRH and regular RRH could be combined. Ehren stated that a new DV-RRH project must be exclusively for DV-RRH and could not be combined for funding. An existing RRH project can expand using DV-RRH funds, as long as all those funds only go to survivors of DV.
- Jenn paused to solicit questions or comments. None expressed.

Overview of Scoring and Ranking

- The Project Review Committee will score all new and renewal project applications submitted to the NC BoS CoC (except the CoC-wide HMIS application and the planning grant application) . After the scoring is complete, the Project Review Committee will recommend a ranked list of project applications for the Steering Committee's approval.
- The projects will be listed in ranked order and divided into 2 tiers as HUD outlined with funding amounts.
 - Projects in Tier 2 are at greater risk for not getting funded.
- The Scorecard Committee met earlier this year and created one scorecard for new projects and one scorecard for renewal projects. The scorecards have four goals:
 - to fund organizations that have the capacity to run effective programs
 - to fund projects that reflect the NC BoS CoC's priorities and HUD's priorities (providing permanent supportive housing, serving chronically homeless people and Veterans)
 - to incentivize agencies to be good partners with the CoC, Regional Committee, and other local programs
 - to ensure that funded agencies are being good stewards of CoC funding and performing to NC BoS CoC standards
- The scorecards have two parts: a Combined Scoring section and a Staff Scoring section.
 - The Combined Scoring section is scored by both a Project Review Committee member and a NCCEH staff person. Each Project Review Committee member will be assigned applications to score. Each Project Review Committee member will also be paired with a member of NCCEH's staff. Both the committee member and the NCCEH staff member

score the same questions, and then the two scores are averaged to create the final score. The committee member and NCCEH staff member may have different scores.

- The Staff Scoring section of the scorecard is scored only by NCCEH staff. This portion of the scorecard contains questions based on objective and technical information.
- Once all applications have been scored, the Project Review Committee will meet on August 29th from 2:00-4:00 pm. During this meeting, the full committee will review the final scores for all applications, discuss any special considerations, and create the proposed ranked list of applications.
- NCCEH expects to receive a total of 43 project applications to score and rank. There are two additional project applications that are not scored:
 - HMIS renewal grant: This grant provides support for the HMIS that serves the entire NC BoS CoC. It is not scored because it is not a housing program and the scorecard is not designed to assess it. This grant has historically been ranked first because HMIS is a requirement for all grantees, and without it, no other applications would receive funding.
 - CoC planning grant: This grant provides funding for CoC-wide coordination, administration, and training. The funds for planning grants are outside of the tiers, so it is not required to be ranked or scored.
- The proposed ranked list of projects will be presented to the NC BoS CoC Steering Committee for approval at its meeting on August 30th meeting.
- The Project Review Committee has options for creating the ranked list and fitting projects into the available funding amounts.
 - HUD allows CoCs to reallocate part or all of the budget amounts from renewal grants to create new projects.
 - The budgets for new grants can be reduced to fit into the available amount of funding, as long as the program would still be able to run effectively on the reduced budget.
 - The Project Review Committee can choose to recommend some of the new project applications for funding and not recommend others.
 - The Project Review Committee will need to decide where to rank the SSO-CE grants (renewal and expansion applications). Last year the SSO-CE application was in Tier 1 because it came from reallocated funding.
- The CoC has set funding priorities for the CoC competition. These priorities were created by the Funding and Performance Subcommittee and approved by the Steering Committee in May. They are intended to provide some guidance to the Project Review Committee when they are ranking project applications.
 - The funding priorities document sets overall priorities for the NC BoS CoC:
 - Ensuring essential infrastructure elements are in place, including HMIS and coordinated assessment
 - Ensuring adequate coverage of permanent supportive housing across the CoC
 - Increasing the availability of rapid re-housing

- Ensuring CoC funding is being used well. Renewal projects that have patterns of low spending or poor performance may have some or all of their funds reallocated to create new projects.
 - The funding priorities document also sets regional priorities. For each of the 13 Regional Committees in the CoC, the document assigns a priority of 1, 2, 3, or no priority for both rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing projects. These priorities are based on the current resources and unmet need in the Regional Committees.
 - <http://www.ncceh.org/files/9232/>
- The Project Review Committee may take several factors into account when ranking projects, including:
 - Funding priorities
 - Whether project met standards and minimums on the scorecard
 - Numerical scores on the scorecard
- Parker Smith asked if the funding priorities were ranked or if any held more “weight.” Brian stated that the SC did not create a prioritization of these priorities. He said where weighing comes in is looking at the region and what components are needed in their area.
- Ehren referenced the regional funding priorities grid at the end of the funding priorities document.

2018 Scorecard Review and Discussion

- All project applications will be scored on the application materials that are submitted by the deadline. NCCEH staff will send Project Review Committee members the materials for the applications they have been assigned to score. Project Review Committee members will then complete a scorecard for each application they have been assigned.
- Some questions on the scorecard are worth numerical points. Other questions are “standards” or “thresholds.” Standards are benchmarks that applicants are expected to meet, so the Scorecard Committee chose not to award these numerical points. Threshold questions are requirements that applicants are required to meet. These are scored as “met/unmet/unmet-documentation not provided/NA”. Missing a standard means that the Project Review Committee should seek further review and determine whether the application should be included in the final prioritization listing. Missing a threshold means that the application does not move forward in the competition and will not be included in the final prioritization listing.
- Renewal project scorecard
 - Combined scoring section = pgs. 2-9
- New project scorecard
 - Combined scoring section = pgs. 2-11
- Project Review Committee members will complete one scorecard per application. At the top of the scorecard, there is a section to indicate the agency, project name, and project type, as well as the reviewer’s name and signature.
- There are thresholds that are requirement for projects to move forward in the competition.

- The scorecard is broken into sections, each of which has a minimum score. Projects that do not meet minimums will trigger further review by the Project Review Committee, which has the option of determining how this will affect the projects' ranking or recommendation for funding.
 - Brian commented that standards, thresholds, minimums mean different things:
 - Thresholds are taken into consideration first. If an application missed threshold the application is not considered for funding.
 - Standards are taken into consideration second.- These are important and all applicants should be meeting these. The applicants that meet more standards are ranked higher.
 - Minimums are taken into consideration next and are sometimes used as standards because they are a way to balance the scorecard, ensuring that all applications are meeting at least the minimum requirements in each section.
 - Points are used last as a way to break ties.
 - Ehren paused to solicit questions or comments. None expressed.
- Staff reviewed the Combined Scoring section of the new scorecard.
 - For questions that are standards, there are four options for answers:
 - standard is met
 - standard is unmet (the applicant submitted materials for scoring, but the materials did not meet the standard)
 - standard is unmet – documentation not provided (the applicant did not submit materials for scoring even though questions pertain to their application)
 - n/a (question does not pertain to the application)
 - Ehren encouraged the PRC members to read the whole application prior to scoring.
 - Section I pertains to general completeness and accuracy of the project application as well as the project's consistency with the agency's mission.
 - Section II asks about program design. It contains the same questions as Section II on the renewal scorecard, plus some additional questions.
 - One question pertains to a statement of need in which the applicant demonstrates how this project will meet an existing need in the community.
 - Other questions ask how the project will target certain subpopulations, prioritize households with the longest histories of homelessness, and quickly move households into housing.
 - PSH: HUD notice needs to be in all their policies and procedures.
 - RRH: Must be in good standing with the ESG office.
 - SSO: Must serve all 79 counties in the NC BoS CoC.
 - One question asks what percentage of the project's budget is for housing activities.
 - Housing First questions ask about policies pertaining to screening and termination.
 - Ehren stated that PRC needs to check the policies and procedures to make sure they match what the applicant put on the HUD application.

- PSH and RRH questions have many standards that can be complicated. Generally, they must meet all components of the standard to meet it. There is a notes section the PRC member can explain what the applicant missed.
 - PSH Questions
 - Participation in services should be voluntary.
 - Leases should not have rules you would not find on private market leases.
 - Check for House Rules or Participant Agreements to see if they are restrictive in ways that would not be normal in a private market rental.
 - They should have choice over the unit they move into.
 - RRH Questions
 - One question asks if the project has a staff person dedicated to housing identification.
 - Does the project screen out landlords that screen out clients for criminal background, credit, etc.
 - Tenants should be given training on their rights as tenants.
 - Rent and move-in assistance should be flexible, meet the needs of the tenant, and give the minimal support needed by the tenant. The amount of assistance given should be objective and clearly defined so they are fair but flexible and based on the needs of each households.
 - Case management services should be provided
 - Screening should adhere to Housing First
 - One question asks if permanent supportive housing projects are dedicated to serving chronically homeless households.
 - Projects applying for leasing instead of rental assistance funds must submit an explanatory statement.
 - New rapid re-housing projects must already be operating an existing rapid re-housing project with other funds, unless the agency is a public housing authority.
 - One question asks what priority this project type is in its region (based on the funding priorities document).
 - Staff paused to solicit questions or comments. None expressed.
 - Section III pertains to services that the project will provide.
 - Services Needs
 - Employment Services
 - Mainstream Services
- Staff reviewed the Combined Scoring section of the renewal scorecard.
 - Section I pertains to general completeness and accuracy of the project application.
 - Section II pertains to program design, including program type, Housing First tenets, and key elements/program standards for permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing programs. Some of these questions will be scored on the project application

and some will be scored on other documentation submitted by the agency. Staff reviewed the specific information that should be used to answer these questions.

- PSH: Move-on program question requires several key components in order for an application to receive full points.
- Ehren solicited questions or feedback. None expressed.

Next Steps for Project Review Committee Members

- NCCEH staff are anticipating 42 applications to score: 33 renewal applications and 9 new applications (HMIS application will not be scored). Each Project Review Committee member will likely have 3 or 4 applications to score.
- This week, each Project Review Committee member will receive emails from NCCEH, including the following information:
 - blank scorecard links, the applications they are assigned, and instructions for filling out the scorecards
 - attachments from Smartsheet (these are the materials that need to be scored)
 - the name of their NCCEH staff partner
 - instructions on how to schedule a follow-up call with their NCCEH staff partner
 - these calls will be held from August 28 to September 1
 - calls will take about 30 minutes
- After receiving these emails, Project Review Committee members can begin scoring their applications. The scoring must be completed prior to the follow-up phone call. During these phone calls, the Project Review Committee member and NCCEH staff partner will review the scores they each gave to the applications.
- After holding the phone call with their NCCEH staff partner, Project Review Committee members must scan and email the Combined Scoring pages of their scorecards to their staff partner by September 1.
- The Project Review Committee will convene for a final meeting on August 29 from 2-4pm to create the ranked list of projects. NCCEH staff will send a reminder email with call-in information prior to the meeting.
- An Appeals date and time has been reserved for Friday, September 7 at 11:30am.
- Project Review Committee members who have questions can contact NCCEH staff at 919-755-4393 or bos@ncceh.org.