Southern New Jersey CoC

Executive Board

2024 SNJ CoC HUD NOTICE of FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
for New and Renewal Projects

June 5, 2024

The Southern New Jersey Continuum of Care (SNJCoC) is an association of county-wide homelessness Continuums of Care that provides information, services, and advocacy for and on   behalf of the homeless population in the area of service within the participating Southern NJ Counties (Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, and Gloucester). The mission of the Southern New Jersey Continuum of Care is to work to prevent and end homelessness through a public and private collaboration that maximizes efforts and leverages resources.

SNJCoC invites community-based organizations to submit applications for new and renewal projects as part of the FY2024 Continuum of Care (CoC) competitive grant process. Renewal projects are those that currently receive Continuum of Care funding with a grant expiring in 2025. New project applications may be submitted for FY2024 HUD Funding from CoC Bonus, Domestic Violence Bonus and reallocated funds to assist households experiencing homelessness in regaining stability on permanent housing.

An estimated **$475,000** will be available through the CoC Bonus, and an estimated **$680,000** will be available through the DV Bonus. The SNJCoC Review Committee may also choose to increase the total amount of funds allocated to new projects above the bonus funds available through reallocation of funding from existing renewal projects. Renewal projects may not request more than their current funding amount. Please note that these amounts may be adjusted upon release of the FY2024 HUD NOFO.

Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, units of state or local government and public housing agencies. Applicants interested in securing funding for programs that will support households experiencing homelessness in regaining stability are encouraged to apply. This includes first time applicants, agencies who have not previously received CoC funding, and faith-based agencies.

New Project proposals may request funding for the following types of activities:
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing
- Coordinated Entry
- Dedicated Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

DV Bonus activities (projects must dedicate 100% of services to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking as defined in category 4 of the HUD CoC definition of Homelessness:
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing
- Coordinated Entry

In accordance with HUD, SNJCoC is prioritizing projects with connection to healthcare. SNJCoC has identified the need of healthcare services and housing in order to continue efforts to move closer to ending homelessness and to address healthcare needs of clients. New projects are encouraged to develop partnerships with public health agencies to improve the health of people experiencing homelessness.

All project applications will be evaluated and scored by the SNJCoC Review Committee. The Review Committee will score new proposals using objective criteria and evaluate proposals based on local needs, and priorities. The Review Committee reserves the right to request additional information and may recommend adjustments to submitted proposals as appropriate. Funding level recommendations made by the review committee may include budget adjustments to comply with program requirements and/or to fit within the limit of funds available. New projects may be funded through Bonus money or Reallocation of funds (in whole or part) from existing renewal projects. All funding recommendations will be submitted to the SNJCoC for final approval before applicants are invited to complete the HUD FY2024 CoC e-snaps application.

As the FY2024 HUD NOFO has not been released yet, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the FY2023 HUD CoC NOFO for background information on the CoC competition process, sample HUD priorities and eligible project activities https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/e-snaps/fy-2023-coc-program-nofa-coc-program-competition/

A technical assistance session will be held **Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 2pm** via Zoom. To register use the link here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEtf-iprz0vGtCLGH6FkbpxJ6ki92-lxKdV

During the session, questions concerning the application, eligible expenses, and local priorities will be answered.

All applications must be submitted online via the SNJ SM Apply portal found here: https://njcocmha.smapply.io/prog/snj_continuum_of_care_funding

Applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm on Wednesday, July 10, 2024. If your agency cannot submit the application through SM Apply for any reason, please reach out to Katelyn Ravensbergen at kravensbergen@monarchhousing.org as soon as possible.

II. HUD's Homeless Policy Priorities and Program Highlights

 A. Policy Priorities. This section provides additional context regarding the selection criteria found in Section VII.B of this NOFO and is included here to help applicants better understand how the selection criteria support the goal of ending homelessness:

1. *Ending homelessness for all persons.* To end homelessness, CoCs should identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness. CoCs should measure their performance based on local data that consider the challenges faced by all subpopulations experiencing homelessness in the geographic area (e.g., veterans, youth, families, those experiencing chronic homelessness, and people with disabilities, including those living with HIV/AIDS). CoCs should partner with housing, health care, and supportive services providers to expand housing options, such as permanent supportive housing, housing subsidies, and rapid rehousing. Additionally, CoCs should use local data to determine the characteristics of individuals and families with the highest needs and longest experiences of homelessness to develop housing and supportive services tailored to their needs.

2. *Use a Housing First approach.* Housing First prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and does not have service participation requirements or preconditions. CoC Program funded projects should help individuals and families move quickly into permanent housing, and CoCs should measure and help projects reduce the length of time people experience homelessness. Additionally, CoCs should engage landlords and property owners to identify housing units available for rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing participants, remove barriers to entry, and adopt client-centered service methods. HUD encourages CoCs to assess how well Housing First approaches are being implemented in their communities.

3. *Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness.* In recent years, the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness has risen significantly, including a rising number of encampments in many communities across the country. People living unsheltered have extremely high rates of physical and mental illness and substance use disorders. CoCs should explore all available resources, including CoC and ESG funded assistance, housing subsidies, and supportive services to provide permanent housing options for people who are unsheltered.

4. *Improving System Performance.* CoCs should be using system performance measures (e.g., average length of homeless episodes, rates of return to homelessness, rates of exit to permanent housing destinations) to determine how effectively they are serving people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, CoCs should use their Coordinated Entry process to promote participant choice, coordinate homeless assistance and mainstream housing, and services to ensure people experiencing homelessness receive assistance quickly, and make homelessness assistance open, inclusive, and transparent. CoCs should review all projects eligible for renewal in FY 2022 to determine their effectiveness in serving people experiencing homelessness, including cost-effectiveness. CoCs should also look for opportunities to implement continuous quality improvement and other process improvement strategies. HUD recognized the effects of COVID-19 on CoC performance and data quality and reduced the points available for rating factors related to system performance in the FY 2021 CoC NOFO. This FY 2022 CoC NOFO significantly increases the points available for system performance rating factors.

5. *Partnering with Housing, Health, and Service Agencies.* Using cost performance and outcome data, CoCs should improve how all available resources are utilized to end homelessness. This is especially important as the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan have provided significant new resources to help end

homelessness. HUD encourages CoCs to maximize the use of mainstream and other community-based resources when serving persons experiencing homelessness and should:

    a. work closely with public and private healthcare organizations and assist program participants to receive primary care, receive housing-related services, and obtain medical insurance to address healthcare needs. This includes developing close partnerships with public health agencies to analyze data and design approaches that reduce homelessness, improve the health of people experiencing homelessness, and prevent and address disease outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS.

    b. partner closely with PHAs and state and local housing organizations to utilize coordinated entry, develop housing units, and provide housing subsidies to people experiencing homelessness. These partnerships can also help CoC Program participants exit permanent supportive housing through Housing Choice Vouchers and other available housing options. CoCs and PHAs should especially work together to implement targeted programs such as Emergency Housing Vouchers, HUD-VASH, Mainstream Vouchers, Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers, and other housing voucher programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness. CoCs should coordinate with their state and local housing agencies on the utilization of new HOME program resources provided through the Homelessness Assistance and Supportive Services Program that was created through the American Rescue Plan;

    c. partner with local workforce development centers to improve employment opportunities; and

    d. work with tribal organizations to ensure that tribal members can access CoC-funded assistance when a CoC's geographic area borders a tribal area.

6. *Racial Equity.* In nearly every community, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color are substantially overrepresented in the homeless population. HUD is emphasizing system and program changes to address racial equity within CoCs. Responses to preventing and ending homelessness should address racial inequities to ensure successful outcomes for all persons experiencing homelessness using proven approaches, such as: developing a coordinated community response created in partnership with a racially diverse set of stakeholders and people experiencing homelessness and partnering with organizations with experience serving underserved populations. CoCs should review local policies, procedures, and processes with attention to identifying barriers that result in racial disparities, and taking steps to eliminate barriers to improve racial equity and to address disparities.

7. *Improving Assistance to LGBTQ+ Individuals.* Discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation manifests differently for different individuals and often overlaps with other forms of prohibited discrimination. CoCs should address the needs of LGBTQ+, transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary individuals and families in their planning processes. Additionally, when considering which projects to select in their local competition to be included in their application to HUD, CoCs should ensure privacy, respect, safety, and access regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation in projects. CoCs should also consider partnering with organizations with expertise in serving LGBTQ+ populations.

8. *Persons with Lived Experience.* HUD is encouraging CoCs to include in the local planning process people who are currently experiencing or have formerly experienced homelessness. People with lived experience should determine how local policies may need to be revised and updated to improve the effectiveness of homelessness assistance programs, including participating in planning and oversight activities and developing local competition processes. CoC leaders and stakeholders should also prioritize hiring people who have experienced homelessness in areas where their expertise is needed (e.g. peer outreach and support).

9. *Increasing Affordable Housing Supply.* The lack of affordable housing is the main driver of homelessness. CoCs play a critical role in educating local leaders and stakeholders about the importance of increasing the supply of affordable

housing and the specific consequences of the continued lack of affordable housing. CoCs should be communicating with jurisdiction leaders, including for the development of Consolidated Plans, about the harmful effects of the lack of affordable housing, and they should engage local leaders about steps such as zoning and land use reform that would increase the supply of affordable housing. This FY2022 CoC NOFO awards points t CoCs that take steps to engage local leaders about increasing affordable housing

supply.