

**Continuum of Care FY2024
Project Evaluation Criteria
Concept Paper Scoring Criteria**

Section 1 - Project Type (5 points)

Because of the focus and priority of both HUD and the local Continuum on providing the homeless with permanent housing the following points will be awarded based on program type:

- 5 points will be awarded to permanent housing projects
- 5 points will be awarded to rapid rehousing projects
- 3 points will be awarded for HMIS projects
- 1 points will be awarded for transitional housing projects
- 0 points will be awarded for Supportive Service Only projects

Section 2 - HUD Priority (Permanent Supportive Housing Providers Only) - Chronic Homelessness (3 points)

As seen in the past few Continuum of Care funding cycles, HUD is placing a large emphasis on the ability to house the chronically homeless to keep in line with the Opening Doors Plan. For this reason, the following points will be awarded based on the percentage of chronically homeless being specifically served by the project:

- 3 points will be awarded to any project that has dedicated 100% of their beds to the chronically homeless
- 2 points will be awarded to any project that has dedicated or prioritized at least 75% of their beds to the chronically homeless
- 1 point will be awarded to any project that has dedicated or prioritized at least 50% of their beds to the chronically homeless

Section 3 - Participation in Local Priorities (2 points)

HUD has continued to put an emphasis on collaboration and participation in local priorities, such as ending veterans and chronic homelessness, as well as the requirement of participating in the coordinated assessment system of the community and the inclusion and meaningful involvement of persons with lived experience. Please explain how your agency participates in and operationalizes these local priorities.

Section 4 - Agency Capacity (5 points)

A maximum of 5 points will be awarded if the project demonstrates:

1. The agency demonstrates a key understanding of the needs and gaps of the priority population
2. The agency has experience working with the priority population, OR provides a description of steps the agency will take to fill gaps in knowledge
3. The agency has been effectively implementing the project under review or has implemented similar projects in a timely fashion
4. The agency has attended at least 6 of the Continuum of Care meetings held in the last year
5. The agency incorporates training for staff of all levels, including the board of directors and executive leadership on priority populations and service delivery

Section 5 - Project Implementation (5 points)

A maximum of 5 points will be awarded if the project demonstrates:

1. How it provides a valuable service/housing opportunity to the homeless in Bergen County
2. Objectives and outcomes that include all elements of a SMART (specific, measurable, attainable/achievable, realistic, time-focused/timebound) goal and are relevant to the target population
3. Effectiveness with assisting participants to obtain and maintain permanent housing, including supports provided to obtain necessary documentation for program entry
4. That it has adequate project staff, or a plan to secure adequate project staff to carry out project activities
5. Successful assessment and connection with, employment services, mainstream benefits, healthcare services and insurance

Section 6 - Monitoring & Evaluation Plan (4 points)

A maximum of 4 points will be awarded if the project demonstrates:

1. A plan for monitoring program objective and outcomes that includes frequency of review and staff roles and responsibilities
2. Utilization of data to determine program effectiveness and quality
3. Utilization of consumer focus groups, questionnaires and/or surveys that measure consumer satisfaction of the progress on ISP goals and activities
4. A data-driven quality improvement plan

Section 7 - Housing First Model (3 points)

The CoC has been successful in utilizing best practices to work towards ending homelessness. One of the most effective best practices and HUD policy priorities has been for projects to utilize a housing first approach to housing. To receive the 3 points associated with being a housing first project, the project must meet the following:

- Demonstrate how they operationalize a Housing First philosophy in program implementation, documented policies and procedures, and training
- Demonstrate that participants are not screened out of their program due to the reasons stated in question 6 of the concept paper narrative
- Demonstrate that clients are not terminated from the program for the reasons outlined in question 7 of the concept paper
- If applicable, provide a detailed overview of any barriers to implementing the Housing First philosophy and strategies project staff have identified to address these barriers.
- Demonstrate that referrals from Coordinated Entry have not been rejected for reasons outlined in question 7 of the concept paper.
- Demonstrate that if any clients were terminated, demonstrate that the agency set forth plans to prevent the client from becoming homeless.
- Provide detailed description of an appeals process.

Section 8 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (6 points)

A maximum of 6 points will be awarded if the project demonstrates:

- At least 3 meaningful strategies your agency is using to address racial disparities, as outlined in the Concept Paper Addendum Tool
- How the agency incorporates the voices persons with lived experience into program design and policies

Section 9 - Budget Appropriateness (2 points)

Due to recent budget constraints and reductions in funding, it is essential for the local Continuum process to ensure all projects are requesting appropriate funds for projects as well as utilizing any funding they are currently receiving. For these reasons maximum points will be awarded to projects in which:

- The budget is reasonable and appropriate for the number of households/persons that are expected to serve
- Administration funds requested do not exceed 7% of the total of the budget line items
- Project budget demonstrates match funding available of 25% of the total budget requested (this includes admin and excludes any leasing dollars).

Section 10 – Financial Health (5 points) (New Projects Only)

A maximum of 5 points will be awarded to new projects who can demonstrate:

- Organization has a written policy specifying approval authority for financial transactions which includes a clear separation of duties.
- Agency had a financial audit completed within the last 12 months and has addressed any findings/citings, if needed.