



## Sonoma County CoC Board Executive Summary

**Item:** 11. FY 23 CoC Competition Process & Approval of Renewal Project Scoring

**Date:** April 21, 2023

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### Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Competition Overview

The CoC Program is a federal funding stream in which projects can reapply annually in a national competition for funding. Contracts awarded through this process are all directly contracted with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Collaborative Applicant, the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, is responsible for the completion of an annual consolidated application for funds (efforts to address homelessness within the community in the past year), rating/ranking of projects, and submission of the Final Priority Listing of projects for funding directly to HUD.

Sonoma County Continuum of Care is scored in the CoC Competition nationally on our scoring process, which includes our rating and ranking projects to receive these funds. As a community, scoring well allows us to keep projects considered at risk of losing their funding and allows us to increase our annual award amount (Annual Renewal Demand- ARD) via bonus funding. HUD has just released the scoring from the 2022 CoC Competition for funding, and we are pleased to announce that we received a perfect score on our scoring process! An overview of our score is provided later in this summary in the section “FY 2022 CoC Program Competition Debriefing.”

### CoC Program Renewal Scoring Item Overview

The CoC Competition Evaluation (CCE) Workgroup met on April 5, 2023, to review project scoring for the 2023 Continuum of Care (CoC) Program renewal projects. The CCE Workgroup was provided information on HUD’s CoC Competition funding process, reviewed requirements of funding, eligible activities, projects up for renewal (projects that are already in existence), and the FY2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) priorities.

The FY 2023 CoC renewal scoring matrix is set for approval by this Board on Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. The CoC Competition is extremely time-consuming once HUD releases the NOFO, so renewal projects (existing projects) are scored first. With this review process, renewal project supplemental materials are extensively reviewed, and CoC Staff and CCE Workgroup members conduct site visits before the release of the NOFO. This ensures the CoC has enough time to thoroughly review all existing projects and develop Corrective Action Plans (if needed). Projects are scored based on system performance, adherence to HUD guidelines, and local priorities. The final ranking of renewals will not be completed

until the CoC NOFO period opens and renewals are ranked with new project applications. Although HUD does not provide a release date for the NOFO, HUD staff confirmed during the CoC Competition Debriefing webinar yesterday that the CoC NOFO will likely be released in May or June.

The CCE Workgroup has approved the scoring sections within the scoring tool. However, the CCE Workgroup still needs to settle the numerical scores for specific areas marked in the scoring tool. During the May meeting, the CCE Workgroup will provide input and finalize the numerical value for each scoring section flagged within the tool. As recommended, the scoring tool remains in tracked changes so the CoC Board knows which sections still need approval.

Given the timeline associated with this review process, it is recommended that the CoC Board delegate the authority to the CCE Workgroup to make final decisions on the weight of the scores during their next meeting. The Funding and Evaluation Committee approved this recommendation during their last meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Renewal Project Scoring Revisions

Over the years, the scoring tool has been slightly modified due to new scoring information included within the annual CoC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), adjustments to the local priorities, and points allocated to each section. As outlined in the materials submitted to Renewal Applicants, if any new priorities are listed once the 2023 NOFO is released, the CCE Workgroup can determine if additional materials should be submitted for scoring.

### What has changed from last year's CoC Renewal Project Scoring Tool?

Scoring questionnaires have been consolidated into one document, the *2023 Renewal Evaluation Application Questionnaire*, which is now in order with the scoring tool. Some questions from previous questionnaires were removed for redundancy, some were revised for clarification based on feedback from last year, and some were added based on new priorities outlined in the FY 2022 CoC NOFO.

Based on the 2022 CoC Competition NOFO, we have added the following sections to the scoring tool:

1. Access to mainstream resources (e.g., Medi-cal, Calfresh, TANF, substance abuse programs, employment assistance)
  - a. Expanded to include a narrative question to the score.
2. Promotion of/supporting volunteering, community engagement, and employment services
3. Racial Equity
  - a. expanded to its own section
4. Anti-discrimination Practices & Policies (Improving Assistance to LGBTQ+ Individuals)
5. Coordination with Housing
6. Coordination with Healthcare

## FY 2022 CoC Program Competition Debriefing

The following information is a breakout of the scores we received in last year's competition. HUD does not provide full details as to where communities lost points, as this is a nationally competitive process.

### "High Priority Application Questions" – full points received:

- Housing First- Lowering Barriers to Entry

- Project Evaluation for Housing First Compliance
- Street Outreach Scope
- Rapid Rehousing—RRH Beds as Reported in the Housing Inventory Count (HIC)
- Increasing Capacity for Non-Congregate Sheltering
- Promoting Racial Equity in Homelessness
- Involving Individuals with Lived Experience of Homelessness in Service Delivery and Decision making—CoC’s Outreach Efforts
- Project Review and Ranking Process Your CoC Used in Its Local Competition
  - As confirmed in yesterday’s HUD CoC Competition Debriefing webinar, this section is “scrutinized very carefully” when the review is completed compared to other parts of the application. This includes our scoring process, scoring tool, posting/noticing/deadlines met of the local competition, and all the required attachments.
- Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA) Submission in HDX 2.0
- Reduction in the Number of First-Time Homeless—Risk Factors Your CoC Uses
- Returns to Homelessness—CoC’s Strategy to Reduce Rate

“High Priority Application Questions” – areas for staff to review for improvement:

- Partnerships with Public Health Agencies—Collaborating to Respond to and Prevent Spread of Infectious Diseases (2/5 points)
- Bed Coverage Rate—Using HIC, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data (3/4 points)
  - To get full points here, all homeless dedicated projects on the annual Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) have to have at least 85% bed coverage in HMIS to get full points in this section.
  - In other words, the percentage of homeless dedicated beds that use our HMIS database are measured by project type.
  - As confirmed in yesterday’s HUD CoC Competition Debriefing webinar, only 55% of CoC’s nationally have the 85% bed coverage needed to receive full points in this section. Thus, almost half of the CoC’s are not able to receive full points on this measure.
- Length of Time Homeless—CoC’s Strategy to Reduce (10/13 points)
- Exits to Permanent Housing Destinations/Retention of Permanent Housing—CoC’s Strategy (7/13 points)
- Increasing Employment Cash Income—CoC’s Strategy (3/7 points)

CoC Scoring Summary (From FY 2022 NOFO)

Areas we did well:

- Coordination and Engagement—Inclusive Structure and Participation (4.5/5 points)
- Coordination and Engagement—Coordination with Federal, State, Local, Private, and Other Organizations (28/29 points)
- Coordination and Engagement—Coordination with Federal, State, Local, Private, and Other Organizations—Continued (46/49)
- Project Capacity, Review, and Ranking—Local Competition (30/30 points)
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)—Implementation (8/9)

- Point-in-Time Count (5/5 points)

#### Areas for Improvement:

- System Performance (38/59)
- Coordination with Housing and Healthcare (0/14 points)
  - This section has been a new HUD priority for the last two years. In FY 2021 competition, these points were only available as bonus points.
  - To receive full points in this section, we had to have **new** permanent housing projects, Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing projects, apply with written commitments from both a housing provider and healthcare provider that included:
    - A written match commitment of at least 25% in-kind services provided by healthcare (medical, substance use, or behavioral health services). If this commitment had been met, we would have received 7 points.
    - A written match commitment from a housing provider that would provide subsidies (other than ESG/CoC Program funds) for at least 25% of the new units in the project. If this commitment had been met, we would have received 7 points.
    - Staff made multiple attempts during the last two funding competitions to encourage agencies to apply for new permanent housing projects with these commitments.
    - We will likely see this requirement again this year once the NOFO is released based on the information collected during the debriefing webinar.

#### Staff Recommendation:

1. Approve the scoring tool for the 2023 CoC Competition – Renewal Projects
2. As approved by the Funding and Evaluation Committee, the request is to give authority to the CoC Competition Evaluation Workgroup to determine the final weight of the scoring during their next meeting in May to ensure the Workgroup can proceed with the in-depth evaluation.

#### Scoring Tool (Review Required for Approval)

Draft 2023 CoC Renewal Project Scoring Tool: <https://share.sonoma-county.org/link/Xihz3328Pj8/>

#### Additional Materials (Optional Review)

The following information is provided for transparency purposes and is not considered required for review.

FY 2022 CoC Competition Debriefing Report (HUD's report of our score from last year's funding competition): <https://share.sonoma-county.org/link/zu-TEJEr1J4/>

If you are interested in viewing the required materials sent to the CoC Renewal Applicants for scoring, you can do so by using the following link: <https://share.sonoma-county.org/link/HS5i78EX8J4/>

2023 CoC Competition materials and up-to-date information can be located on our website: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/development-services/community-development-commission/divisions/homeless-services/continuum-of-care/continuum-of-care-competition>

2023 CoC Competition Evaluation Workgroup meeting information and materials can be located on our website: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/development-services/community-development-commission/divisions/homeless-services/continuum-of-care/committees/coc-competition-evaluation-workgroup>

If you would like to access last year's funding competition materials, you can do so by using the following link: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/health-services/divisions/homelessness-services/continuum-of-care/continuum-of-care-competition/2022-continuum-of-care-competition>