

**Oakland/Berkeley/Alameda County Continuum of Care (CoC)  
2024 CoC Local Application Process**

**Questions and Answers  
Posted August 20, 2024**

*This document summarizes questions asked and answers provided during the bidder's conference on August 12, 2024, as well as questions received answered via email or in TA calls through August 20, 2024. Questions received after August 20 will be answered in a subsequent Q&A document.*

**A. General Questions**

**1. Question: Please explain the meaning of Tier 1 and Tier 2 in the CoC funding process.**

Answer: HUD allocates every CoC enough funding to fully fund all eligible renewals for one year. This amount is called Annual Renewal Demand (ARD). Under this year's NOFO, only 90% of this amount is guaranteed to be funded. This guaranteed portion is Tier 1. Grants placed in Tier 1 on the CoC's Project Priority list are assured of funding (if they meet HUD's threshold requirements). The remaining 10% of ARD goes into Tier 2. Grants in Tier 2 must compete nationally for funding. These grants are not assured of funding. However, in past cycles, the Alameda County CoC has received funding for the majority of Tier 2 renewals and some Tier 2 new projects.

**2. Question: How many applications will be in each Tier?**

Answer: The number of applications in each Tier depends on the dollar amounts of the applications. Tier 2 will be made up of some combination of projects that add up to 10% of the CoC's ARD.

**3. Question: Some CoC's have opted to not put long standing projects who are performing well in Tier 1. What are your thoughts?**

Answer: Policies on how to score and rank renewal versus new projects are developed by the Strategy, Funding and Compliance Committee (SFC) and approved by the Leadership Board. Please consult the approved Strategic Direction for the 2024 NOFO process, which was approved by the Leadership Board in June 2024.

**4. Question: Please explain the CoC bonus and how it differs from Tier 1 and Tier 2.**

Answer: The bonus is the amount of additional money the CoC Can ask for beyond what is needed to cover renewal of existing projects. Bonus projects are new projects and can be placed into either Tier 1 or Tier 2. However, if they are placed in Tier 1, more renewal projects are pushed into Tier 2 which places funding for existing housing units and tenants in jeopardy. The CoC Leadership Board has adopted a policy to not jeopardize renewal of existing housing programs, which means that new projects are often placed in Tier 2.

**5. Question: Do all applicants have to complete the HUD Project Application in E-SNAPs by September 24, even if we will not yet know if we are being included on the Project Priority List?**

Answer: Yes. Everyone must complete the HUD Project Application in E-SNAPs by September 24, 2024. The CoC is holding an optional TA session on E-SNAPs on September 16. This session is geared to

organizations that have never used E-SNAPs before. Please check the EveryOne Home NOFO webpage for details.

**6. Question: Is HMIS participation mandatory?**

Answer: Yes, all recipients of CoC funding must enter data into HMIS. The only exception is for victim service organizations, which are exempt. However, DV organizations with CoC funding must maintain an HMIS compatible database and be capable of generating the required HUD Annual Performance Report (APR).

**7. Question: Is DEI work an eligible expense and under which line item?**

Answer: Applicants are encouraged to review the HUD CoC Interim Rules for details on allowable expenses. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-B/chapter-V/subchapter-C/part-578> Contracts with consultants are an eligible expense under the Administration Line item in some circumstances. Costs for program staffing are allowable under several line items (i.e. supportive services, operations, HMIS, administration).

**8. Question: What if we do not have audited financial statements?**

Answer: Please consult the CoC Interim Rule, Section 578.99 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/section-578.99>) for requirements relating to the applicability of uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for Federal awards. Any organization receiving federal CoC funds must comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and have an annual audit.

**B. Renewal Applications**

**9. Question: Can renewal projects ask for an increase in their project budget?**

Answer: Renewal projects must request the amount listed on the Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW), which is the same as the current grant amount. Current grantees may request an expansion grant, but this must be submitted as a New Project Application. Expansion grants must be for the same project component and for the same grant recipient.

**10. Question: How does the renewal process work for grants that were originally awarded in 2023 but have not yet received a grant agreement from HUD?**

Answer: If you were awarded a grant last year but don't have your contract yet you should still apply as a renewal grant. Your project will be in the category of a "new" renewal. You will need to do a small portion of the local application and you must also complete the HUD Project Application in E-SNAPS. Please consult the Instructions for Renewal Applications posted on the EveryOne Home NOFO webpage.

**11. For Rating Factor 3B1, can you be specific about what kind of documentation is needed to demonstrate someone on your board has lived experience? Are we expected to share personal information about our board members?**

Answer: This question is asking for documentation showing that your organization has adopted a policy creating a designated seat on your board or an advisory board for a participant or former participant or

a person with lived experience of homelessness. *This could be something like your organizational by-laws, governance charter, or other policies relating to organizational governance.* **We are NOT asking you to provide names or biographies of anyone on your board or an advisory board.** If you have a practice of including a person with lived experience on your board but this practice is not spelled out in a policy document, you can attach a narrative explaining your organizational practice. But again, do not provide identifying information about any people with lived experience who are serving in your organization in any capacity.

**12. Question. For Scoring Factor 3B1, is the question asking about a participant or former participant, or could it include a person with lived experience who was never a participant in a program of the applicant organization?**

Answer: It can be a person with lived experience who was not a program participant.

**13. Question: Please explain how the recent monitoring work conducted by Homebase will impact the local application process.**

Answer: There are 3 questions in the Renewal Application that relate to monitoring:

1. *Threshold Requirement: Question B1a.* This question asks if your organization participated in the CoC monitoring process this year. You must answer “yes” to be eligible to participate in the local application process. All renewal applicants participated, so we anticipate everyone will respond “yes.”
2. *Threshold Requirement: Question B4b. Housing First Documentation.* This question asks if the applicant provided documentation of compliance with Housing First requirements as part of the monitoring process. Applicants may respond “yes” as long as they provided the requested materials. If an applicant received any suggestions from Homebase for improvements of their Housing First practices, they may still check “yes” to this question.
3. *Scored Question 3A2. Advancing Racial Equity.* Applicants receive 2 points for each item they check on the checklist of policies and practices for advancing racial equity. Homebase will review this list to identify whether backup documentation for any items checked was provided as part of the monitoring process. If an applicant checks an item and the backup documentation was not provided in the monitoring, the applicant can provide a description of the policy and practice in the provided text box. Backup documentation is not required and is not scored. Applicants are only scored on the boxes checked. In future years, providing backup documentation may be required to score points.

### C. New Project Applications

**14. Question: Is the CoC Bonus \$6 million locally or nationally?**

Answer: This is the estimated amount for the Oakland/Berkeley/Alameda County CoC. HUD has not posted final CoC Bonus amounts. Once that information is available, it will be posted on the EveryOne Home NOFO webpage.

**15. Question: Are there other tentative amounts for bonus funding?**

Answer: The only other tentative amount is the amount for the DV bonus. Once this information is available, it will be posted on the EveryOne Home webpage.

**16. Question: Can an applicant apply for CoC funding for an existing project?**

Answer: Yes, but the applicant should review HUD's requirements relating to maintenance of effort (also known as supplantation). <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/section-578.87>. You cannot use CoC funding to replace other federal, state or local funding. If you have a current source that will no longer be available, that would not be supplantation. However, you cannot intentionally stop accepting a funding source in order to receive HUD CoC funding. If you have funding that only funds a portion of your project, you can request CoC funding for the unfunded portion. Be sure to only ask for CoC funding for any expenses for which you do not have a funding source and that are HUD CoC eligible costs.

**17. Question: Can an applicant for the DV bonus funding apply for a Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) project?**

Answer: No, PSH is not an eligible project component for the DV bonus. The only allowed projects under the DV bonus are RRH, TH/RRH and SSO/CE. Organizations serving the DV population may apply for a PSH project under the regular CoC bonus, but the project would have to meet all applicable requirements for PSH, including serving households that meet the definition of chronic homelessness.

**18. Question. Is there a recommended dollar amount for a new project? We do not want to over or under ask.**

Answer: You should ask for the funding you need to make your project feasible. The NOFO Committee will review all new applications received and select one project or a combination of projects that add up to the maximum CoC bonus request. There have been years when not enough applications were submitted and the Committee had to recruit extra applications to be sure no funding was left on the table. In other years the requests exceeded available funding and the Committee had to select which projects to include on the Project Priority List.

**19. Question. The competition for new projects is competition for the \$6 million bonus, not the full \$49 million ARD, is that correct?**

Answer: The only way a new project could take a portion of the \$49 million ARD would be for the CoC to reallocate funding from an existing project. This year's adopted policy specifies that no projects will be involuntarily reallocated. For this reason, applicants for new funding should assume they are requesting funds from the CoC bonus allocation (estimated at \$6 million) or the DV bonus allocation (estimated at \$2 million).

**20. Question. Can CoC funds be used as a reserve for supportive services or operating expenses?**

Answer: Under the Operations Budget Line Item (BLI), CoC funds may be used for regular payments to a replacement reserve for replacement of major systems of the housing project. Reserves are not allowed for any other type of expense.

**D. Match Requirements**

**21. Question: What is the Match requirement for CoC grants?**

Answer: All grants must have matching resources coming from another source in an amount equal to 25% of the CoC funds requested (minus leasing). Match must be spent on CoC-eligible expense and must

be spent on costs related to serving the participants in the CoC-funded project. See Section 578.73 of the CoC Interim Rule. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/section-578.73>

**22. Question: Do we have to submit match letters with our project applications?**

Answer: You do not have to attach match letters for the local application. If you are applying for a new project, there are bonus points for providing leverage commitments for housing and health care (see New Project Scoring Criteria). You **do** have to attach match letters in the Project Application in E-SNAPS.

**23. Question: Can a grant for support services from a local hospital be considered a “match” for PSH?**

Answer: If the local hospital is delivering services to the participants in the program, yes this can be match. However, you will need to document the services provided to each project participant and the value of those services. It cannot be just a general commitment that health services are available. The level of documentation required for “in kind” match is extremely strict and must be collected at the participant level.

**24. Question. Can the match be revenues on hand or does it need to be new dollars contributed?**

Answer: It can be either. Just bear in mind that the funds must be spent on CoC-eligible costs and pay for services or activities delivered to the participants in the CoC-funded project. It cannot be for services generally available that the project participants may or may not be accessing.

**E. Online Application**

**25. Question: When we are working in the online application, is the work auto-saved?**

Answer: No. You cannot save your work and return to it. You should plan to upload all your answers in one session. We have provided an application template in an editable Word document that you can use to draft all your responses. Applicants are STRONGLY encouraged to use the template and then transfer their answers to the online application.

**26. Question. Is the 2,500 character limit inclusive of spaces or not?**

Answer: It includes spaces. Note that the character limit is not hard coded in the online application, so you will be allowed to upload longer answers. Applicants are asked to be succinct and comply with the limit.

**27. Question. Can applicants amend their online applications after submitting them?**

Answer: Applicants who wish to amend their application BEFORE the September 6, 2024, 5:00 p.m. deadline may request to withdraw the submitted application and submit a new one. Please send an email to [kate@kbristol.com](mailto:kate@kbristol.com) with a cc: to [alameda@homebaseccc.org](mailto:alameda@homebaseccc.org) with your request. Applications CANNOT be amended after the deadline has passed.