

PA 600 Continuum of Care Final Ranking Policies and Ranking List for FY 2015

As the Governing Body for the Allegheny County Continuum of Care (PA-600), the Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) has developed the following process for ranking existing projects and new projects that are seeking funding within the Continuum. Many of the duties that are necessary to carry out this process have been delegated to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS), which serves as the CoC's Collaborative Applicant. However, final authority for determining which projects will be submitted in the CoC's application for funding and the ranking of projects within that application rests with the Continuum of Care's Governing Body—the Homeless Advisory Board.

The Allegheny County Continuum of Care (CoC) has adopted the following process for ranking new and renewal projects under the FY2015 competition. The CoC will develop a **Ranking List** of all new and renewal projects within the CoC based on the criteria established below.

Eligibility for Funding

To be eligible to be placed on the Ranking List, a project must submit all final documentation and application information to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (the CoC Collaborative Applicant) by October 20, 2015, meet the CoC required submission dates set forth in Attachment A, meet the application deadlines established within the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), and meet all other eligibility criteria outlined in that NOFA and established by the CoC, its Governing Body, and its Collaborative Applicant. If a project is renewing an existing grant, the project must also have an executed Grant Agreement from HUD and be in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations established by the federal, state, and local government.

The **Ranking List** will be divided into two groups—**group 1** will be those projects that are newly allocated or meet the minimum threshold score of 550 for renewal projects; **group 2** will be those renewal projects that fall below the 550 minimum threshold score, but that have agreed to a corrective action plan. Within these two groups, projects will be ranked according to the following **Policy Priorities**:

1. Permanent Supportive Housing for the Chronically Homeless
2. Permanent Supportive Housing with at least 75% Beds Dedicated for the Chronically Homeless
3. All other Permanent and Permanent Supportive Housing
4. Rapid Re-housing for families
5. All other Rapid Re-housing
6. HMIS
7. Supportive Services for Coordinated Intake
8. Transitional Housing that Identify and are Verified as Using a Housing First Model
9. Transitional Housing for Unaccompanied Youth
10. Transitional Housing for Veterans
11. Transitional Housing for Survivors of Domestic Violence

12. All other Transitional Housing

The CoC has adopted the **Ranking Tool** that scored renewal projects on a scale from 0 to 800, with the minimum threshold for Group 1 of 550. This Ranking Tool utilized information gathered from each project's Fiscal Year 2013/2014 Annual Progress Report (APR). The evaluation information included utilization rates, amount of funding returned to HUD, accuracy of billing, and performance measures (discharging to or retaining permanent housing, maintaining or increasing income, employment, and maintaining or increasing the receipt of mainstream benefits) that were recommended by the Continuum of Care Committee and approved by the Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board (HAB), the CoC's governing body. The scores derived by the Ranking Tool are used to both determine the group within which the project will be placed and to break ties among projects that fall within the same policy priority. For example, among 2 projects eligible for renewal that are both PSH for the Chronically Homeless, the project with the higher score on the Ranking Tool will be ranked first. If a project scores below 550 on the Ranking Tool, it will be placed in the second group of projects regardless of what type of project it is and where it is among the CoC's policy priorities. For example, if a project scores 400 on the Ranking Tool and it is a PSH project for the Chronically Homeless, it will be placed below all other Transitional Housing projects that score above 550. Projects that score below 550 on the Ranking Tool will be required to undergo a Corrective Action Plan that will be designed to improve performance. If performance does not improve in subsequent years, the project may be removed from the next year's Project Ranking List.

Exclusion from the Project Ranking List

Projects that fall below the 550 minimum threshold score and do not agree to a corrective action plan OR projects that have received documentation from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that a project will not have its grant agreement signed due to being out of compliance with HUD's regulations and/or the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act will not be included in the **Ranking List**. Projects that do not wish to seek renewal funding will also be excluded from the Ranking List. Funds from these projects will be re-allocated to new projects within the Continuum of Care through a competitive Request for Proposals process.

Notice of Projects Ranking

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services will post the Final Ranking List on its website and will notify the Executive Directors of those projects on the Ranking List by November 1, 2015.

Appeals

Renewal projects that do not agree with their placement on the Ranking List or with their exclusion from the Ranking List may submit an appeal to the Chair of the Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board. The HAB will designate a subcommittee to review the appeal and make a final recommendation on the placement of the project in the Ranking List prior to the HAB. The HAB will make a final decision on the submission of any project that appeals its placement on the Ranking List at least five (5) days prior to the submission of the CoC application to HUD. Members of the HAB will follow the Conflict of Interest

Policies adopted in the Governance Charter when participating in discussions and when casting a vote on the project(s) requesting an appeal.

Since appeals of the scores determined by the Ranking Tool have already been heard (see below), appeals will only be heard on the basis of a project's placement within a specific Policy Priority or its exclusion from the Final Ranking List.

Background and Preliminary Rankings

Preliminary FY2015 Ranking Structure

The following Ranking Structure was recommended by the CoC Committee on May 21, 2015:

1. Permanent Housing and Safe Haven project dedicating 75% - 100% of their beds to chronic homeless and scoring over 550 will be ranked according to their score as the first group.
2. Bridging the Gap, a project that is serving 100% chronic homeless utilizing Housing First, started their project in November 2014. They are at capacity now but do not have an APR to reflect the full year of performance. It was, therefore, decided that they must score 550 points or more and would be ranked after the 75% to 100% chronic homeless beds.
3. Permanent Housing projects prioritizing 28% - 9% of their beds to chronic homeless and scoring over 550 will be ranked according to their score as the second group.
4. Hosanna House, New Foundations I, will be taken over in July by a new provider who will increase the number of housing units, utilize the housing first model and serve chronic homeless with turnover beds and will be placed after the 28%-9% projects.
5. In recognition of the importance of permanent housing beds, Permanent Housing projects not prioritizing any beds for chronic homeless will be placed in the third group.
6. A Step Forward was awarded in the HUD 2014 competition. The HUD contract has not yet been executed. It is estimated that the project will begin operation in the fall, 2015. The committee felt strongly that the project, a Rapid Re-Housing Project, should be ranked immediately after the third group.
7. Transitional Housing projects that scored above 550 will be listed in rank order based upon their scoring. The group did not consider the reduction in the time in the program as a consideration in this year's competition due to the high performance of this group.
8. Permanent Housing and Transitional Housing projects who fell below the 550 level will be ranked last based upon their score.
9. HMIS will be placed between the transitional housing projects and the projects falling below the 550 level. The Planning Grant will be considered once the new projects are reviewed and ranked.

All projects who returned 5 or 10% of their grant funding, fell below the minimum score level or did not choose to either consider dedicating turnover beds to chronic homeless in their Permanent Housing Program or to reduce their project time for Transitional Housing, will be requested to consider this element in their 2016 application. It was also recommended that next year's

prioritization include actual average length of stay for projects and rates of returning to homelessness.

Once the NOFA is issued by HUD for the 2015 application, the committee will be asked to consider ranking and integrating the new project applications.

Preliminary Appeals of Scores

Projects that disagreed with their score from the Ranking Tool were able to appeal that score to the Continuum of Care Committee in September of 2105. Projects that felt that there were errors on their APR or that felt that there were extenuating circumstances that caused their performance to be lower than normal were given the opportunity to have their score and/or ranking changed.

Evaluation of HUD 2015 Applications
PA 600 Ranking Process

Activity	Date	Notes
Continuum of Care Committee Meets to develop and adopt Renewal and New Project Evaluation Tools	2/4/15 and 3/4/15	Continuum of Care Committee Meetings 2/4/15 and 3/4/15 were held to review and approve tool and process.
ACDHS Staff prepare Performance Worksheets from APRs	3/15/15 to 4/5/15	The worksheets distributed at 4/6/15 meeting as a part of the pre-application process for renewals.
Renewal Projects receive Performance Worksheet to review and write comments regarding their performance	4/6/2015	
Performance Worksheets returned by individual project for review by the Evaluation Committee.	4/30/2015	Evaluators will be given a set of the all projects received except those having a conflict of interest and those projects will be given to an independent reviewer - Mary Frances Pilarski from the VA.
Evaluation Committee Convened to review Renewal Performance Review Process	5/4/2015	Performance Worksheets distributed with evaluation tool. Tool was reviewed and written instructions distributed.
Evaluation Committee returned master scoring sheet for all projects to DHS.	5/18/2015	All reviewers returned score sheets and were tabulated into one master sheet to determine overall scores.
Evaluation Committee Meeting to review all renewal projects and rank order projects.	5/21/2015	See minutes from September 21 for details of results.

New Permanent Supportive Housing Project RFP published.	7/9/2015	Two Safe Havens requested that funds/projects be re-allocated for PSH. PSH re allocation process - RFP was released for PSH.
New Permanent Supportive Housing Project proposals received	7/31/2015	
New PSH Projects reviewed by Evaluation Committee Review projects	8/3-13/2015	
Evaluation Committee Meeting to review all PSH projects received and reviewed	8/28/2015	See minutes from 8/28/15 for details of results.
Letters sent to all proposers on decisions.	9/3/2015	
New Rapid Re Housing Re allocation project RFP published	8/12/2015	HAB voted 7/28/15 to re allocate for RRH from TH. This RFP was designed to address the reallocation of those funds.
New RRH proposals received	8/28/2015	
Evaluation Committee Review of RRH proposals received	8/31-9/8/2015	
Evaluation Committee Meeting to review all RRH projects received and reviewed	9/11/2015	See notes from 9/11/15 for details of results
Negotiations with Mercy, & YWCA	9/17/2015	
Negotiations with Goodwill	9/22/2015	
Letters sent to all proposers on decisions for RRH projects.	10/5/2015	
Bonus Project RFP published	9/30/2015	
Bonus Project RFP due	10/7/2015	
Bonus Project Reviewed by Evaluation Committee	10/14/2015	Only Youth projects received. Evaluation Committee requests another RFP for a Family Program be issued. Single Youth project recommended for negotiations
Bonus Project for Families RFP published	10/20/2015	

Bonus Project for Families RFP due	10/22/2015	
Bonus Project reviewed by Evaluation Committee	10/26/2015	
Letters sent to all Bonus Projects received and reviewed	10/26/2015	
Overall Evaluation Committee meets to rank order all applications and make recommendations to HAB	10/20/2015	
Homeless Advisory Board formal vote on ranking	10/27/2015	
Ranking letters to providers	10/30/2015	
Ranking posted to Web site	11/ 2/2015	
Final Submission to HUD	11/19/2015	