

Allegheny County Continuum of Care (PA-600) 2021 Rate, Rank, Review, and Selection Criteria Process

This document describes the 2021 Rate, Rank, Review, and Selection Criteria Process utilized by the [Allegheny County Continuum of Care \(CoC\), PA-600](#), for the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Continuum of Care Program Competition (2021 NOFO). An overview of the development of these processes, along with a timeline, is provided following the description of the processes and criteria.

The [Homeless Advisory Board \(HAB\)](#) is the working board that acts on the behalf of the CoC to ensure the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the CoC, and is the body responsible for finalizing the process decisions described in this document. Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) has been designated as the Infrastructure Organization by the HAB. Within this designation, DHS has been delegated the day-to-day and operational responsibilities that fulfill the core duties of the CoC, including serving as the Collaborative Applicant, Unified Funding Agency and supporting the administrative duties required to complete the annual NOFO application.

2021 CoC Review and Ranking

Eligibility for Ranking

Projects that sought renewal for funding in 2021 were required to submit their Performance Outcome Tool Justifications to DHS by May 20, 2021. Beyond submitting required materials by the deadlines outlined by DHS and in the NOFO, renewal projects were required to have an executed Grant Agreement from HUD and be in full compliance with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations. To further support projects and the CoC's completion of a full application to HUD, a meeting was held with all subrecipients on September 21, 2021 to review application processes and requirements.

Projects that sought to receive bonus funding in 2021 were required to submit a complete proposal in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by DHS and reviewed by a diverse, cross-functional evaluation committee, including members of the HAB, by the date outlined in the RFP (October 15, 2021). Further, projects that the RFP evaluation committee recommended for inclusion in the NOFO were required to meet all the criteria for renewals, as outlined above.

Renewal Project Performance Outcome Tool

The 2021 Renewal Project Performance Outcome Tool (2021 Ranking Tool) was developed to evaluate performance and to rank HUD CoC renewal projects for the 2021 NOFO.

The 2021 Ranking Tool was developed through the HAB's CoC Analysis and Planning Committee, utilizing the expertise of CoC members and an analysis of the effectiveness of previous ranking tools. The analysis of previous ranking tools included a review of mean, median and high/low scores, as well as the distribution of projects across scores, a review of system performance across measures, and a comparison of the measurements and point values utilized across 2018-2020 tools.

The 2021 Ranking Tool is organized around the following performance measures: (a) unit utilization; (b) housing performance; (c) income, employment, health insurance and non-cash benefits outcomes; (d) length of time in program; (f) recidivism; (g) data quality (h) timeliness of data entry; (i) programmatic monitoring and housing first performance (j) fiscal administration; and (k) cost effectiveness. In addition, section (e) contributes points to projects based on the percentage of particularly hard to serve consumers (persons with two or more disabilities at entry; adults with zero income at entry; persons living in places not meant for human habitation prior to

entry; and chronic homelessness at entry) they served. Data for each measure is scored and weighted to balance the ranking tool results around a consistent scale.

Data to populate the tool for each project was extracted from HMIS, except for sections (i), (j) and (k). Fiscal data maintained through DHS was used to complete sections (j) and (k), and 2018 monitoring documentation was used to complete section (i).

Once the tool was populated with data it was shared with the corresponding project. Project leads reviewed the completed tool, provided justification for requests to adjust any scores, and described plans to address any low performance measures.

Reallocation Strategy

A full description of the CoC's reallocation strategy can be found in the 2021 Reallocation Process document. The combination of funding adjustments within the grant year, utilizing UFA status, and results from the Renewal Project Performance Outcome tool resulted in no reallocation requests within the 2021 NOFO.

Ranking Strategy

The 2021 ranking strategy continued the CoC's data-driven, performance-based and needs-oriented processes:

- Renewal projects were ranked in order of score using the 2021 Ranking Tool. A data dictionary was included as a part of the overall distribution of the tool.
 - The 2021 Ranking Tool was completed for each project using data pulled from HMIS or a comparable data system.
 - Each project reviewed the scores on the tool and provided a justification for any score that should be adjusted.
 - The Evaluation Committee assessed proposed score changes and adjusted scores per their review.
 - Final scores were used to rank projects in order of score, and final review and approval is conducted by the Homeless Advisory Board (HAB).
- HMIS and Allegheny Link projects are considered critical to the overall operations of the CoC, and therefore were placed in the middle of Tier 1.

Review and Ranking Process

Utilizing the 2021 Renewal Project Performance Outcome Tool (2021 Ranking Tool) and reallocation and ranking strategies described above, the following process was implemented to rank projects for the 2021 NOFO:

- Renewal Project Ranking:
 - HAB approved the 2021 Ranking Tool on March 30, 2021
 - DHS generated the Ranking Tool for each renewal project and distributed them to service providers on May 4, 2021
 - Service providers returned reviewed Ranking Tools, including any score adjustment requests and justification, to DHS for Evaluation Committee review by May 20, 2021
- New Project Ranking:
 - On September 16, 2021, the HAB approved focusing 2021 NOFO bonus project funds on new PSH and/or RRH project(s) that collaborate with healthcare systems and use healthcare resources to assist individuals and/or families experiencing homelessness
 - RFP for bonus funds was issued on September 24, 2021
 - Proposal were reviewed by a Review Committee using criteria outlined in the RFP and projects selected were ranked in the new project ranking list in the order determined by the Review Committee

- Review and Ranking Evaluation Committee
 - Each Evaluation Committee member¹ received approximately one-third of the 2021 Ranking Tools to review
 - During review, if an evaluator felt a score should be changed, the evaluator indicated the section and question, the amount to increase or decrease the score, and a justification of why it should be changed on the official evaluator's score sheet
 - Evaluator's score sheets were returned to DHS; projects were ranked by score with notation of any proposals for score changes from evaluators
 - Evaluation Committee convened to review, discuss and confirm recommended ranking list
- Posting and Appeal
 - The recommended ranking list was posted on the CoC webpage and projects were notified of their ranking and the appeal process on October 29, 2021. No renewal projects were rejected or reduced.
 - Any appeals received will be reviewed by the HAB, to determine if an adjustment to the rankings will be made.
- Final Ranking List
 - The HAB will vote to confirm the final ranking list.
 - The final priority ranking list, as part of the CoC Consolidated Application will be posted on the CoC webpage.

Ranking Appeal Process

All projects were notified of their ranking on October 29, 2021. Projects can appeal their ranking by submitting a complete appeal form (Appendix B) by email to Hilary Scherer (hilary.scherer@alleghenycounty.us) no later than 5:00pm on November 5, 2021. Any appeals received will be reviewed by the HAB, which ultimately determines if any adjustments to the ranking are warranted.

Process Development Overview

The CoC Analysis and Planning Committee is one of four standing committees of the HAB. In addition to regularly reviewing CoC data, policies and strategies, the CoC Analysis and Planning Committee has been charged with developing recommendations for evaluating programs and funding. As such, each year the Committee integrates local data analyses, the CoC's priorities and goals, local lessons learned, national best practices, and programmatic regulations/requirements to develop recommendations on the specific process for reviewing and ranking new/renewal/expansion projects for the HUD CoC Program Application.

The CoC Analysis and Planning Committee meets monthly and has open membership (monthly meeting schedule posted publicly on website and CoC members are reminded of Committee dates and invited to participate at least annually). The Committee held discussions particular to reviewing, ranking, and reallocating projects for the 2021 Continuum of Care Program Competition beginning in January 2021 and put forward their recommendation on the 2021 Ranking Tool in March 2021. The 2021 Ranking Tool was distributed to the full CoC for public comment (March 24-29, 2021), and was then confirmed by the HAB at the public bi-monthly CoC/HAB meeting on March 30, 2021.

¹ Consistent with the process updated from 2018, representatives from CoC funded programs did not serve on the Evaluation Committee in 2021.

Appendix B
2021 Ranking List Appeal Form
(please note this form is also available in Word form on the CoC website)

Allegheny County Continuum of Care (PA-600)
2021 NOFO Continuum of Care Program Competition
Ranking Appeal Form

Instructions

Complete contact information and provide a one (1) page maximum summary that clearly articulates the ranking issue being appealed and provides justification for the requested change. Projects should review the Allegheny County Continuum of Care 2021 Rate, Rank, Review, and Selection Criteria Process document before submitting an appeal to ensure that the justification provided is not duplicative of review and ranking processes that have already been completed, such as the service providers review of completed Performance Outcome Tools for their projects.

Submit this completed form by 5:00pm on November 5, 2021 to Hilary Scherer at hilary.scherer@alleghenycounty.us

Contact Information

Agency Name: _____

Project Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Appeal and Justification (one page)