

Philadelphia Continuum of Care (PA-500)
2014 CoC Project Selection and Ranking Process

Project Proposal Review, Evaluation and Selection Process:

In order to be considered for inclusion in Philadelphia's Continuum of Care Consolidated Application, local agencies must submit the 2014 Continuum of Care Program Renewals Application. Proposals received are first reviewed by City staff to establish whether they pass threshold requirements. All proposals that pass threshold requirements are reviewed by a local review committee, and, if selected, ranked for inclusion in Philadelphia's Consolidated Application.

The CoC Program Renewals Review Committee is a volunteer panel convened to review and rank project proposals. Members of the Review Committee are responsible for the following:

- Independently review and score proposals using the 2014 CoC Renewal Project Evaluation Tool found in Appendix A;
- Provide recommendations on whether a project should be included in the CoC Consolidated Application and how it should be ranked among other projects.

Individual reviewer scores are averaged, which forms the basis for preliminary ranking within the local priorities.

Conflict of Interest

Every effort is made to avoid conflict, or the appearance thereof, when assigning proposals to reviewers. Before reviewers score proposals, they are asked to determine whether a conflict of interest exists with any application that has been assigned to them. If a conflict or the appearance of a conflict exists, the proposal will be assigned to another reviewer and a replacement proposal will be provided.

A conflict of interest can be defined as: an actual or perceived interest by a review committee member in an action which results or appears to result in personal, organizational, or professional gain. This may involve a direct or indirect financial or other interest in a decision of the planning body. Examples of possible conflicts of interest include cases where a reviewer:

- Is employed or has a formal association with an agency that has submitted an application;
- Has recently served as a consultant for an applicant agency;
- Is named as a potential consultant or subcontractor in the application; or
- Has extensive knowledge about the application or proposed project and is unable to objectively review the application.

Confidentiality

Adherence to confidentiality is critical to the integrity of the review process and the protection of reviewers evaluating proposals. All reviewers must agree to abide by the following confidentiality requirements before, during, and after the review process:

- All information related to the proposals should be kept in strict confidence;
- Impressions or judgments concerning the proposals are not to be discussed or shared with anyone prior to, during, or after the review committee's deliberations (exceptions: discussions with other review committee members during committee deliberations and staff discussions during CoC Advisory Committee and CoC Board meetings);
- The proposals, as well as the ideas, concepts, methods, or techniques included in the proposals are to be considered proprietary, and all rights thereby implied are to be respected;
- Proposals, in part or whole, are not to be photocopied; and

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- Questions about any specific proposals are not to be directed to the applicant organization, or to a consultant who assisted in the preparation of the application.

Reviewers must adhere to the following requirements during and after the Review Committee meeting:

- Statements and notes of the reviewers should not be shared with anyone outside the review committee;
- Discussions concerning any specific application are to be confined to the review committee meeting room;
- Proceedings of the review committee are to be kept in strict confidence; and
- Proposals and review materials are to be left with the Office of Supportive Housing (Collaborative Applicant) staff at the conclusion of the review session.

Proposal Evaluation and Scoring

All renewal project applications, except for first time renewals, were reviewed and scored by 5 individuals (3 outside volunteer reviewers and 2 OSH staff members) using the evaluation tool found in Appendix A. The reviewer scores are averaged, which forms the basis for preliminary ranking within the local priorities. The evaluation tool was developed by members of the CoC Quality Improvement and Evaluation Subcommittee. In addition to the evaluation tool, proposals earned 1 additional point if at least two members from the applicant's organization participated in the 2014 unsheltered PIT count. Ten points were removed from proposals received after the submission deadline.

Based on the CoC's Underperforming Policy, a project is classified as "underperforming" if the renewal project application receives a score of 70 or below. These projects are provided with additional technical assistance to improve their performance. In 2014, four (4) permanent supportive housing projects and one (1) transitional housing project received a score below 70 points and classified as underperforming.

Philadelphia Ranking Order

Projects are grouped according to program type (PH, SH, and TH) and are ranked according to the average score received during the proposal review process. The Philadelphia CoC has a long-standing commitment to rank permanent housing renewal projects higher than safe haven and transitional housing renewal projects, with the exception of low-scoring permanent housing projects.

Because the primary basis for reviewing and scoring renewal proposals is performance data from the Annual Performance Reports (APRs), first time renewal projects not been operating long enough to have a year of performance data are not reviewed by the Renewals Review Committee. These projects are ranked in Tier 1 below the reviewed renewal PH projects, but above safe haven renewal projects.

Ranking Rationale

The Philadelphia CoC ranked projects in the order listed below for the following reasons:

- All existing projects are included in the Consolidated Application
- Provides opportunity to create a new RRH project for families through reallocation
- Allows Philadelphia to request the maximum amount of eligible funds in Tier 1 and 94 percent of the eligible funds in Tier 2.
- All projects ranked in Tier 1 will receive funding
 - Because TH Renewal, CoC Planning, and Renewal HMIS projects are a lower selection priority for HUD, there is a strong risk of those projects not receiving funding if ranked in Tier 2

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- Even though TH is a lower priority than PH, the CoC recognizes that all renewing TH projects are an important component of Philadelphia's housing inventory and strategy to end homelessness. Therefore, all TH projects are ranked in Tier 1.
- Funding for the CoC Planning project will provide essential resources to support HUD required activities. Therefore, the CoC Planning project is ranked in Tier 1.
- HMIS is a HUD required tool and is crucial to the planning, operation, and evaluation of the CoC. Therefore the renewal HMIS project is ranked in Tier 1.
- Based on the score it received during the 2013 competition, the Philadelphia CoC strongly believes any renewal PH projects ranked in Tier 2 will likely receive funding. But placing low-scoring projects in Tier 2 reinforces the importance of performance.
 - In the 2013 competition, Philadelphia scored in the top quartile and had new PSH projects funded that were ranked in Tier 2.

Tier 1

1. Renewal permanent housing (PH) projects that scored above 70 points (except for the lowest scoring service-only renewal PH project)
2. First Time Renewal PH projects not operating long enough to have a year of performance data
3. Renewal safe haven (SH) projects
4. Renewal transitional housing (TH) projects
5. CoC Planning Project
6. Renewal HMIS project

Tier 2

7. Lowest scoring service-only renewal PH project
8. Renewal PH projects that scored 70 or below in 2014 process
9. Renewal PH project that scored below 70 for two consecutive years
10. Renewal PH project that scored below 70 for three consecutive years
11. New PH (RRH) project for families created through reallocation

Selection and Ranking Approval Process

On Monday, October 20, 2014, the CoC Advisory Committee endorsed the project selection and ranking order. On Wednesday, October 22, 2014, the CoC Board approved the project selection and ranking order.

Appendix A:

Philadelphia Continuum of Care
2014 CoC Renewal Project Evaluation Tool

All renewal project applications, except for first time renewals, are reviewed and scored by 5 individuals using the following evaluation tool:

| | Scoring Criteria | | Max. Points |
|---|---|------|--------------------|
| Project Description and Participant Information | Project description clearly describes the target population(s) to be served, the plan for addressing the identified needs/issues of the CoC target population(s), projected outcome(s), supportive services provided and coordination with other source(s)/partner(s). The project participant’s chart is fully consistent with the description. If not, an explanation was provided. | 8-10 | 10 |
| | Project description provides a brief description of the population served and services provided. The project participant’s chart is somewhat consistent with the description. | 5-7 | |
| | Project description is lacking in content and does not present a clear picture of the project for reviewer. The project participant’s chart is not consistent with the description. | 0-4 | |
| Case Study | One case study of client challenges was provided. The individual described is representative of the target population. The case clearly illustrates efforts made by the housing and service providers to address the client’s identified issues/needs. The outcome is clear. | 8-10 | 10 |
| | Case study briefly highlights efforts made by both the housing and service providers to address the client’s identified issues/needs and client’s outcomes are clear. | 5-7 | |
| | Case study is lacking in content and does not present a clear picture of client challenges and staff interventions. | 0-4 | |
| Housing First | Program selected “Yes” to all three statements. | 5 | 5 |
| | Program selected “Yes” to two of the statements. | 3-4 | |
| | Program selected “Yes” to one of the statements. | 1-2 | |
| | Program selected “No” to all three statements. | 0 | |
| Data Quality | Most of the data elements had 10% or less Don’t Know/Refused and Missing Values and/or supplied sound explanation and plan to cure if the goal was not achieved. | 8-10 | 10 |
| | Only a few of the data elements had 10% or less Don’t Know/Refused and Missing Values | 5-7 | |
| | None of the data elements had 10% or less Don’t Know/Refused and Missing Values and/or there is no explanation for missing data. | 0-4 | |
| Unit Utilization Rates | Unit Utilization Rate is 90% or above for the 4 points in time. | 8-10 | 10 |
| | Unit Utilization Rate is 75 – 89% for 3-4 points in time. | 5-7 | |
| | Unit Utilization Rate is below 75% for 2-3 points in time. | 0-4 | |

Appendix A:

Philadelphia Continuum of Care
2014 CoC Renewal Project Evaluation Tool

| | Scoring Criteria | | Max. Points |
|----------------------------------|---|------|--------------------|
| Residence Prior to Program Entry | Participants are coming from appropriate sources based on the program type. The majority of participants are coming from literally homeless situations. | 5-10 | 10 |
| | Participants come from eligible places based on the type of project (PH or TH). Some information is missing. | 2-4 | |
| | There is no consistency with the types of places where people are coming from; people appear to be coming from ineligible places (client owned or rental properties) or the percentage of those coming from “other”, “don’t know/refused” or “missing” is high. | 0-1 | |
| Change in Cash Income | 42% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) have more cash income than at program entry. | 3-5 | 5 |
| | 35-41% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) have more cash income than at program entry. Explanation is sound. | 2 | |
| | 34% or below of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) have more cash income than at program entry. Poor explanation or no explanation is given. | 0-1 | |
| Earned (Employment) Income | 20% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income | 5 | 5 |
| | 17-19% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income | 4 | |
| | 13-16% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income | 2-3 | |
| | Fewer than 13% of all adults (Leavers and Stayers) had earned income | 0-1 | |
| Non-Cash Benefit Sources | Based on the target population, the benefits attained by participants are appropriate. | 8-10 | 10 |
| | Participants are connected to some benefits, but based on the population served it is likely that more participants could be connected to additional benefits. Explanations, if provided, appear to be applicable. | 5-7 | |
| | Benefits don’t appear to be appropriate and/or there is not adequate connection to benefits based on the population served. No explanation is given. | 0-4 | |
| Housing Stability (PSH Only) | 85% or more of participants (Leavers and Stayers) remain in the program for at least 6 months | 8-10 | 10 |
| | 75% - 84% of participants (Leavers and Stayers) remain in the program for at least 6 months | 5-7 | |
| | 74% or less of participants (Leavers and Stayers) remain in the program for at least 6 months | 0-4 | |
| Destination (TH Only) | 72% or more of all leavers exited to a permanent destination. | 8-10 | |
| | 65 - 71% of all leavers exited to a permanent destination. | 5-7 | |
| | 64 % or less of all leavers exited to a permanent destination. | 0-4 | |

Appendix A:

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| | Scoring Criteria | | Max. Points |
|---|---|-------|--------------------|
| BONUS – Prioritizing Households Most in Need | Up to 5 points may be awarded for the following: The proposal serves priority target populations: chronically homeless individuals/families, veterans, youth (ages 24 and below) and/or victims of domestic violence. There is evidence that the project seeks to serve the individuals/families who are the longest time homeless and/or require the most intensive services. | 0-5 | 5 |
| Overall Responsiveness/ Explanations and plans to address deficiencies | Very clear, complete proposal – easy to understand the program structure and population served. Data is complete and if there are narrative explanations, they are clear and convincing. If participants exited the program, most destinations are positive. Those who remained appeared to be on track for positive outcomes (same/increased income, connection to mainstream benefits). | 11-15 | 15 |
| | Fairly clear proposal. Complete with some details. | 6-10 | |
| | Proposal unclear, sections or responses missing, hard to understand program or population to be served. | 0-5 | |
| TOTAL SCORE | | | 105 |

| Reviewer Recommendations | |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| Recommend for funding | 75-105 |
| Recommend with reservations | 51-74 |
| Not recommended for funding | 0-50 |