Funding Priorities

- Should providers who have never operated rapid re-housing programs, but have historically operated permanent supportive housing (PSH) programs apply for rapid re-housing (RRH) funding?
  - Yes, for multiple reasons
    - As our system adopts practices to prioritize the most vulnerable for housing and services, it is critical that RRH no longer be viewed as a “light touch” intervention, but more as a flexible intervention that can serve households of various compositions and needs. We need more service-intensive RRH programs in our community, programs that operate like time-limited PSH.
    - The long-term vision for the system is that it uses progressive engagement, an approach to helping households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, providing those with fewer needs fewer supports and those with greater needs greater supports. For most who experience homelessness, RRH will be the intervention recommended to resolve their homelessness. Others, who will require PSH for long-term success, will likely be referred first to RRH as a “bridge” to their PSH so that they are not lingering in shelters and other temporary housing, or on the streets or places not meant for human habitation, waiting for their PSH.
    - The biggest gap of units in the system is for RRH, and the community can anticipate funding new RRH to be an ongoing priority.

- Are the funding priorities within each household type?
  - Yes, the funding priorities are based on a gaps analysis for different household compositions conducted through the CoC strategic planning process. Funding recommendations will be based on both the quality/ superiority of the project proposed and the extent to which it addresses system gaps/ priorities.

- Is there a limit to the amount an applicant can request?
  - Yes, please submit a proposal for a project that your organization can successfully administer.
  - Since we are limited to how much funding we can apply to HUD for, in order to create as many new projects as we possibly can, if you are recommended for funding through this local process, we may request that you reduce the scope of your proposal and budget for submission to HUD. When you are putting your proposal together, please consider what a scaled down version of the project will be.
    - For example, if you request $1 Million in funding, the CoC, via OHS, may recommend you for $500,000 of funding to HUD.

- Is the order of funding source (Reallocation, DV Bonus, and Bonus) the priority order?
City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services
FY 2018 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Homeless Assistance Projects RFP
Questions and Answers

- No, but reallocation funding has historically been the first priority for new projects because it is funding we already have in our CoC, that we are repurposing to create new projects.
- Do you have a sense of how much reallocation funding will be available?
  - We are still evaluating for underspending and cost effectiveness. We are hoping that the maximum amount will be $1.5 Million.

OEO MBE and WBE Requirements

- Do the OEO participation requirements apply to this funding opportunity only, or to the organization overall?
  - The OEO participation requirements apply to this funding opportunity only.
  - If you apply for $100,000, you are required to meet the requirements of 2-5% for $100,000. You would meet the requirement by contracting at least $2,000 out to an MBE and/or WBE.
- Can applicants meet the requirement with MBEs and/or WBEs, if they are not City of Philadelphia certified, but they are certified by another municipality, state, or certifying entity?
  - Yes, you must submit documentation of their certification with your proposal.
- My non-profit organization is primarily led and staffed by minorities and women, and we do all of our administration. The only way we’ve identified we will be able to meet the Office of Economic Opportunity’s (OEO) 2-5% requirement is through outsourcing staffing and leasing. What else can we do to meet this requirement?
  - Your organization can meet this requirement for your independent audit, payroll, property management, office and/or janitorial supplies, program materials, and moving costs for participants.

Eligibility to Apply for this Opportunity

- The RFP states that an applicant must be "Free of debt to the Federal Government, State of Pennsylvania, or the City of Philadelphia for nonpayment of taxes, fines, judgments, liens or fees." If our organization is in a re-payment agreement and arrangement with the federal government that allows us to fulfill our financial obligations, are we eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?
  - HUD’s response to this question: “As long as the repayment schedule is established and the nonprofit is not delinquent under the repayment schedule, they are eligible to submit a New Project application.”
  - Please submit with your proposal documentation that you are current on your repayment plan.
- If one of my organization’s CoC funded projects scored in the lowest 10% of renewal projects in the FY2017 renewal competition, is my organization eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?
  - Yes, your organization’s score in the 2017 renewal competition does not impact your organization’s ability to apply for new project funding in the 2018 competition.
City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services
FY 2018 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Homeless Assistance Projects RFP
Questions and Answers

- If your organization’s project(s) scored in the lowest 10% of CoC funded renewal projects in the 2018 local renewal competition, your organization is ineligible to apply for this funding opportunity

- If my organization is just getting into this work or has been serving the community in similar ways, but not exactly operating RRH or PSH, is my organization eligible to apply for this opportunity?
  - We recommend that your organization partner with an organization that has done this work to gain experience operating these types of projects and complying with federal funding requirements. If you apply for this opportunity without partnering with another organization with more experience, we recommend that you demonstrate how what your organization has been doing is similar to or the same as PSH or RRH. Be sure to include information about the outcomes your organization’s work has produced for the households you have served.

Contracts
- Do the discretionary funding suppliers have to be in Philadelphia?
  - No, but Philadelphia is preferred.

Timeline
- Is it expected that the proposed project will be up and running within 12 months from the time of proposal submission, or from time of award from HUD?
  - It is expected that the project will be up and running within 12 months from award from HUD. It is expected that applicants will have grant agreements in place with HUD no later than December 31, 2019.

CEA-BHRS
- Is there a difference between the screening process for rapid re-housing (RRH) and permanent supportive housing (PSH)?
  - Yes, CEA-BHRS uses a common assessment tool to determine which households will be referred to PSH versus RRH. Within the groupings for PSH and RRH, households who are most vulnerable are prioritized for available units.

- Is an organization allowed to deny referrals from CEA-BHRS?
  - No, an organization can not deny a referral for reasons beyond funder-required eligibility criteria. Participants can deny your project.

Rapid Re-Housing
- Is increasing RRH inventory included in HUD's overall score for us as a CoC/ community?
  - Yes, HUD awards us points in our overall CoC application for increasing RRH units and deducts points for reductions in RRH units. To score us in this category, HUD reviews the change in our RRH inventory, as recorded on the night of the annual January Point-in-Time count.
City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services
FY 2018 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Homeless Assistance Projects RFP
Questions and Answers

- With the requirement for Housing First approach, do you have a sense about the extent to which landlords create barriers for participants, such as screening for criminal records?
  - The sense is that the greatest barrier is often related to utility arrears, not landlords screening for criminal records.
  - One focus of our CoC strategic is to build a better landlord engagement strategy system-wide to support them understand the regulations, programs, and to be supportive to them.
- Are utility arrears part of this contract?
  - No, we try to preserve RRH financial assistance for rental assistance and have a provider in the CoC who we refer participants to specifically for utility arrears costs.
  - If utility costs are included in the rent, as long as the total amount does not exceed FMR, utility costs can be billed to the rental assistance line item of the budget.
- How many RRH provider are there?
  - 17 total, 7 of whom are CoC Program funded. Most of these CoC Program funded RRH projects are new within the past 2 years.
- What is the success rate of rapid re-housing?
  - Most recent analysis of 2015, 2016, and 2017 data showed a 93% successful permanent housing outcome from rapid re-housing. When tracking households 2 years after their exit from the program, 85% have not returned to shelter.
- Do providers have the responsibility of making sure the participants can achieve stability? For example, should the provider allow a participant to choose a unit the provider believes the participant will not be able to sustain?
  - It is the responsibility of the provider to continuously engage the participant in the provision of supportive services, ensure participants are aware of how to access the resources and services that will support them achieve their housing stability and other goals, and advise the participant along their path to stable housing. Participant choice is a core component of rapid re-housing. The provider must respect the participant’s choice about where they will live, etc.

Expansion
- How is new project being defined? If my organization has an existing TH project that recently began operating in 2017, would requesting funding for this project count as new project funding?
  - No, new project funding is funding that will create additional housing opportunities. Supporting the current operations of an existing project in the continuum would not count as new project funding.

Joint Transitional Housing (TH) and Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)
City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services
FY 2018 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Homeless Assistance Projects RFP
Questions and Answers

• If my organization currently operates a CoC Program funded transitional housing project, can my organization apply for the TH-RRH project type, adding RRH to my current TH project?
  o No, HUD’s goal with funding new TH-RRH projects is to increase a community’s inventory of both short-term crisis beds and permanent housing beds. HUD will not award new TH-RRH funding to current TH projects.

• Under the TH-RRH project, could shelter count as the TH portion of the project (depending upon length of stay)? Why or why not?
  o No, the distinction between transitional housing (TH) and emergency shelter (ES) is not length of stay. This isn’t funding for emergency shelter. HUD intends for the TH portion of this project type to be short-term, but it is the participant’s choice if they want to remain in the TH portion of the project longer rather than move to the RRH portion of the project. The organization must be able to provide participants with access to both TH and RRH components of the project, even if the participant only wants to receive one type of assistance. The organization must respect the participant’s choice and provide them with the type of assistance they request.

• Does the structure for TH-RRH need to be where the organization would have housing that temporarily houses youth 18-24 while they are waiting to enter Rapid re-housing?
  o The TH-RRH project must be able to provide participants, in this case youth 18-24, access to both TH and RRH when the youth are referred to the project. This means that if the youth want to enter RRH immediately, it is expected that if the youth wants to stay in the TH portion of the project while the organization works with the youth to identify units in the community, sign a lease, etc. the youth can do so. If the youth referred prefer to be served in the TH portion of the project and not access the RRH portion of the project, that is ok also. The youth’s choice must be respected.

DV Bonus

• Will the DV Bonus be available in future years?
  o HUD’s response to this question: “We are unable to confirm that the DV Bonus will be available in the FY 2019 CoC Program Competition. While the language for a DV Bonus is currently in the House bill, we cannot count on the funding as the FY 2019 Appropriations has not been voted on and passed yet.”