**Western PA Continuum of Care (CoC)**

**FY2017 Request for Proposals**

**NEW Rapid Re-Housing Project for Youth**

**Preliminary Application due by close of business on August 11, 2017**

The Western PA CoC, with input and guidance from its Youth Subcommittee, is soliciting Preliminary Applications from agencies interested in applying for new Rapid Re-Housing projects to specifically serve youth experiencing homelessness. Selected applicants will be included in the FY2017 Continuum of Care (CoC) Application to be submitted to HUD this fall.

All project applicants will be required to include either the entirety of the Northwest region (13 counties) or Southwest region (7 counties) as the service area. The amount of funding available in the Northwest Region is to be determined. An estimated $260,148 is expected to be available in the Southwest Region.

**To indicate your interest in a new project, please submit the attached Preliminary Application by close of business on August 11, 2017.**

**The application should be emailed to pa\_coc@hotmail.com**

**Please use the e-mail subject line: Preliminary Application – Western PA CoC**

Project applicants selected will only receive funding based on the rank order of the project and scoring of the Continuum of Care’s application to HUD, as compared to other CoCs nationally. These will initially be 1-year grants with the expectation that they will be eligible for renewal in future CoC applications. However, future funding will be dependent on the availability of funding from HUD and program performance.

**Please review the information provided below regarding project type, eligible participants, eligible activities, expectations and requirements of the project recipient, and selection/scoring criteria to be used in the selection of new project applicants.**

**Additional Information to review prior to submitting a Preliminary Application**

What are the goals and priorities of the CoC? As articulated in the CoC’s Strategic Plan, we are seeking to reduce homelessness by 50% by 2022. This includes effectiveness eliminating chronic homelessness, Veterans homelessness and reducing family and youth homelessness by no less than 50% during this timeframe. As such, these are priority populations for the Western PA CoC.

This RFP, specifically, is designed to further the CoC’s efforts to reduce homelessness among youth. The 2017 Point-in-Time count identified 44 unaccompanied youth aged 18-24, 5 unaccompanied youth under age 18, and 15 parenting youth households throughout the Western PA CoC.

How is “youth” defined?Youth are identified as individuals under 25 years old and include unaccompanied youth[[1]](#footnote-1), transition age youth and parenting youth. Youth targeted for this RFP are youth 18-24 years old. Applicants that would like to serve youth under 18 should provide information related to their expertise in identifying and serving this population and describe how they plan to serve youth under 18 in a model that requires execution of a lease.

Where can I find more information about how to operate a regional project? Applicants will be expected to serve eligible youth in any county within either the Northwest (13 counties) or Southwest (7 counties) region. The CoC has developed a frequently asked questions document, which provides input from a provider operating a regional rapid re-housing project. This document can be accessed at <https://www.dropbox.com/s/jz5qiw2fswqxd4a/Regional%20Projects%20FAQ.docx?dl=0>

**Eligible Project Types through this RFP:**

* **Rapid Re-Housing:** Rapid Re-Housing is a model of housing assistance that is designed to assist those experiencing homelessness, with or without disabilities, move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. Rapid re-housing assistance is time-limited, individualized, and flexible.
* **Eligible Youth:** Youth eligible for Rapid Re-Housing under the FY2017 CoC NOFA include those who are:
  + - Coming directly from the streets or emergency shelters
    - Fleeing domestic violence AND no subsequent residence has been identified AND has no resources or support networks to obtain permanent housing
    - Residing in a transitional housing project that was eliminated in the FY 2017 CoC Program Competition
    - Residing in transitional housing funded by a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project
    - Receiving services from a VA-funded homeless assistance program and met one of the above criteria at initial intake to the VA's homeless assistance system.

**What will the grant pay for?** The HUD grant can be used towards:

* Rental Assistance: to assist households pay their rent.
* Supportive Services Costs: Case management to assist households in obtaining and maintaining their housing.
* Administrative Costs: To provide funding for your agency to manage the grant including drawing down funds and reporting to HUD.

For more information about eligible costs, see CoC Regulations at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoCProgramInterimRule_FormattedVersion.pdf>

* 578.51 Rental assistance.
* 578.53 Supportive services.
* 578.59 Project administrative costs.

**Are there match requirements?** The grantee must provide a 25% match – either cash or in-kind. The only exception is that leasing costs do not require a match.

**What are the General Principles for operating a youth Rapid Re-Housing?** The CoC is seeking applicants that have/will adopt the following general principles outlined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the “Ending Youth Homelessness, Guidebook Series: Promising Program Models”[[2]](#footnote-2). These principles and practices include housing and services designed per the below:

* Individualized, flexible, and choice-based
* Age Appropriate and Individualized Case Management:
  + Services are intensive (daily or 2-3 times per week) and may continue even after youth appear to have stabilized. Case managers (with a ratio of 8 or 10:1) foster independent living skills (budgeting, cooking, basic maintenance, setting boundaries, etc.), support youth with lease obligations, and coordinate clinical supports as needed. Case managers help mediate problems, and allow mistakes and learning in a supported environment.
* Culturally competent:
  + Given the prevalence of homelessness among LGBTQ youth, culturally competent staff and coordination with organizations serving the LGBTQ community is important.
* Trauma-informed Care:
  + Workers are trained to provide trauma-informed care with an emphasis on meeting youth where they are.
* Employ Positive Youth Development (PYD) principles:
  + Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.
  + Staff is trained to develop the youth’s competence, confidence, character, caring, connection, and contribution (“6 Cs”).
  + Case management and services are individualized and focus on problem-solving, skill-building, communication, and goal-setting. Setbacks and mistakes are tolerated. Youth participate voluntarily and are never “placed” in a home. The matching process should be driven by the youth with support from the case manager.
* Emphasize family reunification and resiliency strategies
* Follow a Housing First Approach:
  + Projects utilize a Housing First approach that provides immediate access to stable housing, low-barriers to entry and to keep assistance, and voluntary but persistent services, with high expectations and high levels of engagement.
  + HUD guidance on “Using a Housing First Philosophy When Serving Youth” should be fully reviewed: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/using-a-housing-first-philosophy-when-serving-youth.pdf>
* Cultivate Landlord Base:
  + Requires a trained and dedicated staff or partnership with a housing organization to cultivate and maintain relationships with property owners, (co)sign and oversee leases, oversee tenant move-ins, and handle the rent payment process.
* Long-Term Housing Stability:
  + RRH time frame is up to 24 months with the goal of achieving long-term housing stability. Rental assistance is structured with youth paying 30 percent of their income or less, building savings as income increases. Apartments should be appropriate for independent life beyond rental assistance. This can include a roommate in high rent areas or use of tenant-based rental assistance, if secured. Alternatively, youth can be supported to find other independent affordable housing, to reunify with family or to secure non-time-limited supportive housing, if needed.

**Are there any other requirements that I need to be aware of?**

* You must enter complete and accurate data into the PA Homeless Management Information System (PA-HMIS). Victim services organizations must enter data into a DV comparable database.
* Applicants from the SW Region will be expected to participate in the SW Regional Homelessness Advisory Board (RHAB). Applicants from the NW Region must participate in their local housing coalition/Local Housing Options Team (LHOT) which are a subset of the NW RHAB. All applicants must be or must become a member of the Western PA CoC and attend the semi-annual meetings.
* You will be expected to have the capacity to operate your program in accordance with HUD requirements including:
  + Submitting your Annual Progress Report (APR) on time
  + Drawing down funds at least quarterly
  + Expend all of your grant funds within the 12-month grant period

**How will projects be selected for submission to HUD?** All Preliminary Applications will be reviewed by the Western PA CoC Funding Committee based on the following criteria. Those that are selected for submission will be notified no later than August 23, 2017.

Threshold: to be considered, applicants must commit to the following:

* Using a Housing First approach
* Experience working with the population to be served
* Conduct at least monthly face-to-face case management appointments in the program participant’s home
* Participate in the Western PA CoC Coordinated Entry System
* Once developed, all CoC-funded projects will be required to follow the CoC’s written standards for providing assistance
* Enter data into PA-HMIS or DV comparable database
* Participate in the RHAB/CoC
* Be cost effective, compared to similar projects
* Operate the project per the above described “General Principles”.

Selection Criteria: Projects will be scored based on several factors, including the below listed criteria:

* Experience working with the population to be served
* Experience with the practices described under the “General Principles”
* Ability of the agency to implement a RHAB-wide project
* Ability to provide outreach in order to engage individuals currently living in unsheltered situations
* Organizational capacity will be evaluated to ensure successful program operation. This includes new organizations not currently receiving CoC-funding, as well as organizations already receiving funds.
* For current CoC grantees, considerations will include meeting HUD’s grant management requirements and implementation of HUD policy priorities such as housing first
* Additional consideration will be given to agencies that have not previously received CoC funding
* Approach for providing supportive services, both through the proposed CoC-funded project and leveraged services from community providers
* Ability to provide housing search and location services, using either staff funded through the proposed CoC-funded project or leveraged services
* Cost effectiveness of approach, as compared to similar projects within the geographic area

**What is my project budget?** The amount of funding available in the Northwest Region is to be determined. An estimated $260,148 is expected to be available in the Southwest Region. While a budget will be submitted in the Preliminary Application, if your project is selected, you may be approved for an amount other than the exact budget submitted.

**If my project is selected for submission, what is the next step?** You will be notified no later than August 23 if your project has been selected for submission to HUD and the amount of funding that you can request. At that time, you will receive instructions for submission.

You will need to submit your new project application on esnaps, HUD’s online application. The following is the timeline for submission:

* **September 1:** Complete your application on esnaps and provide a pdf to Diana T Myers and Associates, Inc. (DMA) at pa\_coc@hotmail.com
* **September 6:** DMA will review your application and provide feedback
* **September 13:** FINAL completed application must be on esnaps

**If I have questions about this who should I contact?** Send an e-mail to pa\_coc@hotmail.com and DMA will get back to you as quickly as possible.

**Where can I find additional resources related to operating a youth-serving RRH project?** Applicants are encouraged to read the following materials and incorporate guidance as appropriate in developing a youth-serving RRH project:

* HUD Rapid Re-Housing for Youth Suite (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5323/rapid-rehousing-for-youth-suite/>)
  + Jump Start Tool: Rapid Re-Housing for Youth
  + Rapid Re-Housing for Youth Checklist, specifically “Organization & Project Level Considerations” on page 2 and “Staff Level Considerations” on page 3
  + Rapid Re-Housing for Youth FAQs
* National Alliance to End Homelessness Rapid Re-Housing for Youth Toolkit (<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/rapid-re-housing-for-youth-toolkit/>) – provides resources and tools on designing the following core components of RRH projects to best serve youth:
  + Housing Identification
  + Rent and Move-in Assistance
  + Rapid Re-Housing Case Management and Services

**Western PA Continuum of Care, CoC PA-601**

**FY2017 New Project Preliminary Application**

**\*Rapid Re-Housing for Youth\***

**Instructions:**

* This document is a “Form”. To enter text, click on the gray shaded area and begin typing. To indicate a check a response, click inside the shaded box  and an “X” will appear within the box - .
* All applications must be returned to pa\_coc@hotmail.com by COB on August 11.

**1) Agency Name:**

Contact information:

* + Name
  + Phone number
  + E-mail address

**2) Which Region do you intend to serve with the proposed project?**

**Northwest:** Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren

**Southwest:** Armstrong, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, Westmoreland

**3) Which of the following populations do you plan to serve?**

Unaccompanied Youth  Parenting Youth  Both

**4) Provide a general description of your proposed project.**

This should include a clear and concise description of the scope of the project. The following information should be included in your description:

* description of community needs. Applicants are encouraged to provide local and/or regional data beyond the data reported through the annual PIT count.
* target population(s) to be served
* estimated number of households to be served at a point in time
* estimated number of households to be served annually
* the reason why CoC Program support is required
* experience in working with households experiencing homelessness, and in particular with youth experiencing homelessness. If you are proposing to work with a specific subpopulation of youth (i.e., LGBTQ youth, youth under 18, parenting youth, transition age youth, etc.) please also describe your experience working with this specific subpopulation.
* experience utilizing the practices described in the “General Principles”, including how you will ensure that the project provides client-centered and culturally competent services
* project plan for addressing the identified housing and supportive service needs, including any agencies that you plan to partner/coordinate with to provide additional expertise
* describe your experience in identifying housing opportunities, including landlord engagement practices
* projected project outcomes
* describe your community partners and the ways you will work together to meet the needs of households served through the proposed project.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION (click on line to begin typing):**

**5) Describe your organization’s experience conducting outreach and engaging**

**youth living in an unsheltered situation.**

**6) Describe any anticipated transportation challenges, for staff and/or project**

**participants, and how you will work to address those challenges.**

**7) Please indicate which of the following requirements you commit to follow:**

Using a Housing First approach

Assisting participants with Mainstream Benefits: (must provide all of the following)

Provide transportation assistance to attend mainstream benefit

appointments, employment training or jobs

Use a single application form for four or more mainstream programs

(example DHS’s COMPASS)

Conduct annual follow-up appointments with participants to ensure

mainstream benefits are received and renewed

Provide access to SSI/SSDI technical assistance provided by the applicant,

a subrecipient or partner agency

Utilize a SOAR trained individual to provide this technical assistance

Participating in the Western PA Coordinated Entry System

Entering data into PA-HMIS (or DV comparable database, if domestic violence

organization)

Participating in the RHAB/CoC

**8) Do you anticipate hiring a case manager to provide services to the population**

**being served?**  Yes  No

* If yes, provide the number of FTEs and expected FTE rate:
* Provide the expected case management ratio to be used:
* Describe your organization’s philosophy or approach to case management services:
* Describe the frequency and location of case management services currently provided by your organization:

**9) Does your organization have the capacity to operate this project throughout**

**the entire RHAB?**  Yes  No

* If yes, please describe your organization’s capacity to operate the project throughout the entire region, including a description of any relationships you have with providers in the other counties and your/their ability to identify landlords in this larger area. If you have experience operating regional projects, this should also be included.

**10) Describe your experience in administering a program similar to the one that**

**you are proposing. This description should include:**

* Experience effectively utilizing federal funds and performing the described services within given funding and time limitations
* Experience leveraging other federal, state, local and/or private sector funding
* Description of the program management and financial account system that will be used to administer the grant
* Any unresolved monitoring or audit findings from HUD, DCED, the Office of the Inspector General

**ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (click on line to begin typing):**

**11) Proposed budget**

For a list and description of eligible cost, please refer to the Continuum of Care

regulations at 24 CFR Part 578, Subpart D – Program Components & Eligible Costs

**HOUSING COSTS: Rental Assistance**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Size of Units** | **# of Units** |  | **Fair Market Rent\*** |  | **12 months** |  | **Total Request** |
| SRO |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |
| 0 Bedroom |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |
| 1 Bedroom |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |
| 2 Bedrooms |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |
| 3 Bedrooms |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |
| 4 Bedrooms |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |
| 5 Bedrooms |  | x |  | x | 12 | = | $ |

\* To find Fair Market Rents (FMR) in your community, visit <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/FY2016_code/select_Geography.odn>

**SUPPORTIVE SERVICES COSTS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PROGRAM COMPONENT** | **REQUESTED BUDGET** | **DESCRIPTION OF USE** |
| Supportive Services | Total $ |  |
| Annual Assessment of Service Needs | $ |  |
| Assistance with moving costs | $ |  |
| Case management | $ |  |
| Child care | $ |  |
| Education services | $ |  |
| Employment assistance and job training | $ |  |
| Food | $ |  |
| Housing search and counseling services | $ |  |
| Legal services | $ |  |
| Life skills training | $ |  |
| Mental health services | $ |  |
| Outpatient health services | $ |  |
| Outreach services | $ |  |
| Substance abuse treatment services | $ |  |
| Transportation | $ |  |
| Utility deposits | $ |  |
| Direct provision of services | $ |  |

**ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Requested Budget:** (cannot exceed 10% of total grant)$ | **If you are proposing a regional project, please describe how the admin will be structured/used:** |

**12) A match of 25% is required for all funds, with the exception of leasing. Match**

**can be in-kind or cash. Please indicate your anticipated source(s) of**

**matching funds:**

Signature of Responsible Party: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Unaccompanied youth are defined as persons under age 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as his/her child(ren).  Unaccompanied youth are single youth, youth couples, and groups of youth presenting together as a household. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Definitions and descriptions are taken from the HUD Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebook series - <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5138/ending-youth-homelessness-a-guidebook-series/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)