

## **Bergen County Continuum of Care Local CoC Funding Selection Process**

The Performance and Evaluation Committee is responsible for selecting projects that will be eligible to apply for funding through the annual Continuum of Care (CoC) Application released by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This committee will determine which projects will be supported for funding and the funding level each project will be able to apply for based on the selection process outlined below.

### **Performance and Evaluation Committee Membership**

The Performance and Evaluation Committee membership will be composed of any interested member of the CoC Leadership Committee that would not be applying for funding through the Continuum of Care Process. All members must declare there is no conflict of interest in participating in this committee. The Chair of this committee will be the CoC Lead Agency, the Bergen County Division of Community Development.

### **Overview of Selection Process**

Each year, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will collect information about new and renewal projects seeking funding through the Continuum of Care. The Committee will collect information about each project through the Local Concept Paper, Monitoring Process, and Performance Review. Each project will receive a score for each of the three areas, which will then be combined by the Performance and Evaluation Committee. Once these final, combined scores are calculated, the Review Committee will use these scores to rank each project and determine final funding levels based on the NOFA released by HUD. The Committee will then notify each agency as to its rank and level of funding, and will provide feedback as to how the decision was made.

### **Local Selection Process**

#### Local Concept Paper

Renewal Projects:

- Upon release of the Final Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW) the Performance and Evaluation Committee will release the Continuum of Care Concept Paper and Scoring Criteria for completion.
- Any agency interested in applying for renewal funding through the CoC will be required to submit a concept paper by the date specified on the announcement.
- Concept papers will be used to collect information focused on the agency's ability to implement the requested project, the project's target population and the willingness of the agency to coordinate with local planning efforts.
- Once all submissions have been received, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will review and score each submission based on the Scoring Criteria that was released with the Concept Paper.
- The Performance and Evaluation Committee has the ability to ask any agency to come in and present if they feel there was not enough information provided or if there were any questions related to the Concept Paper, Monitoring Report or Performance Review that was completed
- Any renewal project that does not submit the concept paper on time will lose an automatic 5 points from their Concept Paper Score.

- Any renewal project that does not submit a concept paper for their project, after a late notice reminder, will not be considered for funding.

#### New Projects:

- After the release of the HUD NOFA, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will release the Continuum of Care Concept Paper and Scoring Criteria for new project applicants. The release will include any local or HUD specified funding priorities and an estimate on the amount available for new projects.
- Any agency interested in applying for new funding through the CoC will be required to submit a concept paper by the date specified on the announcement.
- All agencies submitting new project applications will be required to do a brief presentation for the Performance and Evaluation Committee to provide any additional information about the new project application and to answer any questions the Committee may have.
- After all presentations are complete, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will review and score each submission based on the Scoring Criteria that was released with the Concept Paper.

A mandatory Technical Assistance Training will be provided to all agencies that have an intent to apply for new or renewal funding. This training will review the concept paper and what the Performance and Evaluation Committee is looking for when reviewing the submissions. Any agency that will be submitting a concept paper is required to attend, and those that do not attend the training will not be considered for funding.

#### Monitoring and Performance Evaluation

Prior to final funding decisions and ranking, all renewal projects will have a monitoring and performance evaluation complete, that will follow the process outlined in the Performance and Monitoring Procedures document.

#### Final Project Selection and Announcements

- After all new and renewal project concept papers have been scored and the scores are collected from the monitoring and performance evaluation for each project, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will combine all three to create the Final Project Score.
- This final project score will be used to rank the projects for final funding determination
- Based on the ranking and any funding restrictions outlined in the HUD NOFA, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will make a final determination on the level of funding each project will be able to apply for
- Decisions will be made based on majority vote
- After final funding levels have been determined, the CoC Lead will notify each agency individually, specifying the rank and level of funding for each new and renewal project that was applied for. The notification will also provide an explanation of how the Performance and Evaluation Committee came to its determination and the action the agency can take if interested in trying to appeal the decision of the Committee
  - The CoC Lead will notify all agencies no later than 10 days after the final deadline for all new and renewal Concept Papers has passed

## **Appeals Process**

Any agency that has been denied funding or received reduced funding through the local selection process may appeal the decision to the review committee. To submit an appeal, the agency must submit an appeals letter to the CoC Lead within 5 business days from receipt of the funding notification letter. The appeals letter must include the name of the project and the amount of funding originally requested, as well as a description of the grounds for appeal.

Upon receiving the appeal letter, the review committee will have 10 business days to review the information provided by the agency and provide the agency with the final appeal decision. The decision provided to the agency will include the discussion that occurred among the review committee members as well as detailed reasons for the appeal decision. The CoC Lead will keep detailed information on all review committee decisions, including those that are appealed.

## **Bergen County Continuum of Care Monitoring Policies and Procedures**

The following policies and procedures outline the way the Bergen County Continuum of Care will establish, conduct, and use information from, the monitoring process for the community.

### **Purpose**

The Bergen County Continuum of Care monitoring process was created to enable the CoC to monitor the compliance and effectiveness of all projects that receive Continuum of Care funding throughout the County. The monitoring process will allow for a more comprehensive review of the project's receiving funding and will enable the Performance and Evaluation Committee to make not only more informed, but also more objective decisions when reviewing funding levels during the local Continuum of Care process. While this monitoring will be part of the information that impacts local funding decisions, all funding decisions will follow the policies and procedures outlined in the Local CoC Funding Selection Process policies of the Bergen County Continuum of Care.

### **Monitoring Team**

The Monitoring Team will consist of members of the Performance and Evaluation Committee as well as staff members of the Bergen County Division of Community Development. Members of this team must state that they have no conflict of interest in participating in this committee, as outlined in the Local CoC Funding Selection Process.

### **Monitoring Process**

Depending on the year, the monitoring team will perform one of two types of monitoring for all Continuum of Care projects.

#### Site Monitoring

Every other year, the Monitoring Team will perform a site monitoring for all Continuum of Care projects. Doing a site monitoring allows the Monitoring Team to review first hand, not only how the CoC projects are actually functioning, but also their compliance with federal and local regulations. All site monitoring's for CoC projects will take place within the first 6 months of the calendar year. All agencies will be made aware of their site monitoring at least 2 weeks in advance and will be provided a list of what the monitoring team will be required to look at. The monitoring team may request documents to be sent to the team prior to the site monitoring for team review.

During the site monitoring, the monitoring team will use the Site Monitoring Tool, created by the Performance and Evaluation Committee to review the agencies ability to execute the grant and abide by both HUD and local regulations.

After the site monitoring is complete, the Monitoring Team will send the agency their final, complete Site Monitoring Tool. The agencies will have one week to provide feedback about the monitoring or to provide further information to improve their monitoring results.

#### Desk Monitoring

For the in between years when a site monitoring is not taking place, the Monitoring Team will conduct a Desk Monitoring on all CoC projects. The desk monitoring will request that all CoC

projects submit a number of documents that will allow the monitoring team to complete the Desk Monitoring Tool. Similar to the Site Monitoring Tool, the Desk Monitoring Tool allows the monitoring team to evaluate the ability of the project receiving the CoC funding to utilize the funding in an effective way and in compliance with both HUD and local regulations.

After the desk monitoring is complete, the Monitoring Team will send the agency their final, complete Desk Monitoring Tool. The agencies will have one week to provide feedback about the monitoring or to provide further information to improve their monitoring results.

### **Monitoring Tools**

Depending on the type of monitoring the team is completing, the Monitoring Team will utilize either the Site Monitoring or Desk Monitoring Tool to evaluate and score each Continuum of Care project. The tools look at the following areas for each project:

- Client Eligibility
- HMIS Compliance
- Client Feedback
- Project Coordination
- Financial Review
- Agency Staff
- Project Administration

Each tool has a number of points associated with each of the above sections and criteria needed for projects to obtain the highest level of points. Both monitoring tools will be reviewed annually to ensure it is comprehensive and includes important areas of consideration for both HUD and local compliance.

### **Monitoring Score**

The Monitoring Team will be responsible for completing either the Site Monitoring or Desk Monitoring Tool for each CoC project. Once the tool is complete the Monitoring Team will add up the points awarded for each section and will calculate the Initial Monitoring Score. Once this initial score is calculated, the Monitoring Team will send each agency the completed monitoring tool and the projects will have one week to provide additional information or documentation in attempts to improve their score, if deemed necessary. If the Monitoring Team deems the information acceptable, they have the ability to adjust the score and create the project's Final Monitoring Score. If the team does not receive any feedback from the agency in the one week timeframe, the initial score that was calculated will be used as the project's Final Monitoring Score. It is this Final Monitoring Score that will be used as part of the project's overall score for the Continuum, as outlined in the Local CoC Funding Selection Process policies and procedures.

## **Bergen County Continuum of Care Performance Standards Policies and Procedures**

The following policies and procedures outline the way the Bergen County Continuum of Care will establish, evaluation, and report on the performance standards that have been created for the community.

### **Purpose**

The Bergen County Continuum of Care performance standards were created to enable the Continuum to monitor the performance of not only the projects that create the Continuum, but also to evaluate the performance of the community as a whole. Because the overall goal of the Continuum is to end homelessness among all families and individuals in the community, it is essential for Bergen County to be able to evaluate their progress towards this goal. Upon evaluation of these standards, the Continuum will be able to better allocate funding and assistance to ensure all projects and the community, are performance to the level expected. These performance standards were also created in compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's regulations for Continuum of Care Performance Standards.

### **Performance Standards Creation**

The Performance Standards that are set for the Bergen County Continuum of Care represent standards that have been released by the Department of Housing and Urban Development through program regulations and funding notifications, as well as standards the community has deemed important to the functioning of the continuum. The standards will be evaluated, and if necessary, updated annually based on new information released by HUD and finding in the community. While the standards will be reviewed annually, the Continuum has the ability to review and update the Performance Standards for the community at any point if it is deemed necessary.

### **Performance Standard Evaluation**

The Performance Standards that have been established for the Bergen County Continuum of Care will be used for performance evaluation at two levels.

1. Community Evaluation – The full standards will be used to evaluate the performance of Bergen County as a Continuum. This evaluation will evaluate each standard from the community perspective and will include all appropriate programs in the evaluation, regardless of agency. This evaluation will allow the community to see where they stand in progressing towards a more efficient system for serving the homeless individuals and families within the community. This level of evaluation will also provide the community with information that can be used for funding applications, specifically for the Continuum of Care application and its planning requirements.
2. Project Evaluation – In addition to using the standards to evaluate the progress of the community as a whole, the performance standards will be used to assist in the local funding decisions of the community, including but not limited to, Continuum of Care funding. When using the standards for project evaluation, only the standards that are applicable for the specific project types will be used.

All performance evaluations will be completed by the Performance and Evaluation Committee of the Continuum of Care. The evaluation period will be based on a yearlong time frame established

at the time of evaluation. Unless otherwise specified in the standard, all data for the evaluation of the performance standards will be pulled from the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Because Domestic Violence projects are prohibited from entering information into the HMIS, all Domestic Violence projects will be required to submit the information being evaluated from their comparable database to be included in the review. This stands true for both the community level and project level evaluation.

### **Poor Performance**

Since it the goal of the community to ensure the performance throughout the community is demonstrating progress towards ending homelessness, the community will work on any area that is identified as a performance standard that has not been met. It is not the intention of the Continuum to judge projects based on performance evaluations alone.

If, while evaluating either the performance of the community, or a specific project, there is a standard that is not met, the following actions will take place:

#### **Specific Project Performance Issues:**

- If during the community evaluation or project specific evaluation, it is determined that a specific project is under performing in any of the set performance standards the Performance and Evaluation Committee will first speak to the project to see if there is an acceptable explanation for the performance level. If there is, the explanation will be accepted and performance standard adjustment will be taken into consideration.
- If an acceptable explanation is not provided, the Committee will work with the agency to identify the issue that is leading to the negative performance, with the expectation that the agency will improve their performance by the next evaluation.
- If performance is still under the set standard during the next project evaluation, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will work with the project to create an action plan to improve performance. The Committee will then evaluation the project's performance 6 months after the action plan is created to provide updates if necessary.
- If after the above steps have been taken, the project's performance has not improved, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will discuss the possible restricting of project issues that are continuing to inhibit the project from achieving an acceptable performance level, or if necessary, determine funding reductions or reallocation.

#### **Community Wide Performance Issues:**

- If the measure that is being evaluated is determined to be under the performance standard throughout the community and no in one specific project, the Performance and Evaluation Committee will meet with the applicable project members to determine the specific issues resulting in a decreased level of performance. This collaborative will then create an action plan to improve the functioning and performance of the community as a whole.