

# Western PA Continuum of Care (CoC)

## FY2021 Notice of Interest for NEW and EXPANSION projects

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**Notice of Interest Forms due by Close of Business (5pm) on Tuesday, July 6<sup>th</sup>**

The Western PA CoC is soliciting Notice of Interest (NOI) forms from agencies interested in applying for new projects, or applying to expand existing projects, to effectively address and end homelessness in the Western PA CoC. This includes new/expansion projects for the upcoming FY2021 Continuum of Care (CoC) Application this summer/fall, as well as additional projects that may be funded via other funding streams.

**The CoC is specifically looking to identify interest in the following project types :**

- **New Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Projects**

- 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.
- **Note:** Rapid Rehousing is a priority project type for the Western PA CoC.

- **New Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Projects**

- Permanent supportive housing is permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with supportive services to assist homeless persons/families with a disability achieve housing stability.
- Units must be dedicated specifically to individuals and families who meet the chronically homeless definition. When a program participant exits the project, the bed must be filled by another household that meets the definition unless there are no chronically homeless persons located within the CoC's geographic area.

- **New Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH) Joint Component Projects**

- The Joint TH and PH-RRH component project (also known as TH-RRH) combines two existing program components—transitional housing and permanent housing-rapid rehousing—in a single project to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Recipients should prioritize those with the highest needs using an evidence-based approach designed to provide stable housing and services that, to the greatest extent possible, move the participant towards self-sufficiency and independence.
- When a program participant is enrolled in a Joint TH and PH-RRH component project, the recipient or subrecipient must be able to provide both components, including the units supported by the transitional housing component and the

tenant-based rental assistance and services provided through the PH-RRH component, to all participants. A program participant may choose to receive only the transitional housing unit, or the assistance provided through the PH-RRH component, but the recipient or subrecipient must make both types of assistance available. For more information about the Joint TH and PH-RRH component project, see HUD materials at:

- <https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/joint-th-rrh-component-projects/2941/>
- <https://www.hudexchange.info/sites/onecpd/assets/File/SNAPS-In-Focus-The-New-Joint-Transitional-Housing-and-Rapid-Re-Housing-Component.pdf>

- **Supportive services to enhance the existing Coordinated Entry system. This may include:**
  - Management of the CoC By Name List, including maintaining the list in HMIS, following up with participants on the By Name List, facilitating case conferencing
  - Housing navigation for participants on the CoC By Name List, which may include following up with participants on the By Name List, assisting participants in obtaining the documents necessary for permanent housing projects (including eligibility documentation and ID documents), facilitating/participating in case conferencing, and collaborating with service providers across the CoC.
  - **Note:** At this time the CoC is most interested in providers who could serve multiple counties or a region within the CoC, and who could serve all household types.
- **Expansions of existing CoC grants, including Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), RRH, and TH-RRH Projects. Important notes:**
  - The CoC would like to ensure that all CoC grants have sufficient funding to appropriately compensate the staff who are working on the project. If CoC grantees are interested in expanding their funding for staffing (i.e. supportive services line item), please submit an NOI form.
  - If grantees are interested in expanding the units/beds in their existing Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, or Transitional Housing/Rapid Rehousing Joint Component project, please submit an NOI form.

**Funding is not guaranteed to organizations that submit an NOI Form. This is a preliminary process in order to identify organizations interested in applying for new or expanded funding. Once HUD releases the 2021 CoC NOFA, the CoC will release a Request For Proposals. To be included in the CoC's funding application to HUD, organizations must reply to the forthcoming RFP and the project must be selected by the CoC's Funding Committee. New CoC funding will be awarded by HUD based on the performance of the Western PA CoC in the 2021 Continuum of Care competition.**

The Western PA CoC includes 20 counties located in two regions, represented by Regional Housing Advisory Boards (RHABs):

- Southwest – Armstrong, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, Westmoreland
- Northwest – Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren
- Applicants may submit an NOI form to provide assistance within a single county, across multiple counties, covering the RHAB, or covering the entire CoC.
  - New projects seeking to operate solely within their own county must provide clear data to demonstrate the need for a single county project.

Where can I find more information about how to operate a regional project? The Western PA CoC has developed a frequently asked questions document, which provides input from a provider operating a regional rapid re-housing project. In addition, this provider can provide peer assistance to any new regional projects awarded funding. The FAQ document can be accessed at:  
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/jz5qiw2fswqxd4a/Regional%20Projects%20FAQ.docx?dl=0>

To indicate your interest in a new project, please submit the NOI form by **Close of Business (5pm) on Tuesday, July 6th**. The NOI form should be submitted via Alchemer at the following link: <http://s.alchemer.com/s3/Western-PA-CoC-FY21-NOI>

You can view a hard copy of the NOI survey form here:

[https://mcusercontent.com/e1a442ef49ad7761f7575387a/files/51ffedcf-4445-20d6-259f-20fb06fa3c57/Western\\_PA\\_CoC\\_FY21\\_NOI\\_Survey\\_FOR\\_REFERENCE.docx](https://mcusercontent.com/e1a442ef49ad7761f7575387a/files/51ffedcf-4445-20d6-259f-20fb06fa3c57/Western_PA_CoC_FY21_NOI_Survey_FOR_REFERENCE.docx). Hard copy of NOI survey form provided for reference only -- all responses must be submitted online via the Alchemer link.

**Important Note:** Parties interested in applying for new projects through the CoC are not required to submit an NOI in order to apply for future new project funding. However, this information is very valuable to the CoC in identifying interest and potential gaps.

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## **Additional Information for reference:**

### **Who is eligible for homeless assistance in the CoC?**

- **CoC Funding:** Project participants in CoC funded projects are limited to the categories 1 and 4 of the [HUD Homeless Definition, as outlined in the CoC Written Standards](#). Category 1 includes individuals and families experiencing literal homeless in an emergency shelter or in a location not appropriate for sleeping (e.g. street, tent, car,

etc.). Category 4 includes persons fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Under certain circumstances, Category 4 may also include persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee human trafficking, including sex trafficking.

**Who are eligible applicants?** Non-profit organizations, States, local governments, and instrumentalities of State or local governments are eligible to apply. Rental assistance must be administered by a State, unit of general local government, or a public housing agency.

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

- **Housing Costs:**
  - **Operating funds** to operate a site owned or leased by your agency (including the Transitional Housing portion of a Joint TH-RRH project).
  - **Rental Assistance** to assist a household pay their rent;
    - **Note:** If applying for Rapid Rehousing, Rental Assistance is the only eligible housing cost. It cannot be combined with Operating.
    - Under a Rental Assistance model, the program participant enters into the lease with the landlord
  - **Leasing** of a single site or scattered site housing units;
    - Under a Leasing model, the grantee enters into the lease with the landlord and has a sublease or rental agreement with the program participant.
  - **Note regarding eligible housing costs:**
    - Permanent Supportive Housing projects may request operating funds, rental assistance, or leasing dollars, depending on the structure of the project.
    - Rapid Re-Housing projects may only request rental assistance. Operating and leasing are not eligible costs under this component type.
    - Joint TH/RRH Component may only request operations or leasing dollars to support the TH portion of the project. The RRH portion of the project is limited to rental assistance.
- **Supportive Services Costs:** Case management to assist households in obtaining and maintaining their housing. The CoC's Written Standards, as described below, require minimum case management services to be provided.
- **Administrative Costs:** To provide funding for your agency to manage the grant including drawing down funds and reporting to HUD.

**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.

**Are there any special considerations that I need to be aware of when applying for funding**

### through the CoC?

- Per the CoC's Written Standards, case management is a critical aspect of homeless assistance services. As such, the Written Standards indicate that a minimum of monthly case management is required for participants in Rapid Re-Housing projects and a minimum of quarterly case management is required for Permanent Supportive Housing projects.
- PSH and RRH, as well as the TH-RRH Joint Component, are permanent housing programs and are expected to operate in accordance with a **Housing First approach**:
  - Participants are not screened out based on the following:
    - Having too little or no income
    - Active or history of substance use
    - Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions
    - History of domestic violence
  - Participants are not terminated from the program based on the following:
    - Failure to participate in supportive services
    - Failure to make progress on a service plan
    - Loss of income or failure to improve income
    - Being a victim of domestic violence
    - Any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found in the project's geographic area
- All project participants enrolled must come from the CoC's Coordinated Entry Prioritized Waiting List.
  - To learn more about the Western PA CoC's Coordinated Entry System, visit <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/westerncommittees/coordinated-entry/>
- CoC funded programs must enter complete and accurate data into the PA Homeless Management Information System (PA-HMIS). This will include adhering to the data quality and data timeliness expectations outlined within the HMIS User Agreement. Victim services organizations must enter data into a DV comparable database.
- CoC funded programs will be expected to participate in the meetings of the local Regional Homeless Advisory Board (RHAB). In addition, all applicants must be or must become a member of the Western PA CoC, attend semi-annual meetings of the full CoC, and attend trainings provided through the CoC.
- CoC funded programs will be expected to have the capacity to operate programs in accordance with HUD requirements including:
  - Submitting your Annual Progress Report (APR) on time
  - Drawing down funds at least quarterly
  - Expend all of grant funds within the 12-month grant period

**How can I learn more about needs/gaps in the CoC?** The CoC presented the 2021 Western PA

CoC gaps analysis on June 10, 2021.

- You can access the recording here: <https://youtu.be/YNoG5UAv1jk>
- You can access the PPT slides here:  
[https://mcusercontent.com/e1a442ef49ad7761f7575387a/files/fa3d7193-de67-42e3-a239-ed898a1cd5ec/Western\\_PA\\_CoC\\_2021\\_Gaps\\_Analysis\\_6\\_10\\_21.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/e1a442ef49ad7761f7575387a/files/fa3d7193-de67-42e3-a239-ed898a1cd5ec/Western_PA_CoC_2021_Gaps_Analysis_6_10_21.pdf)

We encourage anyone interested in new projects to review these materials.

**Once I submit an NOI form, what are the next steps?** Funding is not guaranteed to organization(s) who submit an NOI Form. The CoC Funding Committee will review all NOI interest forms. This information is very valuable to the CoC in identifying interest and potential gaps. When new funding opportunities become available, the CoC will release an RFP (Request for Proposals). Organizations who submitted NOI forms are encouraged to apply through the RFP process, but are not required to do so.

**If I have questions about this who should I contact?** Send an e-mail to [westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org](mailto:westerncoc@pennsylvaniacoc.org) and DMA will get back to you as quickly as possible.