



2024 Request for Proposals for Balance of State Continuum of Care Program New or Expansion Projects Created Through Domestic Violence Bonus, Standard Bonus or Reallocation

RFP Number: BoSCoCNOFO24

Release Date: August 30, 2024

Due Date: **September 30, 2024 at 5:00 pm**

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PART 1 – General Information

A. General Information

New project funding is available through the Domestic Violence Bonus, Standard Bonus and Reallocation opportunities in the 2024 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Program [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO).

Domestic Violence (DV) bonus projects are solely dedicated to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who are defined as homeless under paragraph (4) at [24 CFR 578.3](#). Proposals for these projects are limited to the following two project types:

(1) Rapid Re-housing (RRH) projects that must follow a housing first approach and demonstrate trauma-informed, survivor-center approaches.

(2) Joint Transitional Housing (TH) and RRH component projects as defined in of the NOFO that must follow a housing first approach and demonstrate trauma-informed, survivor-center approaches.

Non-DV bonus funds are for assisting any eligible homeless population. Proposals for these projects are limited to the following three project types:

- (1) Rapid Re-housing (RRH) projects that serve persons who qualify as homeless under paragraphs (1), (2), or (4) of [24 CFR 578.3](#) and follow a housing first approach.
- (2) Joint TH/RRH component projects as defined in Section I.B.2.b.(18) of the NOFO that serve persons who qualify as homeless under paragraphs (1), (2), or (4) of [24 CFR 578.3](#) and follow a housing first approach.
- (3) Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects with all units used to serve people who meet the definition of DedicatedPLUS as described in Section I.B.2.b.(5) of the NOFO, OR with all units used to serve people experiencing chronic homelessness, as defined in [24 CFR 578.3](#). PSH projects must follow a housing first approach.

Applicants may request new funds for the following eligible activities, depending on the proposed project type: operations, leasing, rental assistance, supportive services, and up to 10% administration. Capital costs such as acquisition, construction, rehabilitation or conversion are not eligible activities under this RFP.

Regardless of the type of project the applicant applies for, the grant term must be one year. If the applicant is chosen by the project review team to apply for funding as part of the consolidated application, the applicant will then enter their project information into HUD's electronic application system e-snaps. HUD will announce the list of awarded bonus projects by the spring of 2025. Awarded projects will enter into contract directly with HUD, sometime in 2025, who will administer the grant. Projects can apply to renew their funding in future CoC competitions along with the other CoC renewal projects and will be ranked based on performance, according to that year's performance ranking criteria and procedure.

Applicants are responsible for sending their name and email address to the Washington Balance of State (BoS) CoC collaborative applicant, the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce), at boscoc@commerce.wa.gov if they wish to receive notification of any RFP amendments or additional RFP information from Commerce.

B. Eligible Organizations

All members of the Washington Balance of State Continuum of Care, grantees, partners, and interested parties are invited to submit a request for funding for new projects through the Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Program. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, local governments, instrumentalities of local governments, public housing authorities, Indian Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities in the BoS CoC (all counties in Washington except Snohomish, King, Pierce, Clark, and Spokane). Current Continuum of Care Program grantees in the BoS CoC may also apply for expansion of their renewal project through this RFP.

C. Available Funding

DV Bonus

Approximately \$1,361,849 will be available to the CoC in DV Bonus funds. Applicants may apply for any amount up to \$500,000 for a single project.

Standard Bonus and Reallocation

Approximately \$2,299,089 will be available for the Standard Bonus and Reallocation. Applicants may apply for any amount up to \$500,000 for a single project.

In the event that additional funds become available through recapture of funds or release of additional funds from HUD, the CoC may make additional funds available to applicants for DV or Standard Bonus funds using this same process, which may result in grants of more than the maximums stated above. These above amounts available are subject to HUD amendment.

D. RFP Coordinator

The RFP Coordinator is the sole point of contact for this RFP. All communication from the applicant about this RFP should be with the RFP Coordinator:

Name	Sam Schroeder, BoS CoC Program Manager
E-Mail Address	sam.schroeder@commerce.wa.gov

Final project applications and additional inquiries should be sent to:

E-Mail Address	boscoc@commerce.wa.gov
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Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding. Applicants are to rely on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator. **Communication directed to parties other than the RFP Coordinator may result in disqualification of the applicant.**

E. Estimated Schedule

Issue Request for Proposals	August 30, 2024
Question & answer period	August 30 - September 17, 2024
RFP and Bonus Application Webinar	September 4, 2024
Equity Dashboard Training	September 9, 2024
Answers to Q&A posted no later than	September 18, 2024
Proposals due	September 30, 2024 at 5:00pm
Evaluate proposals	October 1 – 9, 2024
Bonus Project Applicants Notified	October 11, 2024
Final Priority Listing Projects Announced	October 15, 2024

F. Application Submission

Applications must be received at boscoc@commerce.wa.gov no later than 5:00 PM Pacific Time on September 30, 2024.

Late proposals will not be accepted and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration, unless Commerce e-mail is found to be at fault at Commerce's sole determination. Proposals should be sent in one email, however if more than one email is needed all must be received by the due date and time. Exceptions will not be made for partial submissions. Requests for deadline extensions will not be granted. All proposals and any accompanying documentation become the property of Commerce and will not be returned. Any information received as a result of this RFP may be collected and considered for continuous improvement purposes.

Applicants should communicate with their local county(s) planning group to determine if two or more bonus project proposals are being submitted from the same community. If that is the case, the local planning group should send its priority rankings in an email to boscoc@commerce.wa.gov so that the Balance of State Continuum of Care may respect local priorities.

Applicants should request no more grant funds than are needed to ensure the success of the project. If funds offered are less than the full request of an applicant, the applicant will be given the opportunity to propose a scaled-back project, which must still meet the test of feasibility. In the event the applicant does not elect to submit a scaled-back project, the CoC may offer the remaining funds the next highest rated project, and so on. If the funds are not claimed in this manner, the CoC may offer the funds to a higher rated project to scale up their project scope.

Applicants should review detail on definitions and program requirements found in HUD Continuum of Care Program regulations at [24 CFR 578](#), and should refer to the definitions in the NOFO.

G. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of Commerce. All Proposals received shall remain confidential until the apparent successful applicant is announced; thereafter, all proposals are subject to disclosure as provided for in Chapter 42.56 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

H. Application Components

All of the following components are required in order for an application to be considered:

- A completed "2024 BoS CoC New Project Application" found here: <https://deptofcommerce.box.com/v/2024BoSCoCRFP>.
- Copies of leverage letters from donating organizations (see 'Part 7 – Leverage Information' for more information)
- The summary pages of the most recently completed Independent Audit Letter showing significant findings and issues and, as appropriate, evidence of adequate responses to findings and issues identified
- Applicants who currently have HUD Continuum of Care Program grants must send a copy of the latest HUD monitoring letter (if a CoC Program project has been monitored) and, if appropriate, evidence of actions to clear findings (or evidence that HUD has cleared the findings).

- Projects with dedicated beds for persons with disabilities must provide a brief statement on how they will ensure that persons with disabilities are given opportunities to interact with other persons without disabilities

I. Question and Answer Period

The question and answer period for this RFP is August 30 – September 17, 2024. Questions about this RFP sent to the RFP Coordinator at the email address listed in Part 1 Section D of this RFP will be accepted during this period. All questions will be answered in a Q&A document posted no later than the date identified in Part 1 Section E of this RFP.

J. RFP and Application Webinar

An overview webinar will be held on September 4, 2024 at 1:00 pm, Pacific Time. The webinar will be virtual only, on a platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Email the RFP Coordinator to receive the meeting link. All prospective applicants are encouraged to attend; however, attendance is not mandatory.

Questions arising at the overview webinar will be documented and answered and posted in the Q&A document.

Part 2 – Threshold Criteria for All New Project Applications

All applications applying for funds through the DV Bonus, Regular Bonus or Reallocation must meet the following threshold requirements. Applicants must clearly state how they meet these threshold requirements in their application.

- (1) Applicant agrees to operate the project using a low barrier, Housing First model according to the definition below and as described in the [USICH Housing First Checklist; September 2016](#).

Housing First means low barrier projects that do not have service participation requirements or preconditions to entry and prioritize rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing. This means the projects allow entry to project participants regardless of their income, credit history, current or past substance use, history of victimization (e.g., domestic violence, sexual assault, childhood abuse), and criminal record. Participants are not terminated from the project for loss of income or failure to increase income, failure to participate in supportive services, failure to make progress toward a service plan, or any other activity not covered in a lease agreement typically found for unassisted persons in the project's geographic area.

- (2) Applicant agrees to serve vulnerable homeless populations (see [HUD CPD Notice 16-11](#)).
- (3) Applicant is participating (or agrees to participate) in the local Coordinated Entry System, which must be in compliance with [BoS CoC CE guidelines](#).

- (4) Projects with dedicated beds for persons with disabilities must ensure that persons with disabilities can interact with other persons without disabilities.

All Applicants must also meet the following:

- (1) Submit a complete application.
- (2) Meet all HUD and CoC applicant eligibility requirements and thresholds.
- (3) The proposed activities meet Continuum of Care Program eligibility requirements.
- (4) The grant request is reasonable based upon the proposed scope.
- (5) A review of their latest Independent Audit reveals no major findings unaddressed. Evidence of agency's adequate capacity determined by the applicant's response to the Audit findings.
- (6) For applicants with current HUD Continuum of Care Program grants, the latest HUD monitoring letter reveals no major findings unaddressed.
- (7) The overall application will be reviewed to determine if the new or expanded project is likely to improve the CoC's outcome performance and will contribute to reducing homelessness.
- (8) The project and the applicant meet or will meet HUD's Continuum of Care Program threshold requirements as listed in Section V.C (also see Section III.C.4. a and b) of the NOFO.
- (9) To demonstrate organizational capacity, if an applicant for new project funds currently operates a Continuum of Care Program funded project(s), the most recently reported performance scores for those grants must not be substantially below the average total of all other scores.
- (10) The applicant has submitted all items listed in Part 1 - section D, 'Application Components'.

Part 3 – Rating Criteria for All New Projects

New projects applying funds through the DV Bonus, Regular Bonus or Reallocation will all be scored on the criteria below.

Note: Applicants selected from this RFP will not automatically be funded, but instead will be invited to complete a HUD application in e-snaps and will be included in the CoC's Priority Listing of projects submitted to HUD for review.

(1) Project Prioritizes Based on Greatest Need/Vulnerability (0-20 points)

All projects will receive points on how well they describe the severity of need of the population they propose to serve and how they will prioritize the most vulnerable populations. To receive full points, applicants must clearly describe:

- the outreach process used to engage persons living on the streets or in shelter;
- the process used for prioritizing persons with the most severe needs;
- identify the specialized needs of vulnerable populations they will serve

Applicants should carefully review [HUD CPD 16-11](#) *Notice Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing and*

consider the requirements found in [HUD CPD 17-01 Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System](#).

(2) Housing First (0-20 points)

Applicants will receive points based on the extent to which the project will follow a Housing First model, based on the definition in the 'Threshold' section above.

To receive full points, the applicant must:

- Demonstrate the extent of experience it has in operating a successful Housing First project or demonstrate a plan to develop the knowledge necessary to operate a successful Housing First project
- Clearly describe a project design that meets the 'Threshold' section definition of Housing First

(3) Coordination with Local Providers and Mainstream Services (0-15 points)

Applicants will receive points based on the extent to which the project leverages mainstream and/or local resources for supportive services. To receive full points, applicants must demonstrate the leveraging of Medicaid resources available in the state. Applicants will receive points as follows:

- Applicants may receive up to 10 points for demonstrating a strong partnership with Medicaid services. Applicants should demonstrate that specific activities are in place to identify and enroll all Medicaid-eligible project participants. Applicants should also ensure that a process is in place to link project participants to Medicaid-financed services, including case management, tenancy supports, behavioral health services, or other services important to supporting housing stability. Project applicants may include Medicaid-financed services either by the recipient receiving Medicaid coverage payments for services provided to project participants or through formal partnerships with one or more Medicaid billable providers (e.g., Federally Qualified Health Centers). No points will be awarded for Medicaid-financed health services provided in a hospital setting. Where projects can demonstrate that there are barriers to including Medicaid-financed services in the project, applicants will receive up to 10 points under this paragraph for demonstrating that the project leveraged non-Medicaid resources available in the local continuum's geographic area, including mainstream behavioral health system resources such as mental health or substance abuse prevention and treatment block grants or state behavioral health system funding.
- Applicants may receive up to 5 points for demonstrating that the project will utilize partnerships with existing local service providers to enhance the range of and access to additional resources that promote housing stability and positive grant outcomes. Optional services through such partnerships may include but are not limited to: home visitation, job training, substance abuse treatment, financial literacy, life skills education, mental health services, etc. Applicants can also describe the service partnerships that exist within its own organization, especially in communities without other local providers to offer these services.

(4) Leveraging (0-5 points)

Applicants may receive points based on the extent to which the project will leverage additional resources to develop a comprehensive project that meets the needs of people experiencing homelessness and ensure successful project outcomes.

- Applicants will receive 1 point if leverage letters show the project will utilize housing units or housing subsidies not funded by the CoC Program (at least 25 percent of proposed units for PSH or proposed persons served for TH/RRH and RRH).
- Applicants will receive 1 point if leverage letters show the project will coordinated with healthcare organizations to provide services to program participants (substance abuse treatment, private or public insurance such as Medicaid, other healthcare services). The value of assistance provided by the healthcare organization must be at least 25 percent of the total project budget request.
- Applicants may receive up to 3 points on the amount of valid, firm commitments in signed letters meeting HUD requirements and submitted by the due date (see 'Part 7 – Leverage Letters). To receive full points, applicants must demonstrate, with a written commitment, that the cash or in-kind value of leveraged commitments is at least 200 percent of the total initial budget request to HUD.

(5) Readiness (0-10 points)

Applicants will receive points based upon the extent of the project’s readiness to proceed. The score will be based on the following.

- Narrative describing the actions taken and planned to be taken, including but not limited to staffing, training, developing project operating procedures, coordination or negotiation with landlords (if appropriate), and any steps involved in the development of the housing resource, to prepare for an early and successful start of the project.
- Projected timeline of major steps, indicating the number of months between each step beginning from the execution of a HUD contract to beginning occupancy to full occupancy.

(6) Capacity (0-10 points)

Applicants will receive points based on the extent to which the applicant’s experience is relevant to the type of participants to be served and the type of housing proposed. If the applicant does not have current capacity for its proposed project, but plans to build that capacity by the project’s start date, it must clearly demonstrate how it will build that capacity in its application. Capacity includes:

- Overall experience of the organization
- Experience of the organization in undertaking similar activities, including experience with the population to be served and the type of housing and services to be provided
- Experience of staff proposed to operate the project OR the standards the organization will use in recruiting/hiring for positions in the project

(7) Soundness of Approach (0-15 points)

Applications will be scored based upon the description of the project and its proposed outcomes. Outcomes proposed will be considered based on the appropriateness of proposed best practices and activities that would result in their achievement.

- Description of project model
- If the project is not operated by a domestic violence provider, applicant must describe how the project plans to collaborate with its local DV provider to help ensure the safety

and confidentiality of DV survivors served by the project (this, like the rest of the rating criteria in Part 2, applies to all applicants – DV Bonus and Standard Bonus)

- If the project is operated by a domestic violence provider, applicant must describe how the project adheres to DV survivor project best practices, as defined here: <https://wscadv.org/projects/domestic-violence-housing-first/toolkit/survivor-driven-trauma-informed-mobile-advocacy/>
- Use data to demonstrate performance of similar projects serving similar populations
- Description of the major outcomes to be achieved through the project (use annualized data/outcomes as a timeframe where appropriate)
- Description of major actions that will be taken to achieve the proposed outcomes

(8) Meeting a Community Need (0-10 points)

- Applicant utilizes data to demonstrate an unmet community need
- Description of how the project fits with local community plan to reduce homelessness

(9) The project is in a county that doesn't already have a CoC Program grant (0 or 5 points)

To broaden the range of assistance throughout the 34-county CoC, 5 points will be given to projects proposed in counties which do not currently have CoC Program grants, including active CoC capital grants, and were not awarded by HUD in the previous CoC competition and are awaiting a grant.

(10) Racial Equity and LGBTQ2IA+ (0-14 points)

Question 1: 7 points

The following questions seek to determine what actions your agency has taken to prevent and eliminate the racial disparities present in the provision or outcomes of your homeless assistance programs and how the results of those actions are reflected in this proposed project. Please respond to the following using facts, citing sources and specific quantitative and qualitative data from your agency (Possible data sources include: CHG Performance Tracker (Equitable Outcomes Dashboard) and Equitable Access Dashboard, along with any other organizational data you may have.

- As you developed and planned this proposed project, describe the potential racial disparities and barriers identified specific to this project. Once identified, how do you plan to eliminate those barriers in this project? **(3.5)**
- Describe how your agency will measure progress on the actions taken specific to this project to prevent or eliminate those disparities **(3.5)**

Question 2: 7 points

Along with racial disparities in the homelessness response system, LGBTQ2IA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Asexual, and more) people are also overrepresented in the homelessness population; members of the LGBTQ2IA+ community are more likely to become homeless, and once homeless, are more likely to endure discrimination, harassment and barriers to accessing services which extends their homelessness. The following questions are intended to evaluate the agency's progress toward addressing these disparities through high quality service to LGBTQ2IA+ clients:

- What actions are your agency taking to improve inclusivity and how does the project address the disparities and barriers to participation that LGBTQ2IA+ people may face when accessing services? **(3.5)**
- How will your agency monitor the impacts of these actions? **(3.5)**

(11) Lived Experience (0-6 points)

Lived Experience refers to expertise on the topic of homelessness and homeless assistance programming derived from the direct, first-hand experience of those who have experienced homelessness and/or accessed homeless assistance programs themselves. Lived experience can differ depending on an individual's, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc. Aligning homeless-ness assistance programs with lived experience expertise is a growing best practice for home-less service agencies. The following question is intended to evaluate the agency's progress on incorporating this best practice. Please respond to one of the following questions:

Question 1: 6 points

- Describe the methods your agency uses to connect and collaborate with lived experience experts, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and LGBTQ2IA+ individuals and groups. **(3)**
- Describe how lived experience expertise influences your agency and shapes the project's programming. **(3)**

OR: Question 2: 3 points

- If your agency does not yet collaborate with lived experience experts, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and LGBTQ2IA+ individuals and groups, what actions does your agency intend to take over the next year to change that? Please illustrate your plan by sharing a detailed timeline of your goals. **(3)**

(12) Prior Performance (0-12 points)

Prior agency performance according to the following measures from July 1, 2022-June 30, 2024 (where available, for organizations without prior performance data in HMIS, see below) System Performance Dashboards (*) and APR reporting from Sage (^). 2 points for 50th percentile of all CoC providers, 0 points for below 50th percentile of all CoC providers:

- Percent served at agency level coming from unsheltered homelessness*
- HMIS Data Quality at agency level*
- Exits to permanent locations at agency level*
- Returns to homelessness at agency level*
- CoC Program APRs submitted on time^
- Funding utilization of CoC Program projects^

Organizations that have no history in HMIS and Sage may submit alternative data sets to demonstrate how well past projects served their community, kept quality data, spent out funds, etc. Please include a brief description of how the included data represents quality prior performance, and if possible try to connect the provided data with the assessed elements above

(serving unsheltered individuals and families, exits to permanent locations, returns to homelessness, reports submitted in a timely manner, utilization of funds, and overall data quality). Organizations who have no comparable data to submit and/or have never managed a similar type of project will get 0 points.

Part 4 – Additional Threshold Criteria for DV Bonus Projects

Threshold Criteria

All applications must meet the following four DV Bonus Project threshold requirements. Applicants must clearly state how they meet these threshold requirements in their application.

- (1) Projects must adhere to DV RRH best practices, many of which are outlined in [‘Rapid Re-Housing: Considerations for Homeless Service Providers Supporting Families Impacted by Domestic Violence’](#). As part of these best practices, applicants must demonstrate that the project will use trauma-informed and survivor-centered approaches, as defined on page 20 of [BoS CoC Policies and Procedures](#).
- (2) Applicants must describe their safety plan for ensuring the safety and confidentiality of all project participants, from initial intake to project exit.
- (3) Applicants must incorporate provisions for extensions in their rental assistance models, since the effects of trauma can prevent survivors from assuming the full costs of housing within common timelines for non-DV projects.
- (4) Applicants must have substantial experience serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, OR closely partner with another service provider that has substantial experience.

Part 5 – Additional Rating Criteria for DV Bonus Projects

The CoC will use the following rating criteria to score and select new DV Bonus project applications. Each application will be scored on the overall quality of the project, and the extent to which the applicant is able to clearly demonstrate the following three criteria.

(1) Safety Plan (0-20 points)

Applicants will receive points based on the extent that their safety plan clearly ensures the protection and confidentiality of all project participants, from initial intake to project exit.

(2) Prior Experience and/or Collaboration (0-20 points)

Applicants will receive points based on the extent of their experience serving this target population. Narrative should include the level and description of project participant input in developing the project design. Applicants without substantial prior experience serving this population will receive points based on the extent of their proposed collaboration with another provider that has substantial experience.

Applicants must provide a detailed description of the training they or their partners have received. This training must include, at a minimum, the requirements listed in [WAC 388-61A-1080](#).

Applicants partnering with an outside service provider to meet this requirement must attach a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that outlines, at a minimum:

- The outside provider's training and experience serving the target population
- A detailed plan outlining the role the provider will play in the partnership and how they will leverage their experience to better serve the target population
- Description of the services the provider will offer to project participants

(3) Past Performance (0-20 points)

Applicants will receive up to five points in each of the following categories, based on their past performance. Applicants should use data in their responses where possible.

- Rate of housing placement of DV survivors (0-5 points)
- Rate of housing retention of DV survivors (0-5 points)
- Improvements in safety of DV survivors (0-5 points) Examples include:
 - The extent to which survivors learn more ways to plan for their safety
 - The extent to which survivors know whom to contact for safety support
- How the project applicant addresses multiple barriers faced by DV survivors (0-5 points)

Part 6 – Balance of State Continuum of Care Competition Policies and Procedures

The principle of fair play through an open, inclusive and transparent application process will be employed throughout the competition.

The CoC will manage the application process with an openness throughout, including significant information exchange and the assignment of staff to help clarify and assist applicants throughout the process. RFPs will be broadcast to the broadest mailing list possible to maximize opportunities for all potential applicants throughout the CoC to participate. Criteria for selecting bonus fund applications will give preference to applicants from counties without current HUD Continuum of Care Program grants. A question and answer period is provided to assist applicants including those from counties without Continuum of Care Program grants and applicants not currently operating Continuum of Care Program projects. Application criteria are developed in an open process of the Continuum of Care Steering Committee with minutes of meetings at which all interested parties are invited to join and participate. The rating criteria are reviewed and approved by the CoC.

Members of the Rating and Ranking Committee scoring the applications are composed of persons invited by staff of the CoC to participate in the rating and ranking process. Persons are chosen for their non-conflicted position and experience with activities to end homelessness. No applicants may participate in a committee to review and rate projects who are competing or potentially competing for project funding in the current round of competition. Membership on the committee will reflect as much as feasible the racial and major geographical framework of the CoC, with at least one representative from the eastern and the western regions of the state and persons with lived experience of homelessness.

Project Selection Criteria

The Rating Criteria will be provided to all interested parties as part of the RFP. The criteria are approved by the CoC. There may be separate selection criteria dependent upon additional requirements of the NOFO. For 2024, the rating and ranking criteria are posted on the CoC website and included in e-mail communications to all potential interested persons in the Balance of State CoC.

Rating criteria for renewals will be based primarily upon objective and outcome-based data on the performance of the existing project; and projects requesting new funds will be based largely upon the quality of the proposal, capacity, extent to which they serve the most difficult populations, housing first commitments, past performance and leverage. The full set of criteria can be found in the RFP.

If two or more applications from the same community are ranked differently at the local level than by the BoS process, the BoS will apply the ranking of the local planning group in developing the BoS's ranking list (for example if two projects submitted from a community are ranked numbers 2 and 4 in the BoS competition and the local planning group ranked those projects 2 and 1 respectively, the BoS will switch the order so that local community project #1 is ranked #2 and local continuum project #2 is ranked #4 in the BoS rankings). In the event that no local planning group preference letter is received on a timely basis, the rankings of the BoS will govern the final rankings.

Encouragement of applications from counties and organizations not previously funded with Continuum of Care Program Funds

The Continuum of Care continues to encourage new applications from counties and from applicants which have not previously received HUD Continuum of Care Program funding. Counties are notified of this preference in the RFP. In addition, applications from unfunded counties will be given bonus points in the rating system. Finally, projects awarded in previously unfunded counties and at organizations which have not previously received Continuum of Care Program funds will be offered priority for technical assistance to help implement the project.

Encouragement of applications from organizations based in community

Community-based organizations operate within a specific community or geographical area, aiming to address local needs and improve the well-being of its residents. In the affordable housing context, these are the communities Commerce hopes to center who have demonstrated disproportionate representation in homelessness, housing instability, and housing affordability in state and nation-wide data.

- Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color including people identified as socially disadvantaged as defined in 13 CFR Sec. 124.103.
- People with disabilities*
- People who identify as part of the d/Deaf and hard of hearing community
- People with behavioral health conditions, including substance use disorder.
- People who identify as LGBTQIA+**
- Survivors of family violence and/or intimate partner violence.
- Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals.

- Undocumented individuals, immigrants and refugees, and mixed-immigration-status families and communities.
- Veterans

*The term disability means: (1) a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) a person with a record of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, and (3) a person who is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This may include, but is not limited to: people with physical disabilities, people with chronic health conditions, and/or people who are neurodivergent.

**LGBTQIA+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and other identities including but not limited to: two-spirit, non-binary, pansexual, agender, etc.

While no bonus points will be awarded to community-based organizations during the 2024 competition, the BoS CoC encourages community-based organizations and organizations with strong partnerships with community-based organizations to apply for new CoC Program funding.

Timing of HUD's CoC Competition Process

The following process will be followed after selection of the apparently successful applicants:

- By HUD requirement, at least 15 days prior to the deadline for submission of the CoC's final application to HUD, any applicant whose application is 1) rejected by the CoC or 2) otherwise will not be sent to HUD as part of the CoC's application, will be provided written notice of the results, the reasoning for the decision and advised of the opportunity to appeal the results prior to submission of the CoC's application.
- Prior to the submission of the CoC and Project Applications to HUD, the final project listing and the CoC's application will be posted on the CoC website and the full membership, stakeholders and interested parties will be provided an e-mail, communicating the results of the project listing (including information on the projects rejected and accepted) and the CoC's application. All parties will be advised by e-mail where on the CoC's website the information is located.

Complaint Process

Potential applicants may submit a complaint to Commerce based on any of following:

- a) The solicitation unnecessarily restricts competition;
- b) The solicitation evaluation or scoring process is unfair; or
- c) The solicitation requirements are inadequate or insufficient to prepare a response.

A complaint may be submitted to Commerce at any time prior to 5 days before the proposal response deadline. The complaint must meet the following requirements:

- a) The complaint must be in writing;
- b) The complaint must be sent to the RFP coordinator in a timely manner;
- c) The complaint should clearly articulate the basis for the complaint; and
- d) The complaint should include a proposed remedy.

The RFP coordinator will respond to the complaint in writing. The response to the complaint and any changes to the solicitation will be posted to applicable public web sites. The Director of Commerce will be notified of all complaints and will be provided a copy of Commerce's response. The complaint may not be raised again during the protest period. Commerce's action or inaction in response to the complaint is final. There is no appeal process.

Protest Procedure

Applicants have five business days from the written notice of the results to submit a written appeal to boscoc@commerce.wa.gov. Written appeals submitted more than five business days from the announcement of the results will not be considered.

Only protests stipulating an issue of fact concerning the following subjects shall be considered:

- A matter of bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator;
- Errors in computing the score;
- Non-compliance with procedures described in the procurement document or BoS CoC policy.

Protests not based on procedural matters will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit if they address issues such as: 1) an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a proposal, or 2) BoS CoC's assessment of its own and/or applicant needs or requirements.

Commerce Chief Contracts Officer will review the protest and a decision will be issued from the CoC Board within ten business days of receipt of the protest.

Establishing Project Ranking and HUD Project Priority List

The overall approach to developing the CoC's Project Priority List is to start by ranking the Renewal projects in order of their performance score against all other Renewal projects, integrate new projects into the list based on their score against all other new projects and rank all Reallocated projects created with funds from projects in the same community at the top of Tier 1 based upon their score in the reallocation competition.

New DV, Standard Bonus, and general Reallocation Applications received after the CoC's project application deadline of September 30, 2024 5:00 PM Pacific Time (or which are substantially incomplete by the deadline), or which do not otherwise meet threshold requirements, will be rejected. Reallocation applications utilizing funds from the same community and Renewal applications received after the Continuum's project application deadline (or which are substantially incomplete at the deadline) are subject to rejection or placement at the bottom of Tier 2.

Part 7 – Leverage Letters

It is important to the success of the application that we demonstrate that the Balance of State Continuum of Care is able to leverage other federal, local, and state funds in our projects.

Leverage can be cash or the value of labor or materials provided to the project (in-kind). It may include but is not limited to below-market lease payments by agencies, rental income for tenants put back into

the program, volunteer labor at \$16.28/hour or, if professional labor (lawyers, doctors, etc.) is provided, it can be valued at the going cost of the service. It can also include services provided for free or at reduced rates by other agencies and staff time of your agency that is not reimbursed by the Continuum of Care Program grant.

In short, leverage includes everything that contributes to the project, other than the Continuum of Care Program grant itself, as long as a firm letter of commitment is obtained meeting the requirements of Exhibit A below. Applicants are encouraged to maximize their leverage points by requesting letters which cover the full term of the grant period requested. Only letters and agreements meeting the Exhibit A requirements that are dated on or after July 31, 2024 and submitted by the leverage letter deadline of September 30, 2024 5:00 PM Pacific Time, will be accepted for rating purposes. Only letters with firm commitments will be accepted (i.e. no “subject to budget approval”). All letters should be sent by e-mail to boscoc@commerce.wa.gov as part of the application.

Exhibit A

Model Commitment or Donation Letter for Leverage for All New Projects

Bold Print = Suggested Text

Regular Print = (Explanation of fill-in item)

Typed on Donor Agency Letterhead

To: _____ (Project Applicant) _____ (a date between July 31, 2024 and September 30, 2024)

Subject: Commitment to the _____ (Name of CoC Program proposed project)

If the _____ (name of project) **is awarded HUD Continuum of Care Program funds,**
_____ (name of agency, church, organization, government, person or business) **commits to**
provide contributions worth \$_____ over the next year to _____ (name of applicant
organization). **Our contribution for** _____ (operations or type of service: e.g. cash,
childcare, case management, clothing, food, etc.) **will be available for the 12 month period beginning July 1,**
2025 (beginning date of the potential grant period).

1. (If professional services based on an hourly rate are involved add the following to the first two sentences of A.):
The commitment is calculated based upon _____ hours of _____ (type of service) at our normal rate
of \$_____/hour.

2. (If non-professional/volunteer services are involved add the following to the first two sentences): **The**
commitment is based upon _____ hours of service at the rate of \$_____/hour.

3. (If the donation is a physical item, add the following to the first two sentences): **The amount of the**
contribution is based upon a donation of _____ (units) of _____ (words describing the contribution).

4. If the donation is space, the following to the first two sentences):

5. If the donation is housing or office space leased at below market rents, state the following:) **We agree to lease**
_____ (number of units) **to** _____ (name of the agency renting or participants in the agency's program) **at**
the following rents of _____ (# of units by bedroom size and \$ for rent) for a one year period beginning July 1,
2025. (You will then need to use some standard such as Fair Market Rents, documented comparable rents, or a letter
from a realtor establishing comparable rents to calculate the amount of the benefit representing the difference
between standard rents and the agreed upon rents).

Sincerely,

_____ (must be signed by an authorized representative of the donating agency)

_____ (title)