


<p><i>HUD Continuum of Care # and Name:</i> VT 501 - Vermont Balance of State CoC</p>	
<p><i>VT BoS CoC Primary Decision-Making Body:</i> Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness</p>	
<p><i>Policy/Procedure:</i> CoC Project Ranking</p>	
<p><i>Date Approved by VT BoS CoC:</i> 12/20/13; revised 10/20/2015</p>	

Purpose: This policy and accompanying ranking tool was created by the VCEH to help guide the CoC Project Ranking Committee and Collaborative Applicant in activities required to perform a prioritization of CoC grant applications for the annual HUD CoC-Homeless Assistance Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). This process was developed to ensure that the scoring and ranking of CoC grant application requests are conducted in a fair, transparent, and unbiased manner. This process was created to also ensure that the VT BoS CoC is open to proposals from entities that have not previously received funds in prior CoC Program competitions, even if the CoC is not applying for any new projects in 2015.

Procedures:

1. 6/19/15: Collaborative Applicant informed and solicited feedback from the VCEH co-chairs for the pending release of a “Local CoC Options Chart” with an explanation on the project review process.
2. 6/26/15-6/29/15: The Collaborative Applicant compiled, emailed and posted resources on the VCEH website for each local CoC and the entire VT BoS CoC to assess all CoC Program funding options and determine prioritization on community-levels.

A “Local CoC Options Chart” was provided to help all interested entities to understand all funding options (renew, retool, reallocate-new).

A “Letter of Intent Form” (LOI) was included to allow for existing & potential new eligible entities to submit proposals to be considered for the *known* FFY2015 CoC Annual Renewal Demand amount.

3. 6/30/15-7/21/15: All local CoC communities collaborated to understand options, develop strategic funding decisions, and submit project priorities. Each local CoC conducted open meetings to review current projects and potential changes, including the consideration of entities that have not previously received funds in prior CoC Program competitions. Local CoCs informed their communities and VCEH of priorities via minutes and emails sent to the Collaborative Applicant and community partners.
4. 7/7/15 & 7/10/15: The Collaborative Applicants from both the VT BoS CoC and the Burlington/Chittenden CoC partnered to provide identical webinars to inform the CoCs and all eligible entities of all funding options. The webinars were open

to the public, posted on the VCEH website and available for viewing at a later date.

5. 7/21/15: All eligible entities were able to submit LOI by this date to the Collaborative Applicant to be considered for existing CoC Program funds. LOI included the project priority ranking decision made by the applicable local CoC.
6. 8/18/15: During the full VT BoS CoC meeting, the Collaborative Applicant reviewed the previous VCEH project ranking process (policy, tool, priorities) to solicit feedback and comments.
7. 9/28/15: Upon the release of the full HUD CoC NOFA, the Collaborative Applicant emailed all known eligible entities, and posted on the VCEH website, the opportunity for potential new CoC Program funding (15% - \$409,000 est.) of one or more new Permanent Housing Bonus project(s) as Permanent Supportive Housing-Chronic Homeless Only and/or Rapid Rehousing Program. New template LOI forms, specifically applying for the PH Bonus, were included/posted with a deadline of 10/9/15.

VSHA, as an eligible project applicant, also informed the VT BoS CoC of their intention to submit a "Letter of Intent" to the VCEH Ranking Committee for a new Permanent Housing Bonus (CoC-Rapid Rehousing) project to serve additional counties with exceptional need.

8. 10/9/15: Completed LOI forms, specifically applying for the PH Bonus, were due to the Collaborative Applicant with only one received [new VSHA CoC-RRH].
9. 10/13/15: The Collaborative Applicant convened the VCEH NOFA committee, with an open invitation to all interested entities. The NOFA committee reviewed recommended changes to project ranking policy and scoring tool.
10. 10/15/15: The Collaborative Applicant emailed and posted on the VCEH website all received CoC project applications (renewal, retooled, reallocated-new); the final draft/revised VCEH Project Ranking Policy & Scoring Tool; and a first draft of the CoC application.

The Collaborative Applicant emailed each CoC project applicant with draft tool with identification of data elements/sources that will be considered by the Ranking Committee. Each project applicant may provide written comments to explain potential performance challenges with their existing project (i.e. bed/unit utilization, timely draws, cost effectiveness, exits to PH, implementation of a housing first model/approach, etc.).

11. 10/20/15: The full VT BoS CoC & VCEH Board reviewed, commented and approved the revised FFY2015 Project Ranking Policy & Scoring Tool and approved the full roster of CoC project applications to be submitted in the

Consolidated Application, with initial & final priority order determined solely by the VCEH Project Ranking Committee as authorized by the VT BoS CoC.

12. 10/22/15: The VCEH Project Ranking Committee convenes to review objective data and written comments from each CoC project applicant. The Collaborative Applicant will be present at the Ranking Committee meeting to provide technical assistance but does NOT have voting privileges.
13. 10/22/15: The Collaborative Applicant will inform each CoC project applicant of the prioritization/funding decision made by the VCEH Project Ranking Committee with their individual scoring results and project ranking position.
14. 10/26/15: Any project applicant may contest the ranking determination of their individual project by submitting an email or fax appeal to the Collaborative Applicant no later than 10/26/15. All appeals will be forwarded to VCEH Project Ranking Committee for consideration and a final determination (if applicable).

VCEH authorizes the final determination of the Project Ranking Committee to be considered as the formal decision/approval on behalf of the VT BoS CoC to be submitted to HUD.

The Collaborative Applicant will send the final CoC project ranking list to the CoC, and all individual project applicants, to be posted on the VCEH website to ensure transparency and compliance with the FFY2015 HUD CoC NOFA.

15. The HUD notice only references if a project is rejected, not if a project objects to the ranking position or any reduction in project funding (if applicable). Per the FFY2015 HUD CoC NOFA: *“Any project applicant that submits a project that was rejected by the CoC in the local competition must have been notified in writing by the CoC, outside of e-snaps, with an explanation for the decision to reject the project(s). Project applicants whose project was rejected may appeal the local CoC competition decision to HUD if the project applicant believes it was denied the opportunity to participate in the local CoC planning process in a reasonable manner by submitting a Solo Application in e-snaps directly to HUD prior to the application deadline of 7:59:59 p.m. eastern time on November 20, 2015.”*

Ranking Team: The CoC Ranking Team will be made up of unbiased members familiar with CoC programs and the community’s homeless system. At the beginning of the ranking meeting, CoC Ranking Team members will provide a statement of confidentiality and no conflict of interest in the regard to any discussions or determinations of specific project applications and/or applicants. Members will be recruited yearly and their eligibility verified (no conflicts of interest) by the CoC.

The Team may consider adjustments for such issues as HUD incentives or requirements. The Team may consider proposal changes or project general budget adjustments that may be required to meet community needs. The Team determines the rank and funding levels of all CoC projects considering all available and objective information.

The following members were approved by the VCEH CoC Board to review and rank the VT BoS CoC project applications for the 2013 HUD CoC NOFA competition:

- Southeastern VT Community Action (Pat Burke)
- VT Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence (Gilan Merwanji)
- VT Agency of Human Services (Angus Chaney or Designee)
- VT Housing & Finance Agency (Maura Collins)
- VT Housing & Conservation Board (Rick DeAngelis)
- VT Department of Housing & Community Development (Shaun Gilpin or Designee)
- U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs-WRJ (Jim Bastien or Designee)

Ranking Process: The CoC will implement goals for each HUD CoC NOFA application cycle which maximize competitiveness of the CoCs Consolidated Application in consideration of local CoC priorities. If deemed necessary by the Project Ranking Committee, VT BoS CoC approves the use of a “Hybrid Approach” to conduct strategic funding allocation if selective cuts are needed for lower ranking projects. Example: <https://www.onecpd.info/resource/3401/fy2013-coc-program-nofa-and-application-webcast/>.

The independent CoC Ranking Committee will meet to review data from each CoC project application request to determine how it meets the scoring criteria established in the CoC project rating tool, minimum grant requirements, and established CoC priorities. These combined factors will inform the CoC Ranking Team how to determine the CoC project ranking list and, if applicable, any necessary funding reductions to one or more projects.

Ranking Tool Measures (see attachment): Housing Priority, HMIS Data Quality & APR (different indicator for a HMIS grant application), Participant Project Performance (different indicator for a HMIS grant application), Target Population, and Leverage. *Sources: Annual Performance Report; CoC Project Applications; LOI.*

Standard Minimum Grant Requirements: leverage match, expenditure of grant funds (slow or fast), bed utilization, cost effectiveness of project, provider organization experience and capacity, project readiness, unexecuted grants, administration of other federal funds, HMIS implementation and compliance, unresolved CoC and/or HUD monitoring findings, and other minimum grant terms.

Sources: Annual Performance Reports; FY2015 CoC Project Applications & LOI; LOCCS draws; HMIS Data Quality Reports; Project Monitoring Results.

CoC Priorities: In addition to the above project ranking tool criteria and minimum grant requirement thresholds, the CoC approved the following priorities for the Ranking Team to consider in determining a project’s rank and potential selective grant reductions:

- **Local CoC Priorities:** as determined by communities in June/July 2015.
- **Geographic Distribution:** assessment of projects within CoC by county/region.
- **VT BoS CoC/Community Need:** assessment of highest needs (literal homeless & subpopulations). *Sources: Annual CoC PIT counts; AHS GA.*
- **HUD CoC Need:** Annual CDBG formula calculated by HUD to determine minimum CoC funding needs by county. *Source: HUD Preliminary Pro Rata Need (PPRN).*

FFY2015 CoC Permanent Housing Bonus Application: As the only submitted proposal for the Permanent Housing (PH) Bonus, the Ranking Committee will review the new VSHA RRH project application to ensure merit, threshold, need and other criteria:

- **PH Component:** CoC-Rapid Rehousing (tenant-based/medium-term rental assistance)
Subpopulation: All eligible [Veterans/Youth/DV/Families/Individuals]
Service Area: Orleans/Addison/Lamoille/No. Windsor/Bennington/Rutland Counties
Grant Recipient: VT State Housing Authority
Provider Agency (No CoC funds available for services; 100% rental assistance): John Graham Shelter, BROCC-Community Action, Capstone Community Action, Upper Valley Haven, NE Kingdom Community Action, Homeless Prevention Center.
Grant Application Requested Budget: \$407,169 (estimated 15% ARD)
Minimum Project Units: 37+ units of varying sizes; additional with grant savings and access to new VSHA CoC-RRH preference upon initial approval in VSHA RRH Program.

Project Determinations and Appeals Process: Applications which do not meet the minimum threshold requirements will not be included in the CoC Consolidated Application submitted to HUD for consideration. If more applications are submitted than the CoC has money to fund, the CoC Ranking Committee will rank the grants in order of an agreed upon priority as approved by VCEH/VT BoS CoC and HUD.

The Collaborative Applicant will send formal notification of a preliminary determination made by the CoC Ranking Committee to each project applicant along with: individual project ranking summary report, individual project ranking number, and potential budget reduction. The Collaborative Applicant will provide all appeals to the CoC Ranking Committee to make a final determination that will be sent to the CoC for a review, vote and posting to CoC website.

FFY2015 VT BoS CoC/VCEH Project Priority Ranking Tool		
Project Name/Agency: _____		Date: _____
Part A: Priority Project Type (Maximum Points – 50)	Max Points	Points Awarded
1. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)	50	
2. Permanent Housing (Shelter Plus Care or Rapid Rehousing)	50	
3. Transitional Housing-Special Needs (Youth/Domestic Violence/Substance Abuse)	30	
4. Transitional Housing-Other	15	
Part B: HMIS Data Quality & APR (Participant Programs - not HMIS projects)	Max	Awarded
1. APR Data Quality (most recent APR)- more than 0% of missing data elements?	-10	
Part C. Performance (Maximum Points - 65)	Max	Awarded
Participant Project Performance		
1. Housing Stability: % HHs maintain or exit to permanent housing: 80% to 100%	20	
Housing Stability: % HHs maintain or exit to permanent housing: 70% to 79%	5	
2. % of households that have non-employment income at exit: 75% to 100%	15	
% of households that have non-employment income at exit: 60% to 74%	10	
3. Employment: % participants with employment income at exit: 50% to 100%	15	
Employment: % participants with employment income at exit: 20% to 49%	10	
Employment: % participants with employment income at exit: 10% to 19%	5	
4. Non-Cash Benefits: % HHs exit with a least one source: 85% to 100%	15	
HMIS Performance	Max	Awarded
1. Does HMIS Lead have capacity to fulfill all CoC needs & federal requirements?	25	
2. HMIS implementation provides timely & accessible trainings to HMIS users?	5	
3. All HMIS Participating Agency agreements are on file with the HMIS lead agency?	5	
4. Do all Vendor Agreements comply with HMIS privacy and other related polices?	5	
5. CoC doesn't have other funds to sufficiently support HMIS activities?	25	
Part D. Target Population (Multiple choices allowed; Maximum Points - 45)	Max	Awarded
PSH projects: prioritize 1st serving Chronic Homelessness (+Veterans = 3 point bonus)	15+3	
Youth/Persons Fleeing Domestic Violence/Families with Children/Substance Abuse	5	
Residence Prior-Literal Homelessness (streets/shelter): 75% to 100%	25	
70% to 74%	10	
Part E. Match/Leverage (Maximum Points – 10) 25% minimum match+leverage	Max	Awarded
100%-150% (over 150% = +1 bonus point)	10+1	
50% to 99%	5	
Part F. Monitoring Criteria (Yes/No; if "No", explanation/reason?)		
1. 100% Unit/Bed Utilization Rate?	Y/N	
2. Timely Quarterly Drawdown Rates?	Y/N	
3. Frequency or Amount of Funds Recaptured by HUD?	Y/N	
4. Length of Stay (TH=<2 years; TH/RRH projects quickly move participants into PH)?	Y/N	
5. Cost Effectiveness (Total HUD CoC funds - low cost per bed)?	Y/N	
6. Does project consider severity of need/vulnerabilities of new/current participants?	Y/N	
TOTAL POINTS:	235	
COMMENTS from RANKING COMMITTEE:		