

CHITTENDEN COUNTY HOMELESS ALLIANCE
Continuum of Care

<u>HUD Continuum of Care VT-501 – Burlington//Chittenden</u>
<u>VT-501 CoC Primary Decision Making Body – Chittenden County Homeless Alliance</u>
<u>Policy/Procedure – CoC Program Project Ranking</u>
<u>VT-501 CoC approved / revised: 12/30/2013, 7/6/2017, 7/5/2018, 7/11/2019, 7/1/2021, 06/02/2022 06/08/2023 08/01/2024 5/27/26</u>

Purpose: To guide the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA), Application Ranking Committee and Collaborative Applicant (CA) in the activities required to perform ranking of Continuum of Care (CoC) grant applications for the annual HUD Continuum of Care-Homeless Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Policy: This policy was developed to ensure that the scoring and ranking of CoC grant application requests are conducted in a fair, transparent, & unbiased manner. The Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Steering Committee (Executive Body of the CoC) reviewed, edited and approved this policy and accompanying rating tool on December 30, 2013 with a majority vote. This process has been amended for the 2015 NOFA cycle. This process was further amended for the 2016 NOFA cycle. This process was amended and voted on for the 2017 NOFA on July 6, 2017. This process was amended and voted on for the 2018 NOFA on July 5, 2018. This process was amended and voted on for the 2019 NOFA on July 11, 2019. This policy was amended and voted on for the 2021 NOFA on July 1st 2021. This policy was amended for the 2022 NOFO in June and August 2022. This policy was amended in June 2023 and August 2024. This policy was amended in May 2026 in anticipation of a 2026 NOFO.

Procedures: The approved ranking measures and data sources used to evaluate all renewal and new CoC grant application requests will be provided to all applicants before the Application Ranking Committee meets to review and rank their projects. The Application Ranking Committee will evaluate renewal applications first, guided by the CoC Board approved renewal evaluation tool, to determine the need for and recommend any reallocation. The Collaborative Applicant, assisted by the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) will collect all specified data for each renewal CoC project application and provide the objective scores to the Application Ranking Committee to conduct their review and make reallocation recommendations. The Collaborative Applicant will be present at the meetings of the CoC Application Ranking Committee to provide technical assistance as needed. After the recommended renewal project reallocation (if applicable) of the Application Ranking Committee is complete, the Collaborative Applicant will send an individual summary of the determination made by the Application Ranking Committee to each project applicant along with: individual project ranking summary report, individual project ranking number, budget reduction (if applicable), and project rejection (if applicable), as well as justification for reductions and/or rejections.

Following the renewal evaluation, the Application Ranking Committee will evaluate new projects. All new project applicants will submit an application to Foundant, and the Application Ranking Committee will review new projects in Foundant, guided by the CoC Board approved new project evaluation tool. Once renewal and new projects are both scored, the Application Ranking Committee will finalize project budget amounts and assign a project rank number to each project applicant and release the rankings to the Continuum. After the ranking is complete, the Collaborative Applicant will send an individual summary of the determination made by the

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Application Ranking Committee to each new project applicant along with: individual project ranking summary report, individual project ranking number, budget reduction (if applicable), and project rejection (if applicable), as well as justification for reductions and/or rejections.

The project priority list and funding will be submitted to the Steering Committee and voted on by non-conflicted Board members during the NOFO period. Each project applicant may appeal the ranking determination of their individual project by submitting a written appeal to the Collaborative Applicant. The Collaborative Applicant supplies the appeal request to the Steering Committee and may request, on behalf of the Steering Committee, follow-up information to support the appeal review. Upon completion of the appeal review, the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Steering Committee will make a final determination, and direct the Collaborative Applicant to notify the project applicant. The Collaborative Applicant will send the final CoC project ranking list to the CoC, and all individual project applicants, to be posted on the designated website to ensure transparency and compliance with the CoC NOFO in accordance with the time period advanced in the NOFO. The entire Consolidated Application will be posted online for review. The Steering Committee will designate the Executive Committee to have the final vote on the submittal of the Application.

Ranking Team: The CoC Application Ranking Committee will be made up of non-conflicted (i.e. not associated with an organization receiving CoC Program funds as a recipient, subrecipient, or contractor) members familiar with CoC programs and the community's system of care for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Each year the Application Ranking Committee members will reaffirm they have 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 Committee may consider adjustments for such issues as HUD incentives or requirements. The Committee may consider proposal changes or project general budget adjustments that may be required to meet community needs. The Committee determines the rank and funding levels of all projects considering all available and objective information.

The following members were approved by the Chittenden CoC to review and rank the Chittenden CoC project applications for the FFY2026 HUD CoC NOFO competition:

- Kerri Duquette Hoffman, State of Vermont
- Jennifer Hunter, Cathedral Square
- Anna Wageling, BPD
- Tammy Santamore, COTS
- Jane Helmstetter, Community member

Ranking Process: The CoC will implement goals for each HUD CoC NOFO application cycle which maximize competitiveness of the CoC's Consolidated Application in consideration of local CoC priorities.

The independent Application Ranking Committee will meet to review data from each CoC applicant to determine how it meets the scoring criteria established in the CoC project rating tool, minimum grant requirements, and established HUD/CoC priorities. These combined factors will

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inform the Application Ranking Committee how to determine the CoC project ranking list and, if applicable, any necessary funding reductions to one or more projects.

Renewal Rating Tool Measures (see attachment):

Participant Project Performance, Target Population, Bed Utilization and Expenditure of Funds.

Sources: Annual Performance Report; eLOCCS Drawdown Reports.

Transition Grants:

Permanent housing (PSH, RRH, TH-RRH) renewal projects may apply for a Transition Grant, which would allow the recipient to transition from permanent housing to another non-permanent housing project type (TH, SSO, Street Outreach) over the course of the FY26 grant. Transition grants will first be evaluated according to renewal evaluation criteria and subject to potential involuntary reallocation based on the criteria outlined below. If the applicant is not subject to full involuntary reallocation, then the project applicant will be notified to proceed to submit a New project application, which will be scored and ranked as a New project.

Reallocation Process:

Voluntary Reallocation

Projects are offered a chance to voluntarily reallocate CoC Program funding in part or whole to support creation of new projects to achieve our goals to end homelessness. Project recipients may determine they want to reallocate if 1) the recipient is unable to certify/affirm new HUD requirements, 2) the recipient has evaluated their own financial and client outcome performance and determined that the project is unlikely to perform well in the local competition, or 3) other recipient reasons.

Involuntary Reallocation

Projects with poor financial and/or client outcome performance, or not in alignment with CCHA standards and practices, or not serving the intended population, or with significant, unresolved findings are subject to involuntary reallocation. The following guidance will be used to determine involuntary reallocation:

1. Projects that have underspent more than 10% of their award may be reduced and those funds may be reallocated for New Project(s). A one-year grace period may be extended to providers who commit to a plan in collaboration with the Ranking Committee that will increase their expenditures to 90%+ in the current program year.
2. Projects scoring 50% or lower on the renewal evaluation scoring tool may be wholly or partially reallocated involuntarily or may be asked to develop a plan to address performance issues before a final determination is made.
3. Projects with significant unresolved HUD monitoring findings may be reallocated involuntarily.
4. HUD priority shifts in the CoC Program may necessitate involuntary reallocation due to meeting new HUD demands related to project types and project-specific policies.

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5. *NOTE: First-time renewals are not subject to involuntary reallocation, given that they have not had a chance to establish their spenddown and performance on the grant.*

Any funds reallocated as part of recapturing unspent funds will be made available for new projects during the local solicitation process. Reallocation decisions are subject to the Ranking Committee's judgment. Any recommendations by the Ranking Committee that are formalized through a CCHA CoC Steering Committee vote are subject to appeal through the CoC Grievance process and, if unresolved, to HUD.

CoC Funding Tier 1 and Tier 2 Process:

The Ranking Committee will follow the directions in the NOFO for the Tier 1 and Tier 2 funding process. HUD will establish the amounts of CCHA's Tier 1 and Tier 2.

Project Determinations and Appeals Process: Applications that 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 Application Ranking Committee will rank the grants in order of the agreed upon priority as approved by non-conflicted members of the Chittenden CoC Steering Committee. The Collaborative Applicant will send formal notification of the determination made by the Application Ranking Committee to each project applicant along with: individual project ranking summary report, individual project ranking number, budget reduction (if applicable), and project rejection (if applicable), as well as justification for reductions and/or rejections. Any appeals to the Application Ranking Committee's determinations for projects must be emailed in writing within 48 hours of notification of determination. After all appeals are reviewed, the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Steering Committee will vote to finalize the Application Ranking Committee's recommendation. The Steering Committee's final approved priority listing, along with the corresponding grant amount for all projects, will be distributed to the Continuum and posted on the appropriate websites.

HUD and CCHA Ranking Priorities

In addition to the above rating tool criteria and minimum grant requirement thresholds, the CoC approved local priorities for the Application Ranking Committee to follow, listed below.

The Application Ranking Committee will follow the ranking priorities articulated below:

1. Highest scoring Permanent Supportive Housing renewals up to any caps placed by HUD;
2. Ranked according to project score: New or renewal projects that serve (or commit to serving) unsheltered populations or individuals currently enrolled in projects that have been reallocated during the FY26 NOFO process who are at imminent risk of homelessness (Category 2);
3. Ranked according to project score: New or renewal projects serving (or committing to serve) any of the following priority populations:
 - a. Persons experiencing Chronic Homelessness
 - b. Persons fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking
 - c. Vulnerable families
 - d. Unaccompanied Youth
 - e. Veterans
 - f. Older Adults (62+)

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Presented to CCHA by email May XX, 2026, and Approved May XX, 2026

Taylor Thibault, Co-Chair

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