

ACHC Local Selection Policy

The Atlantic County Homeless Consortium Executive Committee is responsible for selecting projects eligible to apply for funding through the annual U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care program. In addition to determining which projects are eligible to submit an application through the CoC grant process, the ACHC Executive Committee shall determine the level of funding for new and renewal projects and their ranking. The ACHC Executive Committee will complete the following activities related to the local selection process:

1. Set Funding Priorities
2. Appoint review committee
3. Set timeframes for the local process
4. Review and approve funding recommendations
5. Notify applicants of funding decisions
6. Address appeals

Funding Priorities

The ACHC Executive Committee shall establish local funding priorities on an annual basis. Funding priorities shall be established prior to release of materials for the annual local selection process. Funding priorities will be designed to support projects that meet HUD requirements, fit in with HUD priorities, and support the community in achieving goals of ending homelessness. Funding priorities may reflect populations/subpopulations, project types, program models or other areas as determined by the executive committee based on community need and input.

Review Committee

The review committee shall be appointed by the ACHC Executive Committee. Review committee members may include members of the Executive Committee or any non-conflicted community stakeholders willing to participate in the review and monitoring process. Review committee members shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee members present.

The review committee shall be responsible for evaluating all applications submitted for the CoC process. The committee shall monitor renewal projects according to the monitoring tool approved by the Executive Committee. All projects shall be scored according to the established funding priorities and Executive Committee approved scoring tool with renewal projects scored based on monitoring results and new projects scored based on project applications. The committee shall evaluate and rank all projects as well as make recommendations about funding levels based on project scores, funding priorities, HUD guidance provided through the annual CoC NOFA, and program impact on system goals of ending homelessness. The committee shall provide feedback on the monitoring tool, application, scoring tool and selection process a necessary to improve the review and scoring process.

Local Selection Process

All programs seeking new funding or renewal funding through the CoC program will be evaluated on an annual basis. Renewal programs must complete a project monitoring, which may include

an on-site monitoring or an off-site monitoring, as well as a project application. New projects must complete a project application to request funding through the CoC program. All monitorings and applications must be completed/submitted by the deadline. The review committee and/or Executive Committee may request project presentations by all applicants prior to making final funding decisions. Late applications will not be accepted. Any project failing to submit an application within the established deadline, new or renewal, will not be considered for funding.

Project Applications

The project applications are designed to collect project information necessary to assist the review committee in making funding decisions. The new and renewal project applications shall be reviewed annually at the close of the local selection process to address changes for the following funding cycle. All changes to the applications must be approved by the Executive Committee and may only be made prior to the start of local selection process, or at the conclusion of the local process. Separate application forms shall be used for new projects versus renewal projects and the content of those applications shall at a minimum collect information related to established funding priorities.

Scoring Criteria

All projects submitting applications will be evaluated against the scoring tools approved by the Executive Committee. The scoring tools for new and renewal projects shall be separate. Each project will be scored and ranked based on information from applications submitted, project presentations, project relation to established funding priorities, and project performance and monitoring results where applicable. The review committee may also consider program impact and project worthiness in the scoring and ranking process. For all projects the scoring criteria must include an evaluation of the program in relation to the established funding priorities and the agency's ability to implement the program as described and in accordance with CoC regulations. For renewal programs, the scoring criteria must also include an evaluation of monitoring results and project performance.

Notification of Local Process

The Executive Committee shall approve the funding priorities, applications and scoring criteria annually. Upon approval of the local selection materials, the Executive Committee shall determine the release date and submission deadline for the local selection process. The CoC Lead Agency shall be responsible for widely marketing the local selection process. Information regarding the local selection process for CoC funding shall be published on the CoC website, sent by email to various listservs, announced at community meetings, and published in the local paper. The notification shall include dissemination of the funding priorities, applications, scoring criteria and submission deadline as well as contact information where the local selection materials can be obtained.

Submission Process

All projects seeking funding through the HUD CoC program must submit an application by the identified deadline. Separate applications must be submitted for each project requesting

funding, both new and renewal projects. Projects that fail to submit an application by the established deadline will not be considered for funding. All project applications must be submitted in the format identified in the Announcement for the Notification of the Local Process. Incomplete applications may receive score reductions or be removed from consideration if there is inadequate information to score the project according to the approved scoring criteria.

Late applications will not be accepted.

The review committee may request presentations from applicants to gather additional information about project applications. The committee may ask questions of applicants for clarification or additional information based on the project application or information contained in the HUD NOFA that may not have been included in the initial application. The Lead Agency shall be responsible for notifying applicants when project presentations are required and scheduling the presentations for the review committee.

Project Funding and Reallocation

The review committee shall evaluate each project and score projects according to the established criteria. All programs will be ranked according to their score with the highest scoring programs ranked at the top. The review committee will determine the level of funding awarded to all projects approved for funding.

For renewal projects approved for funding, the review committee may allocate funding at a level equal to or less than the program budget in the most recently HUD approved Grant Inventory Worksheet. The review committee may reduce the amount of funds awarded to renewal projects based on poor performance, a history of unexpended grant funds, issues with agency capacity, low project utilization rates, program structure/model incongruent with established funding priorities, or other reasons related to program compliance, capacity and or ability to fit in with established funding priorities. If the review committee reduces the renewal program budget, those renewal projects must adjust the HUD CoC request to reflect the adjusted budget amount.

For renewal projects approved for funding, the review committee may allocation funding equal to, greater than or less than the request in the project application. The review committee shall determine the type of funding to support approved new projects, reallocation or bonus funding, and inform the applicant. If the budget approved for new projects is greater than or less than the amount of funding requested in the project application, the review committee must confirm with the applicant that the adjusted budget amount is adequate fund the project and acceptable to the grantee.

Upon completion of the process, the review committee must submit their recommendations for project scoring, ranking and funding to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee must review the recommendations of the review committee and may request further information or a re-evaluation of the scoring, ranking and suggested funding levels. Any re-evaluation of the scoring, ranking and funding levels must be done in accordance with the local selection policy and the established funding priorities and scoring tool. All funding recommendations must be finalized through approval from the Executive Committee.

Notification of Funding Determination

Upon approval from the Executive Committee, the CoC Lead Agency shall notify all applicants of the funding recommendations. Notifications must be submitted in writing to all applicants via mail or email. For projects selected for funding, the notification must include the project score and approved funding level. For projects denied funding the notification must include the project score (if applicable), the factors impacting project rejection and information regarding the appeals process.

Appeals Process

Agencies that have been denied funding or received reduced funding through the local selection process may submit an appeal under the following circumstances:

- Failure to comply with the local selection policy – applicants may submit an appeal if the local review committee failed to comply with the local selection procedures as outlined in the local selectin policy
- Failure to comply with scoring tool and ranking process – applicants may submit an appeal if the local review committee failed to comply with the approved scoring tool and ranking process approved by the Executive Committee
- Failure to properly notify – applicants may submit an appeal if the review committee or Lead Agency fails to properly notify applicants during each phase of the local selection and review process

Agencies submitting an appeal must submit written notification to the CoC Lead Agency within 3 business days of the receipt of the funding notification letter. The appeals letter must contain the requested project name and amount, and explanation of the error in the process. Agencies may attach relevant supporting documentation with the appeal letter as appropriate.

Upon receipt of an appeals letter, the Lead Agency must notify the review committee, Executive Committee, and appeals committee within 2 business days. The Appeals committee may request additional information from the applicant, review committee and or executive committee when evaluating the appeal. If deemed necessary, the appeals committee can request a hearing which shall include at a minimum, the CoC Lead Agency, the applicant, and one member from the review committee. Upon reviewing all information and hearing from relevant parties, the Appeals committee shall make a determination. The Appeals committee shall send written notification of their determination to the applicant, CoC Lead Agency, review committee, and Executive Committee. The written notification shall include the final determination and reasoning behind the decision. All determinations by the Appeals committee shall be final.