

Request for Proposals (RFP)
Ventura County Continuum of Care (CoC)
Issued September 10, 2021

INTRODUCTION

As the Collaborative Applicant for the Ventura County Continuum of Care, the County of Ventura's County Executive Office is accepting proposals for new projects or the expansion of current housing projects with Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Ventura County Continuum of Care (VC CoC) is soliciting proposals that address housing and service priorities established through the VC CoC Board, with a high priority for the creation of new Permanent Supportive Housing dedicated to chronically homeless persons.

VC CoC is eligible to apply to HUD for up to \$215,147 in CoC Bonus funding plus \$18,198 in reallocation funding for a total of \$233,345 in new funding.

The following list is prioritized based on current needs in the Ventura County CoC service system.

1. **NEW Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** dedicated to chronically homeless persons. New PSH projects will create new units of PSH through new projects or expanding the number of units at an existing project;
2. **Supportive Services Only for Coordinated Entry (SSO-CE)** to provide outreach to connect homeless persons and families to resources through coordinated entry including providing housing navigation to assist with obtaining eligibility documentation and connection to housing resources. The VC CoC will only accept SSO-CE applications for this project type that serve the full region and partner with the CoC and HMIS Lead agency to carry out eligible activities;
4. **NEW Permanent Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (PH-RRH)** that will increase the number of dedicated units that serve homeless individuals and families including unaccompanied youth. New PH-RRH projects can be new or expansion of existing PH-RRH projects that increase units and the number of persons/households served. Applicants must have a clear method of identifying and securing new housing units in their application and demonstrate how the new project will function as part of the larger system of PH-RRH assistance and meet an unmet need;
5. **NEW Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH)** that will increase the number of beds to serve homeless individuals and families including unaccompanied youth (24 CFR 578.3). TH-RRH projects are limited to serving program participants for up to 24 months;

The projects being solicited must be innovative and highly effective and increase housing resources for vulnerable populations or build capacity within Pathways to Home, the local coordinated entry system. Competitive projects will create additional housing inventory for this population through tenant based or project based rental assistance or leasing. Projects are encouraged to show collaboration among providers and leverage mainstream resources to support highly vulnerable chronically homeless

individuals and those who qualify under paragraphs 1, 2 or 4 of 24 CFR 578.3. Priority will be for projects that have a plan for securing dedicated housing units for the project.

PRIORITY NEW PROJECTS

Under the FY21 HUD CoC NOFO, bonus points may be received for CoCs that submit new project applications that utilize housing subsidies not funded by HUD Continuum of Care or Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding. Housing subsidies may be funded through private organizations, state or local government including HOME funding, Public Housing Agencies, faith-based organizations or federal programs other than the CoC or ESG programs. CoCs will receive full points by demonstrating that they:

- Have applied for at least one permanent supportive housing or rapid rehousing project that utilizes housing subsidies not funded through the CoC or ESG program;
- In the case of Permanent Supportive Housing projects, applicants will dedicate at least 25% of units for households who are eligible and referred through the CoC's coordinated entry system;
- In the case of Rapid Rehousing projects applicants must fund at least 25% of units with funding sources other than CoC/ESG and fill units through coordinated entry;
- Applicants must attach letters of commitments, contracts or formal agreements that demonstrate the number of subsidies or units and the funding source;
- Applicants shall demonstrate through written commitments from a health care organization the types of services and dollar value of services committed to support program participants:
 - Direct contributions from public or private health insurance provider
 - Provision of health care services by a private or public organization tailored to the needs of project participants
 - Eligibility for the project must comply with HUD fair housing requirements
 - Eligibility criteria cannot be restricted by the eligibility requirements of the health care service provider
 - Services must be voluntary and align with the Housing First Model

Funding will come from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) 2021 McKinney-Vento Continuum of Care (CoC) for the Homeless Program, as amended under the HEARTH Act and the CoC Program Interim Rule. The availability and priorities for any funding for new projects is articulated in HUD's CoC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/SPM/documents/FY21_Continuum_of_Care_Competition.pdf

More information on this program, the HEARTH Act, the CoC Interim Rule and the FY21 NOFO is available on HUD's website: <https://www.hudexchange.info/coc>

Organizations that do not currently receive Ventura County CoC program funding are encouraged to submit proposals. Proposals are also welcome from current recipients of this funding, provided the proposed project creates new housing opportunities for those experiencing homelessness.



DEADLINE

Proposals must be submitted via e-snaps and emailed to the Collaborative Applicant Office **by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 13, 2021**. Submission procedures are described starting on page 6 of this RFP. Applications will be reviewed by CoC staff and the CoC Data, Performance & Evaluation Committee for recommendations to be forwarded to the CoC Board on October 28, 2021. Proposals/Applicants who are approved to move forward to be submitted in the CoC Consolidated Application will work with CoC staff to revise applications to be most competitive in the CoC application process.

BACKGROUND

HUD publishes a CoC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for each funding year. This RFP is being released in support of the 2021 CoC NOFO released on August 18, 2021. A single, consolidated submission of all selected projects in Ventura County will be submitted to HUD by the Collaborative Applicant. The Ventura County CoC goal is to submit the application no later than November 16, 2021. Funding will be derived from Federal Fiscal Year 2021 allocations of HUD funds and is subject to funding approval by HUD.

NEW PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

The Ventura County Continuum of Care seeks one or more qualified applicants to administer new or expanded programs to serve homeless individuals consistent with the guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) including, but not limited to, using a Housing First approach. HUD has emphasized the need for increasing employment opportunities, lowering barriers and using an evidence-based approach.

Competitive Proposed Projects Will:

- Leverage healthcare and other housing subsidies as outlined on page 2 under “Priority New Projects”
- Clearly meet the CoC Program funding priorities of HUD and the Ventura County CoC;
- Have a clear plan for acquiring dedicated housing units for the project (PSH; PH-RRH; TH-RRH);
- Describe a housing first and trauma-informed service delivery approach, including low-barrier access to the housing and services that will work effectively with the Ventura County Coordinated Entry System, Pathways to Home;
- Be based upon best practices and the most effective, evidence-based, culturally competent, and individualized client models possible;
- Include plans to successfully meet HUD and local performance measures (PSH; PH-RRH; TH-RRH) including reducing the length of time participants experience homelessness;
- Be administered by organizations that have demonstrated experience providing similar services and serving the proposed population (all project types).
- Serve households with serious vulnerabilities including persons with disabilities and health vulnerabilities, persons with substance use disorders, persons with criminal histories, unaccompanied transitional aged youth and families with minor children.
- Incorporate participation of persons with recent lived experience of homelessness including hiring people with lived experience.



Selection Process: Projects responding to this RFP will be reviewed and ranked by the Ventura County CoC Data, Performance & Evaluation Committee and recommendations will be forwarded to the Ventura County CoC Board for approval on October 28, 2021. Projects will be reviewed in reference to the [2021 Ranking and Selection Policy](#), which includes organizational capacity, project design approach, past performance, design and cost effectiveness. Prior to the full HUD application process, proposals will be reviewed for basic eligibility and other criteria by the Ventura County CoC Data, Performance and Evaluation Committee. The committee is comprised of formerly homeless persons, community professionals, service providers and supported by staff from the Ventura County CoC. The Data, Performance and Evaluation Committee will review applications and make ranking recommendations to the CoC Board for final decisions.

Eligible Applicants: Applications will only be accepted from eligible nonprofit agencies, private nonprofit agencies, units of government and public housing agencies. New applicants who have not previously received CoC grant awards are encouraged to apply.

Match Funding Requirements: 25% Match funds are required. As described by HUD: “Match and Leverage are two distinct categories of program funds that are acquired from other sources not associated with this grant request. Match funds must be used for program eligible costs only and must be equal or greater than 25 percent of the total grant request for all eligible costs with the exception of leasing costs.”

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. With the exception of renewal grants, HUD will only fund **new or expanded** projects. Funds cannot be used to close a funding gap or replace lost funding in an existing housing project or service program. Project applicants must demonstrate that they are not replacing other funding sources. The population to be served must be homeless or chronically homeless as defined by HUD. The final definition for chronically homeless can be found here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4847/hearth-defining-chronically-homeless-final-rule/>
2. Projects must be able to meet timeliness standards. The applicant is expected to initiate approved projects promptly in accordance with the requirements that are specified in the 2021 NOFO. Grant terms and associated grant operations may not extend beyond the availability of funds. Applicants must plan accordingly and only submit applications that can achieve project goals and outcomes within the specified grant term.
3. Applicants must meet HUD recipient and/or sub-recipient eligibility requirements.
4. Participation in the [Homeless Management Information System \(HMIS\)](#) is required of all HUD grant recipients.
5. Participation in the Coordinated Entry System, [Pathways to Home](#) in Ventura County is required including filling units with referrals from Pathways to Home and prioritizing resources for the most vulnerable persons and households.



6. Projects must provide documentation of 25% match of eligible funds or in-kind services. An MOU is required with submission if applicant is fulfilling match with in-kind services.
7. Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing and Joint Transitional Housing – Rapid Re-Housing projects must provide on-site supportive services or have an agreement in place for a partner agency to do so.

PROJECT TYPES

NEW Permanent Supportive Housing

In order to increase the number of beds specifically for the chronically homeless population and work towards the goal of ending chronic homelessness in Ventura County, CoC's will be able to apply for new or expanded projects for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) that proposes to exclusively serve the chronically homeless adult population.

Eligible activities include: Leasing, Rental Assistance, Supportive Services, Operations and HMIS. All components require a 25% match except for leasing. Leasing also requires that rent not exceed Fair Market Rent. <http://www.venturacoc.org/for-providers/coc-documents>

Information on eligible activities and expenses can be found in the Interim Rule (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>)

and at this link: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/program-components-and-eligible-costs/>

Supportive Services Only for Coordinated Entry (SSO-CE)

Additional support is needed for the Ventura County CoC's coordinated entry system to provide housing navigation and assist in obtaining documentation on households experiencing chronic homelessness. There must be a strategy for advertising to reach homeless persons with the highest barriers and be accessible for persons with disabilities.

Eligible activities include: Street Outreach and Housing Navigation case management services that support facilitating connection to services and housing through coordinated entry.

All components require a 25% match except for leasing. Leasing also requires that rent not exceed Fair Market Rent. <http://www.venturacoc.org/for-providers/coc-documents>

Information on eligible activities and expenses can be found in the Interim Rule <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>

and at this link: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/program-components-and-eligible-costs/>



NEW Permanent Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (PH-RRH)

In order to increase the supply of permanent housing options, CoC's will be able to submit applications for new or expanded Permanent Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (PH-RRH) programs. Competitive proposals will have a clear plan for assisting homeless individuals and families secure rental housing in Ventura County's competitive market. Expanded programs must propose to increase the number of persons/families served by their currently funded program. Competitive applications will propose to serve underserved and vulnerable populations including unaccompanied youth.

Eligible activities include: Rental Assistance, Supportive Services, Operations and HMIS. All components require a 25% match. <http://www.venturacoc.org/for-providers/coc-documents>

Information on eligible activities and expenses can be found in the Interim Rule (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>)

and at this link:<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/program-components-and-eligible-costs/>

NEW Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH)

In order to increase the supply of housing options, CoC's will be able to submit applications for new Transitional Housing-Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH) programs. Existing Transitional Housing projects do not qualify for this funding. Competitive proposals will have a clear plan for assisting homeless individuals and families with the highest needs, using an evidence-based approach designed to provide stable housing and services that move participants towards self-sufficiency within a 24-month period. Competitive applications will propose to serve underserved and vulnerable populations including unaccompanied youth.

Eligible activities include: Leasing of a Structure or Unit, Operating Costs for Transitional Housing, Rental Assistance, Supportive Services, Project Administrative Costs and HMIS. All components require a 25% match. <http://www.venturacoc.org/for-providers/coc-documents>

Information on eligible activities and expenses can be found in the Interim Rule (<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>)

and at this link:<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/program-components-and-eligible-costs/>

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

To be considered as meeting project quality threshold, new or expanded project applications must meet the following criteria:

1. Whether the type, scale, and location of the housing fit the needs of the program participants;
2. Whether the type and scale of the supportive services fit the needs of the program participants—this includes all supportive services, regardless of funding source;
3. Whether the specific plan for ensuring program participants will be individually assisted to obtain the benefits of the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible to apply meets the needs of the program participants;
4. Whether program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs;
5. Whether at least 75 percent of the proposed program participants come from the street or other locations not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, safe havens, or fleeing domestic violence.

System Performance Threshold Data Requirements:

1. Housing Stability: 85% of CoC program participants remain in permanent supportive housing or exit to another permanent destination;
2. Jobs and Income Growth: At least 55% of CoC program adult participants gain or increase their income from employment and other sources;
3. Mainstream Benefits: 56% of CoC program participants obtain or retain non-cash mainstream benefits.

EVALUATION and PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The CoC Data, Performance and Evaluation committee will review submissions and make final determinations. Committee members will be unbiased and cannot have a personal or financial interest in final recommendations. The VC CoC Ranking and Selection Policy and scoring tool is posted at <http://www.venturacoc.org/the-alliance/funding>

The successful project(s) will be recommended for selection based on the following criteria:

1. Meets minimum requirements of HUD
2. Experience and Capacity of the Applicant
3. Project/Program Features
4. Vulnerabilities of target population
5. Past or current system performance and plans to achieve satisfactory performance
6. Applicant Readiness to Submit Full Application
7. Ventura County Continuum of Care Priorities

Projects responding to this RFP will be reviewed and selected by the Continuum of Care Board on **October 28, 2021**. Proposals will be reviewed in reference to organizational capacity, project approach, design and cost effectiveness.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS in e-SNAPS

1. SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance;
2. SF-424 Supplement, Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Application required for nonprofit applicants only where completion and submission of this survey is voluntary;
3. Form HUD-2880, Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report;
4. SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable);
5. Form HUD-50070, Certification for Drug-Free Workplace;
6. Applicant Code of Conduct that complies with 2 CFR part 200.
7. Match commitments.
8. Formal letters of Commitment for leveraging non-CoC/ESG funded housing units/subsidies. Commitment must include details of number of units/subsidies and funding sources.
9. Formal letters of Commitment for leveraging healthcare resources to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Formal agreement must include the project name, value of commitment and specific dates the healthcare resources will be provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The regulations for the Continuum of Care program may be found at:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/coc/coc-program-law-regulations-and-notices/>

A Workshop for new and renewal applicants will be held on September 16th from 1:00pm to 2:30pm on Zoom. The meeting link will be posted on the VC CoC website calendar at <https://www.venturacoc.org/>.

All parties intending to apply for funding are strongly encouraged to review the program regulations, including those organizations that are currently or were previously funded. Proposals which do not conform to the regulations will not be considered for funding. Please contact Tara Carruth at (805) 654-3838 or tara.carruth@ventura.org with questions about HUD programs.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Please use e-snaps to prepare and submit a project proposal being certain to answer all questions and referencing the 2021 Ventura County CoC Rank and Review Policy including Attachment C for scoring of new projects.

E-snaps can be accessed at: <https://esnaps.hud.gov>

In addition, please email one PDF copy of the complete e-snaps application with **a cover letter signed by the organization's authorized representative** to tara.carruth@ventura.org.

Additional supportive documentation may be requested by staff of new applicants.



AWARD OF FUNDS

The project(s) selected by the Continuum of Care Board will be notified no later than November 1, 2021. Please be aware that applications need to be finalized in eSNAPS and submitted to the CoC Collaborative Applicant by 5pm on October 13, 2021. If the funding is awarded by HUD, grant funds are estimated to be made available by HUD by **the first half of calendar year 2022**. The timing of awards and grant-making by HUD is outside of the control of the County of Ventura or the VC CoC. Therefore, agencies seeking and receiving new funding must be aware of all operating year start and end dates and must make arrangements to cover any period of which a HUD funding award is pending, delayed, or not awarded.

APPLICANT WORKSHOP

The CoC will hold an Applicant Workshop via Zoom for New and Renewal Applicants on September 16th from 1-3pm to walk applicants through e-snaps and provide technical support. Announcements of meetings and additional information regarding this NOFO will be posted on www.venturacoc.org