



**Meeting Agenda
Continuum of Care (CoC) Board
October 28, 2021
3:30pm-5pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 814 4026 6829

Passcode: 553591

IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(e)(1)(A) AND IN RESPONSE TO THE DECLARED STATE AND LOCAL EMERGENCIES DUE TO THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER RECOMMENDATION REGARDING SOCIAL DISTANCING, THE VENTURA COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE IS HOLDING ALL BOARD, ALLIANCE AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS ELECTRONICALLY WHICH ARE ACCESSIBLE ONLINE VIA ZOOM WITH LINKS POSTED ON www.venturacoc.org TO FIND OUT HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT, SEE INFORMATION CONTAINED BELOW ON THIS AGENDA.

1. Call to Order
2. Board Comments
3. CoC Staff Comments
4. Public Comments: Public Comment is an opportunity for the public to participate in public meetings by addressing the Ventura County Continuum of Care Board in connection with one or more agenda or non-agenda items. This meeting is subject to the Public comments may be submitted by using one of the following options.

Email in advance of the meeting:

If you wish to make public comment on an agenda item via email, please submit your comment via email by 4:30pm on the day prior to the Board meeting. Send emails to: venturacoc@ventura.org
Please indicate the agenda item you would like to speak on if relevant and whether you would like your message read by staff or you will be participating and would like to provide your comments during the live meeting.

During the meeting: Participants may use the chat or raise hand function in zoom to indicate they would like to make a comment. Staff will call on participants during the public comment section of the meeting or during specific item following staff presentation of the item.

Continuum of Care Governance Board Business

5. Approval of Board Minutes from September 8, 2021
6. Approval of Cancellation of November 10, 2021 Continuum of Care Board Meeting.
7. Approval of Continuum of Care (CoC) funding recommendations from the CoC Data, Performance & Evaluation Committee including recommendations for new projects including CoC Bonus and Domestic Violence Bonus funding and the final rankings of new and renewal projects to be included in the FY21 CoC Consolidated Application. Direct staff to notify all applicants of final rankings and if projects were accepted or rejected for the final submissions.
8. Authorize CoC Staff to Release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2021 California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding and Approve Local Priorities for Funding.
9. Receive an Update from the Ventura County Human Services Agency Coordinated Entry Lead Agency on Updating the Local Vulnerability Assessment Tool Utilized for Prioritization of Housing Resources.



**Meeting Minutes
Continuum of Care (CoC) Board
September 8, 2021
3:30pm – 5 pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87105223842?pwd=LzRTUzhCSkd6TWEzai84cnJSeVNHZz09>

Meeting ID: **871 0522 3842**

Passcode: **590446**

1. **Call to Order:** Dawn Dyer, CoC Board Chair, called the meeting to order at **3:33 pm**

Board Members: Dawn Dyer, Michael Powers, Carmen Ramirez, Susan Englund, Manuel Minjares, Emilio Ramirez, Michael Nigh, Carolyn Briggs

Absent: *Kevin Clerici*

Staff: Felipe Flores, Jennifer Harkey, Tara Carruth, Christy Madden

HMIS Staff: Marcy Snider, Alicia Morales-McKinney

Public Attendees: Susan White Wood, Jaydon Gaines, Jessica Petrillo, Dan Parziale, Susan Kulwicz, Elizabeth Stone, Sabriana Marrufo, Cathi Nye, Brenda Blakely, Ella Moore, Richard Goldner, (805) 498-1883, Hilary Carson

2. **Board Comments:** Michael Powers, CoC Board member stated that Project RoomKey (PRK) continues to perform excellent work and that the Eviction Moratorium is coming to an end. He also shared that the County is working on providing/extending additional relief. Manuel Minjares, CoC Board Member expressed thanks to Assembly Member Steve Bennet for assisting in providing \$1.5M to complete the People's Place affordable housing development in Santa Paula CA.
3. **CoC Staff Comments:** Tara Carruth, CoC Staff, informed that HHAP 2 Agreements are being currently being prepared and will be issued to partners soon. She further informed that CoC Staff was working with the three Area Housing Authorities on Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) and other resources.
4. **Public Comments:** No in-person or email comments submitted.

Continuum of Care Governance Board Business

5. **Approval of Board Minutes from July 14, 2021.**

CoC Board member Carmen Ramirez moved to approve, Manuel Minjares was second and Carolyn Briggs CoC Board member, abstained due her past Board meeting absence. The balance of the Board approved.

CoC Board – Meeting Minutes

6. Receive a Presentation on Project Roomkey and the County of Ventura's Santa Clara River Encampment Response Effort.

Tara presented a comprehensive summary of Project RoomKey (PRK) and the County's River Encampment Response Effort. After concluding her presentation(s), Tara also touched upon firefighting efforts at dry river bottoms and shared that the Ventura County Fire Department is awaiting a grant to work at and help reduce fire-prone areas. Supervisor Ramirez was grateful to Tara and her hard work regarding the Encampment areas and appreciated the effort. Michael Powers furthered Supervisor Ramirez' thoughts and noted that incremental improvement has been made and is encouraged to continue with the efforts. Manuel Minjares acknowledged the effort as well and shared that he was also working locally (District 3) to address the ongoing issues. He also shared that locally, they had two recent wildfire scares with one of those being near a mobile home park. Dawn also expressed thanks to all partners for the good work and for managing the limited resources well and stressed that additional housing is needed.

7. Authorization for Staff to Execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) With Ventura County Behavioral Health for the Full-Service Partnership Data Exchange Project.

Tara began this section by informing the Board that in May 2020, the County Board of Supervisors approved the initiative where Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) would build a data exchange project under the Mental Health Services Act. She further explained that it is being built for the Full-Service Client, which can sometimes have intensive needs. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is only the first step and it indicates the start to the project. The data exchange is meant to be bidirectional and would allow VCBH to access data on specific episodes of client care such as episodes of homelessness, length of time homeless, incarcerations or hospitalizations. The main purpose is to serve clients better and to better understand their needs. Hillary Carson, VCBH Staff, informed that the MOU would allow VCBH to start work on the data exchange. She also stated that VCBH is not sure if the project will work and that working with automated reports from Human Management Information System (HMIS) has its challenges. With this MOU, VCBH can begin figuring out the project mechanics and hopefully improve and enhance client care and have better reports on outcomes.

Michael Nigh, CoC Board member moved to approve, Carolyn Briggs was second. Prior to the vote, Elizabeth Stone, of Ventura Downtown Partners (member of the public), expressed concern regarding perception of clients and their diagnosis/clinical information. She further explained that her concern revolved around clients being judged or discriminated against (for housing) based on their diagnosis. Tara shared that there is not specific diagnosis information in HMIS. Hillary affirmed that information in the first phase is unidirectional but that overall, the grant will be bidirectional. But the overall perception would be unidirectional. The exception to this would be if an Advanced Care Plan where clients would allow for certain data to be exchanged, for example, if there were a hospital or medication preference.

After this discussion, Dawn asked about section 3B in the MOU with regards to responsibilities and asked who will take the lead for bridge with VCBH and if a date goal needed to be set. Tara replied that CoC Staff and HMIS as a lead agency would support in partnership with VCBH.

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Hilary reaffirmed Tara's comments and added that the project has been slow to start due to the pandemic. She further shared that that funds expire in June 2023 but the reality is that a year extension, to 2024, would be requested. Dawn also asked to clarify language in section 5 and if the wording should read dispute resolution rather than dispute resolute. Tara confirmed this was a type-o and would have that corrected.

With the motion and the second on the table, a vote was taken. Michael Powers abstained; with the balance of the Board was in favor.

8. Approval of Ventura County Continuum of Care Final 2021 Rank and Review Policy, Preliminary Ranking of Continuum of Care Renewal Project Applicants and Partial Reallocation of Lutheran Social Services Rapid Rehousing Grant and FY21 CoC Competition Schedule.

Staff shared that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) had been released on August 18, 2021 and formalized by the CoC. Staff indicated that the funding calendar had been updated to align with key dates with this NOFO. For this reason, the CoC Board was asked to adjust its October meeting schedule. The final Rank & Review (R&R) policy was updated to include HUD's priorities, criteria for scoring and revised the funding schedule. Staff shared that there is \$215,147.00 in funding available for CoC Bonus projects and \$645,440.00 available for Domestic Violence (DV) Bonus projects. The Data Performance and Evaluation Committee (serving as the Rank & Review committee) met to review renewal applications and the scoring had been completed. Staff noted that Lutheran Social Services' (LSS) Rapid Rehousing (RRH) project had the lowest score but that this didn't necessarily mean they would automatically be recommended for reallocation. Since LSS returned funds and was not able to serve the goal of 25 households (HH), which both items are HUD thresholds, the R&R Committee recommended reallocating \$18,198.00 of their funds and reducing the number of HH served. HUD priorities in the FY21 competition remain the same and reinforce Housing First practices. CA Housing First rules will be followed, regardless of funding source. In closing, Staff informed that HUD will be focusing and awarding points in new areas such as partnering with Housing Authorities, filling units through Coordinated Entry, establishing homeless preferences, incentivizing CoC's that create housing projects, leveraging healthcare resources and other housing funding. Final R&R results with new and renewal projects will be presented in October 2021. Dawn asked how System Performance varied from Project Performance and staff explained that System Performance included measures set by HUD while Project Performance was tied to utilization. Carolyn Briggs moved to approve; Supervisor Carmen Ramirez was second. All in favor.

9. Authorization for Continuum of Care (CoC) Staff to Release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for New Funding Including Bonus and Reallocation Funds (\$233,345) and Domestic Violence Bonus Funds (\$645,440) to be Considered for Inclusion in the FY21 CoC Funding Competition and Overview of Scoring for CoC Consolidated Application.

Staff informed that HUD has two different funding opportunities available.

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These are for new projects under the CoC and include new Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Rehousing (RRH) and Supportive Services (SS) for Coordinated Entry. New DV projects include RRH, Transitional Housing (TH) + RRH (newer project type for HUD), and SS for Coordinated Entry. HUD has made 10 bonus points available for CoC that submit new application for new projects that leverage housing subsidies and healthcare resources to provide supportive services to program participants. Staff shared that HUD may award partial points if their full threshold is not met and at least one project has to be submitted with a letter of commitment from the participating partner. She stressed that it was important to gain as many points as possible to maintain the CoC competitive in obtaining new funding. Staff further explained there are different opportunities where current partners and service providers can help gain points by addressing and/or leveraging with existing projects.

Carmen indicated that this will be a challenge since the current housing shortage is a factor in achieving goals, especially since conditions in coastal California is much different than other parts of the country. Dawn noted that many of the discussed areas are out of the CoC's control and are dependent on the partners. She also asked if a cover letter can be sent to partners asking for specific projects or coverage or if the RFP can have a specific focus. Tara replied that the CoC is already working with partners and encouraging them to work in the noted areas. Emilio noted that the City of Oxnard Housing Authority was already working on several of the NOFO items and asked if that could qualify for obtaining all 10 bonus points. Tara replied that in past years, HUD has asked for documentation on all HA's Admin Plan to describe preferences. However, this year only two HA's will be reported on. In order to have the best opportunity to obtain points, the CoC may ask all from all five. Emilio commented that it would appear that between the Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura (HACV), the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (HACSB), and the City of Oxnard Housing Authority, the 10 bonus points may be achieved. Michael Nigh, CoC Board member, partially agreed noting that the only limitation would be achieving 20% of new admissions. Tara expressed that this has usually been a challenge and appreciated the efforts of the three HA's. Dawn asked if partial points can be awarded and staff confirmed. Michael Nigh also asked what the chances were of submitting for this RFP, having responses and achieving success. He also acknowledged the efforts of CoC staff and its limited capacity and wondered if it was worth the time to pursue the opportunity. Staff replied that although the amount may seem limited, there are several good opportunities coming up that could be good companion for this grant money. Dawn noted that the DV component seemed like a good opportunity and staff noted that past lower scores were because of data related issues. However, RFP's can be tailored to meet opportunity. Elizabeth Stone asked if the RFP was for PSH only or truly for all 3 categories mentioned. She indicated that several of the categories within CoC Application Scoring Chart (September Board packet, pgs. 44-48) can serve as base for seeking additional points for next year. Staff replied that under HUD CoC program only PH, PSH, RRH, SS for Coordinated Entry and HMIS is eligible under this funding source but later state funding can provide flexible and creative opportunities.

Carolyn Briggs moved to approve noting that she also shared Michael Nigh's thoughts regarding CoC's effort to pursue this funding; Michael Powers was second. All in favor.

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10. Authorization for Continuum of Care and County of Ventura to Jointly Apply for the State of California's Third Round of Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP-3) Funding for a Combined Allocation of \$4,829,424.30.

Staff opened this discussion by explaining that the State will be issuing an Intent to Apply with a 30-day time limit to reply. She explained that CoC Board and the County of Ventura Board of Supervisors will be asked if allocations can be combined. Otherwise, two applications would have to be submitted. This represents double the work with submittals, reporting and all other grant components. If a joint application is submitted, 25% of the allocation is awarded up front with the balance given when the full application and all its components is submitted on June 30, 2022. Single applications only receive 20% up front. Same eligible uses as with previous rounds apply however, the State will be looking for measurable and meaningful outcomes and results. Staff expressed this would be a good opportunity to obtain funds by leveraging current HomeKey efforts and/or encampment responses as examples. In addition, the State has indicated there will be incentives for goals that are met. This represents bonus funding for items that are working well in the community. There will be a fourth round of HHAP funds in FY22.

Michael Nigh asked if only a Letter of Intent (LOI) was to be submitted initially and staff confirmed. Once specifics are known, then full details and application would be discussed. Michael Nigh moved to approve; Michael Powers was second. All in favor.

In conclusion, staff asked Cathi Nye if she had thoughts she wanted to share. Cathi asked if the CoC had any thoughts on CAUSE's movements on rent stabilization in Oxnard and Ventura because of her recent struggles in trying to help a couple of persons in trying to find a place to live. Staff mentioned that perhaps CAUSE can share some information at a future meeting.

Emilio Ramirez indicated that the Rent Control Report that CAUSE presented to Oxnard City Council is going to committee on September 14, 2021 and is happy to share with the CoC.

Supervisor Ramirez closed by sharing that many single-family homes are being purchased by investment companies only to turn these around and make available for rent only. This poses housing stability problem, including limiting available stock. She also offered sharing additional information on this with the CoC.

Staff concluded that the next meeting will be on Thursday, October 28, 2021, to accommodate HUD NOFO application review.

Dawn adjourned the meeting at **5:05 pm**.

October 28, 2021

CoC Governance Board

SUBJECT: Approval of Continuum of Care (CoC) funding recommendations from the CoC Data, Performance & Evaluation Committee including recommendations for new projects including CoC Bonus and Domestic Violence Bonus funding and the final rankings of new and renewal projects to be included in the FY21 CoC Consolidated Application. Direct staff to notify all applicants of final rankings and if projects were accepted or rejected for the final submissions.

BACKGROUND: CoC Data, Performance & Evaluation Committee met on October 20, 2021 to review the scoring and ranking of new and renewal CoC applications for the FY21 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). All project applications were reviewed and scored with the 2021 Ventura County CoC Ranking and Selection Policy tool and ranked by highest score and local priorities in accordance with HUD's emphasis on the importance of performance-based decisions in the prioritization and reallocation process. The scoring of new project applications factored in scores associated with the following categories:

- 1) Compliance and Experience with Grants and Financial Management including HUD threshold criteria for new & renewal projects (10 points);
- 2) Program Design and Best Practices including Housing First (20 points);
- 3) Timeliness to achieve project goals by grant deadlines (10 points)
- 4) Serving Vulnerable Populations and tailoring services to target population (10 points)
- 5) Cost Effectiveness (10 points);
- 6) Alignment with local System Performance Goals, CoC priorities and plans to achieve objectives (20 points)

The committee reviewed and discussed the priorities that the CoC Board approved on September 8, 2021 before making a final recommendation and discussed strategies to utilize all CoC funding for maximum community benefit.

Renewal/Reallocation

All renewal projects scored above 75 points which is the adopted threshold below which a project would be considered for reallocation. All renewal projects continue to meet community needs and priorities. Per the locally adopted policy, projects are ranked in order of their scores from highest to lowest. The HMIS and Coordinated Entry projects are ranked in Tier 1 to fulfill the HUD mandates of those systemwide services. A partial reallocation of the Lutheran Social Services Rapid Rehousing project of \$18,198 was approved by the CoC Board on September 8, 2021 for two years of under spending and

ability to secure rental units for the 25 households this grant aims to house each year. This grant reduction will result in this grant serving 23 households per year.

DV Bonus Funding

The FY21 NOFO included a third year of Domestic Violence (DV) bonus to assist survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking through Rapid Re-Housing, Supportive Services for Coordinated Entry, or a Joint Transitional Housing / Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH) project. The Ventura County CoC is eligible to apply for up to \$645,440 in DV Bonus funding. Two applications were received through the RFP process, A Rapid Re-Housing project proposal (\$212,180) was received from Interface Children and Family Services and an application was received for Transitional Housing + Rapid Rehousing (\$645,410) from The Coalition for Family Harmony in partnership with the Family Justice Center. The committee discussed each applicant's prior experience, proposed outcomes, eligible expenses and budget in order to make an informed decision in recommending that the Coalition for Family Harmony project be included in the Consolidated Application. This project proposal includes leveraging an existing transitional housing program and providing rental assistance funds to support households transitioning to safe permanent housing locations as well as dedicated staff to provide housing support services utilizing trauma-informed care approach and best practices for working with survivors who are experiencing homelessness.

CoC Bonus Funding

The Ventura County CoC is eligible to compete for bonus funding which is dependent on HUD's final allocation for all Continuums of Care. The total amount of new funds available under the CoC Bonus plus reallocation is \$233,345. Three applications were received through the RFP for CoC bonus funding or reallocation. Following discussion and assessment of the benefits of each proposal, the Committee is recommending that Many Mansions' Mountain View project for 8 new units of permanent supportive housing in Fillmore and a Ventura County Human Services Agency application for Supportive Services for Coordinated Entry be included in this year's consolidated application. A third application was received by a new partner, Mesa to provide Transitional Housing for Transitional Aged Youth but their application was not complete and was unable to be scored for this round of funding. The Many Mansions application will support the CoC in securing up to 10 bonus points in the consolidated application by utilizing Project-Based Vouchers from the Area Housing Authority of Ventura County and partnering with the County's Healthcare Agency's Whole Person Care program in providing enhanced healthcare related supportive services. This application is for a total of \$44,592 in CoC funds to support onsite housing support services.

Final Ranking

The Committee discussed the scoring and ranking of projects and location of ranking in Tier 1 and Tier 2. Tier 1 is equal to the VC CoC's Annual Renewal Demand (ARD) of \$2,383,290 and Tier 2 is equal to the total amount of new bonus funds or \$860,587.

Historically, the VC CoC has ranked new projects in Tier 2. This strategy is conservative in preserving renewal funding but not reliably effective in obtaining new bonus funding. The VC CoC has not lost renewal funding ranked in Tier 1 or 2 in over 5 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Data Committee formulated the following recommendations for CoC Board consideration in preparing for the FY21 CoC NOFO.

Annual Renewal Demand		VC CoC New and Renewal Projects				
\$2,383,290		Rank	Project/Agency	Project Type	Funding	Score
		1	Human Services Agency	HMIS	\$252,631.00	100
		2	Human Services Agency	HMIS/CES	\$150,000.00	100
Tier 1	\$2,383,290	3	Many Mansions-PSH Simi	PSH	\$132,484.00	100
Tier 2	\$860,587	4	Turning Point Foundation Wooley I	PSH	\$41,606.00	100
		5	Many Mansions Mountainview	PSH	\$44,592.00	100
	New/Bonus	6	Many Mansions-PSH Oxnard/TO	PSH	\$173,175.00	100
	DV Bonus	7	TPF Stephensons PSH	PSH	\$32,453.00	98
		8	VCBH PSH	PSH	\$379,205.00	96
		9	HSChoices	PSH	\$396,723.00	95
		10	HSARRH	RRH	\$81,829.00	95
		11	TPF Wooley 2	PSH	\$35,837.00	93
		12	TPF RRH	RRH	\$149,200.00	90
		13	Salvation Army	RRH	\$47,514.00	90
		14	Our Place Safe Haven	Safe Haven	\$168,977.00	88
		15	Salvation Army PSH	PSH	\$140,861.00	87
		16	LSS	RRH	\$156,203.00	76
				Tier 1 Total	2,383,290.00	
		TIER 2				
		16	LSS	RRH	\$26,394	
			Coalition for Family Harmony	TH-RRH (DV)	\$645,440.00	92
			HSA_SSOCE	SSO-CE	\$118,484.00	92
			Mesa TAY TH-RRH	TH-RRH (TAY)	\$40,000.00	85
				Tier 2 Total	\$830,318.00	



October 28, 2021

CoC Governance Board

SUBJECT: Authorize CoC Staff to Release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2021 California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding and Approve Local Priorities for Funding.

BACKGROUND: The State HCD announced the estimated 2021 Continuum of Care (CoC) ESG allocations on August 17, 2021 with a requirement to submit a newly adopted Resolution by October 19, 2021. The preliminary estimated CoC allocation is \$178,878. The Ventura County CoC is in compliance with all requirements to apply, including HUD-compliant conflict of interest policies, adopted written standards and an operational Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). As the Administrative Entity, the County of Ventura Board of Supervisors has authorized the Resolution on October 12, 2021. CoC staff have completed the HCD ESG application form and submitted the certified Resolution through the State's online portal. HCD will announce provider awards in December 2021.

DISCUSSION: CoC staff is seeking CoC Board approval to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) with specific priorities to address program gaps within the homeless services system. During the pandemic (program years 2020-21), the CoC has received various State funding resources for emergency shelters, rental assistance, street outreach and landlord engagement services. CoC staff have analyzed the current resources and determined which gaps still need to be filled. As a reminder, ESG funds are limited to emergency shelters, Rapid Re-Housing and street outreach activities.

The CoC Data, Evaluation and Performance Committee discussed the potential funding priorities during a remote meeting held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. The committee unanimously agreed that all ESG project proposals should include leveraged funding, use best practices and incentivize programs that employ persons with lived experience to provide peer support. The following recommended funding priorities have been proposed by the committee:

- 1) Rapid Re-Housing for single adults and transitional age youth;
- 2) Non-Congregate Sheltering with adequate infrastructure that includes case management & housing navigation for unsheltered persons;
- 3) Street Outreach to unsheltered persons in currently underserved areas, dedicated to connecting individuals to services through the Coordinated Entry System and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS);
- 4) Operating Subsidies for the expansion of Emergency Shelter beds which add privacy, health and safety.

Proposed Local Timeline for 2021 ESG funding:

CoC Releases Requests for Proposals (RFP)	October 29, 2021
Applications due to CoC staff	November 19, 2021
CoC Data Committee review of applications	December 1, 2021
CoC Board approval	December 8, 2021
CoC Staff finalizes application with budget	December 10, 2021

The RFP will only request information necessary to evaluate proposals relative to priorities, community need, timeliness for expenditure of funds and organizational experience. The ESG project proposals will be reviewed by CoC staff and the CoC Data Committee, with final review and approval by the CoC Board. Applicants with significant amounts of unspent funding will not be prioritized for this round of funding.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize CoC staff to release a Request for Proposals based on the preliminary 2021 ESG funding allocation and approve the funding priorities, in compliance with HCD guidelines.

October 28, 2021

CoC Governance Board

SUBJECT: Receive an Update from the Ventura County Human Services Agency Coordinated Entry Lead Agency on Updating the Local Vulnerability Assessment Tool Utilized for Prioritization of Housing Resources.

BACKGROUND: With the development and implementation of Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) program, many communities complied with the requirement to adopt a vulnerability prioritization tool by utilizing the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool or VI-SPDAT. This tool developed by OrgCode, a Canada-based consulting firm was selected by the Ventura County CoC and over 75% of other CoCs because of its availability within many Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) as an assessment tool. In late 2020, OrgCode announced the phasing out of use of this tool related to concerns that the tool 1) does not help assess for vulnerabilities related to domestic violence and safety, 2) poses challenges with assessment questions and self-reported data, 3) leaves room to perpetuate and maintain racial disparities in the homeless service system and 4) leaves room for bias with both the interviewer/provider and the client.

DISCUSSION: In April 2021, the Human Services Agency as the HMIS/CES Lead Agency, CoC Staff and CoC Service Providers embarked on a mission to address the announcement and retirement of the VI-SPDAT. The CES coordinator has convened stakeholder meetings of service providers in an effort to develop a locally developed vulnerability assessment tool to assist with prioritization of housing resources filled through the CES. The goal of this effort is to develop and adopt a locally developed community, equity driven and evidence-based tool to assist our system and providers to make prioritization decisions throughout the system. The attachment in Exhibit A summarizes the scope of this work and progress that has been made to date including soliciting feedback from people with current lived experience of homelessness. The final tool will be presented to the CoC Board before formal adoption for use within the VC CoC service system.



VENTURA COUNTY
**CONTINUUM OF
CARE ALLIANCE**

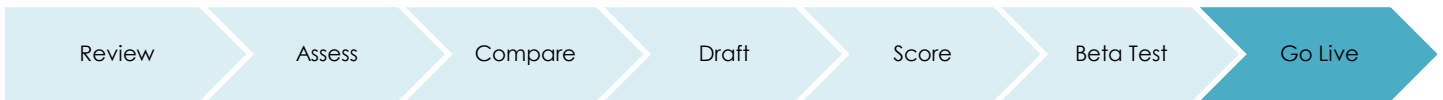
ENDING HOMELESSNESS
IN VENTURA COUNTY

Coordinated Entry System- Pathways to Home



Vulnerability Tool Reassessment Workgroup Update

In April 2021, the HMIS/CES team and CoC service providers embarked on a mission to address the recent announcement and retirement of the vulnerability tool (VI-SPDAT). The VI-SPDAT helped systems of care across the country further evolve from managing homelessness with a "housing readiness" service orientation to a movement to prevent and end homelessness. Time for innovation and evolution is primed and our CoC providers are hoping for an even more community, equity and evidence-driven tool to help us address inequities within Coordinated Entry. The VI-SPDAT is currently used in our community to prioritize individuals and families with securing housing based on their vulnerability and service level needs. With the retirement announcement, your homeless service community has begun next steps in addressing the current vulnerability assessment tool and began making service level agreements in creating a home-grown Ventura County Vulnerability tool to help with prioritization. Please see the timeline below for updates on the workgroups progress.



Completed by	Task
✓ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Service providers across the VCCoC completed a survey requesting feedback related to the VI-SPDAT
✓ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Providers reviewed various assessment tools across the country gaining a greater understanding of what other communities are using. Providers completed a score card for all assessment tools providing in depth feedback and scoring of each vulnerability tool, examples of models reviewed included Massachusetts CES Priority Model, Houston Model, Austin, TX Model, Arizona Measurements Tool Model, etc.
✓ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Diversity Equity and Inclusionary discussions occurred during various workgroup meetings to prepare providers for question development.
✓ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Priority Tool Development: providers worked together to address 5-10 high hitting domains they would like addressed in the vulnerability tool. E.g. Physical health, mental health, risk, socialization, etc. Providers noted their FIVE NON- Negotiable questions they wanted to see in a community developed tool
✓ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Providers branched off into small workgroups to begin question development for each subpopulation (singles, families and transitional aged youth). The small work group committees included outside representatives such as the youth collaborative.

✓	CES Coordinator	<p>CES invited Shelter Operators to deploy the <u>Vulnerabilities Amongst Those with Lived Experiences of Homelessness Survey</u> in each shelter/ transitional. The goal of the survey was to seek out individuals and families/households who have experienced homelessness; to understand how any specific vulnerabilities may have impacted them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy House: Oxnard Emergency Shelter, The Arch Ventura Emergency Shelter, and The Non-Congregate Shelter • Salvation Army: Men's/ Women's Emergency Shelter and Grant Per Diem Veterans Shelter • Spirit of Santa Paula Emergency Shelter • Turning Point: Safe Haven Shelter, River Haven and Veterans Transitional Housing • Humans Services Agency RAIN Transitional Housing • Human Services Agency Homeless Services: Family Emergency Shelter • Kingdom Center: Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing
✓	CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Draft Tool development submitted (150 questions- non deduplicated)
✓	CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Deduplication process: providers reviewed the draft tool and deduplicated. Draft consists of 48 questions
✓	CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	Providers are working on scoring and ranking each question set- IN PROGRESS
☐	CES Coordinator	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion lens re-review. CES Coordinator will submit the draft version to Human Services Agency DEI Advocates for final feedback and review



Completed by	Updated Timeline
☐ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	November 1- November 30, 2021: Beta Testing (Table Top Testing) -Compare currently prioritized clients, looking at their current VI score and completing a new Vulnerability tool with them.
☐ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	December 1-15, 2021: Make revisions as needed to accommodate Beta Testing
☐ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	January 1-31, 2021: Convert current VI scores to new Vulnerability tool for ALL active prioritized clients
☐ CES Coordinator/ VCCoC Providers	February 15, 2021: Go Live Date with new Vulnerability tool

For any questions, please feel free to contact CES Coordinator at: alicia.morales-mckinney@ventura.org