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SNAPS In Focus: NOFAs Past and Present

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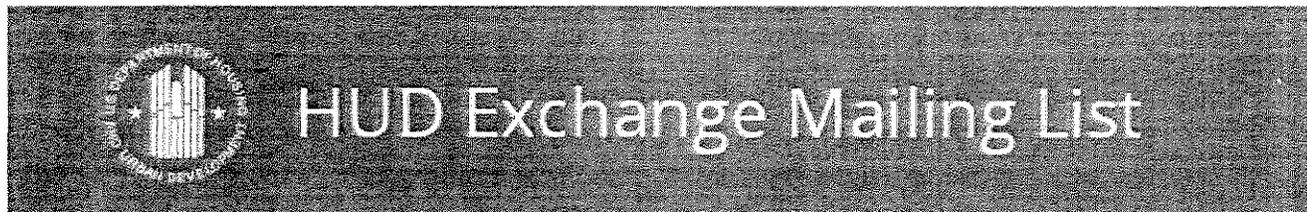
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Tue, Jul 14, 2015 at 8:49 AM

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SNAPS In Focus: NOFAs Past and Present

Here at SNAPS, we are busy preparing to release the FY 2015 Continuum of Care (CoC) program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the next several weeks. In the meantime, I wanted to provide some feedback about last year's competition and give you a sense of our priorities moving forward.

FY 2014 Funding Process

In one sense, the FY 2014 funding process was much easier because there was no CoC Application; instead, we used the CoC's score from the FY 2013 CoC Application. We saw an improvement in project applications, and we think that is due in part to the fact that project applicants and CoCs took more care to ensure that project applications were more complete and accurate. This resulted in fewer projects falling below threshold requirements.

Fewer CoCs reallocated funds to new projects in 2014 than in 2013. Some CoCs may have chosen not to reallocate because there was less time to plan before the 2014 process or because they could apply for bonus projects. We received over 200 applications for permanent supportive housing bonus projects and were only able to fund only 25. Needless to say, there were several excellent projects that we could not fund because of a lack of resources.

As we move forward into the FY 2015 CoC Program Competition we hope to see the same attention to the quality of the project applications even as CoCs have to complete the CoC Application once again.

FY 2015 and Beyond

The quick turnaround between 2013 and 2014 and using the 2013 CoC Application score for both years allowed us to return to a more reasonable

competition timeline. This year, our goal is to release the NOFA in July, and in future years, we'd like to release the NOFAs in late spring. Here is what you can expect from the next NOFA.

- **A More Competitive Process.** We believe that we have enough funding for FY 2015 to award all renewal projects, however, we are still implementing a tiered funding process. Tier 1 will be a smaller percentage than in years past, and the process for selecting projects from Tier 2 will be much more competitive. Whether a project is funded will depend much more on the performance of the CoC and the qualities of the project. CoCs should be evaluating their performance and identifying lower priority projects that can be reallocated as well as planning new permanent housing projects that can be created through reallocation or bonus.
- **Rewards for CoCs Implementing Strategies Consistent with Opening Doors.** In FY 2015, HUD will be more aggressively promoting the strategies outlined in *Opening Doors*. This includes demonstrating progress towards strategic resource allocation, ending chronic homelessness, ending family homelessness, ending veteran homelessness, ending youth homelessness, and implementing housing first approaches. As we get closer to the target dates for the goals of ending family and youth homelessness, you can expect to see an increased emphasis during the competition on meeting these goals.
- **Expanded Reallocation Opportunities.** In the past few competitions the only new projects CoCs could apply for were permanent housing projects. This year, we are expanding reallocation to allow CoCs to fund projects that enhance data collection and analysis along with coordinated entry. This means, in the FY 2015 Competition, CoCs will be able to reallocate to the following types of projects:
 - **Permanent Supportive Housing** for chronically homeless households, including individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth
 - **Rapid Re-housing** for individuals and families, including unaccompanied youth, who are residing on the streets or in emergency shelters or who are fleeing domestic violence
 - **Dedicated HMIS**
 - **Supportive Service Only for Coordinated Entry**

It is our hope that with additional time to plan and increased opportunities, that more CoCs will take advantage of reallocation to reprogram funds to better meet local needs.

- **Permanent Housing Bonus Projects.** There will be an opportunity to apply for permanent housing bonus projects – either rapid re-housing or permanent supportive housing. We suggest that you read the NOFA carefully as some of the requirements for the permanent housing bonus

will likely be different than in prior years.

As we do each year, we will post a NOFA broadcast to walk through the highlights and will cover what you need to know to compete for funds. Please view the broadcast and carefully review the NOFA and detailed instructions that accompany the application to ensure that you are as competitive as possible.

In the meantime, we have published a variety of resources on the HUD Exchange and I recommend that you take some time to read them as they will provide you with a sense of program requirements, HUD policies related to ending homelessness, technical assistance materials, and promising practices.

Thank you for your commitment to ending homelessness.

Regards,

Norm Suchar
Director
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs

Additional Resources

- *Coordinated Entry Policy Brief*
- *Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing Brief*
- *Rapid Re-housing Brief*
- *Notice CPD-14-012: Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing and Recordkeeping Requirements for Documenting Chronic Homeless Status*
- *Rapid Re-Housing for Homeless Youth*
- Unites States Interagency on Homelessness (USICH) Reallocation Tool
- USICH's CoC Resources: Helping Communities Prepare for the 2015 Competition

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