

Rhode Island Continuum of Care RI-500

July 11, 2019

Request for Letters of Interest to Apply for New Permanent Housing (Permanent Supportive Housing/Rapid Re-Housing/Joint TH-RRH), HMIS and CES Funds During the 2019 Continuum of Care Program Competition

The Rhode Island Continuum of Care is again requesting Letters of Interest from qualified nonprofit organizations and/or local government agencies for new project applications for the 2019 Continuum of Care Program Competition. The CoC seeks projects that can make maximum efficient, economical, and effective use of the prospective allocation of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) funds.

Approximately \$1,264,000 in a combination of reallocated funding, bonus funding and DV bonus funding may be available for new projects in the competition. The CoC intends to allocate this funding to multiple projects. HUD will ultimately select the projects that are to be funded and selection by the CoC for inclusion in the collaborative application does not assure that the application will be funded by HUD.

Some possible new project application types:

Opportunities for new project types could include, but are not limited to, the following to:

Expanded Eligibility for Youth and Youth-Serving Providers

The appropriations act of 2019 expanded the ability of ‘youth serving providers’ [private non-profits with a primary mission to serve youth aged 24 and under] to serve youth. **Under the 2019 NOFA any youth-serving provider can serve youth 24 and under who have an unsafe nighttime residence and no safe alternative to that residence. Additionally, youth aged 24 and under must not be required to provide third party documentation that they meet the homeless definition.** Applicants meeting the definition of ‘youth-serving provider’ should note the expanded ability to serve youth in need.

Expanded Eligibility for new RRH and Joint RRH/TH projects

Eligible households can now include households meeting HUD’s category 2 homeless definition: at ‘Imminent Risk of Homelessness’. Categories 1 (‘Literally Homeless’) and 4 (‘Fleeing Domestic Violence’) continue to be eligible populations to serve with these projects.

Expansion Projects

Existing CoC grantees may apply through the new application process to ‘expand’ their current CoC grant. An ‘expansion’ grant provides additional housing units and services and/or increases services to current participants. Expansion grants must be the same program component (e.g., RRH, PSH) and must identify the currently funded grant that is being expanded and the reasons for the expansion.

Domestic Violence Bonus Projects

Again this year, applications may be submitted for a new type of bonus project: a **Domestic Violence Bonus Project** in which all persons served are survivors of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking. The following types of new projects may be submitted for the DV Bonus – please note, all projects applying for the DV bonus are required to use trauma informed and victim centered approaches:

- Rapid rehousing exclusively serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are defined as homeless.
- Joint TH-RRH projects exclusively serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are defined as homeless.

There is no limit on the number of DV bonus projects that may be submitted provided: that the amount requested does not exceed the amount available to the CoC for the DV bonus and that no project is for less than \$25,000.

Requests for New and/or Expanded Permanent Housing Projects:

New in 2019 new project applications may submit a new project requesting **1 year of funding but with a longer initial grant term not to exceed 18 months**. This will permit the project to start-up and become fully operational.

There are three allowable types of New and/or Expanded Permanent Housing projects:

- **Permanent supportive housing** for disabled homeless individuals. All units/beds must either be dedicated to serving 100% chronically homeless persons or exclusively serving persons who meet the definition of [DedicatedPLUS](#). All PSH projects will be expected to follow HUD Notice 16-11, “Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness ...” Assisted persons may be provided housing assistance through rental assistance, operating or leasing support. Supportive services should be provided to assist residents maintain housing stability. All applicants and eligible new program participants must be referred from the RICOC’s Statewide Coordinated Entry System.
- **Rapid rehousing for individuals and families** that are homeless as defined by HUD’s Category 1, 2 or 4. This is also known as: at imminent risk of homelessness, residing in shelter, unsheltered in streets/public places, or fleeing domestic violence. Households may **ONLY** be assisted with tenant based rental assistance. Supportive services should be provided to assist residents maintain housing stability. All applicants and eligible new program participants must be referred from the RICOC’s Statewide Coordinated Entry System.
- **TH- RRH PH projects.** This was a new project type created for the 2017 competition. These projects:
 - Serve eligible households, which includes homeless as defined by HUD’s Category 1, 2 or 4. This is also known as: at imminent risk of homelessness, residing in shelter, unsheltered in streets/public places, or are fleeing domestic violence.
 - Provide rapid access to safe and secure crisis housing.

- Use that housing as 'bridge' housing - a temporary residence to provide a stable living situation while the household arranges permanent housing. During the stay, the household will be assisted in obtaining all documentation needed for permanent housing and in locating an appropriate permanent housing unit.
- Provide short/medium term rental assistance to participants during their RRH program phase.
- **The move to permanent housing in RRH should occur as soon as possible.**
- All applicants and eligible program participants must be referred from the RICOC's Statewide Coordinated Entry System.

This housing model may be particularly appropriate for projects serving youth and young adults. The TH component can be used for temporary crisis housing including temporary leased accommodation to provide safe housing to highly vulnerable young people. The RRH component will allow rapid transfer to permanent housing.

In accordance with RICoC Policies and Procedures, all projects must follow **Housing First** principles. These include:

- Minimal barriers to program entry. For example: there cannot be a requirement for sobriety prior to being housed and prior background (criminal history, lack of credit, or eviction history) cannot be used on a blanket basis to exclude potential participants.
- Services that are person centered and trauma informed must be assertively offered to participants, but participants may not be required to participate in services or activities.
- To the maximum extent possible, program participants should be given the opportunity to exercise choice in their living unit.
- All participants must be provided with an annual residential lease that does not include clauses that are not standard for leases in the community and that is consistent with the Rhode Island Landlord Tenant Act [Chapter 34-18]
- Individuals and families can only be terminated from the program in accordance with due process rights of tenants under a lease.

Requests for New/Expanded HMIS and/or Coordinated Entry Services:

The RICoC will entertain applications for new and/or expanded services provided for HMIS and/or Coordinated Entry. Since the Board has designated HMIS and Coordinated Entry lead agencies, those organizations are the only entities eligible to apply for this funding.

Applicants will be required to identify the new and/or additional services that will be provided and to identify how these additional services will lead to improvements in data quality (HMIS), bed coverage, or increased efficiency/effectiveness of the coordinated entry process.

PLEASE NOTE: The CoC is issuing this second request for LOI at this time to ensure that is positioned to respond to the 2019 US Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). **The CoC is requesting nonprofit and local government organizations wanting to apply for new project funding during the 2019 competition to complete and submit a letter of interest.** It is likely that this will be the final such request for letters of interest for new projects issued in the FY2019 competition. The CoC reserves the right to offer less funding than the total requested by any applicant to ensure fairness and equity in the distribution of funding.

The Letter of Interest must provide the following information:

Name of Organization: _____

Organization type: _____ Non-profit; _____ PHA or local government agency

Contact information for the Organization: _____

Proposal Type: _____ Permanent Supportive Housing _____ Rapid Re-Housing _____ Joint Transitional Housing /Rapid Rehousing _____ HMIS _____ Coordinated Entry Services

Is this a current grant seeking to reallocate existing funding? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes:

- Grant number for current project: _____
- Total HUD CoC funding for project: _____

Is this a new project application seeking to expand an existing CoC funded project? _____ Yes;
_____ No

If yes:

- Grant number for current project: _____
- Component type for current project: _____

All Permanent Housing project applicants must provide the following information (not to exceed five narrative pages):

1. Target population for project and experience in serving population and providing similar services.
 - a. Include a projection of the number of persons/households to be served (point in time at full capacity and number expected to be served during a one-year period)
2. If applying for the TH-PH/RRH option, provide information on: expected length of stay in crisis-transitional housing, how the TH component will be used, and how the project will quickly move participants into permanent housing.
3. Applicants must address the scoring factors on the [Scoring Criteria for New Permanent Housing Projects](#). Provide sufficient detail on each scoring factor to permit evaluation of the project.
4. Project Budget
 - a. Rapid rehousing projects may apply for funding only for:
 - i. Supportive Services
 - ii. Tenant Based Rental Assistance
 - iii. HMIS
 - iv. Administration
 - b. Permanent supportive housing projects may apply for:
 - i. Leasing or rental assistance
 - ii. Operating
 - iii. Supportive services

- iv. HMIS
- v. Administration
- c. TH-RRH projects:
 - i. TH component may use leasing or operating costs plus supportive services;
 - ii. RRH component may use tenant based rental assistance and supportive services
 - iii. Admin is allowable for both the TH and RRH components.

HMIS project applicants should respond to [Threshold and Scoring Criteria for New HMIS projects](#) and include a comprehensive program budget

CES project applicants should respond to [Threshold and Scoring Criteria for New Coordinated Entry System projects](#) and include a comprehensive program budget

Expansion applications: In addition to the above listed criteria dependent on project type, **Expansion applications should** explain why the expansion of the project is needed and what are the additional benefits to the CoC and community from the expanded project. If seeking funding to provide additional services for current participants, please explain how these added services will affect project outcomes.

Letters of Intent will be evaluated based on the factors identified on the applicable New Projects Threshold Requirements and New Projects Rating Tool (The different Scoring Criteria are hyperlinked above for each project type: PH, HMIS and CES).

Applicants seeking new funding under the 2019 competition will be required to apply to contract directly with HUD as the COC Grant Recipient.

Based on responses, the CoC may request applicants to modify budget targets to ensure equitable and competitive distribution of funding.

Deadline:

All letters of interest are due by July 30, 2019 by 5 pm EDT. Letters of interest must be submitted electronically to the CoC Planner, Elizabeth Bioteau (ebioteau@rihousing.com). Adobe PDF format is preferred.

After the July 30, 2019 deadline, the CoC Planner will notify the highest scoring new project letters of interest (from both rounds requests for LOIs issued) of their approval to submit new project applications in the ESNAPS grants management system. For those invited to apply, the eSNAPS new project applications must be submitted in the eSNAPS grants management system no later than August 23, 2019 at 5pm Eastern Daylight Time. Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring their applications are submitted in eSNAPS.

PLEASE NOTE: Although it does not intend to change information detailed above, the RICOC Board may adjust this Request for Letters of Interest, including the deadline date listed above, in response to HUD updating the FY2019 Notice of Funding Available for the Continuum of Care Program.