TX-503 Austin/Travis County CoC

Renewal Project Scoring Guide FY24 Continuum of Care NOFO Competition

This checklist and scorecard will be used for all Renewal Applications, including HMIS & first-time renewals. First Time Renewals must meet Threshold Components to ensure compliance with HUD organizational recommendations and HMIS implementation. Items that are not able to be scored will receive full points (e.g., if there is not yet 12 months' worth of information for first-time renewals).

Checklist of Required Attachments (*denotes attachment is required, if applicable to that project):

* Documentation of grant changes and/or amendments over the past 12 months requiring an amendment or contact with the Local Field Office (e.g., copy of email communications, support letter from ECHO, memo requesting change) Required to document any project changes
☐ Annual Agency Financial Audit ☐ Most Recently Completed Agency Audited Financial Statement ☐ Auditor's Communication with Agency Governance Board
☐ Board/Leadership/organization staff rosters (disaggregated/de-identified) w/ racial/ethnic representation included (Or an explanation of why this is not available)
 □ * HUD Monitoring (Required if project participated in HUD monitoring over the past 2 years) □ * HUD Monitoring Notification Letter □ * HUD Monitoring Report (indicating findings or lack thereof) □ * HUD Monitoring Closeout Letter
 * Recaptured Funds * Official grant documentation showing the percentage of overall project budget recaptured, and total dollar amount recaptured * Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) (Required for all agencies that have executed a PIP in the last 12 months)
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☐ Lived Experience ☐ Participant Feedback & Compensation Policy/Policies ☐ Other Relevant Policies ☐ Up to 3 feedback forms (de-identified)
* HMIS Administrator Checklist (HMIS Projects only)

Local Application

MAXIMUM POINTS SCORING SECTION				
1. Program Changes & Amendments				
N/A	1.1 Significant Amendments			
N/A	1.2 Annual Renewal Demand			
2. Agency Characteristics & HUD Standards				
P/F	2.1 Annual Financial Audit			
10	2.2 Representation on Board & Agency Leadership			
N/A	2.3 HUD Monitoring			
10	2.4 Unspent/Recaptured Grant Funds			
3. Project Type				
5	3.1 Component Type			
N/A	3.2 Number of Units (non-HMIS Projects only)			
5	3.3 Subpopulation Focus (non-HMIS Projects only)			
4. Project Quality & Performance				
10	4.1 Performance Improvement & Evaluation			
5	4.2 Housing First			
10	4.3 Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities			
10	4.4 Addressing LGBTQ+ Safety (non-HMIS Projects Only)			
15	4.5 Lived Expertise			
10	4.6 Increasing Safety for DV Survivors			
10	4.7a Severity of Barriers (non-HMIS Projects only)			
10	4.7b HMIS Administrator Checklist (HMIS Projects only)			
100	100 TOTAL SCORE			

Local Application Question and Scoring Criteria

Local Application Question and Scoring Criteria				
1. Program Changes and/or Amendments				
1.1 Significant Amendments	Not Scored			
Describe any changes and/or amendments made to this project during the last 12 months. Examples include adjustments to budget, target population, service delivery, subrecipient/partner roles and responsibilities (500-word limit). (*If no changes and/or amendments were made during the last 12 months, please put "N/A".)				
 Attachments: Supporting documents (emails with the field office, and/or copies of change forms) 				
1.2 Annual Renewal Demand What is your ARD?	Not Scored			
2. Agency Characteristics & HUD Standards				
2.1 Annual Agency Financial Audit	PASS – Meets all criteria.			
Please attach a copy of your agency's most recent financial audit. For financial reporting purposes, every organization has a 12-month fiscal year. A fiscal year can coincide with the calendar year but may also be any 12-month period that is selected by the organization. Audits are performed on the organization's fiscal year. The only exception to a 12-month audit occurs if the organization has changed its fiscal year during the audit period. This will require an audit for less than or more 12 months for the year of change.	FAIL – Information provided CONFIRMS that project is not eligible for HUD funding.			
 Attachments: Most recently completed audited financial statement for agency (not program/project) The auditor's communication with agency's governance board Criteria to Consider: The most recent audited financial statement is attached. An audit is completed within 9 months of the end of the agency's fiscal year and/or the agency identifies consistent procedures that are used in the preparation of financial reports in which the most recent report follows and is attached. The audit opinion indicates that the agency's financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with Generally Accepted Account Principles (GAAP) The audit opinion does not include any substantial doubt about the organization's ability to continue as a concern. 				

2.2 Representation on Board of Directors & Agency Leadership 73.9% of the population experiencing homelessness in Austin/Travis County identifies as non-white (Asian, Black, Native/Indigenous, Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, two or more races). What percentage of the applicant's organization staff identifies as non-white? What percentage of the applicant organization's board of directors identifies as non-white? What percentage of the applicant organization's leadership (senior managers, directors/administrators, VP's, Executives/C-Suite) identify as non-white?

Required Attachments:

Board/Leadership/organization staff's demographic info (disaggregated/de-identified) w/racial/ethnic representation (*NOTE: If your agency does not have this info available, please include an explanation as to why.)

Optional: Additional Materials

10 points – At least 73.9% of agency staff and agency leadership and the board of directors identify as non- white.

8 points – At least 73.9% of agency staff identify as non-white and at least 50% of agency leadership identify as non-white and at least 50% of members of the board of directors identify as non-white, but the number of agency leadership and board members who identify as non-white falls below 73.9%.

6 points – Between 50% and 73.8% of agency staff identify as non-white and between 50% and 73.8% of agency leadership identify as non-white and between 50% and 73.8% of members of the board of directors identify as non- white.

4 points – Between 50% and 73.8% of agency staff identify as non- white and multiple people in agency leadership and multiple members of the board of directors identify as non- white.

2 points – Multiple staff members identify as non-white and multiple members of agency leadership or multiple members of the board of directors identify as non-white.

0 points – No, criteria are not met.

Note: appropriate attachments backing up the answer provided are required for an agency to receive any score above a zero.

2.3 HUD Monitoring

Has the project been monitored by HUD at any point over the past 2 years? (Y/N)

If yes, use the narrative section to describe any actions your agency has taken to address any findings or concerns.

Attachments (if yes):

- HUD Monitoring Notification Letter
- HUD Monitoring Report (indicating findings or lack thereof)
- HUD Monitoring Closeout Letter (indicating resolution of findings).

If yes, were there any findings during the HUD Monitoring Visit? (Y/N)

Were any findings resolved? (Y/N)

Explain all resolved and unresolved findings.

2.4 Unspent/Recaptured Grant Funds

Have any funds related to the renewal project request been recaptured by HUD for the most recently expired grant term?

Attachments:

- Please provide official grant documentation showing (1) the percentage of overall project budget recaptured (2) total dollar amount recaptured.
- Optional: Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Agreement

Not Scored

10 points – All funds spent. No deobligated funds.

8 points – Some funds deobligated, but less than 3% of total funding.

6 points – Deobligated more than 3% of total funds, but less than 5%.

4 points – Deobligated more than 5% of total funds, but less than 7%.

2 points – Deobligated more than 7% of total funds, but less than 10%.

0 points – Project does not meet expectations due to deobligating more than 10% of total grant funds or more than \$50,000 (whichever is greater).

3. Project Type			
3.1 Proposed Component Type	5 points – HMIS project type		
Select the proposed component type:			
 Permanent Housing – Permanent Supportive Housing (PH-PSH) Permanent Housing – Rapid Rehousing (PH-RRH) Joint Component Transitional Housing & Rapid Rehousing (Joint 	0 points – non-HMIS project type (Permanent Housing, Transitional Housing, Joint TH-RRH,		
TH-RHH) • Supportive Services Only (SSO) • HMIS	or SSO)		
3.2 Number of Units (PH-PSH, PH-RRH, TH, and Joint TH-RRH only) What is the total number of units (if applicable)? What is the total number of beds? Of the total number of beds, what are the total number of beds dedicated to clients who meet the HUD definition of chronic homelessness or DedicatedPLUS?	Not Scored		
3.3 Subpopulation Focus (PH-PSH, PH-RRH, TH, and Joint TH-RRH only)	5 points – Project has no		
Do you have eligibility criteria for new clients to be referred to your program? (Y/N)	eligibility requirements based on subpopulation		
If yes: What is the specific population focus for eligibility for this project?	0 points – Project has eligibility requirements based		
 Scoring Criteria: Projects operated by VSP providers who have received funding through DV Bonus (SAFE Alliance) will receive 5 points despite having subpopulation specific eligibility requirements 	on subpopulation (e.g., by household type, age, veteran status, mental illness, or disability status		

4. Project Quality & Performance

4.1 Performance Improvement & Evaluation

Describe any strategies and/or efforts made during the last 12 months to improve program outcomes. Discuss how your agency has used data including HMIS reports to identify ways to improve services, program design, staff development, and/or outcomes shown through Quarterly Performance Scorecards or other performance measures. Describe how the implemented changes have improved both your organization and your project outcomes. (500-word limit) (*First-time renewals which do not have 12-month worth of program performance, please put N/A.)

Scoring Criteria:

- Different types of data collection are described (e.g., project performance, client feedback, employee evaluations, third-party evaluations, continuous quality improvement (CQI, etc.)
- Client feedback is specifically mentioned as a mechanism for performance evaluation and improvement
- Data is used to ensure cost-effectiveness of program spending
- Description is given of how strategies/efforts made during the last 12 months will be monitored/evaluated for effectiveness
- First-time renewals will automatically receive 10 points.

10 points – All criteria clearly described with examples

8 points – Applicant utilizes multiple types of data including client feedback to inform performance evaluation and to track spending; and client feedback is not specifically mentioned to inform program evaluation and improvement.

6 points – Applicant utilizes multiple types of data to inform performance evaluation and track spending *and* does <u>not</u> collect client feedback to inform program evaluation and improvement.

4 points – Applicant only utilizes HMIS and Quarterly Performance Scorecard data to inform performance evaluation and track spending; and does not collect client feedback to inform program evaluation and improvement.

2 points – Applicant does not clearly describe any strategies and/or efforts to improve program outcomes; and applicant has a clear plan for using data to improve program outcomes.

0 points – Applicant does **not** clearly describe any strategies and/or efforts to improve program outcomes.

4.2 Housing First

Please describe how the practice of Housing First is implemented at your agency, specifically in reference to policies and practices that ensure fidelity to the Housing First approach. (500-word limit).

Scoring Criteria:

See the <u>TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery</u> (p. 14-19) for a detailed description of how Housing First practice can be applied to each step of service delivery.

The Austin/Travis County CoC has adopted the Housing First approach throughout our system. Services are targeted and prioritized for the most vulnerable people in our community and are offered without conditions. Within the Housing First model, barriers to accessing and maintaining housing and services are reduced or eliminated to ensure those who need the resources most have access to them. Housing First is a homeless services approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness, and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach aims to eliminate the system barriers that prevent people from accessing their right to housing. Housing First can be contrasted with older models, like Housing Ready, that focus on addressing other issues (e.g., substance abuse, increasing income) prior to placing a person in housing.

Additionally, Housing First is based on the idea that participant choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising the right to choose will likely make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their quality of life. Services should be culturally appropriate. Personal barriers, such as non-adherence to a medication regimen or substance abuse, are addressed using collaborative approaches, like motivational interviewing.

For PH-PSH, PH-RRH, TH, and Joint TH-RRH:

- Describe Housing First principles (e.g., trauma-informed care, harm reduction, participant choice) implemented at screening & admission to the project (e.g., project entry is not contingent on preconditions such as sobriety, income, criminal history status, rental history background, service participation requirements).
- Does not terminate program participants for lack of participation in supportive services offered by the program (e.g., there are no requirements to participate in peer support, groups, or to make certain progress on case plans on specific timelines).

5 points – Agency implements all elements of Housing First as described in the TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery, including centering participant choice, and providing culturally responsive services-

4 points – Agency implements most elements of Housing First as described in the TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery, including centering participant choice and providing culturally responsive services.

3 points – Agency implements most elements of Housing First as described in the TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery, including centering participant choice or providing culturally responsive services.

2 points – Agency implements some elements of Housing First as described in the TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery, and has a plan for increasing participant choice, culturally responsive services, and other incomplete aspects of Housing First implementation.

For SSO-CE:

 Describe Housing First principles (e.g., trauma-informed care, harm reduction, participant choice) implemented at screening & admission to the CE System, including referrals to housing and supportive services (e.g., CE project entry and referrals to housing programs are not contingent on preconditions such as sobriety, income, criminal history status, rental history background, service participation requirements).

1 point – Agency implements some elements of Housing First as described in the TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery, and does <u>not</u> address any plan for improvement.

0 points – Agency does not follow Housing First as described in the TX-503 Austin/Travis County Written Standards for Program Delivery.

4.3 Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Black Americans are overrepresented in the total population experiencing homelessness in the United States relative to total population representation. According to the <u>U.S. Census Bureau</u> and analysis of HMIS data, Black/African American residents account for 9 percent of Travis County's total population, but 32 percent of the population experiencing homelessness in the same area. This is a dramatic overrepresentation and a key challenge facing our homelessness response system and the Austin/Travis County community generally.

Provide a narrative describing how your project is addressing racial disparities in service delivery. (500-word limit).

Scoring Criteria:

- Plan for recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Black staff.
- Mention client feedback in evaluation of program and service delivery
- Mention client feedback in improving racial equity in service delivery
 Subcontracting with Black-led organizations for any eligible costs (e.g., outreach, peer support, substance use treatment, case management, housing navigation)
- Mention disaggregation of data to identify patterns in housing placement and successful program exit
- Professional development opportunities, such as trainings, on racial equity or anti-racism provided to staff, agency leadership, and/or board of directors

10 points – Agency provides clear narrative addressing all criteria.

7 points – Agency provides clear narrative addressing some criteria - <u>must</u> include: use of client feedback, and staff training, and plan for recruitment/hiring/retention/promotion of Black staff.

4 points – Agency provides clear narrative addressing some criteria – including use of client feedback.

0 points – Agency does not have a clear plan for addressing racial disparities in service delivery.

4.4 Addressing LGBTQ+ Safety (non-HMIS Projects Only)

For <u>non-HMIS</u> projects ONLY: Provide a narrative describing how your project is addressing these physical and psychological safety concerns for LGBTQ+ clients, specifically in relation to the higher likelihood of experiencing interpersonal violence, and to the impact of experiencing discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation when seeking services. (500-word limit).

Scoring Criteria:

- Trainings provided to staff that aim to address and reduce bias, educate staff on gender and sexuality including updates to language, and identify legal protections for LGBTQ+ clients
- Mention grievance policy and process for clients who experience discrimination or mistreatment by staff and other clients
- Mention policies and processes in place for ensuring client choice in geographic placement of housing and supportive services provided
- Plan for recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of LGBTQ+ staff.
- Mention client feedback in improving LGBTQ+ safety in service delivery
- Mention client feedback in evaluation of program and service delivery
- Subcontracting with LGBTQ+ -led organizations for any eligible costs (e.g., outreach, peer support, substance use treatment, case management, housing navigation, and any gender-affirming services)

Attachments:

- Optional: any policies and procedures relevant to addressing physical and psychological safety concerns for LGBTQ+ clients
- Optional: any training materials provided to staff

10 points – Agency provides clear narrative addressing all criteria.

7 points – Agency provides clear narrative addressing some criteria - <u>must</u> include: use of client feedback, *and* staff training, *and* plan for recruitment/hiring/ retention/promotion of LGBTQ+ staff.

4 points – Agency provides clear narrative addressing some criteria – including use of client feedback *and* staff training.

0 points – Agency does not have mention client feedback *OR* does not have clear processes or policies for addressing LGBTQ+ safety in service delivery.

4.5 Lived Expertise

Describe how your agency identifies areas for improvement and improves service delivery through feedback from past and current program participants*. Please provide specific examples of formally solicited suggestions made by clients that resulted in your program making specific changes to its operations to improve outcomes or practices based on participants' feedback. Please describe your formal process for collecting client feedback, including the frequency with which it occurs, evidence of robust/concrete agency responses to that feedback, and methods by which persons with lived experience of homelessness are compensated for their participation and contributions to your agency's improvement. Has your agency hired persons with lived experience of homelessness to work as full-time staff in its programs? (500-word limit).

*For HMIS projects that do not provide direct services to clients, this includes clients whose data has been input into the HMIS system.

Required Attachments:

- Participant Feedback & Compensation Policy/Policies
- Other Relevant Policies
- Up to 3 feedback forms (de-identified)

Scoring Criteria:

- Mention client feedback collection process that is routinely reviewed for evaluation of program & service delivery
- Specific examples of how client feedback was used to improve program & service delivery
- Mention clear & consistent formal compensation policy for persons with lived experience for their solicited participation and feedback
- Evidence of active & continued employment of people with lived experience as full-time program staff
- Plan for recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of staff with lived experience of homelessness.

15 points – Meets all criteria. Agency provides evidence that client feedback is routinely collected as well as specific examples of how they have used the feedback to make improvements. To score a 15, the agency must have a clear & consistent formal process for compensating persons with lived experience for their solicited participation and feedback AND must actively employ those with lived experience of homelessness as full-time staff in the agency's programs.

10 points - Meets basic criteria adequately with no concerns. Agency provides evidence that client feedback is collected routinely as well as examples of how they have used the feedback to make improvements. To score a 10, the agency must have a clear & consistent formal process for compensating persons with lived experience of homelessness for their solicited participation and feedback.

5 points – Meets basic criteria with some concerns identified. Agency demonstrates an understanding of the importance of lived experience of homelessness

but cannot provide evidence of collecting client feedback, improvements made from feedback, or compensation for participation by those with lived experience of homelessness.

0 points – Does not meet criteria.

4.6 Increasing Safety for Survivors of Domestic Violence

According to preliminary Needs & Gaps data, 30% of people experiencing homelessness reported being survivors of domestic violence. It is important that all programs providing services to those experiencing homelessness take this into account, not just Victim Service Providers (VSPs).

For **non-HMIS** projects, provide a narrative describing how your project is delivering services to clients and operating through a trauma-informed lens, how your staff are trained to do so, and what improvements you have made in ensuring safety for survivors of domestic violence.

For **HMIS** projects, provide a narrative describing how your project operates its database and trains the community to protect client safety and information privacy though data security standards and practices; how project staff are trained to do so and how they train others to do so; and what improvements you have made in ensuring safety for survivors of domestic violence. (500-word limit).

Scoring Criteria:

- For non-HMIS projects:
 - Does the application identify policies and practices to assess participant safety and increasing safety over time?
 - Does the response indicate staff are provided regular and frequent opportunities for training on how to increase safety and provide trauma-informed services.
 - Does the applicant indicate the project involvement in and utilization of the local VAWA Policies, including providing participants information on VAWA rights at eligibility screening, termination, and evictions?
 - How does the project, if applicable, work with fair market landlords to educate them on VAWA projections and enshrine those protections in rental assistance agreements or participant leases?
- For HMIS projects:
 - HMIS Lead has a designated staff person who is responsible for ensuring privacy and security standards

For non-HMIS projects: 10 points – All criteria met.

7 points – Agency has policies and practices in place to ensure and assess participant safety, privacy, and security; and agency provides regular training opportunities to staff; and agency does <u>not</u> work with fair market landlords to ensure VAWA protections.

4 points – Agency has policies and practices in place to ensure and assess participant safety, privacy, and security; and agency does <u>not</u> provide regular training opportunities to staff.

0 points – Agency does not have policies and practices in place to ensure and assess participant safety, privacy, and security.

For HMIS projects: 10 points – All criteria met.

7 points – All criteria met except agency does not have designated staff person responsible for activities included in criteria.

are implemented as required by HUD.

- Project either provides a narrative description of the process/standards or an attachment is provided. Examples of documentation may include but is not limited to: (job description, HMIS Policies).
- Conduct background check on all employees who access HMIS or view HMIS data.

HMIS Lead conduct Privacy and Security Trainings and follows up on all privacy and security standards on a regular basis.

4 points – Agency ensures all privacy and security standards are implemented and provides background checks on all employees who access HMIS or view HMIS data; and agency does not have designated staff person and agency does not conduct regular trainings on privacy and security.

O points – Agency does not have policies and practices in place to ensure and assess participant privacy and

4.7a Severity of Barriers (non-HMIS Projects Only)

FOR **PH-PSH**, **PH-RRH**, **TH and Joint Component TH & PH-RRH**: Please provide a narrative of policies and practices that the project as adopted to address the barriers experienced by program participants in attaining rapid placement in permanent housing or the ability to maintain permanent housing in Austin's competitive housing market. (500-word limit).

FOR **SSO-CE**: Please provide a narrative of policies and practices that the project has adopted to address the barriers experienced by program participants attempting to access the Coordinated Entry (CE) System.

Scoring Criteria:

FOR **PH-PSH**, **PH-RRH**, **TH and Joint Component TH & PH-RRH**:

 Mention detailed policies & best practices in place to address multiple barriers experienced by program participants (e.g., criminal history record, mental illness)

FOR **SSO-CE**:

Mention detailed policies and best practices that include affirmative marketing & advertisement strategy to ensure the CE System is easily accessible by individuals and families with the highest barriers to accessing assistance (i.e., they are least likely to access the CE system in the absence of special outreach), including but not limited to persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency.

10 points – The applicant's narrative provides a detailed description of policies and practices that address multiple barriers experienced by program participants, including mention of best practice and procedures in place to support those with criminal backgrounds and/or mental illness in attaining housing.

security.

7 points - The applicant's narrative provides a description of policies and practices that support barriers experienced by program participants, including mention of best practice.

5 points - The applicant's narrative provides a description of policies and practices that support barriers experienced by program participants.

0 points – Narrative does not address any policies or practices currently in place to address barriers experienced by clients.

4.7b HMIS Administrator Checklist (HMIS Projects only)

Complete and attach the <u>HMIS System Administrator Checklist</u> based on project information.

10 points – Criteria met.

Required Attachment:

HMIS System Administrator Checklist

NOTE: This scoring element is regarding the effort to complete and use the tool – not on the results of the tool.

Scoring Criteria:

- Agency completed and attached the System Administrator Checklist
- All questions and fields answered throughout the checklist with notes included where necessary

0 – Does not meet criteria.