Continuum of Care 101
WHAT IS A CONTINUUM OF CARE?
What do CoCs Do?

• Promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness;
• Provide funding for efforts to quickly re-house individuals and families who are homeless, which minimizes the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness;
• Promote access to and effective use of mainstream programs;
• Optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness;
• Develop and implement a long-term plan to address homelessness, including housing and service gaps, in the CoC;
• Apply for the annual CoC Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).
In order to carry out the primary purpose of the COC Program, HUD requires representatives of relevant organizations to form a Continuum of Care to serve a specific geographic area. These representatives include:

- mental health agencies,
- hospitals,
- universities,
- affordable housing developers,
- law enforcement, and
- organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless individuals.
History of CoCs

• 1987 - First federal law specifically addressing homelessness:
  • McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
• May 2009 - the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 was signed into law, consolidating HUD’s competitive grant programs
• July 2012 - CoC Program Interim Rule was published, which codified the basic structure and duties of a CoC
Our Continuum of Care

• HUD recognizes our CoC as **FL-502 St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Largo/Pinellas County CoC**.

• The **Homeless Leadership Alliance of Pinellas** is the **Collaborative Applicant** for our CoC, which means the HLA submits the grant to HUD on behalf of the CoC.

• The **HLA** is the **CoC Lead Agency** for our CoC, which means the HLA is in charge of conducting planning activities for the CoC.

• The **HLA** as the **HMIS Lead Agency** for our CoC, which means the HLA is in charge of administering our HMIS database and is led by the **HMIS Director**.
Continuum of Care
Designated Lead Agencies with Catchment Areas by County
(Counties in white are not part of a continuum of care.)
April 2013

- Escanaba Coalition on the Homeless - Escambia, Santa Rosa
- Okaloosa/Walton Homeless Continuum of Care - Okaloosa, Walton
- Homeless & Hunger Coalition of N.W. Florida, Inc. - Bay, Caimbria, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Washington counties
- Big Bend Homeless Coalition - Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla counties
- United Way of Suwannee Valley - Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, Suwannee counties
- Alachua Cnty Coalition for the Homeless - Alachua, Bradford, Levy, Putnam, Gilchrist counties
- Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition of Jacksonville - Duval, Clay, Nassau counties
- Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition of St. Johns County, Inc. - St. Johns County
- Volusia/Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless - Volusia and Flagler counties
- Marion County Homeless Council, Inc. - Marion County
- Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition - Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Sumter, Hernando County Coalition of Hillsborough County - Hillsborough Cnty
- Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness - Manatee and Sarasota counties
- Charlotte County Homeless Coalition - Charlotte County
- Collier County Hunger & Homeless Coalition - Collier Cnty
- Lee County Dept. of Human Services - Lee County
- Highlands Cnty Coalition for the Homeless - DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Okeechobee counties
- Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council, Inc. - Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie counties
- Division of Human Services of Palm Beach County - Palm Beach County
- Broward Cnty Homeless Initiative Partnership Administration - Broward County
- Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust - Miami-Dade County
- Monroe Cnty Homeless Services CoC - Monroe
KEY CONCEPTS
The CoC NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) is the catchall term for funding opportunities eligible under the CoC Program. It includes two activities:

- **CoC operations (CoC Planning Grant)**
- **CoC Program project funding**

Individual organizations are awarded CoC Program funds to run “CoC Program projects” through an **annual competition**.

**Project types** funded in CoC Program: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-housing (RRH), Transitional Housing (TH), Joint Component Transitional Housing – Rapid Re-housing (TH-RRH), Coordinated Entry Supportive Services Only (SSO), and HMIS.
Housing First

- Housing First is both a **philosophy of services** and a **program model**
- It means that participants may receive **housing before anything else**, without preconditions of sobriety or service participation
- It also means participants can’t be denied or terminated from housing based on non-participation in supportive services
- HUD rewards CoCs for using Housing First; therefore the Pinellas CoC rewards projects that use Housing First
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

• **HMIS** – a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families, and persons at risk of homelessness

• **HUD requires** a CoC to use a single HMIS to **record all participant information** from dedicated homeless projects; this includes CoC Program, ESG and SSVF; **other project types are welcome to join too!**

• You can record participant data elsewhere too (e.g. an Excel spreadsheet), but you **MUST** record it in HMIS
Coordinated Entry

- **Coordinated Entry** (CE) – a standardized access, assessment, and referral process for housing and other services across agencies in a community.
- All CoC funded projects **must** receive their referrals via CE
- The HLA administers the **Coordinated Entry Process** on behalf of the CoC.
CoC Program
NOFA: The Big Picture

- Released **annually** by HUD as a competition; in **FY 2018**
  - $2.283 billion awarded nationally
  - $94,092,155 million awarded in Florida

- **$4,534,495 million awarded to our CoC**

- NOFA competition **rewards**:
  - *System performance improvement to end & prevent homelessness*
  - *Data-driven decision making*
  - *Serving HUD-identified populations & priorities*
  - *Implementation of Housing First & Coordinated Entry*
• NOFA is competitive, with caveats...

• Caveat #1: HUD tells us exactly how much money to apply for (Annual Renewal Demand = total dollar amount of all the CoC’s projects that will be eligible for renewal), including how much bonus money we can apply for annually

• Caveat #2: HUD has historically funded everyone’s Tier 1 projects (Tier 1 projects = 94% of the total Annual Renewal Demand). Doing well in the NOFA competition meant Tier 2 and Bonus projects are more likely to be funded
Other Funding Considerations

• All applications must provide **25% match** for all funds EXCEPT leasing funds.

• New projects can apply for money available through **reallocation** and **bonus** amounts. Depending on the NOFA, some years it can be a combination of both.

• HUD CoC Grant is a **reimbursement** grant. Draws are made quarterly, at a minimum, in HUD’s eLOCCS system.
Application Process: Scoring

• Once the NOFA is released, agencies create their **project applications** in e-Snaps, save them as PDFs, and submit them and other materials necessary for scoring to the CoC Lead Agency – HLA.

• Projects are reviewed and scored by **Scoring & Ranking Committee**

• New and Renewal projects are scored on very different **criteria**:
  
  • **New projects** are scored primarily on the strength of their application and the organization’s past experience delivering related services; threshold criteria
  
  • **Renewal projects** are scored primarily based on their previous year’s performance data; threshold criteria
• Projects are either accepted, accepted with modifications such as reduced budgets, or rejected
• Accepted projects are ranked in either Tier 1 or Tier 2; both Tiers are submitted to HUD as part of the Collaborative Application
• Tier 1 is 94% of the total Annual Renewal Demand;
  Tier 2 is 6%
• Higher tiers and higher scores are more likely to receive funding
What Can You Fund with CoC Program Funds?

- CoC Program **funds** Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), Rapid Re-housing (RRH), Transitional Housing (TH), Joint Component Transitional Housing – Rapid Re-housing (TH-RRH), and Supportive Services Only grants for Coordinated Entry
- CoC program **also funds** Planning and HMIS
- **New projects** may apply for PSH, RRH and TH-RRH grants (and dependent on the NOFA, TH and SSO-Coordinated Entry grants)
• **Permanent Supportive Housing** (PSH) provides permanent, open-ended housing assistance and services to people who are homeless and have disabilities.

• **Rapid Re-housing** (RRH) provides housing without a designated length of stay where the agency provides short or medium-term rental assistance and services to people who are homeless.

• **Joint Component Transitional Housing – Rapid Re-housing** (TH-RRH) combines TH and RRH; transitional housing on its own is not typically funded except for youth and domestic violence sub-populations.
Eligible Costs

- Administrative (up to 10% of the total budget)
- HMIS
- Rental Assistance
- Leasing
- Operating Costs

Additional resources about eligible costs can be found at:

https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoCProgramFundingforHMIS.pdf
https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/
• To find additional resources about the Pinellas Continuum of Care visit: www.pinellashomeless.org.
• To find additional resources about HUD’s CoC Program visit: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/