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# **Orange County Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs**

## **2015 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR NEW PERMANENT HOUSING PROJECTS**

### **Release Date**

October 5, 2015

### **RFP Submission Deadline**

October 19, 2015 at 12pm (noon) PST

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# Orange County Continuum of Care

## 2015 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR NEW PERMANENT HOUSING PROJECTS

### BACKGROUND

Since 1994, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has used the phrase “Continuum of Care (CoC)” when referring to a stream of funding specifically intended to serve homeless persons. This funding was established through the 1987 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and reauthorized through the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009.

Each year, HUD releases a CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to which hundreds of communities across the country respond by completing a lengthy grant application. Through the NOFA process, HUD awards funding, but also communicates policy priorities. In 2014 Orange County received over \$19 million to support ongoing operations of a variety of programs that provide housing and services to homeless adults, families and youth as well as in reallocated and bonus funds to support new Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid-Rehousing projects for individuals and families that are experiencing chronic homelessness.

On September 17, 2015, HUD released the FY2015 Continuum of Care (CoC) NOFA that makes available \$1.89 billion to communities nationwide to provide housing and services to homeless populations. The NOFA emphasizes HUD’s Homeless Policy and Program Priorities, including: the use of performance and outcome data to prioritize allocating resources; ending chronic homelessness through the increase of supportive housing units; ending family homelessness through increasing the number of rapid-rehousing programs; ending youth homelessness; ending veteran homelessness; and maximizing the use of the Housing First approach throughout continuums.

In the FY 2015 Program Competition, in addition to requests for renewal projects, CoCs may submit requests for new projects through the process of reallocation as well as the permanent housing bonus. Through the reallocation and permanent housing bonus, CoCs may create new permanent supportive housing projects that will exclusively serve chronically homeless individuals and families or create new rapid re-housing projects for homeless individuals and families who enter directly from the streets or emergency shelters, youth up to age 24, and persons who meet the criteria of paragraph (4) of the HUD definition of homeless.

### BONUS POINTS

One of the policy goals of HUD included in the FY 2015 NOFA, is a commitment to End Veteran Homelessness. The Orange County CoC shares the commitment to ending Veteran homelessness. In order to help reach that goal, the CoC is seeking eligible applications for permanent supportive housing or rapid re-housing projects that are dedicated to serving Veterans. Up to 5 bonus points are therefore available for eligible projects that serve homeless Veterans.

Those submitting a project that is dedicated to serving Veterans are asked to provide the following information:

1. Experience working with homeless veterans, the type of services and housing provided, the

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number of years of experience serving this population, and the outcomes achieved in ending homelessness for the persons served.

2. Experience and relationship with other agencies that provide services to, or advocate for, homeless veterans.
3. Experience working with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

### AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR NEW COC PROJECTS

Our Continuum of Care (CoC) through its approval body, the Commission to End Homeless (C2eH), is issuing this notice to further the ongoing work in our community to “right-size” the system to end homelessness consistent with HUD guidance and HEARTH ACT regulations. Applications are due to 211OC on October 19, 2015 at 12p.m. NOON.

The CoC is inviting the following proposals for new projects:

Project Type	Amount Available
Permanent Housing (PH) Bonus Projects <sup>1</sup>	\$2,930,475*
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) or Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) for Homeless Individuals Created Through Re-Allocation	\$520,373

\*Subject to revision based on final ARD confirmation from HUD (October 9, 2015)

The amount available for the PSH bonus project is established by HUD and is based on 15% of Orange County’s total annual CoC grant. The CoC may apply for more than one permanent housing bonus project. New projects created through a permanent housing bonus must meet the project eligibility and threshold requirements as established by HUD in the FY 2015 NOFA and as stated in this RFP.

Each project type has unique requirements as to eligible applicants and eligible activities that are detailed in the 2015 NOFA, 2015 Detailed Project Instructions, and the Interim CoC Regulation (24 CFR 578). Key sections of these documents are excerpted in this RFP, but applicants are strongly advised to review the source documents for further information. These can be accessed at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4688/fy-2015-coc-program-nofa/>

### ELIGIBLE PROJECT TYPES

This RFP makes funding available for two main types of projects which are defined in the CoC Interim Rule (24 CFR 578) and in the 2015 NOFA.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Is housing for homeless people with disabilities that is not time limited and that provides supportive services. The current NOFA allows for the creation of two types of PSH projects, those created through re-allocation and those funded under the permanent housing bonus. Both types of projects must create beds that are dedicated to serve 100% people who are chronically homeless. These units are also subject to the requirements in HUD’s Notice CPD-14-012: Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing and Recordkeeping Requirements for Documenting Chronic Homeless Status. This notice requires that PSH units be prioritized for those households with the longest histories of homelessness and the most severe needs, as determined using a standardized and objective assessment tool. PSH projects funded under this NOFA must also follow Housing First principles.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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A chronically homeless individual is defined as (1) An individual who: (i) Is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and (ii) Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years; and (iii) Can be diagnosed with one or more of the following conditions: substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability; or (2) an individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, mental health or substance abuse facility, hospital or other similar facility for fewer than 90 days and has met all the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition before entering that facility; or (3) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

Note that people living in Transitional Housing are by definition not chronically homeless.

Rapid Re-Housing: Is a model of housing assistance that is designed to assist homeless people to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing. Rapid re-housing assistance is time-limited, individualized, and flexible. Under the current NOFA rapid re-housing projects will serve homeless individuals and families coming directly from the streets or emergency shelters, and include persons fleeing domestic violence situations and other person meeting the criteria of paragraph (4) of the HUD definition of homeless. People living in transitional housing are NOT eligible for rapid re-housing projects under this RFP.

## ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

All proposed services must be new, and proposed project funding cannot replace other existing funding sources. Additional details on the requirements for each type of new project that may be funded through this RFP are detailed in the table below.

Category	Permanent Supportive Housing	Rapid Re-Housing
Eligible Funding	Bonus Project Funding Reallocation Funding	Reallocation Funding
Eligible Applicants	Non-profits, government entities, public housing authorities	
Eligible Participants	100% Chronically homeless people	Homeless households who enter directly from the streets or emergency shelters, and includes persons fleeing domestic violence situations and other persons meeting the criteria of paragraph 4 of the HUD definition of homeless
Eligible Activities/ Expenses (24 CFR 578.43- 578.63)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leasing</li> <li>Rental Assistance (TRA, SRA, PRA)</li> <li>Operating Costs</li> <li>Support Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short Term Rental Assistance (up to 3 months)</li> <li>Medium Term Rental Assistance (3 to 24 months)</li> <li>Support Services</li> </ul>
Support Services	Grant funds may be used for any supportive service listed as eligible under 578.53	
Grant Term	Initial grant term may be for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 years. Applicants are <b>strongly encouraged to request 1 year grants</b> so as to maximize available funding.	
Timeliness	Program funds must be obligated by September 30, 2017. Applicants must start programs in a timely manner.	
Match	25% of total grant request. Leasing funds do not have to be matched. Match can be cash or in-kind and must be spent on eligible project costs.	
Leverage	At least 150% of grant request	
Coordinated Entry	Must agree to participate in the CoC's Coordinated Entry	

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## THRESHOLD AND PROJECT QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

The 2015 HUD NOFA requires all project applicants to meet Threshold Requirements as listed in Section V.F.2. Threshold requirements include: (1) the applicant must be an eligible entity; (2) the applicant must have financial and management capacity to carry out the project; (3) the applicant must submit required certifications; (4) the project must serve an eligible population; (5) the project must be cost effective; (6) the applicant must participate in HMIS; and (7) and applicants must administer programs or activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of homeless with disabilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Section V.F.2. of the NOFA to ensure that threshold requirements are met.

To be considered as meeting project quality threshold, new permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing–project applications must receive at least 3 out of the 5 points available for the criteria below. New permanent housing project applications that do not receive at least 3 points will be rejected.

- (a) Whether the type, scale, and location of the housing fit the needs of the program participants;
- (b) Whether the type and scale of the supportive services fit the needs of the program participants–this includes all supportive services, regardless of funding source;
- (c) Whether the specific plan for ensuring program participants will be individually assisted to obtain the benefits of the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible to apply meets the needs of the program participants;
- (d) Whether program participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs); and,
- (e) Whether at least 75 percent of the proposed program participants come from the street or other locations not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, safe havens, or fleeing domestic violence.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the threshold and quality requirements described above, the following program requirements for all CoC-funded project should be noted:	
<b>Program Fees</b>	Programs are no longer permitted to impose program fees on program participants.
<b>Termination</b>	Termination is expected to be limited to only the most severe cases. Projects providing permanent housing (PSH or RRH) to “hard-to-house” populations should exercise judgment and examine all extenuating circumstances when determining if violations are serious enough to warrant termination.
<b>Prohibition on Involuntary Family Separation</b>	The age and gender of a child under 18 may not be used as a basis for denying a family admission to a project.
<b>Housing Quality Standards</b>	All housing leased with CoC funds or where rental assistance payments are made with CoC funds must meet applicable Housing Quality and Rent Reasonableness Standards.

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## REVIEW AND RANKING PROCESS

Applicants responding to this RFP must submit materials as described in this RFP. All applications will be reviewed to ensure they meet HUD threshold requirements and quality standards. Any correctable deficiencies will be identified and applicants will have the opportunity to submit corrected documents before the final CoC application is submitted to HUD. Applications that are late, incomplete, or substantially deficient will not be advanced to the Panel for scoring.

The CoC will convene an unbiased project review panel to review each new project that passes the technical review. Any member of the CoC who is making an application or is affiliated with an organization that is making an application will not participate in the ranking process or otherwise influence those that are ranking the applications.

The panel will receive the applications and scoring instructions in advance of the meeting. The panel will hold one meeting to review and average their scores and arrive at a decision about which projects to fund. In keeping with HUD requirements, the panel will also assign a ranked order to all projects that will be funded. They will also recommend which project should be submitted as the permanent housing bonus. The panel may also recommend that projects either increase or decrease their funding request to maximize the use of available re-allocated or bonus funds.

The final ranking of new projects as determined by the Panel will be used to determine their order on the Project Priority Listing submitted to HUD. The final Project Priority list will be approved by the C2EH (with review of the CoC Ad Hoc Committee). Applicants will be notified of the results no later than November 4, 2015. Any projects not selected for funding may appeal the decision by following the CoC's appeal process (to be approved as part of the Rating and Ranking Policy).

Placement on the Project Priority List does not guarantee funding, as HUD will review and assess all new project applications for threshold compliance and project quality.

Applicants conditionally selected for funding by HUD will be required to provide additional information in the form of a technical submission within 30 days of notification by HUD Los Angeles of the project's conditional approval.

## RATING CRITERIA

All projects will be scored on a 100 point scale using the following criteria:

	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Description of basis for assigning points</b>
1	Capacity of Grantee and Partners	Up to 25 points	Applicant and any sub recipients have recent relevant experience in providing housing to homeless people, administering leasing or rental assistance funds, delivering services and entering HMIS data. If application has sub recipients, applicant organizations have experience working together. No applicant or sub recipient has outstanding monitoring or audit issues or issues are explained. Applicant has experience managing HUD funds and has history of timely expenditure of HUD funds if applicable.
2	Targeting and Outreach	Up to 10 points	Project targets an eligible population. There is a strong outreach plan specifically designed to identify and engage people in the target population and ensure they are able to access the program. For bonus PSH, applicant has explained how they will prioritize those with longest homeless histories and most severe housing needs and committed to participation in the CoCs Coordinated Assessment system.
3	Appropriateness of Housing	Up to 10 points	Type, scale, and location of the housing fit the needs of the program participants. Participants are assisted to secure housing as quickly as possible. Programs and activities are offered in a setting that enables homeless people with disabilities to interact with others without disabilities to the fullest extent possible.
4	Service Plan	Up to 25 points	Type, scale, location of the supportive services fit the needs of the program participants and are readily accessible. There is a specific plan to ensure participants are assisted to obtain the benefits of the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible (including, for bonus PSH, Medi-Cal funded non-emergency services). There is a specific plan to ensure participants are assisted to obtain and remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs. There is a specific plan to ensure participants are assisted to increase their incomes and live
5	Housing First Approach	Up to 6 points	Applicant will offer housing assistance without preconditions (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold) or service participation requirements. Rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing are primary program objectives.

6	Timing	Up to 8 points	Project has a clear plan to begin operations within one year of award.
7	Budget and Match	Up to 8 points	Budget is reasonable for type of project and clearly articulated; Required match of at least 25% is included and documented. Project is cost effective compared to other similar new permanent housing applications.
8	Leverage	Up to 3 points	Project leverages more than 150% of HUD budget = 3 pts Project leverages 100%-150% of HUD budget = 1.5 pts Project leverages 100% or less of HUD budget = 0 pts
9	Participation in CoC meetings, PIT, HIC, HMIS	Up to 2 points	Applicant has participated in local planning processes to end homelessness.
10	Completeness and Clarity of Application	Up to 3 points	Maximum points will be awarded if application is complete and all questions relevant to the project are answered.
11	Veteran Preference	Up to 5 points	In accordance with HUD's, the VA, and the Orange County CoC's commitment to end Veteran Homelessness, bonus points are available for eligible projects that include a preference to serve homeless Veterans.

### Submittal Timeline

Please review the key dates and deadlines of the RFP process:

October 5, 2015	Release of RFP by 211OC
October 14, 2015	Last day for RFP questions to Zulima Pelayo
<b>October 19, 2015 at 12:00pm</b>	<b>Proposals Due</b>
November 4, 2015	Awards Announced

*\*Subject to change*

Applicants must submit all required documents to 211OC. The submission must be time-stamped on the cover page of the original and all complete copies by 211OC staff. It is the sole responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that delivery is made to 211OC prior to the Due Date and Time. Delivery receipts are available upon request. Timely submission is a Threshold Requirement.

### Required Documents

The following documents must be submitted. A checklist is provided on Page ## to assist in assembly of

the proposal.

- **Proposal Cover Page** (signed by Authorized Signatory). The cover page should state which project type the applicant is applying for: (1) bonus OR (2) reallocation.
- **Document Checklist**
- **Exhibit 1: Lead Agency Information Form and HUD Application**
  - Attachment 1: Board of Directors' Roster<sup>2</sup> and Resolution authorizing submittal of the new project application in the 2015 CoC competition process)
  - Attachment 2: Most recent HUD Monitoring letter and close out letter for all HUD projects (if applicable)
  - Attachment 3: A list identifying your past 5 years of experience receiving HUD assistance or other government assistance.
  - Attachment 4: HUD CoC Project Application. **Applicants must complete the New Project Application in HUD's online application system, e-snaps**, and provide 211OC with a pdf export of the completed application. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read both the New Project Detailed Instructions and the New Project Instructional Guide, which provide information on how to use e-snaps and also important information about how to develop complete and responsive answers to all narrative questions. These documents may be found at: instructions and documents related to the application may be found at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4688/fy-2015-coc-program-nofa/>
- **Exhibit 2: Participation Status in Local Continuum of Care, Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, HMIS Data Information and Coordinated Assessment System**
- **Exhibit 3: Terms and Conditions<sup>3</sup>**
- **Exhibit 4: Financial Assessment**
  - Attachment 5: In-Kind Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
  - Attachment 6: 25% Match documentation letters for 2015<sup>4</sup>
- **Exhibit 5: Certification of Consistency in the Consolidated Plan (per CoC project)**
- **Exhibit 6: Environmental Information Form (per CoC project)<sup>5</sup>**
  - Attachment 6: Limited Scope Environmental Review Form
  - Attachment 7: Environmental Review of Categorically Excluded Not Subject to Section 58.5
- **Exhibit 7: Veteran Project Bonus**
- **Exhibit 8: Housing First Model Assessment**

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<sup>2</sup> Under the HEARTH Act, each recipient or project sponsor is required to provide for the participation of not less than one homeless individual on the board of directors or other equivalent policymaking entity of the recipient or project sponsor, to the extent that such entity considers and makes policy decisions regarding any project, supportive services, or assistance provided.

<sup>3</sup> The release of information document will allow the Orange County CoC to share information, such as data in the Line of Credit Control System, with 211OC, HUD and other applicable third party entities.

<sup>4</sup> If match documentation letters will not be ready by submission deadline, they will be needed in time of e-snaps submission

- Attachment 8: A copy of Section 3B. Project Description, items 5 (Housing First) a., b., c., and d. from the 2015 HUD New Project Application;
- Attachment 9a: A copy of any proposed program rules, service plans, or applicable documents that include questions b. or c. above.
- Attachment 9b: Effective dates of any organizational or program documents submitted under #2 above.

**Required HUD Forms that MUST be Completed**

All HUD forms are to be completed in your assigned USB.

HUD Form	Purpose
SF 424 Supp	Survey On Ensuring Equal Opportunity For Applicants
2880	Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report
SF LLL	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
50070	Drug-Free Workplace Certification

Technical Requirements for Preparing the Letter of Intent Packet

1. One (1) printed original with signatures and four (4) complete copies in binders with clearly marked section tab dividers for all exhibits, attachments and required documents. Clearly mark original.
2. One (1) electronic copy on a USB flash drive with completed RFP, exhibits and attachments along with other pertinent documentation to be organized and separated per Document Presentation requirements.

Document Presentation Requirements

1. **No late submissions** will be accepted.
2. **Clearly identify** which version is the original and which is the copy on the front page of the document.
3. All sections will be numbered separately with tabs in accordance with the Supporting Documents Checklist.
4. **Most recent** documentation for each Exhibit and Attachment.
5. Dividers with tabs clearly labeled between each exhibit and attachments.
6. **Complete** all attachments and exhibits per RFP requirements. Do not leave any blank responses without an explanation. If the question is not applicable, please indicate N/A.
7. All documents with a signature block must be **signed** by the authorized officer(s).
8. All supporting documents must be included in the submission. No exceptions.
9. All supporting documents must be legible.
10. Double-sided.

Failure to submit any of the required documents may result in failure to pass threshold review.

The RFP submission including all Exhibits and Attachments must be **hand delivered** by 12:00 pm (noon) Pacific Standard Time on October 19, 2015 to:

2-1-1 Orange County  
 Attention: Zulima Pelayo  
 1505 E. 17th Street, Suite 108  
 Santa Ana, CA 92705

**Right of Orange County Continuum of Care to Waive Irregularities**

The Orange County Continuum of Care reserves the right to:

1. Withdraw this solicitation at any time without prior notice and, furthermore, makes no representation that any contract occur and that funds will be awarded by HUD to any respondent to this solicitation.
2. Waive any irregularities in the RFP process and to reject any and all submissions not in the best interest of the Continuum of Care.
3. To request additional information and material. In addition, once released, the application from HUD may require and warrant the request of supplemental material.
4. Not renew grants that have exhibited serious capacity issues in prior grants, including performance and financial problems, HMIS participation, or unresolved monitoring issues, or based on the best interest of the entire CoC Application. HUD will review applications and make the final funding decision.
5. Retain all submitted applications. Selection or rejection of a application does not affect these rights.

### Further Questions and Additional Resources

211OC is available to answer questions on the Letter of Intent, application deadlines, process, training, or to provide copies of application materials. For further questions or technical assistance, please contact 211OC.

211 OC Staff Person	Phone	Email
Zulima Pelayo	(714) 589-2358	<a href="mailto:zpelayo@211oc.org">zpelayo@211oc.org</a>

Specific questions regarding your HUD grant amount, HUD guidelines and etc. should be directed to your local HUD field office representative. **Please DO NOT contact the HUD office regarding Orange County's local application deadlines or process**, as 211OC is available to answer those questions.

### Additional Information

Agencies will be required to comply with terms set forth by the CoC and HUD. In addition, all applicants are strongly advised to review all applicable terms, conditions and federal requirements.

It is strongly recommended that you obtain and review information related to the Continuum of Care Program, the CoC Interim Rule, and the HEARTH Act Regulations, along with any other related documents prior to completion of this RFP. In addition, HUD will provide updates via their website at <https://www.hudexchange.info/>.