



**Re: 2009 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Notice of Funding Availability and Request for Proposals**

Dear Service Provider:

This letter is to inform you of the expected availability of funds through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Homeless Assistance Funding Competition. Through this annual competition, HUD makes funds available to projects that fill locally-identified gaps in Continuum of Care (CoC) systems in order to assist homeless persons in their move toward self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

*There have been several changes made to the local process for the 2009 competition to strengthen the Buffalo and Erie County Application. Please read this document carefully! A brief overview of the competition changes is provided below. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to read the Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care Guidelines 2009 document posted on the Homeless Alliance of WNY website ([www.wnyhomeless.org](http://www.wnyhomeless.org)) for the most complete information.*

## **Changes in 2009**

On February 4 at 1pm, a workshop on innovative approaches to permanent housing will take place at Belmont Shelter Corporation (1195 Main St in Buffalo). **All CoC Applicants are required to attend. Any Applicant Agency that does not send a representative to this workshop will be ineligible to apply in the 2009 CoC competition.**

*The Local Application has expanded to include information about:*

- Project dollars spent on housing vs. services;
- Expanded questions about BAS-Net participation;
- More descriptive questions about ensuring project goals.

*The budget form has been modified. All fields are the same but it has been formatted differently. In addition, a section has been added to determine the cost per client per year in the budget.*

*There is no pre-application for New Projects. Renewal Projects and New Projects will submit a local application and answer the applicable questions for their projects. The deadline for submission of local applications – for both New Projects and Renewal Projects – is Friday, February 27, 2009. For New Projects, this is an initial local submission with an opportunity to revise the application after a review by*

Homeless Alliance staff. More details are provided in the **New Projects** section on Pages 3 and 4.

*This Request for Proposals includes New Information about Scoring Criteria.* Please note the information provided about housing vs. services ratios in the project budget requests.

*For more information about 2009 Changes, please see the Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care Guidelines 2009, available at the Homeless Alliance website ([www.wnyhomeless.org](http://www.wnyhomeless.org)).*

## **New Projects**

In 2009, the Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care application process will focus on addressing priority areas as determined by annual data collection efforts and goals identified in the community's 10-Year Plan (to read the 10-Year Plan, visit [www.wnyhomeless.org](http://www.wnyhomeless.org)). *While any organization can apply for funds, new projects addressing identified priority need areas will be given considerable preference in the local competition.* The only exception to this will be for one-time-only capital construction or rehab projects, which may be considered for funding if, after new and renewal decisions are made, there are still available dollars.

### **2009 Priority Areas (New Projects Only)**

This year, the Homeless Alliance of WNY has identified several priority need areas. Projects applying to meet one of the Priority Need Areas should utilize evidence-based or best practices to create their program models. Based on national and local research and strategies highlighted in the 10-year plan, the Alliance will make recommendations of types of interventions that have been successfully used around the country to meet the identified Priority Need Areas. *If a project is not utilizing one of the recommended models, the Applicant will be asked to document the success or justify the use of the proposed model in the local application.* Documentation may consist of national research or outcome measures from similar programs.

Very brief descriptions are offered for each model; please contact the Alliance for more information or visit the links provided.

### **Priority Need Areas are as follows:**

#### *Permanent Housing for the Chronically Homeless*

The Safe Haven model of permanent housing for the chronically homeless has been shown to engage persons in housing and services that have historically been "difficult to serve." This low-demand intervention offers permanent housing with supportive services available but not required as a condition of stay. Find more about Safe Havens at the Ward Family Foundation website <http://wardfamilyfoundation.org/shp.shtml>.

The HUD definition of Chronic Homelessness can be found in the policy guidelines.

#### *Transitional Housing for Youth (14-18) and/or Young Adults (18-25)*

Step-up or graduated housing models have been very successful for homeless youth and young adults. Lighthouse Youth Services in Cincinnati, Ohio (<http://www.lys.org/>) runs a nationally-recognized transitional housing program of this type.

#### *Innovative Housing for Families (Housing First)*

Housing First models, which rapidly re-house families in rent subsidized apartments while providing supportive services such as case management, are showing excellent results around the country. Information on Housing First programs for families can be found at the National Alliance to End Homelessness' website, <http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/tools/housingfirst>.

#### *Permanent Housing for:*

- a. *Clients dealing with Mental Health Issues*
- b. *Clients dealing with Substance Abuse Issues*
- c. *MICA Clients*

Permanent Supportive Housing models have operated successfully in our community for many years. Please contact the Alliance and staff will put interested applicants in touch with a similar provider.

#### *Client-Centered Case Management for the Chronically Homeless*

Supportive Services Only projects are becoming increasingly difficult to fund through federal HUD CoC dollars. New Supportive Services Only projects are not eligible to compete in the 2009 competition. However, the Homeless Alliance is interested in working with agencies that want to pilot a client-centered (rather than program-specific) case management project for the chronically homeless. With that in mind, the PATH program through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has funding available for innovative approaches to case management services to the chronically homeless. If you are interested in piloting such a project, please contact Devan DeCicco, Homeless Alliance Continuum of Care Coordinator, for more information (853-1101 x403).

### **Required Consultation**

New Project Applicants are *required* to have a consultation with the Homeless Alliance Executive Director Bill O'Connell to discuss a new application *prior to the submission deadline of February 27, 2009*. Please contact Bill O'Connell at 716-853-1101 to schedule this consultation. *Failure to schedule this consultation may result in an application being withheld from the competition or ranked lower by the priorities committee.*

### **Site Visit**

Following the submission of a New Project Application, new applicants may be contacted to schedule a site visit. The site visit occurs after Homeless Alliance staff has reviewed a New Project Application and wishes to consult the New Project Applicant to make suggested changes in the project design, goals, or budget. These changes are not mandatory but are advised to ensure that the agency has a competitive application to submit to the Decisions Committee. If the agency chooses to revise the application, the deadline for submission will be ten (10) business days following the site visit by Homeless Alliance staff. Any New Project Applicant that does not submit a revised application by this time will go forward in the local competition with the initial local submission of their New Project Application.

*(Continued on page 4)*

In addition to this site visit, New Project Applicants should avail themselves in the event that a member of the Decisions Committee should request an additional site visit to learn more about the project.

## **Scoring in the Local Competition**

Applicants will be scored on project design and how the project addresses priority need areas; description of how the project addresses community needs (see application form); budget; project match; leveraging; collaboration; and implementation timeline. Since 2006, HUD has put increasing emphasis on the amount of dollars requested for housing vs. the amount of dollars requested for services. Therefore, *it is unlikely that a New Project Application that has a housing dollars request at or below 50% of the total request will be successful in the local competition.* For more information about what constitutes housing activities in the CoC, see the *Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care Guidelines 2009.*

## **New Project Submission Procedures**

When submitting your local application, you must include twenty (20) double-sided copies of your materials. Please do not staple your application materials (paper-clips/binder clips/dividers are acceptable).

New Project Applications can be dropped off or mailed to:

Homeless Alliance of Western New York  
286 Lafayette Ave  
Buffalo, NY 14213  
Attn: Continuum of Care Decisions Committee

New Project Applications not received by Friday, February 27th will *not* be considered for inclusion in this year's Continuum of Care competition.

*Incomplete New Project Applications will receive lower scores for their project.* Please review your application to make sure you have answered all questions and filled out a complete budget. If for any reason you are unable to complete a part of the application, contact the Homeless Alliance Continuum of Care Coordinator, Devan DeCicco, at 853-1101 x403.

Homeless Alliance staff members may call to schedule a site visit during the week of March 9. Please be available during that time to answer any questions about the New Project Application.

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During site visits, New Project Applicants will receive reviewer feedback from Homeless Alliance staff and will have the opportunity to make any suggested changes. *Revised New Project Applications will be due to the Homeless Alliance office on Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> by 5pm.* Any New Project Applicant that does not submit a revised application by this time will go forward in the local competition with the initial local submission of the New Project Application.

After the local prioritization process, you will receive a ranking score and further instruction from the Homeless Alliance about submission of your federal application and certifications. Please note: *the local application is for the local competition only. A more detailed federal application will be required if your project should be selected for the federal competition.*

**Once a New Project Application is submitted, applicants should not make any revisions to budget or leveraging information without contacting Alliance staff!**

## **Renewal Projects**

The Homeless Alliance will accept renewal projects in the 2009 competition. All renewal applicants will be required to submit a local application in order to take part in the local competition. They will also submit client satisfaction surveys and may be asked to take part in a site visit/interview with key agency personnel during the month of March.

*All renewal projects must submit their most current HUD Annual Performance Report with their materials.*

Renewal Projects may submit funding requests for one, two, or three years worth of funding. Please note: *a renewal request for funding may not exceed the number of years requested in the original grant request. Also, the Decisions Committee reserves the right to limit the term of a request that an agency may compete for (i.e., a three-year request may be allowed to enter the federal competition for only a one-year or two-year request).*

*Local Renewal applications are due to the Homeless Alliance by 5pm on Friday, February 27.* Applicants who fail to submit their renewal application by the 5pm deadline will not be reviewed by the Continuum of Care Priorities Committee and will not be allowed to enter the federal competition through the Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care.

## **Scoring in the Local Competition**

Applicants will be scored on project design; description of how the project addresses community needs (see application form); budget; project match; leveraging; collaboration; performance measurements; and implementation timeline. Since 2006, HUD has put increasing emphasis on the amount of dollars requested for housing vs. the amount of dollars requested for services. Therefore, *it*

*is unlikely that projects with a housing dollars request at or below 50% of the total request will be allowed by the Decisions Committee to move forward to the federal competition for more than a one-year request.*

## **Submission Procedures**

When submitting a renewal application for the local competition, you must include fifteen (15) double-sided copies of your materials. Please do not staple your application materials (paper-clips/binder clips/dividers are acceptable).

Renewal applications can be dropped off or mailed to:

Homeless Alliance of Western New York  
286 Lafayette Ave  
Buffalo, NY 14213  
Attn: Continuum of Care Decisions Committee

Renewal applications not received by 5pm on Friday, February 27 will *not* be considered for inclusion in this year's Continuum of Care competition.

*Incomplete Renewal Project Applications will receive lower scores for their project.* Please review your application to make sure you have answered all questions and filled out a complete budget. If for any reason you are unable to complete a part of the application, contact the Homeless Alliance Continuum of Care Coordinator, Devan DeCicco, at 853-1101 x403.

After the local prioritization process, you will receive a ranking score and further instruction from the Homeless Alliance about submission of your federal application and certifications.

**Once a Renewal Project Application is submitted, Applicants should not make any revisions to budget or leveraging information without contacting Alliance staff!**

## **Additional Requirements**

### **Federal Application**

*Applicants who are selected to move forward to the federal competition are responsible for completing the HUD federal application as outlined in the HUD SuperNOFA.*

### **HMIS Requirement**

*All projects funded under the HUD Continuum of Care will be required to participate in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) operating within the Continuum area. Applicants are also*

strongly encouraged to participate in the Alliance's regular data collection efforts. Contact the HMIS Coordinator at the Alliance office (853-1101) for more information.

### **Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee**

*The Board of Directors of the Homeless Alliance has established a "Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee" to be paid by successful applicants for HUD Continuum of Care funding in order to reimburse the Homeless Alliance for the cost of work done to prepare, coordinate and complete the Continuum of Care application process. For more on this policy, see the Buffalo and Erie County Continuum of Care Guidelines 2009 document.*

### **Electronic Submission**

HUD requires electronic submission of all federal application materials from Project Applicants. Please see the *Continuum of Care Guidelines 2009* for more information on the electronic submission. *Upon completion of the federal application for those Project Applicants moving forward to the federal competition, Project Applicants will be required to make their final submission of the federal applications at the Homeless Alliance office* This protocol is in place to ensure that all information is submitted correctly and in a timely manner. More details on these procedures will be available upon your selection to move forward to the federal competition.

Also, agencies that submit a project application should register with E-SNAPS, HUD's electronic submission website. *Please Note:* This site is *not* the same as Grants.gov and agencies should not underestimate the time it will take to register with E-SNAPS. You can register here: <https://esnaps.hud.gov/grantium/frontOffice.jsf>. The Homeless Alliance does *not* offer technical assistance with registration on E-SNAPS.

*Please note: Project Applicants that are selected to move forward in the federal competition are advised to have access to a computer and the internet and also have an understanding of basic computer use. The Homeless Alliance may offer limited technical assistance including training on the HUD Logic Model and will be available to answer questions about the electronic submission form. Homeless Alliance staff will not offer any basic computer training or related assistance.*

Finally, the Homeless Alliance staff is available to provide more information or to answer specific questions you may have about the local and federal application process. Please contact us at 853-1101 or check our website ([www.wnyhomeless.org](http://www.wnyhomeless.org)). Further information regarding the HUD Continuum of Care Funding Competition can also be found at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov).

### **Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee**

The Board of Directors of the Homeless Alliance has established the following policies in regard to the payment of fees related to successful HUD Continuum of Care applications.

1. A fee, to be known hereafter as the "Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee" is to be paid by successful applicants for HUD Continuum of Care funding, as described below, in order to reimburse the Homeless Alliance for the cost of work done to prepare, coordinate and complete the Continuum of Care application process.

2. Every applicant for Continuum of Care funding shall be notified in writing of the requirement to pay this fee, including a general explanation of the work done by Homeless Alliance staff and volunteers that justifies the imposition of this fee, the formula used to calculate the fee, and other payment rules, no later than 30 days prior to the date that such applications are due to the Homeless Alliance.
3. *Fee Calculation:* this fee owed shall be equal to 0.5% (zero point five percent) of the total award granted by HUD to the grantee. Where a multi-year award is granted, the fee will be calculated and due on the total award.
4. *Payment Method:* fees are to be paid by check or money order, and are to be made payable to "Homeless Alliance of WNY, Inc."
5. *Payment Schedule:* fees will be due and payable according to the following schedule:
  - a. No later than 90 days from the date that HUD officially announces Continuum of Care awards, the Homeless Alliance will calculate and send an invoice to each grantee which details the amount of the fee owed and date due.
  - b. Payment of this fee shall be due no later than 30 days after the execution of a contract with HUD for the award subject to the fee, or no later than 30 days after receipt of an invoice from the Homeless Alliance, whichever comes later.
  - c. For multi-year awards, the full fee will be invoiced, but the option of paying on an annual basis over the life of the award is available to the grantee upon request.
6. *Sub-Grantees:* in the event that an agency applies for and receives an award on behalf of one or more sub-grantees, that agency (the "grantee") is responsible for the fee covering the total amount awarded, and it is the grantee's responsibility to collect from the sub-grantees, if they so choose. This policy does not apply to governmental entities.
7. *Credits:*
  - a. In the event that a grantee is required to pay to the Homeless Alliance membership dues for the same year in which a Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee has been paid, the amount of this fee actually paid will be credited toward the agency's dues obligation for that year.
  - b. In the event that a grantee is required to pay to the Homeless Alliance a Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee for the same year in which membership dues has been paid, the amount of dues actually paid will be credited toward the agency's fee obligation for that year.

- c. In the event that a grantee has made an unrestricted financial contribution to the Homeless Alliance during the same year in which a Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee falls due, this contribution will be credited toward the agency's fee obligation for that year.
- 8. *Failure to Pay*: the failure of a grantee to pay a Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee will be ranked as a significant factor in the evaluation of any future Continuum of Care applications the grantee submits to the Homeless Alliance.

The Board shall review the formula used to calculate the Continuum of Care Successful Application Fee on an annual basis. Any adjustments to this fee shall be made no later than November 1, and communicated to the Homeless Alliance members no later than December 1, to be effective the following year.

Sincerely,

William T. O'Connell  
Executive Director  
Homeless Alliance of WNY

Devan DeCicco  
Continuum of Care Coordinator  
Homeless Alliance of WNY