

## **Balance of State CoC Homeless Steering Committee Meeting**

**Friday, November 13, 2015**

### **Minutes**

1. Results of the Project Rating & Ranking Committee work on this year's applications (following up on the Cle Elm discussion on priorities for ranking projects)

John Epler described the system of scoring for the CoC ranking of projects and how HUD will score the projects. Projects that are reallocating from TH or SSO this year to a PSH or RRH project type, projects that reallocated and were new in the 2014 competition, projects that were new in the 2013 competition and had insufficient data for rating and the Commerce HMIS project are all exempt from the performance ranking and are placed into Tier 1. Bonus projects this year are placed into Tier 2. All other projects were ranked according to performance factors previously chosen by the CoC Steering Committee for the competition. 85% of the total annual renewal demand is placed into Tier 1 and 15% is placed into Tier 2 (along with the Bonus projects). HUD assigns a score to all projects in Tier 2 based on the CoC Collaborative Application (the same score for each project) positioning in Tier 2 (the higher the position in Tier 2, the higher the score), project type (TH, PH or SSO) and Housing First characteristics.

The CoC Rating Committee, with the approval of the Steering Committee, will spread the Bonus projects out in Tier 2 among the renewals in a strategic way that put the CoC in the best position to receive the most funding possible. One participant asked if they should withdraw their SSO project in order to increase the chances of more funding. Withdrawing an SSO would have little or no impact on the other projects. Because of the small grant request they will take up very few placement points. With strategic placement of projects in Tier 2 there is a possibility most of the SSO projects, along with the others, will receive funding. The committee agreed to a strategic ranking approach to maximize funding.

Discussion also included agreement to further review the Continuum's priorities for project type in the coming months to determine the most effective use of the Continuum's project resources.

2. A discussion on the importance of Housing First and Barrier Reduction policies to assure a competitive application

Part of HUD's scoring criteria this year is the extent of Housing First and Barrier Reduction policies within the projects of the CoC. Each project has an opportunity to indicate they operate or plan to operate a Housing First model with low barriers to entry and continued program participation. Projects will be individually scored and will receive more points from HUD if they employ a Housing First model, as will the CoC Collaborative Application overall. The group discussed the benefits and challenges of a Housing First model and removing barriers. Challenges raised by CoC members include limited resources at agencies for serving high-needs individuals, strict eligibility rules from public housing authorities, match providers requiring service engagement for eligibility and sensitivity of other program participants. Benefits of a Housing First model include removing unnecessary requirements to allow for quicker stabilization of participants and permanent housing outcomes. All housing projects (TH, PSH and

RRH) can employ a low-barrier Housing First model. HUD's focus, as is the state's Consolidated Homeless Grant, is to remove unnecessary barriers to entry and move people to permanent housing without adding unnecessary requirements for participants to fulfill first. Grantees are encouraged to revisit their application in e-snaps to remove barriers if they can operate their program in a Housing First model.

3. A discussion on the draft Policies and Procedures of the Balance of State Continuum of Care

The Committee reviewed updated CoC Policies and Procedures. A motion was made by Lael Duncan to adopt the updated Policies and Procedures as the new official working version. Motion was seconded by Judith Gidley. Motion carried. The updated Policies and Procedures are posted to the CoC website [www.commerce.wa.gov/CoC](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/CoC).