Outline of Overarching Policy Priorities Highlighted in FY 2024 and FY 2025 CoC Competition

HUD Homeless Policy Priorities:

The Homeless Policy Priorities section provides additional context regarding the selection criteria found in section V.B. of the HUD NOFO and is included here to help applicants better understand how the selection criteria supports the goal of ending homelessness:

1. *Ending homelessness for all persons.*
   In 2023, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) presented All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness to the President and Congress. The plan is built around six pillars: three foundations—equity, data and evidence, and collaboration—and three solutions—housing and supports, crisis response, and prevention. The work funded through this NOFO will support the actions and strategies proposed within the pillars.
   a. Identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness.
   b. Measure their performance based on local data that consider the challenges faced by all subpopulations experiencing homelessness in the geographic area, including:
      i. Veterans
      ii. Youth
      iii. Families
      iv. Chronically homelessness
      v. People with disabilities, including those living with HIV/AIDS
   c. CoCs should partner with housing, health care, and supportive services providers to expand housing options, such as permanent supportive housing, housing subsidies, and rapid rehousing.
   d. Use local data to determine the characteristics of individuals and families with the highest needs and longest experiences of homelessness to develop housing and supportive services tailored to their needs.

2. *Use a Housing First approach.*
   a. Prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and utilizes housing as a platform for providing supportive services that improve a person's health and well-being.
   b. CoC Program funded projects should help individuals and families move quickly into permanent housing without preconditions and ensure that participants can choose the services they need to improve their health and well-being and remain in their housing.
   c. CoCs should engage landlords and property owners to identify housing units available for rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing participants, remove barriers to entry, and adopt client-centered service methods.
   d. HUD encourages CoCs to assess how well Housing First approaches are being implemented in their communities.

3. *Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness.* In recent years, the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness has risen significantly, including a rising number of encampments in many communities across the country.
   a. People living unsheltered have extremely high rates of physical and mental illness and substance use disorders.
   b. CoCs should explore all available resources, including CoC and ESG funded assistance, housing subsidies, health care programs. and other supportive services to help improve unsheltered people's well-being and help them move as quickly as possible to permanent housing.
   c. CoCs should work with law enforcement and their state and local governments to ==enlist their support for housing people residing in encampments, and to avoid practices that criminalize==

==HUD updates to priorities in FY 24 and FY 25 NOFO highlighted yellow.==

homelessness. ==Criminalization of homelessness risks the health of people living unsheltered and makes it more difficult for them to move into permanent housing==.

    d. CoCs should use their Coordinated Entry process to promote participant choice, coordinate homeless assistance and mainstream housing and services, and ensure people experiencing homelessness receive assistance quickly.

4. *Improving System Performance.*

    a. ==CoC's should be assessing the performance of all homelessness projects using== system performance measures (e.g., average length of homeless episodes, rates of return to homelessness, rates of exit to permanent housing destinations).

    b. Review all projects eligible for renewal under the FY 2024-2025 CoC NOFO to determine their effectiveness in serving people experiencing homelessness, including their cost-effectiveness.

    c. ==The CoC Competition includes several options to help CoCs improve their effectiveness, including reallocation, expansion, and transition grants, and CoC's should take advantage of these options to improve system performance.==

    d. CoCs should also look for opportunities to implement continuous quality improvement and other process improvement strategies.

5. *Partnering with Housing, Health, and Service Agencies.*

Using cost performance and outcome data, CoCs should improve how all available resources are utilized to end homelessness. HUD encourages CoCs to maximize the use of mainstream and other community-based resources when serving persons experiencing homelessness and should:

    a) Work closely with health care systems and agencies and assist program participants to obtain health care and supportive services, including behavioral health services, including those covered and financed by Medicaid. CoCs should develop close partnerships with public health agencies to analyze data and design approaches that reduce homelessness, improve the health of people experiencing homelessness, and prevent and address disease outbreaks, including HIV/AIDS.

    ==b)== Partner closely with PHAs and state and local housing organizations to utilize coordinated entry, develop housing units, and provide housing subsidies to people experiencing homelessness. These partnerships can also help CoC Program participants exit permanent supportive housing through Housing Choice Vouchers and other available housing options. CoCs and PHAs should especially work together to implement targeted programs such as HUD-VASH, Mainstream Vouchers, Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers, ==Fostering Youth Independence (FYI) Vouchers==, and other housing voucher programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness. CoCs should coordinate with their state and local housing agencies on the utilization of new program resources provided through the Homelessness Assistance and Supportive Services Program (HOME ARP) that was created through the American Rescue Plan. ==CoCs should also work with organizations administering other housing assistance, such as assistance provided through HUD's Section 202 and 811 programs, HUD's Project-Based Rental Assistance, and U.S. Department of Agriculture's housing assistance programs.==

    c) ==Partner with local workforce development centers to improve employment opportunitie==s.

    d) ==Work with Tribal organizations to ensure that Tribal members can access CoC-funded assistance when a CoC's geographical area borders a Tribal area==.

6. *Racial Equity.*

    a. In nearly every community, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color are substantially overrepresented in the homeless population.

    b. HUD is emphasizing system and program changes to address racial equity within CoCs ==and projects.==

==HUD updates to priorities in FY 24 and FY 25 NOFO highlighted yellow.==

     c.   Responses to preventing and ending homelessness should address racial inequities to ensure successful outcomes for all persons experiencing homelessness using proven approaches, such as:
        i.   Partnering with ==a racially diverse set of community partners and people experiencing homelessness and partnering with== organizations with experience serving underserved populations.
     d.   CoCs should review local ==data,== policies, procedures, and processes to identify barriers that result in racial disparities and take steps to eliminate barriers to improve racial equity and to address disparities.

7. *Improving Assistance to LGBTQ+ Individuals.*
   a. Discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation manifests differently for different individuals and often overlaps with other forms of prohibited discrimination.
   b. CoCs should address the needs of LGBTQ+, transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary individuals and families in their planning processes.
   c. Additionally, when considering which projects to select in their local competition to be included in their application to HUD, CoCs should ensure privacy, respect, safety, and access regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation in projects.
   d. CoCs should also partner with organizations with expertise in serving LGBTQ+ populations.

8. *Persons with Lived Experience.*
   a. ==The people who know best what solutions will effectively end homelessness are those who are experiencing homelessness.==
   b. HUD expects CoCs to include people with lived homeless experience and expertise in their local planning and decision-making process.
   c. People with lived experience/expertise should determine how local policies may need to be revised and updated to improve the effectiveness of homelessness assistance programs, including participating in planning and oversight activities, developing local competition processes, ==monitoring, and evaluation==.
   d. CoC leaders and community partners should prioritize hiring people who have experienced homelessness in areas where their expertise is needed.

9. ==Building an Effective Workforce.==
   a) ==Homeless assistance providers need effective, well-supported staff to provide high quality assistance.==
   b) ==Unfortunately, recruiting and retaining qualified staff for programs to assist persons experiencing homelessness has proven difficult due to low pay and the challenging nature of the work.==
   c) ==To address this issue, HUD is applying cost of living adjustments to supportive service activities and other staff-focused budget line items to allow CoC budgets to better keep up with rising costs.==
   d) ==HUD also encourages CoCs to work with their funders and other community stakeholders to improve pay and support people who work in the homelessness sector.==

10. *Increasing Affordable Housing Supply.*
    a. The lack of affordable housing is the main driver of homelessness. CoCs play a critical role in educating local leaders and stakeholders about the importance of increasing the supply of affordable housing and the specific consequences of the continued lack of affordable housing.
    b. CoCs should be communicating with jurisdiction leaders, including for the development of Consolidated Plans, about the harmful effects of the lack of affordable housing, and they should engage local leaders about steps such as zoning and land use reform that would increase the supply of affordable housing.

==HUD updates to priorities in FY 24 and FY 25 NOFO highlighted yellow.==

c. This NOFO awards points to CoCs that take steps to engage local leaders about increasing affordable housing supply.

HUD Strategic and other Goals
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Strategic Plan sets the direction and focus of our programs and staff to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality, affordable homes for all. This HUD NOFO supports [HUD's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2022-2026](#) to accomplish HUD's mission and vision. Each of the five goals in the [Strategic Plan](#) include what HUD hopes to accomplish, the strategies to accomplish those objectives, and the indicators of success.

HUD will pursue two overarching priorities focused on increasing equity and improving customer experience across all HUD programs. Five strategic goals and several objectives undergird the Plan; however, the following goals are applicable to this NOFO:

Applicable Goals and Objectives from HUD's Strategic Plan

Strategic Goal 1: Support Underserved Communities
Fortify support for underserved communities and support equitable community development for all people.

1A: Advance Housing Justice
Fortify support for vulnerable populations, underserved communities, and Fair Housing enforcement.
1B: Reduce Homelessness
Strengthen Federal, State, Tribal, and community implementation of the Housing First approach to reducing the prevalence of homelessness, with the ultimate goal of ending homelessness.
1C: Invest in the Success of Communities
Promote equitable community development that generates wealth-building for underserved communities, particularly for communities of color.

Strategic Goal 2: Ensure Access to and Increase the Production of Affordable Housing
Ensure housing demand is matched by adequate production of new homes and equitable access to housing opportunities for all people.

2A: Increase the Supply of Housing
Enhance HUD's programs that increase the production and supply of housing across the country.
2B: Improve Rental Assistance
Improve rental assistance to address the need for affordable housing.

Strategic Goal 3: Promote Homeownership
Promote homeownership opportunities, equitable access to credit for purchase and improvements, and wealth-building in underserved communities.

3A: Advance Sustainable Homeownership
Advance the deployment of tools and capital that put sustainable homeownership within reach.
3A – Major Initiative: Expand Homeownership Opportunities
Promote financing for innovative ownership models to increase the availability of affordable housing.
3B: Create a More Accessible and Inclusive Housing Finance System
Advance new policy, programs, and modernization initiatives that support a more equitable housing finance system. Promote the preservation and creation of affordable housing stock.

Strategic Goal 4: Advance Sustainable Communities

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Advance sustainable communities by strengthening climate resilience and energy efficiency, promoting environmental justice, and recognizing housing's role as essential to health.

4A: Guide Investment in Climate Resilience

Invest in climate resilience, energy efficiency, and renewable energy across HUD programs.

4B: Strengthen Environmental Justice

Reduce exposure to health risks, environmental hazards, and substandard housing, especially for low-income households and communities of color.

4C: Integrate Health and Housing

Advance policies that recognize housing's role as essential to health.

You are expected to align your application to the applicable strategic goals and objectives in the priorities section. Use the information in that section to describe in your application the specific goals, objectives, and measures that your project is expected to help accomplish. If your project is selected for funding, you are also expected to establish a plan to track progress related to those goals, objectives, and measures. HUD will monitor compliance with the goals, objectives, and measures in your project.

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