

CoC NOFA Debriefing Call March 2019

0:00:00 Norm: Program competition debrief for the fiscal year 2018 CoC Program Competition. First of all, I want to welcome everyone to the webinar today, would like to introduce my co-presenter here, Kevin Turner. And we just wanna let you know, we'll have a couple of people in the background as well helping us to answer questions. And we have Brett Esders and Karen DeBlasio who will be available to answer your questions in the chat box. We do have a... Sorry, in the Q&A box. So if you have a question during the webinar, and you can really post your question at any time during the webinar. Please go ahead and post it in the Q&A box and we will try to answer as many of the questions as we can. And we'll answer questions either in that Q&A box or we will answer some of them live on the air, as they say. I will say we probably won't get to every question, some of the questions will likely have a lot more nuance and detail than we're able to answer on the webinar. If you have questions that you need answers to that we're not able to answer, either because of time or for another reason, please go ahead and submit those questions to the "Ask A Question" on the HUD Exchange in the e-snap's AAQ.

0:01:33 Norm: And again, we love questions, and even comments that you can submit during the... Into the Q&A box. So please feel free to answer them any time starting now, and through to the end of the webinar. I should mention all of the lines will be muted, except obviously for Kevin and I, and that's because there are so many people on this webinar, it would be impossible to work with if everyone was live, so all the lines will be muted. And to give you a sense of how this webinar is going to go, Kevin and I will present for about 25 minutes or so, and then the rest of the time will be available for question and answer, so we'll have a lot of time for Q&A. And we will just give sort of a general overview of the CoC Competition, Kevin will focus a lot on areas where if you're interested in things you can do to improve your application, he'll have some handy tips for how you can improve your application. So with that, I'm just gonna go ahead and jump right in. So in the just announced awards, we announced \$2.165 billion in funding.

0:03:00 Norm: A \$85 million of that was awarded for new permanent housing projects, including through reallocation and permanent housing bonus. Also with respect to reallocation, overall CoCs reallocated approximately 3.2% of their funding this year, that's down a little from previous years. But it gives you a good sense of how much reallocation has been happening. The policy priorities that we listed in the NOFA, we put these policy priorities in the NOFA to give people a sense of the overall goals of the NOFA, the overall goals of the CoC Program. And you can see these, they're consistent with last year's policy priorities and I think if you've been working with the program for a while, they should look very familiar. But we're very focused on ending homelessness for all people. We certainly have population-specific questions, but most of the NOFA rating criteria really deal with all populations. We're very focused on creating a systemic response to homelessness and not just looking at individual projects, but... And not just looking at HUD funding in the community, but really looking at all the activities going on in the community and how well they're addressing homelessness.

0:04:23 Norm: We're very much looking at strategically allocating and using resources, so really leveraging CoC funding, bringing in partners who can help healthcare partners, employment partners, education partners, and obviously housing partners. And very focused on using a Housing First Approach whenever we can. We don't necessarily expect every single project is using Housing First approach, but we certainly think that housing approaches are more effective in communities that use Housing First approach. We've seen them time and time again to be more successful. So I wanna talk quickly about the Tier One and Tier Two process and how that worked. Tier One is 94% of the CoC's annual renewal demand. I know most of you know that, but the annual renewal

demand is the amount it would take to fund all the projects that are eligible for renewal for one additional year. So that's sort of what we think of as the base, the starting point for how much funding a CoC is going to be able... Should be getting.

0:05:38 Norm: Projects that are ranked in Tier One, which means the first 94% of funding as far as project rank, those projects are safe. If they pass eligibility and quality threshold, they will be funded. And so communities that are really identifying high performing projects that are needed in the community, those should be ranked in Tier One and those will get awarded again if they pass eligibility and quality threshold. For Tier Two, so Tier Two is that extra 6% of the ARD, plus whatever funding is available for domestic violence bonus. Sorry, available for bonus generally. I wanna talk about the domestic violence bonus in a second, 'cause we treated that somewhat differently. All of these things are calculated before we adjust projects for changes in fair market rent. The changes in fair market rent are really applied at the very end of the process. It's the last thing we do. And so, Tier Two projects are not necessarily safe.

0:06:52 Norm: They can be awarded or not awarded depending on how well the CoC performs and how well it scores. So the Tier Two scoring process, the way this works is that all Tier Two projects from around the country, so every CoC's Tier Two projects, all are put in one national competition and they're rated on a 100-point scale. And the 100-point scale includes up to 50 points based on the CoC scores, so that's the biggest rating factor. Up to 40 points for where the CoC ranks the project within Tier Two. So projects closer to the top of the Tier Two list are going to get more points and projects at the bottom are going to get fewer points. And this is a way for us to really take into account the local evaluation and ranking process into our ranking process. And then the commitment to using Housing first practices is worth up to 10 points.

0:08:04 Norm: So the domestic violence bonus, we treat it a little differently than we have with other types of funding. So I wanna talk about how we did the domestic violence bonus very quickly. So CoC could apply for up to 10% of its preliminary pro rata need or with a minimum of \$50,000, so no CoC... Every CoC could apply for at least \$50,000, but never more than \$5 million. The preliminary pro rata need formula for those of you who aren't familiar is a formula that's been around for a very long time. It's a sort of... It was used a lot more in the early days of the CoC process. Now we focus much more on ARD and bonus biz, but it's a formula based on several factors, including community schools, population, age of housing stock, poverty, a bunch of different factors, and I won't go too much into the formula, but that is sort of the basis for determining how much domestic violence bonus funding you're eligible for.

0:09:15 Norm: For domestic violence bonus projects, we use a 100-point scale and you see the factors there up to 50 points based on the CoC score. If it was a Rapid Re-Housing or a Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Re-Housing project, there were an additional 50 points of which 25 were based on need for the project, 25 were based on quality of the project applicant. For coordinated entry project, the additional 50 points was based on the need for the project. So the way we did that domestic violence bonus selection, is it was really the first thing we selected in the application process. So we... The entire SNAPS office was reviewing CoC applications, we came up with a CoC application score, and we reviewed, actually with a lot of help from our friends at the Department of Justice, we reviewed the questions related to domestic violence bonus projects. And we came up with the score for all the domestic violence projects. Then we selected out the domestic violence projects, so that was the first selection we did.

0:10:27 Norm: If your CoC had a domestic violence project that was selected, we pulled it out of your priority list and we just awarded it. And then, wherever it was in the priority list, all the projects that were below it sort of slid up one level and then if the project did not get selected, we just left the domestic violence bonus on your priority list wherever you had ranked it. So, domestic violence bonus projects that were ranked number one would pretty much automatically receive funding. Either they would get funded through the domestic violence bonus process, or they would get funded just because they were a Tier One project. To give you a sense of how many domestic violence or what we funded with the domestic violence bonus, \$11 million of the funding was for coordinated entry projects, about \$12 million was for joint transitional housing and Rapid Re-Housing projects and about \$25 million was for Rapid Re-Housing projects. We awarded projects in 34 different states. A variety of rural/urban and suburban Continuum of Care, so we really... The projects were really well spread out across the country and across different types of Continuum of Care.

0:11:56 Norm: I just wanna touch briefly on reallocation. Reallocation is the process by which a CoC can essentially trade in a renewal project or a part of a renewal project to create a new project or expand an existing project. Again on average, CoCs reallocated about 3.2% of their resources. Last year this was about between 4% and 5%. So this is a bit lower than last year, we're not exactly sure why. It may be that CoCs are generally reallocating less. It may be the domestic violence bonus created enough opportunities for new projects that people didn't feel as much need to reallocate. So we're not sure exactly why, but it is lower than it was in previous years. One thing I wanna say about reallocation is that... So, as many of you who sort of have paid attention to your childhood cartoons about how bills become laws, and how appropriations work know that Congress appropriates funding, and they also sort of give us rules and tell us the rules of the funding. And one of the things that they have included in our appropriations bills is they have instructed HUD to give priority to communities that are reallocating resources.

0:13:23 Norm: And in fact, a CoC is not even eligible for a bonus unless they can demonstrate that they have the capacity to reallocate projects. That doesn't necessarily mean that they have reallocated, but they at least have to be able to demonstrate that they have the capacity to do so. So, reallocation is... Congress has very much supported this, HUD also supports it and we really feel like it has helped us get to a place where we're more effective and more efficient with our projects. So reallocation is a process that isn't going to be going away soon. Wanna talk quickly about the Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Re-Housing programs. So these projects combine the eligible activities of the Transitional Housing Projects with the eligible activities of Rapid Re-Housing Project, but all in one project. When a program participant enrolls in a Joint Component project, they are in... They are enrolling if they choose in both parts of the project simultaneously. So the project should not be structured such that you go into transitional housing first and then at a later time you enroll in Rapid Re-Housing. You should be able to provide both of those at the same time and in sufficient quantity for what your program participants are choosing.

0:14:50 Norm: So, one important thing about these projects is that it's important to think through the budget, to make sure you have enough Rapid Re-Housing resources for all the persons that are coming into the transitional housing portion. Our expectation is very much that the stays are very brief in almost all cases in the transitional housing portion of the project and that people are moving very quickly to permanent housing. Certainly in the cases where these are domestic violence projects, they should be driven by the time frame that the program participant is choosing and when they're ready and interested in moving out of the project and then into their own housing, the project

should be ready to help them with their Rapid Re-Housing right away. So, overall in the competition, we awarded about 155, Joint Rapid Re-Housing, Transitional Housing component project for a little over \$50 million. Many of those again were through the domestic violence bonus.

0:16:00 Norm: I wanna talk a bit about the local competition process, 'cause this is a really, really important process, part of the CoC Competition. So CoCs should be ranking project based on performance in need. As I mentioned before, the projects that end up in Tier Two are at risk of not being funded, and what that means... What that should mean is that those should be the lowest performing and least needed project in the community. We know that it's tough to... That the ranking process is very difficult and very challenging, and I have to say, I have an immense admiration for Continuum of Care leaders who really are able to implement this, and we know it's a tough process and we know that it is difficult to work with organizations that you've worked with for years, or maybe decades, and who've always been funded, but who aren't performing as well. And we know that whatever performance criteria you use are gonna be controversial. And I have to say, just again, immense respect for that kind of work, and it really has made the program work more effectively and more efficiently. And I will say it is one of the reasons Congress has been giving us additional resources over the past few years. So again, thank you for all that incredible work.

0:17:32 Norm: One area I would also like to mention about the local competition, and I think Kevin's gonna talk about this a little too, is that it's really important for CoCs to review the project applications. We do find a lot of mistakes in the project applications and a lot of them are likely preventable. But I'll let Kevin talk to... Talk about that some more. With that, I'm going to actually turn things over to Kevin and let him walk us through the rest of the presentation. So Kevin, why don't you take it away?

0:18:11 Kevin Turner: Thanks, Norm. So, why CoCs receive increased funding? CoCs with higher application scores generally do these things. They reduce homelessness, they use performance criteria, they use Housing First, they increased Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-Housing units and they reallocated lower performing projects to the extent that people scored lower was based on not doing these things at the same level that those who receive funding did. So, now we're gonna get into where applicants can improve, and so, we're gonna jump off here talking about detailed instructions. They contain very useful information. The NOFA regulations guidance and program requirements are the "what" is required. Detailed instructions are the "how to" apply for CoC program funds based on what is required. So, applicants can improve by responding to all parts of multi-part questions.

0:19:27 KT: And I note here, HUD is not trying to trick you. We're asking very specific questions and we're looking for very specific responses. So, you need to include the entire response in a question and avoid referring to other questions, attachments, websites or other resources. Because HUD cannot review anything that's not a part of the question, nor can HUD go to websites and other resources that one might point to in a question. So the question needs to be in its entirety. And make sure that the response addresses the specific elements of the question. And this is a big one, if you don't understand a question, submit an AAQ. We are, as Norm said, "We're happy to answer questions." We wanna make sure that people understand we work hard at the detailed instructions to try to make them clear. And so, if you have a question, please submit that question.

0:20:31 KT: Now, attachment is a big issue, and there's a lot of points associated with attachments. So, we're recommending that you triple check them and make sure that they address the question,

make sure that they're not blank, make sure that you only attach information that's necessary to respond to the specific question. Oftentimes what we see is that people will attach zip files to a specific attachment and it'll be a number of zip files, most of them not responsive to the question. And I know this is the case where people think that more is better, but in this case, it's not. So to the extent that you can limit the response to the question, it will be helpful for you and it will be helpful for the person who reviews it. And what we noticed also was people did not attach scoring tools or matrix. HUD carefully reviews these tools, the determinant of CoCs use performance criteria to rank and rate projects, and there's a lot of points associated with this. If a CoC says, "We had a meeting and we voted and we decided to keep these projects and not fund the other ones," and HUD doesn't see any way to measure that, then the CoC would have certainly received reduced points for that kinda response.

0:22:14 KT: The other issue is, is that we need final documents, not drafts. Attachments should include actual dates, not system-generated dates. And this is important when it comes to meeting the 14-day deadline for the local competition. We've given an example in the detailed instructions, how to provide evidence with the system-generated date for public postings that are required, and so, it would be helpful if people use those. So if... We're carefully checking to ensure that those dates meet the system requirements. So I just... Okay. I just had a... Something happened with my system. And the next thing is, meet all timeliness requirements. The local competition deadline, the local competition process must be completed 14 days before the CoC program competition application deadline. What we have seen is some people will post as final document, documents that are requiring a Board or some kind of other decisions that falls after that 14-day deadline, and HUD would not consider that a final document for our review purposes. And so now I'm gonna turn it back over to Norm, who's gonna talk about grants not funded.

0:23:56 Norm: Thanks very much, Kevin. Sorry about the little, I don't know, glitch and refresh in the screen. But what to do about grants not funded? So if you had a project that either was in Tier Two and didn't get funded for a domestic violence, bonus project that didn't get funded or a project that didn't meet threshold or requirements and didn't get funded, what do you do next? So there are a few things you should look at. One is that you will have the... Likely have the option of extending the grant. You don't get more money, but you can't extend the grant term, which may make it a little easier to wind down the project in a more rational way. And to do that you would work with your field office. So, in any case, if your grant is not being funded unless you have already planned for this and you feel like you're in good shape, it's worth reaching out to our field office. There will be a lot of stuff to do to close out the grant. And again, your field office will provide you with that information. One of the biggest areas of concern for us and all of you I'm sure is helping program participants to... If they need to move out of the project or transfer to another option to help them do that.

0:25:23 Norm: So, there are a lot of options often for doing this. It is... We are providing technical assistance to a lot of projects that were not funded to help out with this. And it is certainly worth asking through the AAQ about eligibility for a different project. So, when a project is closing down, we can provide you with information about whether those individuals are eligible for other projects and under what circumstances. If you happen to have a project that has a restrictive covenant, which means that there was either construction or acquisition and rehab funding in the initial project, and so, it has a 20-year or a 15-year use requirement. There are some options for that. We do actually have a document on the HUD Exchange that will help you walk through some of those options, but the main thing you need to do is contact your field office. They can walk you through what all the

various alternatives are. And we have worked with a lot of different projects around the country on this and been able to come up with some good resolutions.

0:26:43 Norm: In any case, it's worth reaching out to your field office well before the grant actually expires. It's also a good idea to reach out and try to get some technical assistance to help you again with questions about eligibility and other areas that may help you wind down the project. So with that, we are at our... Kevin and I are done with our presentation, so we will spend the rest of the time answering questions. We have a lot of questions, which is great. A couple of things I forgot to mention. I always forget, I don't know why, but the slides... A recording and the slides will be available. It's probably gonna be about two weeks, but they will be available on the HUD Exchange. And so, that probably would have been more helpful information before you took notes on all of the slides, but those will be available.

0:27:46 Norm: And again, if you want to ask a question, please just go into that Q&A box and type in the question and you can see that many of them have already been answered, but I will go through some more. So we had several questions about Housing First. So I want to talk through them a little bit. First question from Suzy and I'll just sort of read the question. We realize Housing First is the key Federal priority, what do we do about Legacy CoC Projects that received funding initially before the CoC... Sorry, before Housing First was a priority? So, that's a great question. And different communities approach this different ways. One of the things that... A lot of communities will use Housing First as part of their rating criteria in their ranking process. And so, that's one approach CoCs take.

0:28:58 Norm: We have actually published a... sort of a Housing First fidelity tool that if you as a CoC wanted to use that with some of your recipients to just see how well they're implementing Housing First, that tool is available on the HUD Exchange, it is not required, but it is something that can be helpful to use. And again, that's something that if you chose to, you could use it as part of your scoring process. So those are some of the... And a lot of communities are really just doing the relationship work of trying to work with those projects, and I'm sure this is something you work on every day, but working with those projects to try and convince them to use Housing First approaches. So, Suzy also had a question about whether HUD has approved any high-performing communities? This is something I didn't really mention in the beginning. HUD has not... Actually, nobody has applied to be a high performing community yet. There is a... We actually haven't noticed, but you can see on our website, if you wanted to apply to be a high-performing community.

0:30:17 Norm: It is a very, very challenging standard to meet, it is a standard that is largely set by Congress. But if you meet that standard, and can demonstrate that through that you actually apply during the registration process, then you can use funding for homelessness, you can use CoC funding for homelessness prevention, which gives you a lot more flexibility to serve a lot of different populations that you don't normally serve. So a great question, Suzy, thank you for those. We have a question about reallocation from Bill. The question is, how does the CoC demonstrate a capacity to reallocate without actually showing that they have reallocated? So Kevin, I'm gonna take the first crack at this, but you actually probably know something about this too, so feel free to jump in if you want.

0:31:13 Norm: We do actually have a series of questions in the CoC application that we use to determine whether the CoC has the capacity to reallocate and they include things like, "Did you notify applicants that they had, or did you notify the community that there would be an opportunity

to apply for new projects? And do you rate when you go through your rating and ranking process? Does that process allow for the possibility of reallocation? Do you score, essentially rate new projects coming in along with renewal projects? And if a new project is going to perform better and is more needed by the community, that it would get ranked about that other project."

0:32:08 Norm: So those are the kinds of questions... I'm really paraphrasing, 'cause I don't remember the specific wording of those questions. But that's what we use, 'cause we also recognize that we don't want people to reallocate and end up with a worst system. I mean, that's obviously not the point of this. So, there should never be any incentive or any reason to reallocate just for the sake of reallocation. There's always... You just have to show that you have had a process where if you had a better project where reallocation would've helped, you would have been able to do that. Kevin, do you have additional thoughts? Or did I get most of it?

0:32:48 Kevin Turner Sr.: So I would think the other thing is demonstrating that the CoC is actively seeking to reallocate based on performance, as opposed to having a passive process.

0:33:07 Norm: Yes, that's a good point. That was absolutely a part of that sort of series of questions that we reviewed for that. So Bill, thank you for the questions. Question... I'll just read this out. People... Well, actually Brett pasted this question and perhaps she was paraphrasing, but the question is about why we don't provide a more detailed breakdown of scores and how are people supposed to improve their scores, if they don't get better feedback? So, let me walk through our... First of all what we've provided and why we provide what we do, and not what we don't. So, I also forgot to mention this, I think CoCs should have received a debriefing document that included their scores on the major sections of the CoC application, as well as their scores on some of the high priority questions in that... In the application. We are not planning to provide any additional scores beyond those.

0:34:23 Norm: One of our really big concerns about this is we reuse questions in the application. I'm sure everyone has noticed this, but we reuse questions in the application from year to year and one of the things we are trying to focus on is, is really evaluating the performance of a CoC in reducing homelessness and adopting strategies that will reduce homelessness and not to sort of focus on sort of the quality of the of the responses or the sort of very... The nuances of grant writing and when we've provided information, we try to focus on the larger areas that are really about performance and helping guide people to improve performance and not provide information that essentially just makes people better at submitting an application but not actually helping improve the overall quality of homeless assistance. It's a tough balance for us to figure out where that is, but that's the approach we've been taking. So, great question there, thank you. So, we have a question about... We have a couple of questions about the domestic violence bonus. So, one of the questions is, will CoCs be informed of the score for their... Of the domestic violence bonus project? We will be providing the scores of those projects. We haven't yet obviously, it's gonna take a little work, and a little more work and we'll probably have those out in a few weeks, but we will provide the scores for the domestic violence bonus projects.

0:36:16 Norm: A related question is about, how can you tell if your domestic violence bonus project was awarded through the domestic violence bonus or because it was ranked highly enough and the CoC scored well enough to get the project? And that's a great question and I'm not actually sure I know the answer to that. We will try to when we... So, I think maybe one of the things we should put on the debriefing document is, what the overall score threshold was, so you can see if it

scored above or below the threshold. But I don't know why, but I don't think we really thought to indicate the reason that you were awarded the project. So, that's on us to try and get that information back to you. Great question and thank you for that. Some people have asked when CoCs will receive their scores? I think CoCs should have received their debriefing document already. So if you haven't, please reach out maybe to your SNAPS desk officer or to your field office. They should have been sent out and if they've got lost somewhere in the email world, we apologize for that and we can get those to you as soon as possible. It's a great question.

0:37:54 Norm: Okay, going through tiering. So there's a question about can you tell us the cut-off scores for Tier Two project? A great question. So the score... The cut-off line, the minimum score for receiving funding as a Tier Two project was 68.0. So there was a project that got 68.01 points that was funded and a project that got 67.99 points that wasn't funded, so that was the scoring threshold. We have a separate question about whether HUD plans to use the tiering approach in the coming years. And so, with a caveat that we can't... Like, we don't necessarily know what is going to be in the next NOFA. Congress can always change things and other things can change and a lot depends on how much money we have and all those other things. The answer is pretty much yes, that we do plan on continuing to use the tiering process.

0:39:07 Norm: We feel like it strikes a good balance between making sure that high performing projects are protected and funded, but also making the CoC process competitive and encouraging better performance which has been, again, a key, I think to... In a lot of communities to just improve quality of homeless assistance. There's also been really important to getting additional funding for homeless assistance for the past several years. So we do plan on continuing to use it. We always try to make adjustments and make improvements, but as you can see, we've used basically the same approach for the past several years, and I think you can probably read a lot into that.

0:39:55 Norm: A question about... Okay, so there's a great question here about consolidations and actually... So the question is, why were projects that were consolidated given a 14-month grant period instead of a 12-month grant period? So, let me walk through this a little bit and explain how we approached consolidation grants, and I will say from our perspective, not that they were... Everything went perfectly, but the consolidation process worked quite well. So, a lot of that has to do with applicants who did a great job with the consolidated project application, so thank you for that. But... So there were a lot of things we were trying to sort through and make work well in the consolidation process. What happens in a consolidation is that you have several projects that you're trying to merge into one project, but they all have different start and end times. And what we wanted to do was to make sure that... We wanted to make the whole process as easy as possible, we also didn't want to cut off older projects like to end them sooner and recapture funding. And we also wanted to keep... We wanted to make the money sort of easier to manage from our perspective.

0:41:29 Norm: So, let's say you have one project that expired in February, combining with a project that expires in November. So, we could have taken several different approaches. We could have said, "Okay, we will have both... We will have both projects start and end in February," which means that we would recapture a lot of the money from the project that expires in November and have a cycle that starts and ends in February. So that had a couple of drawbacks. One, we don't like recapturing funding. Once we award funding, we like for people to get to use it. Two, you can probably imagine, there are a lot of good reasons we don't want to move project earlier in the year, as far as grant funding, often that's challenging when the competition process takes longer than expected or appropriations take longer than expected. So we could have had a process where both

grants expire in November, which would have meant we would fund... We would have to provide more than one years worth of funding for projects. The downside of that is we would have been able to fund fewer projects overall, which obviously would've been a drawback.

0:42:45 Norm: So, what we did instead is we said, "Okay, we'll provide one year of funding for the consolidated project." And what we'll do is the portion of the project that expired in February, the new consolidated project can pick up those units starting in February and the one that ended in March, the consolidated project can then pick up those units... Or sorry, in November. Can then pick up those units that ended in November and we would calculate... Well, based on that, how long can the project run at the correct rate of spending? Right? You have to pay rent every month, and pay salaries every month, so there's sort of a natural monthly spending rate to a project. And what we did is, we calculated, well then how long will that run so that we can calculate when does that project need to be renewed? So it doesn't have to either increase funding or decrease funding. So that's...

0:43:43 Norm: So we created this formula that calculates all that and that's why your grant terms will generally be... In the case I just cited, you'd have a grant term that starts in February, and ends, depending on the size and the project, roughly in July. So that's what we did with consolidations. And it also means that your GIWs will be much more straightforward. Our funding decisions were much more straightforward and the only hard part was coming up with a math formula for determining when the consolidated grant should end? What should be its expiration date? And we're good at math here, so that wasn't a problem for us. So great question, thank you very much. So, what was the... There's a question about what was the lowest CoC score that received bonus funding? That is a great question, and I honestly have no idea what the answer to that is. But that's something when we do this again next year, that's a piece of information we'll try to catch for you. It's a great question though.

0:44:55 Kevin Turner Sr.: Hey Norm, the DV bonus questions... I mean, the DV bonus projects that were funded through the DV bonus...

0:45:04 Norm: Yup.

0:45:05 Kevin Turner Sr.: Have a D in the grant number.

0:45:10 Norm: Oh, that's right. So, thank you Kevin, and thank you for paying attention. So if you are... To the earlier question about how you can tell if your DV bonus project was funded through the DV bonus or through the regular process is the DV bonus project would, as Kevin mentioned, have a D in their grant number. What's the letter they have if they're not a DV bonus project? Do you remember?

0:45:39 Kevin Turner Sr.: A different letter. I think it's probably L. [chuckle] I think L is the common number that's in the regular CoC grants.

0:45:51 Norm: Great. So, thank you. So, look at your grant number. If it's a D, it was through the DV bonus, if it's an L or something else, it was through the regular process. Thanks Kevin for chiming in with that. Let me see, we have several other questions. Project level performance. So Kevin, can you talk a little bit about this from the rating perspective, and I wanna talk about this question a little more generally, but the question is, are there specific performance criteria HUD

would suggest CoCs use to score higher in the project level performance section? So this is the section where they rank and rate their application. So this is like the 1E1 question that HUD would suggest that CoCs used to score higher in this section, and... Well, can you talk a little bit about that? Can you just talk about generally what we were looking for in that section?

0:47:11 Kevin Turner Sr.: So the 1E questions... I'm trying to think. They... I thought you were talking about... I thought you were gonna address the issues of some of the projects, when it comes to ranking and rating.

0:47:35 Norm: So one thing I would say is that we... You know, there are a lot of ways to do this, and we try to be flexible about this, so we don't have... We're not super specific there. We do look at the degree to which the project helps with system performance.

0:47:55 Norm: This is again something that's in our congressional language. So, we are looking for some indication that it is... You're evaluating it, based on whether it improves system performance on some measure. And for those of you who don't remember our system performance measures, it reduces the length of time people experience homelessness, it reduces returns to homelessness, it increases exits to permanent housing destinations, it improves employment and income. Those are the main ones. There are a couple of others, but those are the main ones. So, we are really looking for some indication that those are in some way improving system performance, but we also know that there's a lot of reasons to do different things locally and that you may have indicators of performance in need that are important to you for some reason, and you know, we are... We give people credit for other types of performance, but we are definitely at very least looking for that improvement consistent performance.

[overlapping conversation]

0:49:06 Norm: No, go ahead Kevin.

0:49:07 Kevin Turner Sr.: And so, we're looking for points being assigned to those questions and how people are evaluating them, and whether they're actually including them as they're prioritizing.

0:49:23 Norm: Exactly. So, this is one of the reasons we ask for the scoring matrix, or whatever tool you use to be attached is, we need to see evidence that those performance criteria are actually having an impact on the rating. And so, we're kinda looking for the math or whatever the logic is behind behind those. So Kevin, this actually brings up another question about sort of our scoring process in general. Can you... So we have two major types of questions in the CoC application. We have things that we are... That are fairly... That are either numbers or check boxes or things that we are able to auto-score, which means we just... We create logic that... And they just sort of automatically get scored based on the logic we create. And so, we have a lot of questions that are scored like that. And you can imagine like, your length of time homeless question is scored like that. We have your data from last year, we have your data from this year and we just apply a scoring rubric to that. But there are also questions that are... A lot of questions that have narrative responses. And Kevin, can you talk about the process we use to score those narrative questions?

0:50:55 Kevin Turner Sr.: So it's important for people to know that there are at least two reviewers that review every narrative question. And the same way we provide detailed instructions to applicants for applying, we apply very rigorous detailed instructions for reviewers to review, so that

we have a uniform scoring system. And we're very meticulous about this process. So, when we're actually reviewing the projects, we're looking for very specific answers. So when you have a multi-part question, we're looking for very specific answers to those questions and we score them accordingly. And you should also know, often times people are trying to figure out the points. And it's also important to note that some questions, some points are associated with different questions, so there's various questions that get to different points, and there's this whole big matrix thing that runs behind all this stuff, that ties all the points to the different questions to the various aspects of what we're looking for.

[pause]

0:52:35 Kevin Turner Sr.: I can't.

[pause]

0:52:54 Brett: Norm, I think you're muted.

0:52:58 Norm: Thank you Brett. You guys missed a great little talk there, but thank you Brett. So, we have a question about how a lower ranked DV bonus project might be funded above a higher ranked project, and why would that be? So I wanted... There are actually a few different scenarios where a lower... There aren't that many, but a few scenarios where a lowering rank project might be funded above a higher rank project. And I want to just walk through those scenarios very quickly. So one is that the way the Domestic Violence bonus worked is that you really had two chances to get a Domestic Violence bonus project funded. Through the domestic violence bonus, which means, we scored every Domestic Violence Project, no matter where it was ranked on by the CoC. We scored them all. If they scored high enough, they got awarded. So even if it was the very last project in a priority listing, if it was enough to... If it scored high enough on the DV bonus criteria then it would get awarded. So, that's one way, even your very bottom ranked project could have been awarded, even though ones above it weren't.

0:54:18 Norm: Another reason is that, in some cases, a project... Even a project in Tier One would not have been able... Would not have passed either threshold or eligibility reviews. So, we look at every... We read every single project application, all 8000 or so of them, and there are certain eligibility criteria and threshold criteria they have to meet. For eligibility, for renewals, the main one is that they have to be expiring in the correct year to be eligible for renewal. But there are other reasons they may not be eligible as well. And so, if a project does not meet the eligibility or threshold requirements, then it just won't get funded period, and ones that are under it could potentially get funded. The other major reason that this would have happened is, it is possible for a lower rank Tier Two project to be funded above a higher rank Tier Two project based on the Housing First score. So, if a higher rank Tier Two project does not get all 10 points on the Housing First criteria and a lower ranked one does, it can catch up in PATH higher rank project. So that happens very, very rarely, but it does happen occasionally. So those are the main reasons that... And Kevin maybe you can talk about some of the other reasons that a project might not have passed either thresholds... Well, it's mostly threshold. Can you talk about some of the reasons for that?

0:56:07 Kevin Turner Sr.: Well, some would be the support services don't match the population being served. Proposed activities are ineligible. You have ineligible housing types based on the component. The program description doesn't line up with the budget and other things in the grant.

The proposed housing is an ineligible... Units don't match persons being served, BLIs are... Don't match up with the project description and other parts of the application, and things of that nature. And one other kind of anomaly about why a project didn't get funded out... A project got funded out of order was that someone ranked an expansion project above a renewal project at the bottom of Tier One.

0:57:12 Norm: So can you talk more about that? That's actually a really important point as well.

0:57:17 Kevin Turner Sr.: So, in order to receive the expansion project, the NOFA required that the renewal project had to pass a threshold requirement. And so, if there is no renewal project approved for funding, then you can't have an expansion project. You can't expand what doesn't exist.

0:57:41 Norm: Great. Yeah, so the upshot of this actually, if you're sort of ranking stuff, is that it really does not make sense to rank an expansion project above the renewal that it expands, it often makes sense to do the reverse, to have the renewal project. In fact, what a lot of CoCs do is they... Their top ranking renewals are the ones they would want to expand, which makes a lot of sense, but the expansion may be well down in Tier Two, maybe, or lower in Tier One while the renewal is near the top. So that makes sense. But putting the expansion portion above the renewal doesn't actually make sense. Because we can't award the expansion and not the renewal. So, we have a question about... We had a good question up here, sorry, I lost it. We have a question about the next competition and the timing of the next NOFA and a related question about, "Wow, the registration process is two months earlier than last year, does that mean everything is going to be two months earlier than last year?"

0:59:04 Norm: So let me walk through the timeframe for this year's, at least our planned time frame for this year's competition. So obviously the registration process is open. Registration closes, I believe, next Thursday, actually, a week from today for that. And so, the way the registration process works and it worked this way last year is, if you have no changes to your registration, like your geography is exactly the same, everybody is exactly the same, you don't actually have to submit a registration. We will just carry forward the information from the previous year. So, that... So if you really have no changes, you don't have to do anything, and that's fine. If you do have changes, you should please do them by next Thursday. The registration process is also where you apply for UFA and if you'd like a high-performing community status. So UFA is Unified Funding Agency, those applications are also due next Thursday.

1:00:08 Norm: If you are renewing your Unified Funding Agency status, you still have to submit the same application as new applicants for Unified Funding Agency status, so every UFA has to submit an application every year. So that's the registration process. We anticipate opening up the CoC competition by releasing the CoC NOFA in early May, and opening up the system shortly after that. We often try to open up the system at the same time we publish the NOFA, but in practice, all that would mean is us delaying releasing the NOFA, which I think is not what anybody actually wants. So the NOFA will probably perceive the e-snaps opening by a couple of weeks. And the applications will be due in late August, and we will make awards in early November. So that gives you a sense of the timing we're shooting for. That is the timing we would like to have be the timing on a regular basis going forward. So hopefully, that gives you a sense of everything. We're unfortunately not able to accelerate everything by two months, or maybe fortunately from your perspective, but that gives you a sense of the timing. So a great question, thank you for that. A

question about, if a CoC submitted an HMIS bonus project, how did you determine if they were Housing First for those projects?

1:01:54 Norm: So, HMIS projects and Coordinated Entry project, actually just... We awarded all 10 points for Housing First. You're right, it doesn't make any sense to rate it on a Housing First basis, so those projects just automatically got all 10 points for being Housing First projects, and that's actually... It's buried a little in the NOFA, but there's language in there that describes that. Actually, an interesting question here that I wanna talk about very quickly. The question is, how is the CoC to balance the ability to reallocate project with the consolidations of projects when they don't have any input into which projects can consolidate? So, I wanna just take a few minutes to talk about the relationship between collaborative applicants and CoCs and project applicants, 'cause this is really important, and this has been evolving over time. So it's always good to revisit this. At the end of the day, the CoC is responsible for the... What goes into the application. The CoC sets the policy, they set priorities, they set the procedures for how the CoC application process is going to run. The collaborative applicant is ultimately responsible for executing those policies and submitting the application to us.

1:03:30 Norm: And obviously project applicants are filling out project applications and submitting them to us, but at the end of the day, project applicants should not be able to consolidate without the approval of the CoC. And so, I think in some cases, CoCs are not... They don't have a formal process for sort of reviewing the project applications and enforcing standards that they want to enforce on the project applications, but they really should. And you certainly have that authority and if you want to get some technical assistance about how you execute that and all, please feel free to reach out to us, we would love to help you work on that. That was a great question, so thank you for that. So I mentioned earlier that... And Kevin actually mentioned that the Domestic Violence grants have different letters in their grant numbers and so somebody asked the very natural question about where can you find the grant numbers? And once again, I have to admit, I don't know where the grant numbers are. I don't think they were in people's letters. They are certainly in your grant agreement, but maybe you're not at the grant agreement stage yet. So, we will figure out a way to get it into your debriefing document, so you have some sense of what happened there. Sorry about that. Let's see, appeals, we have several questions...

1:05:12 Brett: Norm, this is Brett. Do you think the field offices have been, so they haven't gone to grant agreement with you yet, you can at least ask them the grant number that will be, 'cause I know they go to grant agreement with new project second.

1:05:26 Norm: Yeah. So your field... That's a really good point, your field office should know I also think it's actually on their overview report that we send them, but we will... So your field office likely knows, but we will also put them on our DV debrief document we have, so you have access to that. So, we have questions about... We have several questions about appeals. So I'd like to walk through these. So one question is about if you feel like there's a scoring error, then can you appeal a CoC application scoring error, and as an example, it talks about they got zero points for submitting the same answer that received full points in the 2017 competition. There are actually two separate questions here that I... And I want to address both of them. The first point, you can appeal anything you'd like and scoring, if you feel there's a scoring error, you absolutely can appeal it. The deadline is coming up, so we'd encourage you to get it to us promptly, but you can absolutely appeal it and we will dig into it and see, you know, investigate.

1:06:49 Norm: But I also want to address the second part which is about scoring. I will say that even when a question looks exactly the same as the previous year, that doesn't mean that we will use exactly the same scoring criteria as the previous year. We do make adjustments to our scoring criteria for a lot of reasons. We do a pretty thorough review of every competition after the competition ends. We look at... And then sometimes things... Questions... Some questions work better than others. And so, we make adjustments, because maybe nobody is scoring very well on a question, and we've set the bar for points a little too high, or everybody's scoring well on a question, so we've set the bar too low, or there are just sort of other factors that we didn't take into account that we realized we should have taken into account and so we changed the scoring process.

1:07:51 Norm: I'm not saying necessarily that's what happened in the case of the question, whoever asked this question was asking about, but it is the case that we will change the specific criteria we use from year to year. Can... Another question about can an appeal be filed based on the midst ranking of a DV bonus project? So, the answer is you can actually... You can appeal anything, but you have to... If you want your appeal to be successful, you have to demonstrate that we made... HUD made an error somewhere. If it was... If we misread the ranking, I guess, that would be a HUD error. But if you just... If your CoC submitted a ranking and you disagree with where the project was ranked, that isn't necessarily something that we can address, but you are welcome to appeal and we can take a look at it. So, we talked about a consolidation earlier and the difference between 12 months and 14 months, and I talked through how we set the date. There's a follow up question about that... They're saying that it will result in a deobligation. I just wanna say, can you just touch base with us or the field office and we can...

1:09:23 Norm: The question is asking about appealing the new dates. That's not quite the way it'll work, but I wanna look into that. So if you could please reach out through AAQ or your desk officer somewhere we can take a look at that. We have a question... This is a great question here. Our community is punished because the local homeless shelter won't play nice with others. The CoC funded projects are doing great, but we're getting cuts for issues way out of our control. How is that reasonable? So this is a great question, and this is an example of things that are much less in your control, than a lot of what you do, but there are others as well. So I wanna talk through this a little bit, because I think there are some important points here and I think it's important to see how we think about the whole issue of how the CoC relates to other funders, other projects, other stakeholders in the community? Excuse me. So, we do have several questions, we have questions about PHAs, we have questions about HMIS bed coverage. One of the ratings... One of the sits and performance measures is about new entries into homelessness, and these are all things that to some degree are really outside of the control of the CoC.

1:11:00 Norm: Not entirely, but at least somewhat. But at the same time, one of the things we... As we look at communities and their levels of success at reducing homelessness, clearly getting... Working with those shelters, working with public housing authorities, working with the broader community on issues of affordable housing, on criminalization of homelessness, on working with your healthcare system, these are really important features of a homelessness system that works well. One of our hopes is that you as a CoC leader or as a community leader can use the CoC application as a way to really try and... More strongly than you have been encouraged different stakeholders in your community to participate. I know it must be incredibly frustrating to when stakeholders won't partner. We certainly have our share of that here at HUD, and I know it must be incredibly challenging, but we do really think that the CoC application and the NOFA process is an important tool to promote that collaboration and coordination.

1:12:13 Norm: And so, we do... We recognize that that is... That's putting a lot of pressure on you, but we also think it's a valuable tool for improving homeless assistance more generally. So, that is kind of how we think about it and thank you for your question, and hopefully that those other partners in your community will sort of see the light and get on board a little more. So, there's a question here... We've addressed this a little, but Kevin, I want you to take a look at it and see, maybe if there's some part that we missed. So the question is, is there a reason that a project in Tier Two that scored above the cut-off, would not have been funded? So can you talk through some of the real... I think you covered some of them earlier, but maybe go through some of those additional and maybe there are some additional ones, about why something in Tier Two that was above the 68 point threshold would not have been funded?

1:13:26 Kevin Turner Sr.: Well, I think a big issue here to point out is that all Tier Two projects compete against all Tier Two projects. And so, just... So some people would think because they have a higher score, they maybe should have gotten all the projects in their Tier Two, but all projects in Tier Two compete against the other Tier Two projects. So, if you get a certain score and another Tier Two project gets a higher score, that's one potential reason why it would not have gotten funded.

1:14:05 Norm: Okay. And I think if indeed a Tier Two project wasn't funded, it really... And it scored like in that competition that Kevin described it scored above our cut-off threshold, it would've... There must have been a reason that it either was not eligible or didn't meet threshold requirements. So, you could reach out to us and we... There aren't that many projects every year that we don't fund for those reasons. But you can reach out either through AAQ or some other way. And we'll be happy to try to track that down for you. And also, some of our... Not all the letters have gone out, but the letters do explain some of that as well. We have a question about renewals of consolidated projects and do... Will they run on a 12-month grant term? And the answer is yes, all renewals will... So consolidated projects in the consolidation year, they might have a different than 12-month grant term, but in all the future years, they will have 12-month grant terms, unless something strange happens with them. So Kevin, we have a question about the review process again, and maybe some more factors than you had originally talked about, but can you talk about the... A little more about the review process, for example, do the same people review the application every year, is it just SNAP staff that review the application or are other people involved? Do people... Do we have a regional basis for how applications are reviewed? Can you dig into that a little more?

1:16:02 Kevin Turner Sr.: So we primarily use SNAP staff, but typically we use staff that had a high high grade. So generally, they have program knowledge and expertise. And again, we provide the type of documentation that allows them to be able to score the applications. The other thing that we do is we do training, and we do norming sessions where we talk about how we're scoring, so that we have a consistency and we have a common understanding about the various questions and we actually score applications, all of us do and we come together, we meet and we talk about the score and we build consensus around how we're all gonna score? There are a number of mandatory trainings that all people who are reviewing applications must attend and then there are managers who oversee this entire process. So there's... And we break up the application oftentimes based on subject matter expertise.

1:17:19 Kevin Turner Sr.: So when we have subject matter experts on a particular area, they may review certain parts of the application. And so, we break it up in a number of different ways, but the

staff that we use are able and equipped to apply the scoring documentation that we provide, and are able to come up with a consistent score and again, we panel the question. So Norm spoke about the auto-scoring process, but we had the paneling process, where each scorer individually scores the application questions assigned to them and where they disagree they must come together in panel and if they still can't agree, then we have a manager that makes the final decision on the score. So there's a lot of... It's a robust scoring process to say the least.

1:18:19 Norm: Thank you very much. Let's look at some other questions here. First of all, thank you everyone, we have a lot of questions, so this is incredibly helpful. So we have a few questions about renewals and I wanna talk about renewals. And we also have a question about DV bonus funding, and I wanna talk about that for 2019. And I wanna talk about that very quickly. So first of all, the renewal process for... Or what is eligible for renewal in the 2019 competition? Because we have two sort of new things that are eligible for renewal that haven't been before. So one is that... And I don't know if you guys have lost my picture, but I'm sorry about that, but one is that we have the first round of Youth Homelessness Demonstration Programs that many of those projects will be eligible for renewal. And so they will be able to apply in this CoC competition. We will provide more information to those communities about how to apply. The other is, that Domestic Violence Bonus Projects that were awarded just very recently in the fiscal year 2018 competition, those may be eligible to be renewed in the 2019 competition, if they have started operating in sometime during calendar year 2019, and are expiring some time in calendar year 2020.

1:20:09 Norm: So all those awarded DV bonus projects, if they're up and running will be eligible to renew in the 2019 competition. In addition to that, Congress gave us additional funding for Domestic Violence... Another round of Domestic Violence Bonus Projects, another \$50 million. And so we will have another Domestic Violence Bonus this year. And we'd really, really strongly encourage people to apply. We had... I don't remember the number of applications or how many we awarded, but to give you a sense of the scale, we had a little over \$100 million, maybe, \$110 million or \$120 million in applications for Domestic Violence Bonus Project. We awarded just a shade under \$50 million through the Domestic Violence Bonus process. And then there was about \$12 million more or so of Domestic Violence Bonus Projects that did not get funded through the Domestic Violence bonus. But did get awarded through the regular CoC Bonus process... The regular CoC process.

1:21:27 Norm: So we essentially, awarded about \$60 million in new Domestic Violence Project. So we're very excited about those projects. And again, very excited that people will have an additional opportunity to apply for those this year. There's another question about, "Are we anticipating any major changes in the CoC competition for fiscal year 2019?" Unfortunately, I can't talk in much detail about the NOFA or what changes will happen there. But I think it's fair to say that the trend we've been on I think, should be pretty apparent. And we're mostly continuing on that trend. Also, we haven't had a lot of time to do stuff, because many of you know we're off for a few days in January. So, you can sort of read into that or you will. Let's see what additional questions we have.

1:22:33 Kevin Turner Sr: Hey Norm, I'll just throw in another comment about the review process. Another thing that we do, after all the desk officers and everybody review the project, is then we run a consistency check, where we pull random applications, and there are specialists who review those projects to check the points to see whether they were scored in accordance with the scoring paradigms that have been set up.

1:23:14 Norm: Great. Thank you. Thank you Kevin. So, let's take a look at some of these other questions. We do have a question about... So actually, we're coming to the end of our time here, so I want to answer just a couple of final questions before we finish. So one is about anticipated time frames for the next round of Youth Homelessness Demonstration Programs. And there's another question about mainstream vouchers. So these aren't about the CoC program, but these are really, really important. And it's new funding, so that's always fun. The question about the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program, we will be putting that out probably in the next few weeks. So that competition will open up fairly soon. That will be round three of YHDP. We also received... And that is for up to 25 communities at least, eight of which are mostly rural. So, there's...

1:24:20 Norm: And it's \$75 million of funding, so it is a lot of funding. If you have applied before and not been successful and you are getting discouraged about it, I would really strongly encourage you to apply again, every year as the top scores, we award them, you don't have to compete against them the following year, and we do have much more money this year. So, we'll be awarding many more communities. So, please keep applying, especially if you're a rural community your odds they are actually quite good. So we... Round three will be announced in a few weeks, and we will have another \$75 million for a round four, so we're very excited about that as well. The other question I wanted to address was about the mainstream voucher program. So, this is a... This is not a SNAPS program, but it is a HUD program that I think is really important to our work to end homelessness. So that's why I wanna talk about it for a few minutes. There was a round of mainstream vouchers that was awarded last year, I'm sure many of your communities received the Public Housing Authorities, PHAs in your communities received those funds.

1:25:47 Norm: And they are for people with disabilities who are not elderly and they work like regular housing choice voucher programs. So it's a great tool for developing permanent supportive housing. That NOFA had very strong incentives for the PHAs to work with their CoCs, to use the subsidies to serve people experiencing homelessness. There will be another round of those and probably more than one additional round. So some time in the next two or three months would be my best guess. I don't know exactly when, there will be another opportunity to apply for mainstream voucher funds. I would really strongly encourage your CoC to reach out to your PHAs and work on a partnership and work on an application process or prepare to apply when that opportunity becomes available. It is a huge opportunity, it is new money, it goes into that Housing Choice Voucher program, so it gets renewed fairly consistently. So, it's a great opportunity and I'd encourage you all to take that. So with that, I want to thank my partner here, Kevin, for doing this webinar with me.

1:27:13 Norm: I wanna thank our other people in the background, Brett and Karen who have busily answering your questions. Sorry, we couldn't get to all the questions. We will try to... We take all this information and we try to use it in our future materials, and it helps inform our instructions for next year and various other things. So it's immensely helpful. I wanna thank TDA who have sort of taken care of the logistics here and made this webinar run really smoothly, so thank you all. And then I really, really wanna thank all of you for joining us on this webinar and for sharing your thoughts and questions and concerns, and really wanna thank you for the incredible work you do every day. The CoC work is very hard work. Ending homelessness is incredibly challenging work, and I honestly am constantly amazed at just how much you all are able to do out there. And so, I just wanna say we at SNAPS appreciate tremendously all the work you do. Please keep sharing the good stories with us. We love to hear about your progress and the amazing work you're doing. So with that, we're done, and I wanna thank everyone and wish everyone a great...