

# COORDINATING WITH YOUR LOCAL CoC

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. This document highlights the value and importance of collaboration between HOPWA and your local Continuum of Care. It will provide examples of collaboration that could expand housing opportunities and services for persons living with HIV.

*This resource is prepared by technical assistance providers and intended to help grantees and project sponsors understand HOPWA program guidance. The contents of this document, except when based on statutory or regulatory authority or law, do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.*

## WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO COORDINATE?

By working with partners in the area, a community can maximize its resources, leverage existing housing stock, and ensure a coordinated response to housing. This can be accomplished, in part, by marketing the HOPWA program to develop new partnerships. Additionally, by working with these new partners, a HOPWA program could obtain new housing resources for its clients and find new landlords to work with the housing program.

## WHAT IS A CoC?

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program is a HUD-funded program designed to assist individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families experiencing homelessness and to provide the services needed to help such individuals move into transitional and permanent housing, with the goal of long-term stability.

More broadly, the program is designed to promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to address homelessness; improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness; improve data collection and performance measurement; and allow each community to tailor its program to the particular strengths and challenges within that community. HUD funds local CoCs through a Collaborative Applicant for the local or regional planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals.

The following are the eligible components of the CoC program:

- **Permanent Housing**
  - *Permanent supportive housing (PSH)* — permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with services to help homeless people with disabilities achieve housing stability
  - *Rapid re-housing (RRH)* — a model that emphasizes housing search and relocation services, as well as short- and medium-term rental assistance to move homeless people as rapidly as possible into permanent housing
- **Transitional Housing** — up to 24 months of housing with accompanying support services, providing a period of stability to enable homeless people to transition successfully to and maintain permanent housing.
- **Supportive services only** — may be used to conduct outreach to sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons, link clients with housing or other necessary services, and provide ongoing support.



HUD requires each CoC to establish and operate a “centralized or coordinated assessment system” (referred to as “coordinated entry”) with the goal of increasing the efficiency of the local crisis response systems and improving fairness and ease of access to resources, including mainstream resources. Coordinated Entry is a system created for all person(s) experiencing homelessness to be assessed and referred to the appropriate location.

More information on the HUD CoC Program can be accessed here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/>

### **HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT MY LOCAL CoC?**

- Connect with the CoC in your community. Contact information for your local CoC can be found on [the HUD Exchange here](#).
- Access your local CoC Collaborative Applicant’s website to better understand how your local CoC operates, and retrieve information on upcoming CoC meetings and minutes from previous meetings. Websites often feature helpful documents on topics such as governance structure, written standards of care, Homeless Management Information Services (HMIS), governance/privacy policies, previous funding applications, listing of housing types funded, and Coordinated Entry policies. You may also find information about your area’s local plan to end homelessness and how to access your local Coordinated Entry system.

### **HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR CoC?**

- Join as a general CoC member
- Seek or request nomination to the CoC Board
- Participate in planning groups related to updating your community’s 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, Consolidated Plan, and/or Action Plan

### **WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO GAIN BY COORDINATING WITH YOUR CoC?**

- Increased knowledge of additional housing resources and funding sources
- Increased opportunities to create new partnerships with non-HOPWA and other special-needs housing providers
- Increased awareness of the needs of persons living with HIV using and/or residing in CoC-funded programs
- Increased access to other service resources for persons living with HIV

### **WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO OFFER THE CoC?**

- Relevant information, training, and education about HIV and HIV housing resources
- Increased capacity through planning and implementation assistance or volunteers for the CoC’s annual Point in Time (PIT) count
- Increased housing and non-CoC funded resources for persons living with HIV
- Accurate data about people living with HIV