

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Frequently Asked Questions

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provide applicants with general information about the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). It is important for applicants to read the YHDP NOFA in its entirety, and the HUD FY 2016 NOFA General Section before beginning the application process to ensure compliance with application and program requirements. Applicants are encouraged to visit <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/yhdp> for links to the NOFA, application information, program announcements, and technical assistance resources. The HUD FY 2016 NOFA General Section is located at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4913/fy-2016-nofa-policy-requirements-and-general-section/>

1. General YHDP Application Information

1.1 - How do I apply for the YHDP?

Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the Grants.gov website, where they can also access instructions for downloading, completing, submitting, and tracking grant applications. A link to the application on Grants.gov can be found on the official YHDP webpage, <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/yhdp>. Refer to Grants.gov for download information, Adobe software, and system compatibility information.

1.2 - When are applications due to HUD?

Applications and all required materials are due on November 30, 2016 by 11:59:59 Eastern Time. HUD will not consider any application submitted after this deadline and encourages applicants to submit early, if possible, in order to account for possible technical difficulties. All applications must be submitted through grant.gov unless a special waiver request has been approved by HUD for your community. See Section IV.A of the YHDP NOFA for more information.

1.3 - What supplemental material will HUD accept as part of the YHDP application?

HUD will only accept supplemental documentation identified in the application checklist (see Section IV.B.1. of the YHDP NOFA). HUD will not review any other supplemental materials that applicants submit.

1.4 - What parts of the application are included in the 30-page limit?

Only narrative responses are included in the 30-page limit. Required forms and attachments listed in Section IV.B.1. of the YHDP NOFA and the Youth Systems Map, described in Section V.A.1 under the Capacity for Innovation rating factor, are not included in the 30-page limit.

1.5 - May an applicant submit more than one application if a CoC is made up of multiple communities?

Yes. An applicant may submit more than one application, including for distinct communities located within the geographic area of a single CoC, even when the applicant is submitting an application for the

entire geographic area of the CoC or another portion of the CoC's geographic area. For example, communities might decide to submit one application that only includes the rural counties (as defined by Section I.3.1. of the YHDP NOFA) within a CoC's geographic area and another, separate, application that covers the large urban center claimed by the CoC. In this case, HUD will review both applications and make a determination regarding selection, in part, based on the target community area requirements included in Section III.C.3.A. of the YHDP NOFA. HUD will not select more than one community per CoC, even if both applications score among the top ten applications according to the rating factors described in Section V.A.1. of the YHDP NOFA.

1.6 - Is HUD requiring applicants to submit a Coordinated Community Plan, or a strategic plan to end youth homelessness, at the time of application?

No. HUD does not require applicants to submit a Coordinated Community Plan, described in Section III.C.3.b of the YHDP NOFA, at the time of application. A central activity for the 10 communities selected to participate in the YHDP, *after the completion of the NOFA application process*, will be the development of a Coordinated Community Plan that serve as the community's blueprint for preventing and ending youth homelessness. HUD will provide significant technical assistance to these selected communities to help develop their plans.

If a community has already developed a strategic plan to end youth homelessness at the time of application, or if it has included a youth plan as part of a larger strategic plan to end all homelessness, they will be able to provide additional details in their response to the application questions in Section V.A.1. However, HUD does not expect communities to have already developed a Coordinated Community Plan, or that most will have a comprehensive strategic plan to end youth homelessness, at the time of application.

1.7 – Are applicants required to submit a project plan or project descriptions with their applications?

No. HUD does not require applicants to submit a project plan or project descriptions with their application.

The 10 selected communities will identify the projects that they need to implement a system to end youth homelessness as part of their Coordinated Community Plan, and will submit detailed project information with the project applications that they submit individually for funding consideration after community selection. Selected communities will be able to apply for 30 percent of their YHDP funds as soon as they are selected, and will be able to apply for the remaining 70 percent of their funds after HUD has approved their Coordinated Community Plan.

1.8 – Can you explain the following terms that are included in the rating factor section of the NOFA (V.A.1)?

A Systemic Challenge (Factor 1, Question 1) A systemic challenge, in this context, means a public issue that remains unresolved, without an obvious solution, and involves a broad array of community stakeholders responsible for addressing the issue who cannot be easily defined by a single agency, organization, or program.

Extra Data (Factor 7, Question 3) Extra data means data not typically captured by the Point-In-Time (PIT) count, including youth who are couch-surfing, doubled up, living in unsafe situations, at risk of homelessness, unstably housed, or living in hotels or motels. The PIT count always captures youth living on the streets, in cars, other places not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters (including Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Basic Center Programs), and transitional housing (including RHY funded Transitional Living Programs).

Broad Reaching Methodology (Factor 4, Question 1) A broad reaching methodology is a system of methods or principles that affects more than one organization and must be fundamental to how organizations serve clients, e.g. housing first, RRH, harm reduction, trauma informed care.

Major System-Wide Change (Factor 4, Question 1) Major system-wide changes must affect more than one organization and significantly alter stakeholders' operational behaviors (e.g. the way organizations intake, assess, and refer clients, share data and information, interact across sectors or the interpretation and enforcement of community rules). Examples of where change efforts may occur include, but are not limited to, coordinated entry processes, cross-system discharge policies, a multi-system prevention strategy, system level housing first adoption, a community-wide data framework, and a decriminalization and engagement strategy.

New Innovation or System (Factor 4, Question 2) A new Innovation or system, in this context, means something new to the organizations being described and might include the adoption of a new set of operating principles (e.g., housing first, rapid rehousing, PSH, trauma informed care, harm reduction) or perhaps a new tracking mechanism, information system, or operations structure (e.g., a system that tracks risk and protective factors, allows for unique case manager-client interactions, or restructures the program to better meet the needs of clients in an environment of limited resources).

Please note that stating that a provider will use a system or process that they are already required to use does not count as adopting a new innovation or system (e.g., RHY providers using HMIS); however, using that system or process in a new, innovative way, does.

Universe and Target (Factor 7, Question 8) The universe is the total number of youth who could possibly meet the performance goal (often the total number of youth in a given project), and the target is the total number of youth who actually do or will meet the performance goal. If, for example, there were 10 participants in a given project and 5 are expected to achieve a successful outcome, then the universe is 10 and the target is 5.

2. Applicant Eligibility

2.1 – What type of organizations may apply for the YHDP in response to this NOFA?

Any Collaborative Applicant, designated by a CoC during the FY 2016 CoC Program Competition Registration process, may apply on behalf of the CoC and community stakeholders to be a selected community under the YHDP in response to this NOFA.

It is important to remember that the YHDP NOFA application process is designed to identify the 10 communities that HUD will select to participate in the YHDP. It is not designed to identify and assess specific projects for funding. The project application process will occur *after* HUD has announced the 10 selected communities. For more information on the project application process, see Appendix A of the YHDP NOFA.

In order to be successful in applying to be a selected community, applicants must demonstrate that their community has strong motivation to prevent and end youth homelessness; is willing to commit significant resources to the effort; and has the local leadership, organizational capacity, and partnerships necessary to execute initiatives that will change the local system for addressing youth homelessness. Keep in mind, HUD does not expect communities to have all of this in place at the time of application, nor does HUD expect communities to have already implemented robust programs and policies aimed at ending youth homelessness in their communities at the time of application. Instead, HUD will use the factors described in the NOFA Section V.A.1 to identify those communities with the necessary structure, capacity, partnerships, and motivation to succeed.

2.2 – How is HUD defining a “rural” community when considering the four rural communities that will be selected to participate in the YHDP?

HUD is defining a “rural” community to mean an applicant representing a “rural area” according to the following definition:

- has no part of it within an area designated as a standard metropolitan statistical area (MSA) by the Office of Management and Budget; or
- is within an area designated as a metropolitan statistical area or considered as part of a metropolitan statistical area and at least 75 percent of its population is located on U.S. Census blocks classified as non-urban; or
- is located in a State that has population density of less than 30 persons per square mile (as reported in the most recent decennial census), and of which at least 1.25 percent of the total acreage of such State is under Federal jurisdiction, provided that no metropolitan city in such State is the sole beneficiary of the grant amounts awarded under this part. (Section I.A.3. of the NOFA)

Collaborative applicants representing communities that meet the above definition must indicate in their application that they are requesting participation as a rural community. The congressional districts entered into the SF-424 attached to the application must confirm that the community represented by the application meets the rural definition. If the CoC’s geographic area includes non-rural areas, the Collaborative Applicant may apply on behalf of the rural area only by describing the geographic area (at the county level) and indicate that they are requesting participation as a rural community in the application narrative.

2.3 - I am a homeless assistance provider. My nonprofit organization is interested in running projects dedicated to youth experiencing homelessness. Are we eligible to apply for the YHDP in response to this NOFA?

It is important to remember that the YHDP NOFA application process is designed to identify the 10 communities that HUD will select to participate in the YHDP. It is not designed to identify and assess

specific projects for funding. The project application process, will occur after HUD has announced the 10 selected communities.

Only a CoC's Collaborative Applicant is eligible to apply on behalf of a community to participate in the YHDP NOFA application process. HUD established this threshold criterion to integrate the YHDP process with the CoC's processes, and to allow communities to renew YHDP projects through the CoC Program upon completion of the demonstration. Under the CoC Program, the Collaborative Applicant is ultimately responsible for the submission of CoC grant applications to HUD.

Homeless assistance providers that are not Collaborative Applicants should support the Collaborative Applicant in the development of the YHDP NOFA application, and can participate in the YHDP as applicants for project funding if their community is selected to participate. Any eligible entity as defined in Appendix A of the NOFA that is a stakeholder in a selected community may apply for project funding once the community selections have been announced. It is important to note that the project application must be supported by the Collaborative Applicant, the local youth advisory board, and the other YHDP partners, and must be identified in the Coordinated Community Plan.

2.4 - Can an entity other than the Collaborative Applicant apply on the CoC's behalf? For example, can a youth organization that is not the Collaborative applicant, but that is designated by the CoC, apply for the YHDP in response to this NOFA?

No. Only Collaborative Applicants that successfully registered for the FY 2016 CoC Program Competition are eligible to apply on behalf of the community in response to the YHDP NOFA. The YHDP NOFA requires that Collaborative Applicants have formal agreements with a youth advisory board and public child welfare agency in order to be considered for selection, and must have relationships with a set of key stakeholder groups described in Sections III.C.3.b and V.A.1 in order to receive full points in the rating and ranking of applications. However, none of these other entities are eligible to apply directly to HUD on the CoC's behalf.

It is important to note that any eligible entity in a selected community as defined in Appendix A, including the Collaborative Applicant, may apply for project funding once the community selections have been announced.

2.5 - The application mentions partner agencies and organizations—which partners are required in order to be selected to be a community in the YHDP?

Effective cross-sector partnerships are the cornerstone of a strong YHDP application. There are some partnerships that the YHDP requires for purposes of eligibility, others that are important for achieving a high application ranking, and still others that will be critical for the 10 selected communities during the development and implementation of their Coordinated Community Plans.

There are two required partnerships:

- 1) Youth Advisory Board
- 2) Public Child Welfare Agency

Without formal agreements with these two entities, HUD will not review the application narrative. Collaborative applicants must also be able to demonstrate that meaningful relationships exist between the CoC and a set of key stakeholder groups in order to receive full points in the rating and ranking of applications. A list of these key partners is included in Section V.A.1 of the YHDP NOFA, along with a grid of partnership attributes that HUD has defined as crucial to contributing to a successful YHDP implementation. Applicants may use the competition period to establish a youth advisory board and develop relationships with the included stakeholders. However, the partnerships described must actually exist before the application is submitted. Finally, HUD has included a list of key partners and mandatory structural requirements in the Section s III.C.3.b that outline how to incorporate those partners into the Coordinated Community Plans that selected communities will develop.

2.6 - If our community does not currently have a Youth Advisory Board, can we create one for the purpose of applying for the YHDP?

Yes. Applicants may establish a youth advisory board during the period of time before the application is due to HUD. The youth advisory board must:

- have at least 3 members;
- be comprised of youth, age 24 and younger, at least 2/3 of whom are homeless or formerly homeless, that are included in policy making decisions of the CoC, particularly on policies that relate to preventing and ending youth homelessness; and
- have elected an authorized representative from among its members and submitted a signed letter with the NOFA application confirming that all of the partnership requirements described in Section II.C.1.d have been met.

2.7 – Is a community eligible to apply if the CoC does not have a formal agreement with its local or State public child welfare agency?

No. A formal partnership between the CoC and the local or State public child welfare agency (PCWA) is a threshold requirement for participation in the YHDP. The applicant must demonstrate the existence of the partnership by attaching a Memorandum of Understanding between the CoC and the PCWA, or a letter of support from the PCWA for the YHDP. The document must include a commitment to engage in the development of the application, the planning of the coordinated community response, and the implementation of that plan. Every CoC in the country has an applicable PCWA and child welfare system (including its infrastructure, resources and human capital), which HUD deems essential in the effort to end youth homelessness.

3. Eligible Activities

3.1 - Can selected communities use awarded funds to support existing youth homelessness projects?

No. Selected communities may only request funding for entirely new projects and are prohibited from requesting funds to support a preexisting project even if the new funds would expand the number of youth the existing project could serve. Selected communities may request funding for new projects according to the project types outlined in Section II.C.3 of Appendix A and are encouraged to apply for innovative

project models according to the needs of local youth experiencing homelessness, even when those project models would require a waiver of regulations found within the CoC Program Interim Rule. Because this is a demonstration program, HUD has broader discretion to fund activities outside of the normal CoC Program activities, though project applicants will need to demonstrate the need for using funds in a manner not currently supported under the CoC Program Interim Rule in their project application. See Appendix B. for more information regarding waiver requests under the YHDP.

3.2 - May selected communities use awarded funds to conduct planning related activities?

Yes. Selected communities may apply for funds to conduct planning related activities through the CoC Program “Planning” component type outlined in 24 CFR 578.39. These funds may be used to conduct needs analyses, develop and implement the Coordinated Community Plan, and evaluate the outcomes of the local YHDP. However, HUD will only approve planning grants, together with all other project funding requests, up to 30 percent of the total amount made available to the community until HUD approves the Coordinated Community Plan.

3.3 - Will selected communities be able to create programs that target youth who qualify under Category 3 of HUD’s definition?

Yes, but with conditions. The selected community may choose to use up to **10 percent** of its awarded YHDP funds to serve youth that meet the criteria for paragraph 3 of the definition of homeless at 24 CFR 578.3 only if it is approved by HUD to do so. That choice must be described in the selected community’s Coordinated Community Plan. The project application request must demonstrate that serving this population is equally or more cost effective in meeting the overall goals and objectives of the plan than serving homeless youth as defined under paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of the definition of homeless in 24 CFR 578.3. HUD reserves the right to reject a request that does not meet the threshold requirements described in more detail in Section I.D.5. of Appendix A of the YHDP NOFA. If HUD approves a community’s request, then future project applications will not need to submit documentation demonstrating the information discussed above. However, the CoC is responsible for ensuring that the total amount of grant funds expended to serve youth that qualify under Category 3 does not exceed 10 percent of its total awarded amount.

It is also important to note that the Coordinated Community Plan can include youth in situations that are not defined by HUD as homeless or even at risk of homelessness. A comprehensive plan to prevent and end homelessness will necessarily include efforts to reach youth and families who are stable but potentially at risk. It will be imperative for selected communities to identify partners and funding streams that can support efforts to reach these community members without YHDP or CoC funding.

3.4 - Will selected communities be able to use awarded funds to implement innovative project types, including those that are not eligible under the CoC Program?

Yes. Applicants can apply for innovative project types that are not consistent with Subpart D of the CoC Program interim rule or subtitle C of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381–11389) (the Act) so long as they understand the following conditions:

- The project applicant must attach a waiver request to the project application that requires a waiver *when submitting the project application*, and identify the specific regulation or statutory citation in the request; and
- HUD will assess the waiver request and the project application at the same time. If HUD determines that the waiver is not approvable with the information provided and the project is not feasible without the waiver, then HUD will reject the project.

HUD has provided examples of projects that will need waivers in Section II.C.3. of Appendix A of the YHDP NOFA.

4. Budget

4.1 – Are applicants required to submit budgets with their NOFA application for each project that they intend to include in their implementation of the YHDP?

No. Applicants are not required to submit project budgets with their application in response to this NOFA. HUD does require applicants to “Describe the CoC’s proposed 6-month budget for developing a Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness” in order to receive maximum points as part of the Financial Resources rating factor in the YHDP NOFA. However, HUD does not expect applicants to submit project budgets with their NOFA application and they will have no impact on the review and ranking of a community’s application.

HUD will only require selected communities to submit project budgets with their project applications. The project application process will not occur until the NOFA application process has completed and the 10 selected communities have been announced.

4.2 – Are there match or leverage requirements associated with the YHDP?

Yes. While HUD does not require applicants to submit evidence of match or leverage under the YHDP NOFA, HUD will require selected communities to identify match commitments and submit match documentation as part of the project application process in accordance with CoC Program requirements at 24 CFR 578.73. HUD will not collect information on leverage for the purpose of the YHDP.

5. Other HUD NOFA Requirements

5.2 – Are YHDP project grant recipients required to comply with HUD requirements other than the program specific requirements established in the YHDP NOFA?

Yes. YHDP grant recipients are required to comply with requirements described in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the HEARTH Act (the Act), the CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR part 578, the FY 2016 HUD General Section NOFA, and government-wide regulations including 2 CFR part 200. Selected communities may request a waiver of requirements through their project application in order to apply for innovative youth homelessness programs. Waiver requirements are described in Appendices A. and B. of the YHDP NOFA.

6. Award Information

6.1 – Congress appropriated \$33 million to HUD in FY 2016 for youth homelessness projects as part of a coordinated community approach. How is that money being distributed, and how much will be awarded through this NOFA?

Through this NOFA process, HUD will select 10 communities to participate in the YHDP. The 10 selected communities will then have the ability to apply for a portion of the \$33 million appropriated by Congress based on a formula that ensures the following:

- a minimum of \$1 million per community;
- a maximum of \$15 million per community;
- proportionate weighting for the size of a community's total youth population;
- proportionate weighting for the community's youth poverty rate.

The formula that HUD will use to calculate funding availability is as follows:

Community Award = \$1,000,000 + [(Community Population Age 10 to 24 x Community Poverty Rate Age 12 to 24) ÷ (Sum of (Community Population Age 10 to 24 x Community Poverty Rate Age 12 to 24) for all 10 Communities)] x \$23,000,000

You may notice that age ranges for population size and poverty rate are different. This is because the US Census data uses different age ranges for population and poverty rate. For more information, see Section II.C. of the NOFA.

HUD will distribute the apportioned funds to communities based on a project application process described in Appendix A of the NOFA. Selected communities will also receive substantial technical assistance designed to support the development of Coordinated Community Plans.

6.2 – When and how will communities be notified whether HUD has selected them as 1 of the 10 YHDP communities?

HUD will make a public announcement regarding the 10 selected communities as early as two months after the application submission due date. In addition, HUD will send individual notification to each collaborative applicant that submits an application regardless of whether their community was selected.

6.3 - If selected as 1 of the 10 communities, will awarded funds be made immediately available for project implementation?

HUD will announce the amount of funds available per community together with its public announcement of the 10 selected communities. Project applicants in those selected communities will then be able to apply for up to 30 percent of those funds immediately, and will be able to apply for the remaining 70 percent after HUD has approved the community's Coordinated Community Plan. Funds will be available for project applicants after HUD has approved their individually submitted project applications

6.4 - If selected as 1 of the 10 communities, will HUD award projects on a competitive basis or will project awards be guaranteed?

HUD will not use a competitive process to award project funding, but will award project funds based on the following factors:

- Whether the amount requested by the project is within the total funding amount available to each community as determined by the formula included in Section II.C. of the YHDP NOFA;
- Whether HUD has approved the community's Coordinated Community Plan, which determines the availability of **70 percent** of the funding amount available to the community;
- If the community does not yet have a HUD-approved coordinated community plan, whether the amount requested by the project is within **30 percent** of the total funding amount available to the community before the coordinated community plan is approved
- Once the coordinated community plan has been approved, whether the specific project requesting funding is included in the plan, which is a YHDP requirement;
- Whether the applicant for the project meets project applicant eligibility as determined by 24 CFR 578.15 (remember, the project applicant for all planning funds must be the Collaborative Applicant); and
- Whether the proposed project meets the quality and eligibility requirements described in Section III. of Appendix A. of the YHDP NOFA.

If projects are rejected for funding, they may incorporate the feedback received from HUD and reapply for funds, and such actions will not jeopardize the total funding amount awarded to the community. HUD will encourage applicants of rejected projects to incorporate HUD feedback into future applications in an effort to ensure HUD approval.