

Overview on Partnerships

Partnerships are important to ending unsheltered homelessness. Partly this is about money: to pay rent, to pay for intensive services that people need, for the needs of everyone living on the streets today is beyond what homelessness systems have available; and making housing more affordable so that vulnerable people aren't falling into homelessness is far beyond the resources of even larger systems. It's also about know-how. People living in unsheltered homelessness often have complex medical needs, and cooperation from local and regional hospitals and health care systems is indispensable. And it's about leadership. Systems that are negatively affected by mass homelessness need to help convince political leaders to make it a priority.

This Special Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness envisions and rewards a working system that allows the funds directly provided through the award to leverage other funding, both for housing and for healthcare. In successful applications, it is likely that more funding will come from outside sources than come from the funds applied for in the NOFO. Some communities that don't receive NOFO funding will doubtless decide to move ahead with their plans using just the mainstream funds. And of course, mainstream programs have the potential to be sustainable funding sources, whereas funding from the Special NOFO is one-time only.

Provisions in the NOFO that specifically award partnerships:

Provision	Emphasis	Points Available
CoC Coordination and Engagement NOFO Ref: p.43/ VII.B.3	Having a coordinated, collaborative process for developing the plan to use these resources. Individual points are available for things like engaging a broad array of stakeholders.	8 points
Leveraging Housing NOFO Ref: p.46-47/ VII.B.4.a	Developing new housing units and housing opportunities. The emphasis is on housing paid for by mainstream HUD programs such as Housing Choice Vouchers, HOME funds from the American Rescue Plan, or the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS program.	10 points
	Landlord recruitment plans and initiatives.	8 points
Leveraging Healthcare Services NOFO Ref: p.48/ VII.B.4.b	Full points will require a written commitment from one or more healthcare organizations to provide a range of services to people being served by the funded projects.	8 points
Supporting Underserved Communities NOFO Ref: p.53/ VII.B.4.g	Supporting underserved communities and supporting equitable community development. It is the Alliance's experience that the most effective plans to improve in this area will include building new partnerships with organizations in the community that serve people who may be underserved by the current homelessness system, but who seek help elsewhere when needed.	8 points

Section VI.F.1 of the NOFO outlines the CoC Consolidated Application charts, narratives, and required attachments. This includes the required letters of commitment from partnerships in new housing development, healthcare services, working groups comprised of persons with lived experience, and Public Housing Authorities.

Partnership Commitment Letters	Description
<p>Development of New Units and New Housing Opportunities</p> <p>NOFO Ref: p.35/VI.F.1.e</p>	<p>A written commitment can include a letter, contract, or other formal written agreement. It must demonstrate how many new units are being developed or set aside for individuals experiencing homelessness and the date they will be available.</p>
<p>Hospitals, Healthcare Clinics, Insurance Agencies, Medicaid State Agencies, Public Health Departments, Mental Health Clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, or Drug Treatment Facilities</p> <p>NOFO Ref: p.35/VI.F.1.f</p>	<p>A written commitment must demonstrate the types of services being made available, the value of the commitment, and the dates the healthcare resources will be provided.</p>
<p>Working Group Comprised of Persons with Lived Experience</p> <p>NOFO Ref: p.35/VI.F.1.g</p>	<p>A letter must be signed by (1) at least three members involved in said working group, or (2) an authorized representative of the working group along with evidence that that person is authorized to represent the group. The letter must demonstrate support of the priorities in the CoC’s Plan for Serving Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs.</p>
<p>Public Housing Authority (PHA) Serving the CoC’s Geographic Area</p> <p>NOFO Ref: p.35/VI.F.1.h</p>	<p>HUD is requesting CoCs demonstrate written commitments with PHAs to: (1) pair vouchers with CoC-funded supportive services; and (2) work with the CoC and other stakeholders to create a prioritization plan for potential allocation of Stability Vouchers or a preference for general admission to Housing Choice Voucher Program. This could be done through the coordinated entry process for those experiencing homelessness; at risk of homelessness; or fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.</p>

Key Take-Aways

The best applications will be those showing that a coherent approach to reducing unsheltered homelessness is a goal and a strategy owned by the entire community, not just the local Continuum of Care programs. Leaders of the entire community will need to be involved in order to bring this kind of consensus. Partnerships between these leaders and the homelessness system may be the most important results of this NOFO.

The Alliance hopes that many communities apply, and that the partnerships developed or confirmed as part of the application process can be assets to those communities for years into the future.