

Morris County Continuum of Care

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Request for Proposals

Morris County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Lead Agency

Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to secure an organization to serve as the Coordinated Entry Lead Agency for the Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC).

Background

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has established an initiative to end homelessness in the United States, with an established priority for persons experiencing chronic homelessness and other vulnerable persons. As part of this initiative, HUD implemented the Continuum of Care under the Homeless Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act). The mission of the Morris County CoC is to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to address and prevent homelessness in Morris County. To facilitate this mission, the CoC is committed to organizing its homeless system into a trauma-informed “Housing First” collaborative system. This model will serve to prioritize households with the greatest need and barriers to housing solutions including, but not limited to, shelter, permanent housing, rapid rehousing, supportive services and prevention programs.

Coordinated Entry (CE) is a community-wide system to standardize and expedite the process by which people experiencing housing crisis access housing and homeless resources. Through Coordinated Entry, people experiencing literal or imminent homelessness will be matched to available services and housing solutions based on their level of need and availability of resources. Standardizing the intake and assessment process across the region, sharing information in real-time and adopting uniform prioritization policies are all at the core of a high-performing CE system.

The CoC Allocations Committee is seeking proposals from qualified housing and services organizations to serve as the Morris County CoC Coordinated Entry Lead Agency. The CE Lead Agency selected through this RFP will be the organization that has the strongest application showing a clear vision and plan for how they will implement a high performing CE system in collaboration with the CoC. The CoC has the ability, if deemed necessary, to reissue this RFP if they do not feel that a qualified provider has submitted a proposal to serve as the CE Lead Agency.

The Morris County CoC has dedicated \$110,636 to the Coordinated Entry lead Agency, with the possibility of additional funding upon implementation if awarded. All funds awarded are subject to the availability of federal appropriations from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). If awarded, the agency will be responsible for carrying out all activities associated with the CoC grant, including a required 25% match (cash or in-kind) of the grant funding.

The funds will be awarded for one year followed by a one-year renewable option based on the availability of funding. The renewable option will be executed on review by the CoC.

CoC Lead Agency: Morris County Department of Human Services

Detailed Scope of Services

The Coordinated Entry Lead Agency's role in the Morris County Homeless System will be to assist households in exiting the system by obtaining stable permanent housing. The Coordinated Entry Lead Agency will act as the Project Manager to ensure the service delivery and compliance of all features of the program including:

1. Administer Coordinated Assessment (CA) and/or Coordinated Prevention (CP) Tools to all clients based on status as literally or imminently homeless in Morris County, defined by HUD and local criteria.
 - A) Establish a call line where eligible clients can call and remotely complete the Coordinated Assessment and/or Coordinated Prevention Tools during the hours of Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm.
 - B) Establish at least one accessible physical location where clients can utilize the assistance of services to assist in completing the Coordinated Entry process
 - C) Define a process for after-hours where agencies can educate the client on where and when they can complete a CA or CP Tool.
 - D) Define a process for addressing client and provider complaints/grievances in a timely manner including follow-through to ensure issues are resolved.
 - E) Enter all clients seeking homeless services or homeless prevention services into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
 - F) Establish a system for capturing and recording any updated information that may be collected on clients after their initial assessment.
 - G) Ensure full accessibility of the program based on geographic location, disability status, domestic violence history, limited English proficiency or other barriers.
2. Manage prioritization lists of all clients who have completed CA or CP tools.
 - A) Utilize HMIS to coordinate and manage lists within the CE project based on criteria established in coordination with the CoC.
 - B) Ensure data completeness and accuracy and attend regular Data Quality Committee meetings to ensure quality improvement planning and participation in CoC-wide data quality initiatives.
 - C) Ensure that households are prioritized based on their level of need and barriers to housing with the assistance of the Morris County HMIS provider and case conferencing committees.
 - D) Identify and refer vulnerable households for housing navigation services.
 - E) Provide housing navigation services with a caseload of at least 40 clients per full time housing navigator (or 20 clients per part time navigator).
 - a. Educate and provide assistance to possible eligible consumers on the documentation needed to submit a successful application for housing vouchers and affordable housing openings.
 - b. Help clients obtain needed documents and support transitions into shelter placements
 - c. Appropriately document key steps taken towards housing and housing outcomes within the HMIS database in accordance with data standards.
 - d. Advocate for needed services and entitlements.
 - e. Work closely with CoC committees, collaborative partners, navigators and case managers to best assess and serve households on waiting lists in a coordinated and efficient fashion and to ensure continuity of service delivery.
 - f. Provide services in a trauma-informed and confidential manner with appropriate trainings.
3. Facilitate appropriate referrals to service providers who participate in the Morris County Continuum of Care.
 - A) Execute Memorandums of Understanding with all participating providers to establish the appropriate referral process for each program and to ensure all programs will keep the CE abreast of current and pending vacancies or availability of funding.

- B) Ensure all providers with ESG or CoC funding are fully participating in Coordinated Entry with fully executed Memorandums of Understanding.
- C) Work collaboratively with partner agencies and providers to assure compassion for clients, efficiency in operations and appropriate placement of households.
- D) Ensure a process is in place for referring eligible and interested households for case management or housing navigation services while they are waiting on a CE list.
- E) Ensure partner compliance with priority scoring and priority intake into shelter, housing and homeless prevention programs.
- F) Participate in and provide technical assistance during case conferencing committee meetings to assist households with finding permanent housing
- G) Be familiar with housing sources participating in the Coordinated Entry system and current resources outside of the CE system, including eligibility criteria, to provide referrals where appropriate.

Applicant Qualifications

The selected project must be a nonprofit organization or government entity with proven experience serving homeless populations in case management and must demonstrate:

- Awareness of existing resources and services within the Morris County community.
- Knowledge of the evolving data elements per HUD and CoC directives.
- Willingness to work with chronically homeless and similar populations with high service needs and barriers to housing.
- Knowledge of Coordinated Entry best practices for implementation into the Morris County CE System.
- Knowledge of various permanent housing strategies including rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and rental assistance.
- Familiarity, understanding and knowledge of the conditions of affordable housing available to recently re-house clients, including but not limited to accessibility to supportive services and safety issues.
- Expertise in Morris County shelter and housing programs, including clients' perspectives/attitudes about them.
- Familiarity with various homeless prevention providers and programs, such as DCA projects, housing authorities and other types of voucher programs.
- Incorporation of Housing First principles and other evidence-based practices.
- HMIS licensure or willing to engage in the process of becoming a licensed HMIS user.
- Ability to enter data into HMIS and ensure client privacy is maintained.
- Ability to prepare monthly, quarterly, yearly and CoC requested reports with special attention to priority populations including the following information:
 - Calls received including demographics, referrals and services received
 - Shelter/housing/prevention entries
 - Compliance issues and data discrepancies
 - Housing outcomes at program exit
 - High-level system analysis such as identification of barriers to housing, recommendations for eliminating barriers, trend data, historical comparisons
 - Other data as requested by various committees of the CoC.
- Ability to maintain and submit updated database of available housing resources with the monthly statistics and narrative report.

Notice of Intent Form Instructions

For new applicants, complete the 2021 CoC New Project Notice of Intent Form with accompanying Coordinated Entry Addendum. For returning applicants, complete the 2021 CoC Renewal Project Notice of Intent Form with accompanying Coordinated Entry Addendum. Applications without EITHER a New Notice of Intent Form or Renewal Notice of Intent Form AND Coordinated Entry Addendum will not be considered.

Notice of Intent Form Deadline

All Notices of Intent must be submitted in full by 4:30pm on June 4, 2021. Notices of Intent are to be submitted as PDF by electronic mail to the following:

Shelia Carter: scarter@co.morris.nj.us and Nadine Azari: nazari@monarchhousing.org.

Agencies submitting a Notice of Intent Form may be required to participate in a question-and-answer session before the CoC review committee. The question-and-answer session schedule will be announced within two weeks of the release of the 2021 CoC Notice of Funding Available by HUD.