

Continuum of Care (CoC) Glossary of Terms

September 2013

Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). Annual report to Congress, providing an in-depth look at the state of homelessness in the country. The AHAR is prepared by HUD and provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, including information about the demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and the capacity to house homeless persons.

Annual Performance Report (APR). A reporting tool that HUD uses to track program progress and accomplishments and inform the Department's competitive process for homeless assistance funding.

Annual/Biennial Point-In Time (PIT) count. One night count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons; reported by CoCs into the Homeless Data Exchange (HDX). CoCs can choose to conduct these counts each year, but they are only required to conduct them every other year during the last week in January.

CoC Lead Agency (administrative agent/entity). Agency that is designated to carry out the activities of the CoC or grant including fiscal and compliance activities. Regular administrative tasks may include, but are not limited to: management of the annual HUD application, coordination of other funding opportunities, project and system monitoring, meeting management, etc. For purposes of the CoC Check-up, this excludes staff/staff time related to fiscal or HMIS-related duties.

CoC projects. Those projects identified by the CoC as part of its service system, whose primary purpose is to meet the specific needs of people who are experiencing a housing crisis and include both 'homeless assistance' and 'homelessness prevention' projects. Each project may nor may not receive HUD funds (e.g. ESG, SHP, S+C, etc.)

CoC Strategic Plan. A plan identifying the CoC goals/objectives, action steps, performance targets, etc. and serves as a guide for CoC development and performance improvement related to preventing and ending homelessness. This may be the same as or different than a community's "Ten Year Plan" or other community-wide plan to prevent/end homelessness and may be generated by the CoC lead decision-making group or another community-planning body. If the CoC follows a regional or statewide 10-year or other plan to prevent/end homelessness, the CoC strategic plan would be the CoC's specific goals/objectives, action steps, and timelines to support the regional or statewide plan.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Federal HUD formula grant program providing communities with resources to address a variety of community development needs. CDBG is awarded to entitlement communities to carry out a wide range of community development

activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services.

Consolidated Plan. A long-term housing and community development plan developed by state and local governments and approved by HUD (24 CFR Part 91). The Consolidated Plan contains information on homeless populations and should be coordinated with the CoC plan.

Consumer. A person or household utilizing housing or services provided as part of the CoC.

Continuum of Care (CoC). A collaborative funding and planning approach that helps communities plan for and provide, as necessary, a full range of emergency, transitional, and permanent housing and other service resources to address the various needs of homeless persons. HUD also refers to the group of community stakeholders involved in the decision making processes as the “Continuum of Care.”

Continuum of Care Lead Agency. Agency or organization designated by the CoC primary decision making body to be the entity that submits the CoC application. The CoC lead agency is responsible for the coordination and oversight of the CoC planning efforts, and has the authority to certify and submit the CoC homeless assistance funding application. A state governmental entity is the only acceptable organization that may serve as the Lead Agency for multiple CoCs, due to the level of involvement and possible conflict of interest that comes with serving multiple CoCs. Under no other circumstance should one entity be identified as the Lead Agency for multiple CoCs.

Continuum of Care Primary Decision Making Group. This group manages the overall planning effort for the CoC, including, but not limited to, the following types of activities: setting agendas for full CoC meetings, project monitoring, determining project priorities, and providing final approval for the CoC application submission. This body is also responsible for the implementation of the CoC’s HMIS, either through direct oversight or through the designation of an HMIS implementing agency. This group may be the CoC Lead Agency or may authorize another entity to be the CoC Lead Agency under its direction.

Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG). The Emergency Shelter/ Grants program provides homeless persons with basic shelter and essential supportive services. Eligible activities include funding operational costs of the shelter facility, grant administration, and short-term homeless prevention assistance to persons at imminent risk of losing their own housing due to eviction, foreclosure, or utility shutoffs.

Federal Strategic Plan. Plan (“Opening Doors”) developed by the US Interagency Council on Homelessness in 2010 outlining the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness.

Fiscal agent. Agency designated by the CoC to undertake grant and fiscal monitoring and oversight.

HMIS Lead Agency. Agency, organization or government department designated by CoC to administer and manage the HMIS.

HOME Investment Partnership Program. HOME funds are the largest block grant to State and local governments around creating affordable housing for low-income households. Funds are often used in partnership with local nonprofit groups to build, acquire or rehab affordable housing for rent or own.

Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS). An HMIS is a computerized data collection application designed to capture client-level information over time on the characteristics of service needs of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness, while also protecting client confidentiality. It is designed to aggregate client-level data to generate an unduplicated count of clients served within a community's system of homeless services. An HMIS may also cover a statewide or regional area, and include several CoCs. HMIS can provide data on client characteristics and service utilization. HUD will allow only one applicant for HMIS dedicated grants within a CoC.

Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP). A federally funded program designed to provide financial assistance and services to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless or to help those who are experiencing homelessness to be quickly rehoused and stabilized. HPRP is a time-limited program funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Homeless Pulse Report. A quarterly report collecting timely data on the sheltered homeless population of targeted CoC's. The PULSE assists HUD in understanding the impact of the current economic crisis on homelessness. The PULSE provides point-in-time shelter counts of homeless persons that are served on a specified quarterly date and also a count of "newly" homeless persons served in the reporting quarter.

Housing for People with AIDS Program (HOPWA). This program provides housing and service assistance for homeless clients living with AIDS. HOPWA funds may be used for a wide range of housing, social services, program planning, and development costs. These include, but are not limited to, the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of housing units; costs for facility operations; rental assistance; and short-term payments to prevent homelessness. HOPWA funds also may be used for health care and mental health services, chemical dependency treatment, nutritional services, case management, assistance with daily living, and other supportive services.

Housing Inventory Count (HIC). Annual inventory of a CoCs emergency shelter, transitional housing, safe havens, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing resources for persons who are homeless in a CoC. The HIC includes both HUD and non-HUD funded shelter and housing resources.

HUD-funded projects. Projects receiving HUD ESG or CoC Homeless Assistance (Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Shelter plus Care (S+C) or Section 8 Mod Rehab) funding. The HEARTH Act consolidates the Shelter Plus Care and Supportive Housing Program into a single CoC program, but maintains all of the eligible activities available under S+C, SHP and Mod Rehab/SRO programs.

Other Non-HUD funded CoC projects. Projects providing assistance to homeless or at-risk individuals and families, but not receiving any HUD Homeless Assistance or ESG funds.

Participation. Participation means that stakeholders dedicate sufficient staff time and resources to assist in CoC governance and goal achievement commensurate with their role/responsibilities relative to the CoC. Participation may occur at any level in the CoC governance structure.

Performance indicator: Specific measurements, used to gauge outcomes. Performance indicators are set to understand what a program or system does or produces (outputs) and what has changed as a result of an output (outcomes). CoCs typically have both CoC-wide indicators to measure achievement of system-wide goals and program indicators to measure individual program performance.

Performance Target. A percentage or numeric measurement set for specific performance indicators

Project Sponsor. An entity that is responsible for carrying out the proposed project activities of a HUD Homeless Assistance grant. A project sponsor does not submit an SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance) or enter into a direct contract with HUD, unless it is also the applicant/grantee. To be eligible to be a project sponsor, the organization must meet the same program eligibility standards as applicants/grantees. The only exception to this standard is under the Sponsor-based rental assistance (SRA) component of the S+C Program, where a sponsor must be a private, nonprofit organization or a community mental health agency established as a public nonprofit organization; therefore, eligible project sponsors for this component are statutorily precluded from applying for S+C funding.

Temporary housing: A facility where the primary purpose is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for people experiencing homelessness in general or for specific populations of the homeless population. Temporary housing includes emergency shelter and facility-based transitional housing.

Unified Funding Agency (UFA). A collaborative applicant who is designated by HUD to be the fiscal agent in that CoC.