

## Before Starting the Special CoC Application

You must submit both of the following parts in order for us to consider your Special NOFO Consolidated Application complete:

1. the CoC Application, and
2. the CoC Priority Listing.

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

- Special Notice of Funding Opportunity to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness
- 24 CFR part 578
- Special NOFO CoC Application Navigational Guide
- Section 3 Resources
- Frequently Asked Questions

As the Collaborative Applicant, you are responsible for reviewing the following:

1. The Special Notice of Funding Opportunity (Special NOFO) for specific application and program requirements.
2. The Special NOFO Continuum of Care (CoC) Application Detailed Instructions for Collaborative Applicants which provide additional information and guidance for completing the application.
3. All information provided to ensure it is correct and current.
4. Responses provided by project applicants in their Project Applications.
5. The application to ensure all documentation, including attachment are provided.

CoC Approval is Required before You Submit Your CoC's Special NOFO CoC Consolidated Application

- 24 CFR 578.9 requires you to compile and submit the Special NOFO CoC Consolidated Application on behalf of your CoC.
- 24 CFR 578.9(b) requires you to obtain approval from your CoC before you submit the Consolidated Application into e-snaps.

Answering Multi-Part Narrative Questions

Many questions require you to address multiple elements in a single text box. Number your responses to correspond with multi-element questions using the same numbers in the question. This will help you organize your responses to ensure they are complete and help us to review and score your responses.

Attachments

Questions requiring attachments to receive points state, "You must upload the [Specific Attachment Name] attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen." Only upload documents responsive to the questions posed—including other material slows down the review process, which ultimately slows down the funding process. Include a cover page with the attachment name.

- Attachments must match the questions they are associated with—if we do not award points for evidence you upload and associate with the wrong question, this is not a valid reason for you to appeal HUD's funding determination.

- We must be able to read the date and time on attachments requiring system-generated dates and times, (e.g., a screenshot displaying the time and date of the public posting using your desktop calendar; screenshot of a webpage that indicates date and time).

## 1A. Continuum of Care (CoC) Identification

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

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**1A-1. CoC Name and Number:** MN-505 - St. Cloud/Central Minnesota CoC

**1A-2. Collaborative Applicant Name:** Central MN Housing Partnership, Inc.

**1A-3. CoC Designation:** CA

**1A-4. HMIS Lead:** Institute for Community Alliances

1A-5.	<b>New Projects</b>	
	Complete the chart below by indicating which funding opportunity(ies) your CoC applying for projects under. A CoC may apply for funding under both set asides; however, projects funded through the rural set aside may only be used in rural areas, as defined in the Special NOFO.	
1.	<b>Unsheltered Homelessness Set Aside</b>	Yes
2.	<b>Rural Homelessness Set Aside</b>	Yes

## 1B. Project Capacity, Review, and Ranking–Local Competition

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

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<b>1B-1.</b>	<b>Web Posting of Your CoC Local Competition Deadline–Advance Public Notice. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.1.b.	
	You must upload the Local Competition Deadline attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.	
	Enter the date your CoC published the deadline for project application submission for your CoC's local competition.	08/11/2022

<b>1B-2.</b>	<b>Project Review and Ranking Process Your CoC Used in Its Local Competition. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.1.a.	
	You must upload the Local Competition Scoring Tool attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.	
	Select yes or no in the chart below to indicate how your CoC ranked and selected new project applications during your CoC's local competition:	
	1. Established total points available for each project application type.	Yes
	2. At least 33 percent of the total points were based on objective criteria for the project application (e.g., cost effectiveness, timely draws, utilization rate, match, leverage), performance data, type of population served (e.g., DV, youth, Veterans, chronic homelessness), or type of housing proposed (e.g., PSH, RRH).	Yes
	3. At least 20 percent of the total points were based on system performance criteria for the project application (e.g., exits to permanent housing destinations, retention of permanent housing, length of time homeless, returns to homelessness).	No

<b>1B-3.</b>	<b>Projects Rejected/Reduced–Notification Outside of e-snaps. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.1.b.	
	You must upload the Notification of Projects Rejected-Reduced attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.	
	1. Did your CoC reject or reduce any project application(s)?	Yes
	2. Did your CoC inform the applicants why their projects were rejected or reduced?	Yes
	3. If you selected yes, for element 1 of this question, enter the date your CoC notified applicants that their project applications were being rejected or reduced, in writing, outside of e-snaps. If you notified applicants on various dates, list the latest date of any notification. For example, if you notified applicants on 6/26/22, 6/27/22, and 6/28/22, then you must enter 6/28/22.	10/05/2022

1B-3a.	<b>Projects Accepted–Notification Outside of e-snaps. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.1.b.	
	You must upload the Notification of Projects Accepted attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.	
	Enter the date your CoC notified project applicants that their project applications were accepted and ranked on the New Priority Listings in writing, outside of e-snaps. If you notified applicants on various dates, list the latest date of any notification. For example, if you notified applicants on 6/26/22, 6/27/22, and 6/28/22, then you must enter 6/28/22.	10/05/2022
1B-4.	<b>Web Posting of the CoC-Approved Special NOFO CoC Consolidated Application. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.1.b.	
	You must upload the Web Posting–Special NOFO CoC Consolidated Application attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.	
	Enter the date your CoC posted its Special NOFO CoC Consolidated Application on the CoC’s website or affiliate’s website–which included: 1. the CoC Application, and 2. Priority Listings.	10/18/2022

## 2A. System Performance

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

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<b>2A-1.</b>	<b>Reduction in the Number of First Time Homeless—Risk Factors.</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.2.b.	
	Describe in the field below:	
	1. how your CoC determined which risk factors your CoC uses to identify persons becoming homeless for the first time;	
	2. how your CoC addresses individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless; and	
	3. provide the name of the organization or position title that is responsible for overseeing your CoC's strategy to reduce the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness for the first time or to end homelessness for individuals and families.	

**(limit 2,500 characters)**

1. Central CoC consists of three regions having common assessment prevention targeting tools to identify risk factors to determine who could potentially become homeless. Risk factors include current housing status, income, barriers to housing, history of homelessness, economic instability, relationship breakdown, domestic violence, mental health, & substance abuse. Housing affordability and housing availability is one of the most significant reasons people lose their housing and become homeless. Most initial diversion/prevention calls are taken by FHPAP providers who use the Minnesota Homelessness Prevention Assessment Tool. This tool is based on research and program evaluation data that identifies conditions, characteristics, and attributes most closely associated with a future incidence(s) of homelessness. Non-FHPAP assessors use a Housing Crisis Screening Form available on the CES website.
2. Central CoC's strategy is to focus on diversion/prevention to reduce first time homelessness. The CES Coordinator emphasizes diversion and prevention throughout assessor trainings. A "9 Steps to Diversion" process is used and is available on the CES website. CoC uses established prevention and diversion tools for those that have the most risk factors. Each of the CoCs regions have active FHPAP programs who are front line access points trained in diversion and prevention strategies. The majority of initial client calls are taken by FHPAP providers. These programs have direct access and strategies for prevention money. Direct landlord engagement is available in situations where mediation may prevent an eviction or nonrenewal of a lease.
3. The Central MN CoC Coordinator and the Central CES coordinator are ultimately responsible for overseeing the CoC's strategy to reduce first-time homelessness in Central MN.

<b>2A-2.</b>	<b>Length of Time Homeless—Strategy to Reduce. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.2.c.	
	Describe in the field below:	
1.	your CoC's strategy to reduce the length of time individuals and persons in families remain homeless;	
2.	how your CoC identifies and houses individuals and persons in families with the longest lengths of time homeless; and	
3.	provide the name of the organization or position title that is responsible for overseeing your CoC's strategy to reduce the length of time individuals and families remain homeless.	

**(limit 2,500 characters)**

1. The average length of time for persons on the Priority List for 2021-22 was 248 days. This has decreased from 266 days for 2020-21. This is in spite of the fact that agencies throughout the CoC have reported increased difficulty in housing placements as a direct result of Covid eviction moratoriums. People were not moving out of units which severely limited availability. Increased volatility of personal income led many people to not pursue new housing options, choosing to stay where they were while waiting to see what long term impacts Covid would have on their situation. The CoC continues its strategy to reduce the length of time households are homeless by increasing the number of available beds, using CE to target households with the highest barriers & longest time homeless. Increased efforts to encourage landlords to adopt a Housing First approach, including changes in how background histories are used. Navigators assist CH & LTH with obtaining needed documentation when put on the priority list so this is completed before a unit is available, saving time & increasing the success rate of referrals. Central CoC policy is to house those that have been homeless the longest first. Incentives such as landlord mitigation funds are used to increase the housing stock for those with multiple barriers. The CoC works with MN Housing and housing developers to build affordable housing within the Central CoC.

2. Central CoC identifies and houses and persons in families with the longest lengths of time homeless through the Coordinated Entry Priority List. Length of time homeless is a data point that is listed on the Priority List and is used to prioritize which households are referred to housing programs first. Those that have been homeless longest along with the highest scores are assisted first.

3. The Central MN CoC Coordinator and Coordinated Entry Coordinator are ultimately responsible for overseeing the CoC's strategy to reduce the length of time individuals and families remain homeless.

<b>2A-3.</b>	<b>Successful Permanent Housing Placement or Retention. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.2.d.	
	Describe in the field below how your CoC will increase the rate that individuals and persons in families residing in:	
1.	emergency shelter, safe havens, transitional housing, and rapid rehousing exit to permanent housing destinations; and	
2.	permanent housing projects retain their permanent housing or exit to permanent housing destinations.	

**(limit 2,500 characters)**

1. Central CoC’s strategy for individuals & families in ES, SH, TH & RRH to exit to PH destinations include: Use CE to move households into appropriate housing quickly. Extra focus is placed on accuracy and timeliness of data on the PL and maintaining regular contact with households to make referrals faster and increase successful referrals; Work with HH on a housing plan as they enter the temporary housing including budgeting, plans to increase income & linking HH to mainstream resources; Identify options available to HH to reduce overall housing costs relative to their budget; Use of tenant/landlord mediation to resolve lease violations through solution driven action plans; Use of Landlord Mitigation funds to reduce the financial risk when renting to households with barriers thereby creating more housing opportunities; On-going case management support that focuses on housing stability and; Increasing affordable housing stock by working with state funding agencies & developers to develop more affordable housing. These strategies will stabilize HH by increasing their income & using available connections to strengthen their ability to obtain and stay in PH.

2. Strategies to assist households maintain PH include: Continue to provide ongoing case management with households once they obtain housing to increase problem solving skills needed to retain it; Teach budgeting to identify ways to reduce overall housing costs relative to their income; Tenant/landlord mediation (if needed) to help resolve lease violations through solution driven action plans; Link households to mainstream resources they may need, including childcare assistance, medical assistance, veterans assistance, domestic violence resources, SSI/SSDI, workforce agencies, substance abuse treatment, mental health providers & transportation options.

<b>2A-4.</b>	<b>Returns to Homelessness–CoC’s Strategy to Reduce Rate. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.2.e.	

Describe in the field below:	
1.	how your CoC identifies individuals and families who return to homelessness;
2.	your CoC’s strategy to reduce the rate of additional returns to homelessness; and
3.	provide the name of the organization or position title that is responsible for overseeing your CoC’s strategy to reduce the rate individuals and persons in families return to homelessness.

**(limit 2,500 characters)**

1.The CoC strategy is to identify individuals & families who return to homelessness by reviewing System Performance Measures (SPM) & Coordinated Entry data. The CoC reviews progress data on SPM including how many individuals & persons in families have returned to homelessness. Additionally, reports are obtained from the HMIS provider which track returns to homelessness on a statewide basis. This ensures that clients who re-enter in another CoC area will be counted as well. The timeframe is 365 days to make sure it is a true 12-month time period.

2.The CoC’s strategy to reduce the rate of returns to homelessness is to utilize a network of resources households can turn to prior to returning to homelessness. The CoC worked with housing providers to revise written standards for RRH & PSH. Updates include expectations on case management services & after care services. A key component in the expectations is communicating early & often with the household about the resources available to maintain housing stability. Providers are committed to re-engaging with households after program exit if the household needs support in re-stabilizing their housing. Service providers may offer longer rent subsidies, intensive case management, assist clients in finding employment & unearned income, and health resources to maximize their housing stability. Landlord Mitigation funds can assist in mediation between landlords & households to enable a household to stay in their current housing and not return to homelessness. Central CoC has a transfer policy for those at risk of homelessness stating if it is determined that a household’s needs no longer fit with the program they are currently participating in, or the understanding of their needs have changed since program entry they may have the ability to transition to a different housing program that better fits their needs.

3.CoC Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the strategy to reduce the rate households return to homelessness.

<b>2A-5.</b>	<b>Increasing Employment Cash Income–Strategy. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.2.f.	

Describe in the field below:	
1.	the strategy your CoC has implemented to increase employment cash sources;
2.	how your CoC works with mainstream employment organizations to help individuals and families increase their cash income; and
3.	provide the organization name or position title that is responsible for overseeing your CoC’s strategy to increase income from employment.

**(limit 2,500 characters)**



1. Collaborate with area workforce centers, community education, & employment agencies to provide ongoing training & access to employment opportunities. Connect clients with workforce centers, provide job readiness programs, employment coaching, resume creation, interview practice & training for specific careers. Identify employers who have flexibility in hiring people with criminal backgrounds. Focus on promoting youth employment programs. Assist Veterans with engagement to Veteran Service Officers & agencies to receive Veteran employment services. CoC agencies have partnerships with for-profit and non-profit employment agencies & workforce centers. This partnership includes on-site services for homeless households that includes resume writing, interview practice and employment coaching. Employment agencies notify homeless service agencies of potential job openings & often provides the training needed for certain jobs. Employment and Training programs assist with individual employment plans, life skills and 1:1 sessions that include job readiness topics. Connection to career clothing for interviews/ job required clothing & emergency bus cards/gas cards support job search and retention. Mainstream employment organizations are essential to the success of households obtaining and/or increasing their cash income.

2. CoC agencies have partnerships with for-profit & non-profit businesses, employment agencies & workforce centers. Opportunities for assistance to pay for additional schooling as well as GED classes are promoted as increasing education often leads to increased income, increased benefits, and more stable employment.

3. CoC Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the strategy to increase job & income growth from employment.

2A-5a.	Increasing Non-employment Cash Income—Strategy. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.2.f.	
	Describe in the field below:	
	1. the strategy your CoC has implemented to increase non-employment cash income;	
	2. your CoC's strategy to increase access to non-employment cash sources; and	
	3. provide the organization name or position title that is responsible for overseeing your CoC's strategy to increase non-employment cash income.	

(limit 2,500 characters)

1. Central CoCs strategy to increase non-employment cash income includes partnerships with agencies assisting individuals with applications for mainstream resources such as Minnesota General Assistance, Minnesota Family Investment Program (both MN unearned income supports), Food Support, SSI, SSDI, unemployment & other unearned income benefits. Central CoC has developed robust connections with Veteran's agencies to ensure Veterans are connected to Veteran Service Officers and agencies to receive VA benefits including veteran pensions. Individuals with a disability are connected to SOAR for support and assistance with applications and navigating the SSI/SSDI process. Households are assisted in applying for child support, alimony, energy assistance, weatherization, and health insurance.
2. Central CoC's strategy to increase access to non-employment cash sources includes local partnerships with county services, Veteran Service Officers, MN Assistance Council for Veterans, SOAR and transportation services. Communication of available mainstream resources are shared and updates reported at the Central CoC Full Membership Committee meeting and other local monthly meetings. Agencies throughout the CoC educate households on services available to them to increase their non-employment cash income and reduce overall household expenses. Households are supported with applications and transportation options to increase access to mainstream resources. Many agencies will assist clients in completing applications and obtaining required documentation.
3. The CoC Coordinator, working with the CoC's Governing Board is responsible for overseeing the CoC's strategy to increase non-employment cash income.

## 2B. Coordination and Engagement–Inclusive Structure and Participation

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

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2B-1.	<b>Inclusive Structure and Participation–Participation in Coordinated Entry. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Sections VII.B.3.a.(1)	

In the chart below for the period from May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022:	
1.	select yes or no in the chart below if the entity listed participates in CoC meetings, voted—including selecting CoC Board members, and participated in your CoC’s coordinated entry system; or
2.	select Nonexistent if the organization does not exist in your CoC’s geographic area:

	Organization/Person	Participated in CoC Meetings	Voted, Including Electing of CoC Board Members	Participated in CoC’s Coordinated Entry System
1.	Affordable Housing Developer(s)	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.	Agencies serving survivors of human trafficking	Yes	No	No
3.	CDBG/HOME/ESG Entitlement Jurisdiction	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.	CoC-Funded Victim Service Providers	Yes	Yes	No
5.	CoC-Funded Youth Homeless Organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
6.	Disability Advocates	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.	Disability Service Organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
8.	Domestic Violence Advocates	Yes	Yes	Yes
9.	EMS/Crisis Response Team(s)	Yes	No	No
10.	Homeless or Formerly Homeless Persons	Yes	Yes	No
11.	Hospital(s)	Yes	No	No
12.	Indian Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) (Tribal Organizations)	Yes	Yes	No
13.	Law Enforcement	Yes	No	No
14.	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) Advocates	Yes	Yes	Yes
15.	LGBTQ+ Service Organizations	Yes	Yes	No
16.	Local Government Staff/Officials	Yes	No	No
17.	Local Jail(s)	No	No	No
18.	Mental Health Service Organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
19.	Mental Illness Advocates	Yes	Yes	Yes

20.	Non-CoC Funded Youth Homeless Organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
21.	Non-CoC-Funded Victim Service Providers	Yes	Yes	No
22.	Organizations led by and serving Black, Brown, Indigenous and other People of Color	Yes	Yes	No
23.	Organizations led by and serving LGBTQ+ persons	Yes	Yes	Yes
24.	Organizations led by and serving people with disabilities	Yes	Yes	Yes
25.	Other homeless subpopulation advocates	Yes	Yes	No
26.	Public Housing Authorities	Yes	Yes	Yes
27.	School Administrators/Homeless Liaisons	Yes	No	No
28.	Street Outreach Team(s)	Yes	Yes	Yes
29.	Substance Abuse Advocates	Yes	Yes	Yes
30.	Substance Abuse Service Organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
31.	Youth Advocates	Yes	Yes	Yes
32.	Youth Service Providers	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Other:(limit 50 characters)			
33.	Seniors Organizations	Yes	Yes	No
34.				

2B-2.	Open Invitation for New Members. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.a.(2), V.B.3.g.	

	Describe in the field below how your CoC:
1.	communicated the invitation process annually to solicit new members to join the CoC;
2.	ensured effective communication with individuals with disabilities, including the availability of accessible electronic formats;
3.	conducted outreach to ensure persons experiencing homelessness or formerly homeless persons are encouraged to join your CoC; and
4.	invited organizations serving culturally specific communities experiencing homelessness in the geographic area to address equity (e.g., Black, Latino, Indigenous, other People of Color, persons with disabilities).

(limit 2,500 characters)

1. Central MN CoC advertises an open invitation for new members at least annually via emails, phone contacts & the CoC Website. The Membership Committee gathers lists of potential new members to make contact with. Meetings are open to anyone interested in preventing & ending homelessness. Whenever new agencies or seasoned agencies who do not currently participate in the CoC are identified, they are welcomed & provided with information regarding the CoC including who we are, who we serve, how we operate & an invitation to attend a CoC meeting. 17 agencies either joined for the first time or reengaged again over the last year.
2. Central CoC ensures effective communication with individuals with disabilities by providing accessible information on Facebook and our Website with options for telephone & email contact. Telecommunications relay services are utilized. Central CoC monthly meetings are held virtually using meeting applications that include close captioning and other accessibility options including the option to call in rather than attend via computer. These methods make it easier for those with a disability to connect with the CoC and ask questions about membership.
3. Outreach to people with lived expertise was conducted at CoC Full Committee meetings & programs were asked to contact current & past clients to see if they would be interested in being a paid consultant. A statewide agency who had already recruited several consultants was contacted to see if any of those people would be interested in being a consultant for the CoC. Additionally, a housing provider sent direct mailings to all their tenants in several buildings soliciting participants.
4. Organizations serving culturally specific communities are invited to join the Full Membership meetings and to offer input on programs and policies that may affect various communities. The CoC has an active Racial Equity Accountability Project cohort as well as a Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee that is promoted throughout the CoC at meetings and actively recruits new members in order to expand input from the BIPOC community. The CoC Membership Community identifies and personally makes contact with organizations that have been historically underrepresented in order to add those valuable voices to the planning and decision-making process. Staff has been attending community events to make connections with agencies serving underrepresented populations in an effort to expand our network.

2B-3.	CoC's Strategy to Solicit/Consider Opinions on Preventing and Ending Homelessness. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.a.(3)	

Describe in the field below how your CoC:	
1.	solicited and considered opinions from a broad array of organizations and individuals that have knowledge of homelessness or an interest in preventing and ending homelessness;
2.	communicated information during public meetings or other forums your CoC uses to solicit public information; and
3.	took into consideration information gathered in public meetings or forums to address improvements or new approaches to preventing and ending homelessness.

(limit 2,500 characters)

1. The CoC solicited input from a wide array of stakeholders using several different ways. CoC Full Membership Committee meetings bring together over 40 different attendees each month where feedback, suggestions, and concerns are shared and possible solutions are discussed. Specific areas of concern are focused on each month. Recent discussions focused on cold weather planning, youth outreach, health services, and others. People with lived expertise are now paid consultants who attend these meetings to bring their unique perspectives and ideas. Additionally, meetings with only people with lived expertise are being held so that they feel free to be candid without program staff being present.

2. CoC staff has attended multiple public forums where program information was shared and time was given for attendees to ask questions or provide feedback. More than 40 people attended each of these outreach sessions. Mental health workers, housing providers, and county staff attended these meetings. The Landlord Engagement Group facilitates bimonthly meetings where landlords provide feedback on areas of improvement for housing in the area. This has been crucial as we work to improve relationships with landlords that were negatively impacted by the Covid eviction moratorium and subsequent RentHelp MN payment process.

3. Information gathered is brought back to various committees of the CoC to be discussed. Possible solutions are presented to the CoC Full Membership Committee which then passes their recommendations to the CoC Governing Board for final approval and implementation. An example of this process is changes being implemented in the CES process. Experiences and concerns from housing providers, property management staff, and tenants were discussed in a variety of group settings and were brought to the CES Advisory Committee to revise policies and procedures to create a more effective and efficient referral processes. This has led to several policy changes that were subsequently approved and implemented by the CoC Governing Board. This process is also ongoing.

2B-4.	Public Notification for Proposals from Organizations Not Previously Funded. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.a.(4)	

Describe in the field below how your CoC notified the public:	
1.	that your CoC's local competition was open and accepting project applications;
2.	that your CoC will consider project applications from organizations that have not previously received CoC Program funding;
3.	about how project applicants must submit their project applications;
4.	about how your CoC would determine which project applications it would submit to HUD for funding; and
5.	how your CoC effectively communicated with individuals with disabilities, including making information accessible in electronic formats.

(limit 2,500 characters)

1. Central CoC announced the local competition via an email to the entire CoCs listserv. Additionally, information was placed on the agency website and announced at a meeting of the CoC Full Membership Committee.
2. Central CoC notified the public that new projects would be considered through emails, specific outreach to agencies that had previously expressed interest, and via information on the CoC website. A mass email announcement was sent to the entire CoC email listserv with over 140 people on it soliciting new applicants. The Intent to Apply form for New Projects is readily available on the website. Information is also shared during CoC Full Membership Committee meetings. New project applicants are notified of available technical assistance through the CoC.
3. Project applicants are notified of the process to submit application via email, verbal notification at meetings, and through timelines and process information on the website. Applicants are also notified during available technical assistance through the CoC.
4. The Performance and Ranking Committee reviews & scores applications for eligibility, meeting homeless unmet needs, priority needs in the area, project design & HMIS & Coordinated Entry requirements. Documents are posted on the CoC website which explain the process that will be used & how projects will be prioritized for submission. The scoring spreadsheet is available online for applicants to review & to help them understand the priorities that have been established for this year's competition.
5. CoC provided NOFO notification to individuals with disabilities via agency website in pdf, Word & different languages upon request. Notices are sent to agencies that work with individuals with disabilities with instructions on how to apply.

## 2C. Coordination / Engagement—with Federal, State, Local, Private, and Other Organizations

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

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2C-1.	<b>Coordination with Federal, State, Local, Private, and Other Organizations. (All Applicants)</b>	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.b.	
	In the chart below:	
	1. select yes or no for entities listed that are included in your CoC’s coordination, planning, and operations of projects that serve individuals, families, unaccompanied youth, persons who are fleeing domestic violence who are experiencing homelessness, or those at risk of homelessness; or	
	2. select Nonexistent if the organization does not exist within your CoC’s geographic area.	

	Entities or Organizations Your CoC Coordinates with for Planning or Operations of Projects	Coordinates with Planning or Operations of Projects
1.	Funding Collaboratives	Yes
2.	Head Start Program	No
3.	Housing and services programs funded through Local Government	Yes
4.	Housing and services programs funded through other Federal Resources (non-CoC)	Yes
5.	Housing and services programs funded through private entities, including Foundations	Yes
6.	Housing and services programs funded through State Government	Yes
7.	Housing and services programs funded through U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	Yes
8.	Housing and services programs funded through U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)	Yes
9.	Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	No
10.	Indian Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) (Tribal Organizations)	Yes
11.	Organizations led by and serving Black, Brown, Indigenous and other People of Color	Yes
12.	Organizations led by and serving LGBTQ+ persons	Yes
13.	Organizations led by and serving people with disabilities	Yes
14.	Private Foundations	Yes
15.	Public Housing Authorities	Yes
16.	Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY)	Yes
17.	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Yes
	Other:(limit 50 characters)	
18.		



2C-2.	CoC Consultation with ESG Program Recipients. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.b.	

Describe in the field below how your CoC:	
1.	consulted with ESG Program recipients in planning and allocating ESG funds;
2.	participated in evaluating and reporting performance of ESG Program recipients and subrecipients;
3.	provided Point-in-Time (PIT) count and Housing Inventory Count (HIC) data to the Consolidated Plan jurisdictions within its geographic area; and
4.	provided information to Consolidated Plan Jurisdictions to address homelessness within your CoC's geographic area so it could be addressed in Consolidated Plan update.

(limit 2,500 characters)

1. ESG Program recipients were involved at the monthly CoC Full Membership meetings as well as biweekly Provider Collaboration meetings. Discussions with ESG providers occurred regarding which agencies would be providing services, where clients would be housed, and creating collaborations with other agencies to ensure that availability of resources was adequately announced. CoC staff also collaborated via email and phone calls as needed.
2. Minnesota's Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) is the ESG recipient for the balance of MN. In the ESG RFP process DHS OEO solicited and received input from the Central CoC Coordinator regarding priorities, organizational capacity and performance, and feasibility of proposed project funding. Programmatic performance was discussed for each applicant program. HMIS and PIT count numbers were used to assist in determining the ESG needs in the CoC area.
3. PIT & HIC data is available through HUD reports. CoC level data is also posted on the CoC website. Agencies that request specific information are sent information that has been customized to meet their specific needs, including by-county level data via email.
4. Central CoC local needs are addressed along with the other 9 MN CoC's and the Tribal Collaborative which are part of the MN Consolidated Plan and updated as needed. PIT Count data and consultation are provided for purposes of the local Consolidated Plan update.

2C-3.	Discharge Planning Coordination. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.c.	

Select yes or no in the chart below to indicate whether your CoC actively coordinates with the systems of care listed to ensure persons who have resided in them longer than 90 days are not discharged directly to the streets, emergency shelters, or other homeless assistance programs.		
1.	Foster Care	Yes
2.	Health Care	Yes
3.	Mental Health Care	Yes
4.	Correctional Facilities	Yes

2C-4.	CoC Collaboration Related to Children and Youth–SEAs, LEAs, School Districts. (All Applicants)
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.d.

Select yes or no in the chart below to indicate the entities your CoC collaborates with:

1.	Youth Education Provider	Yes
2.	State Education Agency (SEA)	Yes
3.	Local Education Agency (LEA)	Yes
4.	School Districts	Yes

2C-4a.	CoC Collaboration Related to Children and Youth–SEAs, LEAs, School Districts–Formal Partnerships. (All Applicants)
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.d.

Describe in the field below:

1.	how your CoC collaborates with the entities checked in Question 2C-4; and
2.	the formal partnerships your CoC has with the entities checked in Question 2C-4.

**(limit 2,500 characters)**

1. Central CoC collaborates with School Districts during monthly Provider Collaboration meetings. District homeless liaisons and social workers attend these meetings to provide information, network, and learn updates from the CoC. The CoC also conducts targeted outreach to all school homeless liaisons and Youth Education Providers to solicit involvement in the annual PIT Count process. The recently signed Collaboration Agreement with the MN Department of Education will help to strengthen these collaborations as well as reinforce the importance of the CoC/education agency partnerships.

2. All MN CoCs including MN-505 have entered into a formal Collaboration Agreement with the MN Department of Education (MDE). The purpose of this non-binding collaborative agreement is to demonstrate interest in sharing resources, expanding collaborative efforts and implementing systemic supports to better serve students and families who are experiencing homelessness. This agreement establishes a variety of ways that cross agency communication will occur to address needs of homeless students including trainings, meeting attendance, and increased access to school homeless liaisons. This is a significant new step that will greatly enhance access to homeless students and ensure they are promptly connected to needed services throughout the CoC. Additionally, CoC policy requires ESG & CoC funded projects with school age children to link youth to a Homeless School Liaison (HSL) & have formal agreements with early childhood programs. CoC Funded providers are required to document agreements with SEAs and LEAs as part of the annual NOFO process.

2C-4b.	CoC Collaboration Related to Children and Youth—Informing Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness about Eligibility for Educational Services. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.d.	

Describe in the field below written policies and procedures your CoC adopted to inform individuals and families who become homeless of their eligibility for educational services

**(limit 2,500 characters)**

From page 43 of the Central CoC Written Standards & Policies: Education Policies: All homeless assistance projects within the Central MN CoC region that serve households with children (shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing) will be expected to comply with the following policies: i. Identify staff person(s) who have primary responsibility for school attendance. ii. Ensure that all homeless families are informed of the McKinney Vento Act to ensure that their children can maintain enrollment in school. iii. Advocate for families with their school district to ensure that transportation is arranged (as needed). iv. Track school attendance for all children served within your program and help families to resolve any barriers that are contributing to the absences (as needed). v. Assist families in developing education related goals for all family members when completing Housing Goal Plans. vi. Ensure that all family members are connected to relevant educational resources in the community. vii. Encourage and assist families with children ages 3-5 to apply for the Head Start Program and provide referrals to agencies that offer Head Start. This policy was updated and approved February 2, 2021.

2C-5.	Mainstream Resources—CoC Training of Project Staff. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.e.	

Indicate in the chart below whether your CoC trains project staff annually on the following mainstream resources available for program participants within your CoC's geographic area:

	Mainstream Resource	CoC Provides Annual Training?
1.	Food Stamps	Yes
2.	SSI—Supplemental Security Income	Yes
3.	TANF—Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Yes
4.	Substance Abuse Programs	Yes
5.	Employment Assistance Programs	Yes
6.	Other	

**You must select a response for elements 1 through 6 in question 2C-5.**

2C-5a.	Mainstream Resources—CoC Collaboration with Project Staff Regarding Healthcare Organizations. (All Applicants)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.B.3.e.	

Describe in the field below how your CoC:	
1.	systemically provides up-to-date information on mainstream resources available for program participants (e.g., Food Stamps, SSI, TANF, substance abuse programs) within your CoC's geographic area;
2.	works with project staff to collaborate with healthcare organizations to assist program participants with enrolling in health insurance;
3.	provides assistance to project staff with the effective use of Medicaid and other benefits; and
4.	works with projects to promote SOAR certification of program staff.

(limit 2,500 characters)

1. CoC provides notices of trainings & funding opportunities via email & at CoC meetings & invites people to attend meetings to discuss available resources. Representatives from many counties within the CoC attend various regularly scheduled meetings where updates & opportunities for training are shared with other organizations. Central CoC disseminates the availability of mainstream resources & assistance information to projects monthly at Full Membership & other meetings. CoC emails updated information on resources on an ongoing basis whenever notification is received about new or updated information.
2. Central CoC works with programs to collaborate with healthcare organizations to assist program participants with enrolling in health insurance by including health care organizations in local meetings & discussions where updates are shared. Participants are connected to MNsure certified navigators for free assistance to enroll into health coverage through MNsure. CoCs Call to Connect process is used to refer to programs that can assist clients in obtaining health insurance when the need is identified during the initial assessment process.
3. CoC assists with the effective utilization of Medicaid & other benefits by making sure all who are eligible are aware of & apply for services. MN has a statewide document vault accessible through its Disability Benefits 101 & Housing Benefits 101 programs. These programs provide access to information for SSI, SSDI, health care, SNAP, Energy assistance, work programs, childcare, affordable housing, Veteran Housing, Housing & Supports Program & forms to apply. Agencies use these programs to assist clients apply for mainstream services. These services provide clients & agencies with alternatives to HUD housing and/or additional supports to help increase incomes & housing stability.
4. CoC Programs have SOAR trained staff to assist with SSDI applications. Annual NOFO applications ask programs to identify if they have trained staff and scoring is impacted based on staff assistance with these programs. Annual CoC training promotes SOAR and regional Navigators directly assist clients in obtaining their SSDI benefits and verification forms.

### 3A. New Projects With Rehabilitation/New Construction Costs

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

- Special Notice of Funding Opportunity to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness
- 24 CFR part 578
- Special NOFO CoC Application Navigational Guide
- Section 3 Resources
- Frequently Asked Questions

3A-1.	<b>Rehabilitation/New Construction Costs–New Projects. (Rural Set Aside Only).</b>  Special NOFO Section VII.A.	
If the answer to the question below is yes, you must upload the CoC Letter Supporting Capital Costs attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.		
Is your CoC requesting funding for any new project(s) under the Rural Set Aside for housing rehabilitation or new construction costs?		Yes

### 3B. Serving Persons Experiencing Homelessness as Defined by Other Federal Statutes

The CoC Special NOFO page provides HUD-approved resources to assist you in completing the Special NOFO CoC Application, including:

- Special Notice of Funding Opportunity to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness
- 24 CFR part 578
- Special NOFO CoC Application Navigational Guide
- Section 3 Resources
- Frequently Asked Questions

3B-1.	Designating SSO/TH/Joint TH and PH-RRH Component Projects to Serving Persons Experiencing Homelessness as Defined by Other Federal Statutes. (Rural Set Aside Only)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.C.	

Is your CoC requesting to designate one or more of its SSO, TH, or Joint TH and PH-RRH component projects to serve families with children or youth experiencing homelessness as defined by other Federal statutes?	No
--	----

3B-2.	Serving Persons Experiencing Homelessness as Defined by Other Federal Statutes. (Rural Set Aside Only)	
	Special NOFO Section VII.C.	
	You must upload the Project List for Other Federal Statutes attachment to the 4A. Attachments Screen.	
	If you answered yes to question 3B-1, describe in the field below:	
	1. how serving this population is of equal or greater priority, which means that it is equally or more cost effective in meeting the overall goals and objectives of the plan submitted under Section 427(b)(1)(B) of the Act, especially with respect to children and unaccompanied youth than serving the homeless as defined in paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of the definition of homeless in 24 CFR 578.3; and	
	2. how your CoC will meet requirements described in Section 427(b)(1)(F) of the Act.	

(limit 2,500 characters)

## 4A. Attachments Screen For All Application Questions

Please read the following guidance to help you successfully upload attachments and get maximum points:

- |  |    |   |
|--|----|---|
|  | 1. | You must include a Document Description for each attachment you upload; if you do not, the Submission Summary screen will display a red X indicating the submission is incomplete.  |
|  | 2. | You must upload an attachment for each document listed where 'Required?' is 'Yes'   |
|  | 3. | We prefer that you use PDF files, though other file types are supported—please only use zip files if necessary. Converting electronic files to PDF, rather than printing documents and scanning them, often produces higher quality images and reduces file size. Many systems allow you to create PDF files as a Print Option. If you are unfamiliar with this process, you should consult your IT Support or search for information on Google or YouTube. |
|  | 4. | Attachments must match the questions they are associated with.  |
|  | 5. | Only upload documents responsive to the questions posed—including other material slows down the review process, which ultimately slows down the funding process.  |
|  | 6. | If you cannot read the attachment, it is likely we cannot read it either.<br>- We must be able to read the date and time on attachments requiring system-generated dates and times, (e.g., a screenshot displaying the time and date of the public posting using your desktop calendar; screenshot of a webpage that indicates date and time).<br>- We must be able to read everything you want us to consider in any attachment.                           |
|  | 7. | Open attachments once uploaded to ensure they are the correct attachment for the required Document Type.  |

Document Type	Required?	Document Description	Date Attached
1B-1. Local Competition Announcement	Yes	Local Competition...	10/09/2022
1B-2. Local Competition Scoring Tool	Yes	Local Competition...	10/09/2022
1B-3. Notification of Projects Rejected-Reduced	Yes	Notification of P...	10/09/2022
1B-3a. Notification of Projects Accepted	Yes	Notification of P...	10/09/2022
1B-4. Special NOFO CoC Consolidated Application	Yes		
3A-1. CoC Letter Supporting Capital Costs	No	CoC Letter Suppor...	10/10/2022
3B-2. Project List for Other Federal Statutes	No		
P-1. Leveraging Housing Commitment	No		
P-1a. PHA Commitment	No	PHA Commitment	10/18/2022
P-3. Healthcare Leveraging Commitment	No		
P-9c. Lived Experience Support Letter	No	Lived Experience ...	10/18/2022
Plan. CoC Plan	Yes	CoC Plan	10/18/2022

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:** Local Competition Announcement

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:** Local Competition Scoring Tool

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:** Notification of Projects Rejected-Reduced

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:** Notification of Projects Accepted

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:**

## **Attachment Details**



**Document Description:** CoC Letter Supporting Capital Costs

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:**

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:**

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:** PHA Commitment

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:**

## **Attachment Details**

**Document Description:** Lived Experience Support Letter

## Attachment Details

**Document Description:** CoC Plan

## Submission Summary

Ensure that the Special NOFO Project Priority List is complete prior to submitting.

Page	Last Updated
1A. CoC Identification	10/07/2022
1B. Project Review, Ranking and Selection	10/07/2022
2A. System Performance	10/07/2022
2B. Coordination and Engagement	10/09/2022
2C. Coordination and Engagement–Con't.	10/09/2022
3A. New Projects With Rehab/New Construction	No Input Required
3B. Homelessness by Other Federal Statutes	10/09/2022
4A. Attachments Screen	Please Complete
Submission Summary	No Input Required

cmhp.net/continuum-care/

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Rental Properties | Continuum of Care | Homeless Response System | Housing Development | Small Cities Development Program | Join our Team

Continuum of Care (CoC) [HUD Supplemental NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness](#) is now out!

HUD has released a Supplemental NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness. For information, documents, and deadlines please go to the [2022 Supplemental NOFO page](#):

Click [HERE](#) for the 2022 Supplemental NOFO page.

If you have any questions or comments about the application, please contact

Tim Poland  
Central Minnesota CoC Coordinator at 320.258.0677 or [tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net).

82°F Mostly sunny 5:47 PM 8/21/2022

cmhp.net/hud-2022-supplemental-nof/

Central Minnesota Housing Partnership

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Rental Properties | Continuum of Care | Homeless Response System | Housing Development | Small Cities Development Program | Join our Team

## HUD Supplemental NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness 2022 Local CoC Program Competition

The HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness is open!

Please read the following information regarding eligible applicants and methods to apply.

For further information, contact Tim Poland at [tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net)

- Special NOFO Summary Sheet Central CoC
- HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness (published 10/20/22)
- 2022 Local CoC Program Competition Timeline

81°F Mostly sunny 6:42 PM 8/21/2022

### Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness Overview

Funding Opportunity Number: FR-6500-N-255

**IMPORTANT PROJECT APPLICATION DATES & DEADLINES** for Central MN CoC – tentative (subject to change based on HUD availability in eSnaps and CoC updates)

Check the Central MN CoC website: <https://www.cmhp.net/continuum-care/> for updates.

- **June 28, 2022** – 2022 HUD Special NOFO published
- **TBD** – Project Application Lab
- **September 19, 2022** – Project Applications submitted to CoC via eSnaps and PDF for ranking
- **TBD** – Ranking and Scoring Committee Meeting
- **October 4, 2022** – Project Applications notified of inclusion in Collaborative Application
- **October 10, 2022** – Project response and appeals to CoC due by 4:30 PM on Application Rank & Score
- **October 13, 2022** – Vote on appeals to rank and score (if needed)
- **October 13, 2022** – Projects notified of appeals outcome and amended rank/score (if needed)
- **October 16, 2022** – Final Project Application edits submitted in eSnaps and PDF to CoC
- **October 18, 2022** – Collaborative Application posted on CoC website
- **October 18, 2022** – CoC Full Membership Committee vote on Collaborative Application
- **October 18, 2022** – CoC Governing Board vote on Collaborative Application
- **October 18, 2022** – Approved Collaborative Application posted on CoC website

**HUD Special NOFO Application Deadline:** October 20, 2022, at 7:00 PM Standard Time.  
**Note:** Project Applications must be submitted to the CoC by the Project deadline above (September 19, 2022) NOT the Consolidated Application deadline.

**Central CoC MN-505:**

\$1,853,018	Unsheltered Set-Aside over 3 years maximum – HUD corrected 9/9/22
\$617,672	Unsheltered Set-Aside per year maximum – HUD corrected 9/9/22
\$845,646	Rural Set-Aside over 3 years maximum
\$281,882	Rural Set-Aside per year maximum
\$158,348	Domestic Violence (DV) Bonus
10% of Award	CoC Planning Grant maximum per year

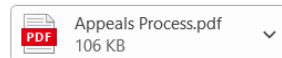
## HUD Special NOFO Notification

Tim Poland

To Vicky Kinney ([vicky@mntlc.org](mailto:vicky@mntlc.org))

[↩ Reply](#) [↶ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [📎](#) [⋮](#)

Wed 10/5/2022 11:12 AM



Good morning Vicky-

This email is to inform you that we will not be including the following program application in the HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness through the St. Cloud/Central MN CoC (MN-505):

My Neighbor to Love Coalition – Creekside Community funded through the Rural set aside.

Upon review, the Performance and Ranking Committee identified a number of areas of concern which led to the final decision to not support this application. Some concerns identified included:

- Lack of paid staff, including Executive Director and program staff.
- Lack of established financial management at a level necessary for federal funding.
- Lack of Board approved organizational policies that establish a clear understanding and implementation of HUD policies.
- Concerns regarding a full understanding of the complexities of the proposed program as well as HUD required reporting and financial expectations.

We would encourage you to continue working with the CoC over the next year to see if your organizational setup and program understanding can be enhanced to a point where you can submit a successful application for HUD funding next year.

If you would like to appeal this decision, please refer to the attached Appeals Process document.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you.

Tim Poland  
Central MN Continuum of Care Coordinator  
24707 County Road 75  
St. Augusta, MN 56301  
[tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net)  
(320) 258-0677



Website: [www.cmhp.net](http://www.cmhp.net)

## HUD Special NOFO Notification

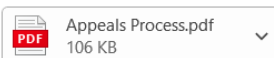
Tim Poland

To Kelley StepsofStrategy

Cc Carrie Johnson

[↩ Reply](#) [↶ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [📎](#) [⋮](#)

Wed 10/5/2022 1:54 PM



Good afternoon Kelley-

This email is to inform you that we will not be including the following program application in the HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness through the St. Cloud/Central MN CoC (MN-505):

Steps of Strategy – Unsheltered Homelessness Project funded through the Unsheltered set aside.

Upon review, the Performance and Ranking Committee identified a number of areas of concern which led to the final decision to not support this application. Some concerns identified included:

- Lack of an established relationship with St. Cloud/Central CoC, including planning discussions in advance of the HUD application for funding.
- Lack of established need for dedicated Chronic Homeless housing in Morrison County.
- Lack of Board approved organizational policies that establish a clear understanding and implementation of HUD policies.
- Concerns regarding a full understanding of the complexities of the proposed program as well as HUD required reporting and financial expectations.
- Lack of specific, descriptive information regarding the proposed project, supportive services, and sources of match.

We would encourage you to continue working with the CoC over the next year to see if your organizational setup and program understanding can be enhanced to a point where you can submit a successful application for HUD funding next year.

If you would like to appeal this decision, please refer to the attached Appeals Process document.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you.

Tim Poland  
Central MN Continuum of Care Coordinator  
24707 County Road 75  
St. Augusta, MN 56301  
[tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net)  
(320) 258-0677



Website: [www.cmhp.net](http://www.cmhp.net)

## HUD Special NOFO Notification

Tim Poland  
To Rose Surma ([oasiscmdirector@outlook.com](mailto:oasiscmdirector@outlook.com))

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#)  

Wed 10/5/2022 10:07 AM

Good morning Rose-

This email is to inform you that we will be including the following program applications in the HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness through the St. Cloud/Central MN CoC (MN-505):  
Oasis Central MN – Unsheltered Homeless – Support Services funded through the Unsheltered set aside.  
Oasis Central MN – Emergency Shelter-Site Acquisition and Renovation funded through the Rural set aside.  
As we discussed, there are a few edits/corrections needed for these applications before final submission.  
Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you.

Tim Poland  
Central MN Continuum of Care Coordinator  
24707 County Road 75  
St. Augusta, MN 56301  
[tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net)  
(320) 258-0677



Website: [www.cmhp.net](http://www.cmhp.net)

## HUD Special NOFO Notification

Tim Poland  
To Mollie Lyon  
Cc Heinz-Amborn, Britt

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#)  

Wed 10/5/2022 10:17 AM

Good morning Mollie-

This email is to inform you that we will be including the following program applications in the HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness through the St. Cloud/Central MN CoC (MN-505):  
Institute for Community Alliances – MN HMIS Central Unsheltered FY22 funded through the Unsheltered set aside.  
Institute for Community Alliances – MN HMIS Central Rural FY22 funded through the Rural set aside.  
As we continue the submission process, if there are any edits/corrections needed for these applications before final submission, I will let you know.  
Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you.

Tim Poland  
Central MN Continuum of Care Coordinator  
24707 County Road 75  
St. Augusta, MN 56301  
[tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net)  
(320) 258-0677



Website: [www.cmhp.net](http://www.cmhp.net)

## HUD Special NOFO Notification

Tim Poland  
To Deanna Hemmesch  
Cc Tim Poland



Wed 10/5/2022 10:24 AM

Good morning Deanna-

This email is to inform you that we will be including the following program applications in the HUD Special NOFO to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness through the St. Cloud/Central MN CoC (MN-505):

St. Cloud/Central MN CoC – CES Rural Application FY2022 funded through the Rural set aside.

As we continue the submission process, if there are any edits/corrections needed for these applications before final submission, I will let you know.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you.

Tim Poland  
Central MN Continuum of Care Coordinator  
24707 County Road 75  
St. Augusta, MN 56301  
[tpoland@cmhp.net](mailto:tpoland@cmhp.net)  
(320) 258-0677



Website: [www.cmhp.net](http://www.cmhp.net)





24707 County Road 75  
St. Augusta, MN. 56301  
Phone: 320.259.0393  
Fax: 320.259.9590

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*St. Cloud/Central MN Continuum of Care - MN-505*

October 18, 2022

To whom it may concern:

This is a letter of support from the St. Cloud/Central MN Continuum of Care (MN-505) for the Oasis Central MN Emergency Shelter-Site Acquisition and Renovation project application as part of the Rural Set Aside for the Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Competition FR-6500-N-25S.

This application is requesting the following funding:

\$100,000 for Total Acquisition

\$60,000 for Total Renovation

The property to be acquired and renovated is located at 306 1<sup>st</sup> Ave SE, Little Falls, MN 56345.

This project will meet a documented and established need in Morrison County, MN and meets a priority area of need for the CoC. Oasis Central MN has demonstrated an appropriate level of ability to acquire and renovate this property in the timeline that they propose.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tim Poland

St. Cloud/Central MN (MN-505)

Continuum of Care Coordinator

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING STABILITY VOUCHERS

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been created and entered into on \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 between the St. Cloud Housing and Redevelopment Authority (St. Cloud HRA), 1225 West St. Germain, St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301 and the Central Minnesota Continuum of Care (Central MN CoC), 24707 County Road 75, St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301 for the purposed of administration of the Stability Vouchers (SV).

### I. **Introduction and Goals:**

The St. Cloud HRA and the Central MN CoC through the Stability Voucher (SV) Program seek to prevent and end homelessness among individuals and families who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking, and veterans and families that include a veteran family member that meets one of the proceeding criteria.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260) (2021 Act), makes available \$43,343,000 for new incremental voucher assistance under Section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 for use by individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness; those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and veterans and families that include a veteran family member that meets one of the proceeding criteria.

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Public Law 117-103 (2022 Act) further provides that HUD may waive certain statutory and regulatory provisions to administer the SV's (except for requirements related to tenant rights and protections, rent setting, fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards and the environment) upon a finding that any such waivers or alternative requirements are necessary to facilitate the use of funds made available for SV's.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the collaboration and commitment between the St. Cloud HRA and Central MN Continue of Care to pair Stability Vouchers with CoC-funded supportive services; and to collaborate with the Central MN Continuum of Care and other stakeholders to develop a prioritization plan for these vouchers.

#### **Lead Agency Liaisons:**

**Lead Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Liaison:** Lori Lygre, Voucher Programs Manager, St. Cloud HRA – position is responsible for the technical work of managing and administering the SVs to ensure compliance with program policies and procedures along with voucher issuance and usage.

**Lead Central MN CoC Liaison:** Tim Poland, Central MN CoC Coordinator, Central MN Housing Partnership – position is responsible for the oversight of a network of organizations, community

residents and businesses that plan programs with the primary goal of alleviating homelessness in 13 counties in Central Minnesota.

II. **Individuals and Families Eligibility under the Qualifying Categories**

In order to be eligible for an SV, an individual or family must meet one of four eligibility categories:

- **Currently Homeless**
- **At risk of homelessness**
- **Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking**
- **Veterans and families that include a veteran that meet one of the preceding criteria.**

III. **SV Roles and Responsibilities**

**St. Cloud HRA Roles and Responsibilities -**

1. Coordinate and consult with the CoC in developing the services and assistance to be offered under the SV services fee.
2. Accept direct referrals for eligible individuals and families through the CoC Coordinated Entry System.
3. Commit a sufficient number of staff and necessary resources to ensure that the application, certification, and voucher issuance processes are completed in a timely manner.
4. Commit a sufficient number of staff and resources to ensure that inspections of units are completed in a timely manner.
5. Designate a staff to serve as the lead SV liaison.
6. Comply with the provisions of this MOU.

**CoC Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Designate and maintain a lead SV liaison to communicate with St. Cloud HRA.
2. Refer eligible individuals and families to St. Cloud HRA using the Central MN Continuum of Care (Central MN CoC) Coordinated Entry System.
3. The CoC or other partnering agency must provide supporting documentation to the PHA of the referring agency's verification that the household meets one of the four eligibility categories.
4. Identify any available CoC-funded supportive services that may be paired with SVs.
5. Comply with the provisions of this MOU.

IV. **CoC-funded supportive services that will be paired with SVs**

Central CoC currently funds programs through Tri-Cap, Lutheran Social Services, and Center City Housing in the St. Cloud area. A variety of programs and services, including housing, may be appropriate to provide ongoing tenancy and wrap around services. The CoC also has existing partnerships with a variety of mental health providers, substance abuse providers, and county agencies that are well positioned to work with the SV recipients to achieve and maintain stable housing.

Partnering service providers will provide their agencies services in support of the SV program. Partnering service providers will commit a sufficient number of staff and necessary resources to ensure that the application, certification and voucher issuance processes are completed in a timely manner. Partnering service providers that are CoC-funded are Anna Marie's Alliance, Lutheran Social Services, Tri-CAP, Salvation Army, and Center City Housing.

V. **St. Cloud HRA Adopted Waivers and Alternative Requirements**

PIH Notice 2022-24 provides St. Cloud HRA with the authority to adopt certain statutory and regulatory requirements and alternative requirements for Stability Vouchers. St. Cloud HRA and Central MN Continuum of Care have agreed to adopt the following waivers and alternative requirements.

**Establishing Partnerships for SV Administration – Waiver – Alternative Requirement** - St. Cloud HRA will enter into a MOU with the CoC to establish partnership for the administration of the SVs, par SVs with CoC-funded supportive services; and to collaborate with the CoC and other stakeholders to develop a prioritization plan for these vouchers.

**Direct Referrals from the CoC and Other Partnering Organizations – 24 CFR 982.204(a) – Waiver** – St. Cloud HRA will accept referrals for SVs directly from the CE System and Victim Services provider if the CE system does not identify families that may be eligible for SV assistance because they are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking.

**Separate Waiting List – 24 CFR 982.204(f) – Waiver** – St. Cloud HRA shall maintain a separate list for SV referrals/applicants.

**Public Notice When Opening and Closing the Waiting List – 24 CFR 982.206** – The SV Waiting List is based on direct referrals or emergency transfer requests to the PHA from a survivor of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking and not applications from the general public.

VI. **PHA Permissive Prohibition Polices agreed upon by the PHA and CoC.** – St. Cloud HRA in consultation with Central MN CoC have agreed to adopt the following permissive prohibitions for the Stability Voucher program. The St. Cloud HRA may prohibit admission of a family for the grounds stated below:

1. If the PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in, or has engaged in within the previous 12 months:
  - a. Violent criminal activity.

- b. Other criminal activity which may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or persons residing in the immediate vicinity.
- 2. If any member of the family has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any Federal housing program within the previous 12 months.
- 3. If the family engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward PHA personnel within the previous 12 months.

VII. **Program Evaluation** – St. Cloud HRA and Central MN CoC agree to cooperate with HUD, provide requested data to HUD or HUD-approved contractor delegated the responsibility of program evaluation protocols established by HUD or HUD-approved contractor.

Signed by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director, St. Cloud HRA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Central MN CoC Executive Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING STABILITY VOUCHERS

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been created and entered into on \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 between the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Stearns County, Minnesota (Stearns County HRA), 401 West Wind Court, Cold Spring, Minnesota 56320 and the Central Minnesota Continuum of Care (Central MN CoC), 24707 County Road 75, St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301 for the purpose of administration of the Stability Vouchers (SV).

### I. **Introduction and Goals:**

The Stearns County HRA and the Central MN CoC through the Stability Voucher (SV) Program seek to prevent and end homelessness among individuals and families who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking, and veterans and families that include a veteran family member that meets one of the proceeding criteria.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260) (2021 Act), makes available \$43,343,000 for new incremental voucher assistance under Section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 for use by individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness; those fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and veterans and families that include a veteran family member that meets one of the proceeding criteria.

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Public Law 117-103 (2022 Act) further provides that HUD may waive certain statutory and regulatory provisions to administer the SV's (except for requirements related to tenant rights and protections, rent setting, fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards and the environment) upon a finding that any such waivers or alternative requirements are necessary to facilitate the use of funds made available for SV's.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the collaboration and commitment between the Stearns County HRA and Central MN Continue of Care to pair Stability Vouchers with CoC-funded supportive services; and to collaborate with the Central MN Continuum of Care and other stakeholders to develop a prioritization plan for these vouchers.

#### **Lead Agency Liaisons:**

**Lead Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Liaison:** Barb Schloemer, Housing Specialist I position, Stearns County HRA– position is responsible for the technical work of managing and administering the SVs to ensure compliance with program policies and procedures along with voucher issuance and usage.

**Lead Central MN CoC Liaison:** Tim Poland, Central MN CoC Coordinator, Central MN Housing Partnership – position is responsible for the oversight of a network of organizations, community

residents and businesses that plan programs with the primary goal of alleviating homelessness in 13 counties in Central Minnesota.

II. **Individuals and Families Eligibility under the Qualifying Categories**

In order to be eligible for an SV, an individual or family must meet one of four eligibility categories:

- **Currently Homeless**
- **At risk of homelessness**
- **Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking**
- **Veterans and families that include a veteran that meet one of the preceding criteria.**

III. **SV Roles and Responsibilities**

**Stearns County HRA Roles and Responsibilities-**

1. Coordinate and consult with the CoC in developing the services and assistance to be offered under the SV services fee.
2. Accept direct referrals for eligible individuals and families through the CoC Coordinated Entry System.
3. Commit a sufficient number of staff and necessary resources to ensure that the application, certification, and voucher issuance processes are completed in a timely manner.
4. Commit a sufficient number of staff and resources to ensure that inspections of units are completed in a timely manner.
5. Designate a staff to serve as the lead SV liaison.
6. Comply with the provisions of this MOU.

**CoC Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Designate and maintain a lead SV liaison to communicate with Stearns County HRA.
2. Refer eligible individuals and families to Stearns County HRA using the Central MN Continuum of Care (Central MN CoC) Coordinated Entry System.
3. The CoC or other partnering agency must provide supporting documentation to the PHA of the referring agency's verification that the household meets one of the four eligibility categories.
4. Identify any available CoC-funded supportive services that may be paired with SVs.
5. Comply with the provisions of this MOU.

IV. **CoC-funded supportive services that will be paired with SVs**

Central CoC currently funds programs through Tri-Cap, Lutheran Social Services, and Center City Housing in the St. Cloud area. A variety of programs and services, including housing, may be appropriate to provide ongoing tenancy and wrap around services. The CoC also has existing partnerships with a variety of mental health providers, substance abuse providers, and county agencies that are well positioned to work with the SV recipients to achieve and maintain stable housing.

Partnering service providers will provide their agencies services in support of the SV program. Partnering service providers will commit a sufficient number of staff and necessary resources to ensure that the application, certification and voucher issuance processes are completed in a timely manner. Partnering service providers that are CoC-funded are Anna Marie's Alliance, Lutheran Social Services, Tri-CAP, Salvation Army, and Center City Housing.

V. **Stearns County HRA Adopted Waivers and Alternative Requirements**

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4. If the PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in, or has engaged in within the previous 12 months:
  - a. Violent criminal activity.



- b. Other criminal activity which may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or persons residing in the immediate vicinity.
- 5. If any member of the family has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any Federal housing program within the previous 12 months.
- 6. If the family engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward PHA personnel within the previous 12 months.

VII. **Program Evaluation** – Stearns County HRA and Central MN CoC agree to cooperate with HUD, provide requested data to HUD or HUD-approved contractor delegated the responsibility of program evaluation protocols established by HUD or HUD-approved contractor.

Signed by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director, Stearns County HRA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Central MN CoC Executive Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

October 18, 2022

To whom it may concern:

As part of the planning process for the HUD Unsheltered and Rural NOFOs, a group of people with lived expertise were met with to give ideas and feedback. All participants currently are or have been homeless at least once during the last 7 years. The group gave input on things that are working, things that aren't, and things that are missing in the CoC. Ideas and suggestions from these meetings were used in the planning process and put into the CoC Planning document. These paid consultants are also involved in the CoC Full Membership Committee meetings, subcommittees, and as Governing Board advisors.

These meetings were held virtually, so an email was sent to each participant to get their approval of the written plan and also to get permission to sign this letter on their behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Poland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" being more prominent than the last name "Poland".

Tim Poland  
CoC Coordinator  
St. Cloud/Central CoC (MN-505)

On behalf of: Marlena Jasch  
Tauheedah Dillard  
Jessica Rose Jungroth

## **St. Cloud/Central MN CoC (MN-505) Plan for Serving Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs**

### **P-1. Leveraging Housing Resources**

P-1a. Central CoC is not applying for any additional permanent housing projects through this NOFO.

P-1b. Stability Voucher Attachment is included.

P-1c. Landlord Recruitment

1. describe the current strategy your CoC uses to recruit landlords, and their units, in which to use tenant-based rental assistance including:

a. demonstrating how well this strategy works in identifying units across your CoC's entire geographic area;

Recruiting landlords over the last 3 years has been particularly difficult due to Covid and the Federal and State enforced eviction moratoriums. Landlords were understandably reticent to add any additional units of subsidized housing knowing they were unlikely to receive full rents due as well as having their hands tied when needing to evict tenants with lease violations. Now that the moratoriums have been lifted Central CoC has engaged in vigorous engagement through various Landlord Engagement Committees. The CoC has a St. Cloud area focused committee. Additionally, the 3 regional FHPAP recipients have Landlord Engagement Committees and Crow Wing County has a county-oriented group that continues to meet regularly. The CoCs Landlord Engagement Committee has been working on an updated list of all landlords throughout the CoC. PHAs have increased the payment standard to 100% of FMR which has helped but nowhere near what was hoped for. Occupancies are very low and landlords are taking advantage of this by increasing rents higher than the payment standards. Adding a financial incentive directly to the landlord for every new HAP contract worked very well. Within 3 months, all funding had been expended. Beyond Backgrounds has yet to have any real impact. Tenant-based rental assistance is announced and promoted at the different landlord group meetings, social service meetings, city inspection departments and with local realtors.

b. demonstrating how well this strategy works in identifying units in areas where the CoC has historically not been able to identify units.

The CoC has had very modest success in recruiting new landlords. The vacancy rates are extremely low and rents can be increased as a result. New units are not being built as quickly now that construction costs, including labor and materials, have risen so high in a short time span. Programs for Veterans have had some success in adding units due to additional Federal incentives that they have been able to offer landlords. PHAs have promoted their voucher programs to landlords. This strategy has helped in that new property owners can contact the PHA and receive information on the program before deciding if they will accept voucher holders. There are some property owners who will try a couple of voucher holders in the property that historically have not been renting to voucher holders in the past.

2. identify any new practice(s) your CoC has implemented to recruit landlords in the past 3 years and describe the lessons learned from implementing those practices; and

Beyond Backgrounds has expanded to a statewide level. This program will provide up to \$2,000 of financial assistance if the landlord will relax their screening criteria and give an applicant with issues on their background check a chance to rent. If the tenant does not pay rent, damages the unit or legal fees are incurred, the \$2,000 would help cover those costs. The hope is that landlords will take a chance on a tenant with issues in their background with this additional financial incentive. Unfortunately, when this program was expanded, they implemented a \$300 fee for a tenant to participate. It has been very difficult to find agencies that can cover this expense. As a result, very few people have been able to sign up for this service. PHAs have increased their payment standards to 110% of FMRs. They will also tell landlords that if they are having issues with a tenant, to contact the PHA so they can reach out to the tenant and explain that their housing situation may be in jeopardy if they do not comply. During the pandemic, one PHA offered a financial bonus to landlords for every unit that entered into a new HAP contract. This

worked very well, using all funds within three months. This is an area that may work well in the future if additional funding could be secured.

3. describe how your CoC will use data, including the specific data points that will be used, to update its landlord recruitment strategy.

The CoC is able to collect data based on a specific property that is being rented. This data shows the percentage of applicants that are accepted or denied as well as reasons for denial. This allows the CoC to determine properties that have high denial rates. Then outreach can occur to determine if there are things in the tenant selection process that can be adjusted, promote Beyond Backgrounds, and ensure that Fair Housing laws are being followed. Data from the Priority List allows the CoC to determine areas where there are higher numbers of households needing housing. This data can be refined down to the county level. When specific counties are identified that have high numbers of homeless, agencies within the geographic area can reach out to local landlords to explore options. Building relationships with specific landlords is the key to success. Landlords need to learn that agencies can be trusted to support them as they give a chance to the most difficult to house households. We also hope to recruit landlords that have successfully participated in Beyond Backgrounds to spread the word to landlords that currently not participating. As agencies, we can sing the praises of the program to landlords, but it will be much more effective if peers can do that.

### **P-2. Leveraging Healthcare Resources—New PSH/RRH Project.**

No narrative required.

### **P-3. Current Strategy to Identify, Shelter, and House Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**

P-3.a. A. identify evidence-based practices your CoC uses to conduct street outreach; and Evidence based practices that are utilized in the CoC include the Positive Youth Development Framework, Harm Reduction, and Trauma Informed Care. Other evidence-based practices utilized include person-centered services with the client deciding their individual level of engagement with outreach social workers, setting goals, and the amount of personal information they share.

B. demonstrate your CoC's strategies are based on data and performance.

Agencies utilize Continuous Quality Improvement on a quarterly basis as well as participating in the HMIS quarterly data quality reporting and data checking. Counties utilize a Customer Relationship Management reporting system to record data and management and fiscal teams are able to access, monitor and pull records as needed. Outreach teams record demographics on people served including gender, race, age, etc., along with services offered and the number of housing episodes. Other data gathered includes type of housing that the client moves into, such as their own home, GRH, assisted living facility, etc. All this data can be used to determine outcomes, needs, and gaps in services.

Describe your CoC's current strategies to:

1. ensure that outreach teams are coordinated;

Outreach staff create a schedule of large youth-oriented events in the community. Examples are high school homecoming football games, Pride picnics, county fairs, etc. Outreach staff are scheduled to be present in the community at the same time each week so youth will know when to expect them. Regular contact is also maintained with law enforcement to know where youth are hanging out, encampments have been set up, etc. Agencies have preset schedules with emergency shelters so that shelter staff can coordinate with outreach workers and those in the shelter to facilitate meetings and also ensure that all households in shelter have been appropriately assessed for services and placed on the Priority List as appropriate. This coordination is also critical when a household has been referred for a housing opening. In cases where a household does not have a phone or email, the outreach worker will often work as the main contact to work with the housing provider to complete paperwork, etc. Weekly Case Coordination meetings also are a strategy to coordinate outreach efforts. A wide variety of programs spanning the full CoC are on these calls and can work directly with outreach staff to facilitate contact, coordinate

appointments, and often, locate individuals being referred. Stearns County's outreach team is comprised of two outreach social workers and a housing specialist that make up the HOME team (Housing, Outreach and Mobile Engagement). They work together with Benton County outreach, Sherburne County outreach and Catholic Charities outreach workers and have a monthly outreach meeting that also includes Crow Wing County and Wright County where there is collaboration on case consultation, new programs and changing policies.

2. ensure that outreach is frequent, by describing the days and times outreach is conducted each week; Outreach workers have regular office hours on Tuesday 1:00-4:30 PM at the Place of Hope West shelter and at the Place of Hope North shelter on Mondays. The HOME team meets every Tuesday morning at the Community Action Team (CAT) team log meeting and every other Tuesday at 10:00 AM for the CAT team active utilization meeting. Stearns County outreach staff collaborate with the St. Cloud Police Department on homeless encampments whenever they are requested throughout the workday and weekly roam areas that are known to have folks camping out and flying homeless signs. A worker connects with the VA weekly and attends the annual Stand Down as well as Project Connect. These events are free and open to the public and are specifically designed to attract unsheltered homeless people in need of services. The team also works with the co-responders for St. Cloud and Stearns County Sheriff's Office. The HOME team has made personal visits to several rural Police Departments to offer those areas assistance with homeless services and to share resources. Youth outreach staff is also available by phone and to respond to crisis/urgent situations in person 10:00 AM-6:00 PM on weekdays along with some afterhours availability.

3. help people exit homelessness and unsheltered homelessness;

Outreach staff can do assessments and place youth and adults on the Priority List. Outreach staff also will contact shelters to find openings so unsheltered people can get inside if they want to. Ongoing contact with homeless people, particularly unsheltered, makes it easier for housing providers to get in contact with households that have been referred for a housing opening. Oftentimes, referrals and advocacy are offered for individuals to get into treatment, receive mental health care, and medical services. These can be crucial steps necessary to resolve individuals' homelessness. By maintaining contact with people, staff can also ensure that all information entered into HMIS is the most current and accurate. This also helps expedite housing referrals. All staff are trained in various resources for the community. They also can shelter youth in a hotel (very short term) while they develop an alternative housing plan with them.

4. ensure the specific engagement strategy will engage individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the highest vulnerabilities and will use culturally appropriate strategies;

Outreach staff work to engage people by heading to areas where they tend to be such as community meals, shelters, laundromats, and area parks. They attempt to engage by being open and ready for questions. Staff often carry hand warmers, sleeping bags, bug repellent, water, snacks, bus tokens, etc. in order to help engage and build a connection. Many times, some of the most vulnerable of clients need to see outreach staff often and watch as they interact with others over a period of time to build comfort in working with outreach services. Staff strive to give people the space that they need. An openness to connect on the individuals terms and allow them to walk away or stop services at any time and re-connect when they are ready is an essential strategy. The HOME team is starting to partner with a local stylist and barber to provide culturally appropriate hair care services to homeless folks in the community along with hair care products. Staff receive anti-racism training and positive youth development and harm reduction principles are embedded in the outreach work. Training is obtained when staff encounter a youth from a cultural background they are not familiar with. Staff also utilizes Google Translate if needed or contacts a formal translator if necessary.

5. use the outreach teams to connect individuals and families experiencing unsheltered homelessness to permanent housing; and

Outreach staff are often the first contact homeless people may encounter so they are sure to connect them to as many resources as possible. There is a 24/7 hotline for homeless youth and the number is widely distributed throughout the service area. Outreach staff also distribute business cards with the CoC's Call

to Connect phone number on it. This is a number that will facilitate someone being assessed to determine if there are diversion options available or if the household needs further services and to be placed on the Priority List. Staff can advocate on behalf of clients who may locate possible permanent housing, including helping to complete paperwork and assist with obtaining deposits.

6. hire people with lived expertise of unsheltered homelessness to conduct street outreach.

Many youth workers are in this line of work because of lived experience when they were younger. Most of the youth outreach team (80%) have lived experience in homelessness, addictions and the like. People with lived expertise are part of the United Way AmeriCorps Vista program working in our local Lincoln Shelter and South Junior High School and Counties have taken deliberate steps to provide diversity in their workforce. CoC funded programs have shown a consistent increase in the proportion of staff, management, and leadership that reflect the full range of demographics of their communities as well as a range of lived experiences often associated with homelessness.

### **P-3.b. Current Strategy to Provide Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Shelter and Temporary Housing for Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness.**

1. describe your CoC's current strategy

Central CoC's current strategy is to refer unsheltered households to emergency housing options such as shelters and hotel/motel vouchers. The Call to Connect phone number, which is available 24/7, is available throughout the entire CoC. This number will connect a household to an assessor who will complete a Housing Crisis Screening. This allows the Assessor to quickly determine if there is a need for emergency shelter or voucher services. Based on the determination from this Assessment, an appropriate referral will be made to the agency or program best suited to assist that household.

2. describe how well your CoC's current strategy performs at providing access to low-barrier and

culturally appropriate temporary accommodations (e.g., emergency shelter, especially non-congregate shelter, transitional housing) to all individuals and families experiencing unsheltered homelessness

Emergency shelter in the St. Cloud area is always full. The need is far exceeding the current supply. There is a lack of shelters that will allow pets to stay with their owners. Also, there are shelters which are meant for adults only, so families cannot use them. Some of the shelters will not let couples (married or not) stay together. At a time when support systems are particularly critical, this can add significantly to the trauma of homelessness. Our rural areas typically use motel vouchers as there are almost no emergency shelters available, except for domestic violence. The motel vouchers work fairly well but most areas run out of money well before the middle of the year so there is not money available when the weather becomes cold again in the later part of fall.

The Veterans agencies have established an efficient process specific to Veterans. When a homeless Veteran who is interested in housing and services is identified, they are referred to the Veterans Registry. Designated staff work specifically with those households to determine needs and identify needed interventions. A number of transitional housing units have been established and Veterans are typically moved into these settings relatively quickly if needed. Once in this setting, dedicated staff work with the household to determine permanent housing options which may include permanent supportive, rapid rehousing, or permanent housing options. These efforts have enabled Central CoC to declare Functional Zero for homeless veterans which has been maintained for almost one year.

Culturally appropriate shelter can also be a struggle. Many emergency shelters are religious based and as such, people of faiths or cultures other than Christian do not feel welcome or comfortable using them. The Native American tribes have emergency shelter options specific to tribal members that are established on their reservations. In particular, they have established domestic violence shelters as well as using motel vouchers when needed. These options work well for tribal members as they are culturally appropriate and sensitive and are run by tribal organizations that know the available services for tribal members.

The rural areas of the CoC showed significant underutilization of emergency shelter in the 2022 PIT Count. Less than 50% utilization was documented in 4 of 6 rural counties and one rural county does not have any emergency shelter beds. One of the largest barriers to emergency shelters in rural areas is

transportation. In rural areas, it can be a significant distance to get to the available beds. If the household does not have transportation, they cannot get there. We also see difficulties with shelter being for singles only and not pet friendly. Many rural shelters are also specifically designated for domestic violence victims. Although that is a necessary priority, there are not available shelters for those not fleeing domestic violence, particularly single men. In rural areas, many shelter spaces are provided through churches. They are not open to those who are actively using or drinking and often are woefully unprepared to deal with mental health issues.

3. identify any new practices your CoC implemented in its geographic area over the past 3 years and the lessons learned from implementing those practices.

The Call to Connect phone number was fully implemented over the last 3 years. One lesson learned is that it is crucial to have staff available to answer the calls, not let them go to voice mail. Staffing has been an ongoing issue at the agencies utilized for this phone number. It is also crucial for the agencies answering the calls to have the most current and accurate information so that referrals are beneficial and do not lead to dead ends. Two new emergency shelters opened recently and there was significant pushback from the area residents. Many important lessons have been learned regarding safety, appearance of the shelter site, and public relations. One shelter was subsequently closed due to a lawsuit from the County. The other one has had to significantly reduce its capacity as it works through a variety of city and county concerns. We have learned that there is an overwhelming need for shelter for chronic substance abusers, those with significant mental health issues, and extensive criminal backgrounds. We have learned that it is crucial to have on site staff who can work intensively with individuals to help assess needs, de-escalate situations, and access services. The population is generally unable to find or access services they need without help from trained staff. Emergency shelters are in chronic need of capital for maintenance, renovation, and expansions. There are very limited options to obtain this funding. Most shelters do not have additional staff that can commit the time necessary to navigate complex Federal and State systems and requirements in order to apply for more funding. Experienced grant writers available at minimal cost would be a welcome addition to the process. It has also proven to be very difficult to obtain enough funding to staff shelters at the level necessary to adequately serve those with the highest barriers including maintaining the safety and well being of other shelter residents. Several smaller shelters have recently accessed AmeriCorps Vista volunteers and have found this has been a good way to supplement paid staff. The downside can be that they often are not particularly trained or skilled in working with very high barrier individuals and their time of employment is limited through the program. They have been essential for working on specific programs, developing curriculums, etc. Another lesson we have learned and are working on finding solutions to is the complexity of the required data requirements and reporting through HMIS. Most shelters do not have adequate staffing to commit to HMIS data entry. They have also found it to be cumbersome and difficult, especially for those who may not be particularly computer savvy. There is a significant need for one-on-one training for new providers and the ICA applications being submitted with this NOFO are attempting to address that shortage.

### **P-3.c. Current Strategy to Provide Immediate Access to Low Barrier Permanent Housing for Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**

1.a. how your CoC utilizes a Housing First Approach in implementing its current strategy

All CoC and ESG funded programs are required to use a Housing First Approach. When programs apply for funding, they are required to complete a Housing First Checklist as well as provide documentation of trainings, policies and procedures, and posted documents.

b. how the strategy is connected to the permanent housing resources identified in the CoCs response to “Leveraging Housing Resources” portion of the CoC Plan for Serving Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs

The CoC is not applying for any additional housing units through this NOFO.

2. demonstrate how the CoCs current strategy performs at providing low-barrier and culturally appropriate access to permanent housing to individuals and families who have histories of unsheltered homelessness;

The CoC continues to add units of housing that will be low barrier as well as adjusting policies of current providers to lower barriers they may currently have in place. When new development projects present to the CoC to obtain support for their Certificate of Consistency needed to obtain funding and tax credits, they are required to complete a set of questions that focus on low barriers to housing. The CoC Full Membership Committee met with all developers and asked questions around the barriers. Several developers were required to go back and update their company policies to reflect the expected lower barriers as well as begin providing staff training for all levels of staff from project management down to property staff.

3. provide the evidence that supports the use of the CoCs current strategy;

Central CoC requires all developers proposing housing projects that will include units for homeless households to complete the following;

### **Central MN CoC-Confirmation Form Additional Questions**

As you are preparing to build and request a Continuum of Care (CoC) Confirmation Form from the Central MN Continuum of Care, we are here to remind you that High Priority Homeless have high barriers and this needs to be addressed now as we have had many denials from past projects. The below questions are more specific than they have been in the past due to the issues of high barriers.

1. What steps have you taken to ensure racial equity is among your prospective tenant selection criteria?
2. Are your tenant selection criteria flexible to allow for higher barrier individuals to access housing? If yes, explain what high barriers you are accepting/will not accept.
3. Do you perform a background check? (if so, how far back do you go?) (We would prefer to see no more than 5 years)
4. What/how much emphasis do you place on criminal backgrounds in your tenant selection criteria and is that up for negotiation?
5. What eliminates (be specific) a high barrier individual from your housing?
6. Do you look at credit score? If so, what is an acceptable score?
7. Do you look at past eviction history? If so, what is acceptable? What is not acceptable?
8. What are your income criteria?
9. Do you have a Housing First model in place?
10. How will prospective tenants be able to access your tenant selection criteria?  
Is it available on site, online, will you send to Coordinated Entry Coordinator etc.?
11. What is the policy to appeal a denial? How long will the appeal process take to make a decision?  
How often have appealed denials been reversed? (Looking for %)
12. Do you require your property management company to have training for working with households that are High Priority Households (HPH), Chronic Households (CH), Long-Term Homeless (LTH) and those with Disabilities? If not, why not? If so, explain the training program.

Central CoC used “Success in Housing: How Much Does Criminal Background Matter? A Research Project Initiated by Aeon, Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, CommonBond Communities, and Project for Pride in Living (the Research Collaborative), Conducted in Partnership with Wilder Research” Author: Cael Warren, published January 2019 which can be found at

[https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/imports/AEON\\_HousingSuccess\\_CriminalBackground\\_Report\\_1-19.pdf](https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/imports/AEON_HousingSuccess_CriminalBackground_Report_1-19.pdf) as a supporting document to initiate change in housing background checks. Housing First training is a part of the annual training that the CoC provides.

4. identify new practices the CoC has implemented across its geographic area in the past three years and the lessons learned from implementing those practices.

Two years ago, the CoC implemented a new process where new development projects are required to complete a set of questions that focus on low barriers to housing. The CoC Full Membership Committee meets with all developers and asks questions around the barriers. Several developers were required to go



back and update their company policies to reflect the expected lower barriers as well as begin providing staff training for all levels of staff from project management down to property staff. Lessons were learned on both sides of this process. Developers have an increased understanding of the impact that barriers are having on housing homeless households. The CoC has learned that additional time and resources will need to be directed towards project staff to continue education on barriers as well as monitoring to ensure that policies that have been promoted as being implemented are, in fact, being implemented and followed. A process will also need to be developed to address issues that are identified beyond adding areas of concern to new project proposals as not all property management companies are presenting new developments on a regular basis. All applicants for CoC funding through a NOFO are required to complete and submit the Housing First Checklist from the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness last updated September 2016.

#### **P-4.Updating the CoCs Strategy to Identify, Shelter, and House Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness with Data and Performance**

1. For street outreach:

a. How data, performance, and best practices will be utilized to improve the performance of and expand street outreach within the CoC,

Quarterly data quality checks are performed in HMIS. CoC staff run monitoring reports that allow for tracking of performance and outcomes by program. Annual and ongoing trainings are provided to promote the use of best practices by all agencies.

b. street outreach activities are connected to coordinated entry or HMIS, and

Street outreach providers regularly enter households into the Coordinated Entry System so that they are placed on the Priority List. Additional work is ongoing to ensure that more specific outreach workers have access to HMIS so that all households are promptly entered. Many agencies have multiple outreach workers who funnel all of their information to one staff member for data entry. This does not always translate to all households being entered or all data to be correct.

c. how your CoC will incorporate new partners (e.g., business owners, law enforcement, healthcare providers) into its street outreach strategies.

The CoC is continually doing outreach throughout the entire geographic area to identify new programs and agencies that can become part of the CoC Full Membership Committee. The CoC Membership Committee is a very active group that is regularly reaching out via emails, letters, and phone calls whenever a possible partner is identified. This has led to substantial growth to the CoC over the last 2 years. When new programs join, they are given an opportunity to present to the other members so that providers are able to expand their network of connections and services.

2. For low-barrier shelter and temporary accommodations:

a. How data, performance, and best practices will be used to improve access to low barrier shelter and temporary accommodations,

Demographic data will be collected through HMIS for all households sheltered through the Unsheltered and Rural NOFOs. This will allow the CoC to analyze who is being served and what are the outcomes associated with the services. In particular, the addition of Current Living Situation as a data point on the 030 Core Homeless Programs report will allow the CoC to determine the level of severity of needs associated with homeless households sheltered through these programs. Best practices such as trauma informed, client centered, and strengths-based assessments are already being used throughout programs applying for funds and will continue to be a part of programming. With the addition of specific staff to provide case management and Navigation services to these households, performance should be improved and an increase in positive housing outcomes should be able to be documented. Additionally, documentation of related services that were accessed can be tracked to verify that wraparound services are also being utilized.

b. How data, performance, and best practices will be used to expand, as necessary, low barrier shelter and temporary accommodations, and

Data collected through this funding will be crucial to show the need versus availability of shelter space. State Department of Human Services funding through the Office of Economic Opportunity has made funding available to increase shelter capacity. This must be data based and the information gathered through case management and HMIS data entry will prove to be a crucial piece of determining how to best utilize this funding to create maximum outcomes.

c. Any new practices and activities that will be funded through an award under this competition.

This competition will fund several activities that will provide low barrier shelter. Oasis Central MN offers emergency shelter to households with very high barriers. They utilize a Housing First approach and have very few disqualifying factors for those needing a bed.

ICA proposes to add data points that will help identify gaps in service as well as successes. They will also provide additional training to staff providing services. This is crucial, as especially in rural areas, new programs are often very small and have minimal staff and limited resources to provide training. They are willing and interested but desperately need the additional one-on-one training that ICA is proposing to add.

The addition of staff at CMHP to focus on the Call to Connect and Navigation services directly ties to low barrier access. The Call to Connect phone number is intentionally designed to be as low barrier as possible. It is 24/7 and is meant to quickly receive an assessment to determine the most critical needs and does not base services on lack of any barriers. The highest barrier households should receive the same level of services and support as those with the least number of barriers.

3. For permanent housing:

a. How data, performance, and best practices will be utilized to improve the CoCs ability to rapidly house, in permanent housing, individuals and families with histories of unsheltered homelessness, and No new permanent housing programs are included in this NOFO application. However, for all regular CoC funded agencies, performance data obtained through APRs and HMIS are analyzed and specific targets are set for various point categories. Best practices will be presented through CoC wide trainings as well as through individual agencies own policies and procedures. Ongoing monitoring of programmatic results is a part of the Performance and Ranking Committees duties. They will be examining data and outcomes on a regular basis in an effort to identify issues quicker and be able to intervene and offer assistance or resources as needed to increase the annual outcomes.

b. How data, performance, and best practices will be utilized to expand the CoCs ability to rapidly house, in permanent housing, individuals and families with histories of unsheltered homelessness.

Although the CoC is not applying for funding for additional Permanent Housing through this NOFO, the data collected will still be useful for the next years NOFO funding. As specific needs are further identified, specific strategies can be planned with specific areas targeted for additional housing. This will also assist the CoC in the process of providing Certificates of Consistency to developers who are proposing new housing projects as the CoC will have already determined areas of need and can leverage that information to influence where new developments might be constructed. The CoC will be losing two of its Rapid Rehousing Programs with the funding of the FY22 CoC Competition NOFO. The loss of these HUD funded programs in conjunction with the rising number of unsheltered homeless in the CoC will necessitate the use of new strategies to identify agencies capable of taking on this type of housing program and be able to successfully place households.

The CoC will work in partnership with PHAs to utilize Stability Vouchers which will be another opportunity to use data, performance, and best practices to quickly house unsheltered households. Over the course of the last year, the CoC has worked closely with the St. Cloud HRA and the Morrison County HRA to place households using Emergency Housing Vouchers. This process has allowed the CoC and the HRAs to establish processes and procedures that work best to house clients quickly. These lessons will transfer to the new Stability Vouchers as the programs have many similarities and requirements.

**P-5. Identify and Prioritize Households Experiencing or with Histories of Unsheltered Homelessness**

1. your CoC's strategy for ensuring that resources provided under this Special NOFO will reduce unsheltered homelessness;

Money provided for HMIS expansion and improvements will help create additional data points that can be used to identify people with severe levels of service needs. Addition of Current Living Situation to the 030 Core Homeless Programs report will assist in data analysis to determine if those with the greatest needs are the ones being helped. The additional trainings proposed by ICA are extremely important. Historically, smaller and new organizations have struggled to get acclimated to HMIS and enter accurate and complete data. This additional training will allow the data entry to be higher quality in a much faster timeframe which should lead to better outcomes as information is shared across agencies accessed by the households.

Central MN Housing Partnership's proposal to add Navigation services and Call to Connect staff accomplishes several goals. A critical first step in quickly housing the unsheltered is for them to access services. By increasing the promotion of the Call to Connect number to ever more rural areas will help people locate the first place to reach out to for help. By having additional staff to answer the phone, the initial contact will be more likely to result in an assessment and connection to appropriate services. When calls go to a voicemail, data shows that many people just hang up without leaving a message. Each of these represents a failed chance to quickly house someone. Because services are so limited in rural areas, it is especially important to have a rural focused staff person on Call to Connect who has a detailed knowledge of services and providers and can be creative in finding possible solutions. The additional Navigation services will also increase housing outcomes as the housing options are much more limited in rural areas. By using the Navigator as an advocate, they can work directly with private landlords to show them the benefits of giving someone a chance as well as being able to explain risks versus rewards. The Navigator will also be a person who can spend the time needed to assist with completing paperwork, gathering documents, etc. that County staff does not have the time to do.

Oasis Central MN has been offering motel vouchers and limited emergency shelter for two years. They have the data to show that demand is far exceeding supply. If they can offer more vouchers and/or keep a household in shelter for a longer amount of time they will have a better opportunity to provide case management services. This allows them to use best practices to determine needs and wants and make appropriate connections. They can also spend time helping with housing searches and advocating with local landlords. In rural Minnesota, relationships are crucial. Oasis has established many strong relationships with service and housing providers and this funding will allow them to expand on these relationships.

2. how your CoC will adopt:

a. program eligibility processes that reduce unsheltered homelessness;

Central CoC is currently approaching the end of the process to eliminate the VI-SPDAT score as a scoring mechanism used to place households on the Priority List. Efforts are underway to finalize the Prioritization Order that will be implemented and the entire Assessment process is under review. An important piece of the Assessment review process is to ensure that only information that is required and necessary is collected. This is in an effort to reduce the trauma inducing effects of the questions asked with the hope that if the Assessment process produces the least amount of trauma possible, then people will be more willing to be assessed and ultimately access services. The review process will lead to a revised Assessment Form that will be distributed to all agencies throughout all 13 counties of the CoC as well as developing an updated training process that will be required for all assessment agencies so that there is a consistent and equitable process in place for all populations in all areas.

Focus is also being placed on the processes being used with unsheltered people to ensure that everyone that wants to be assessed will be assessed. This includes recommendations that all outreach staff utilize iPads or similar technology so that they can complete assessments on the spot at the time of the initial encounter. Increased focus is also being placed on agencies having adequate access to HMIS as current case notes are crucial to making good housing referrals.

b. coordinated entry processes that reduce unsheltered homelessness;

The entire Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures are currently under review. This has included working with HUD TA as well as participating in HUD Coordinated Entry Community

Workshops specifically focused on prioritization and assessment. The ultimate outcome is to create a system that will efficiently identify unsheltered homeless, assess them quickly and accurately, place them on the Priority List and make good referrals to housing providers so that they can be quickly housed.

3. how your CoC will use street outreach to connect those living in unsheltered situations with housing resources; and

Street Outreach workers will have current, complete, and accurate resources with them that can be given to unsheltered people when they encounter them. This will also include work on the CoC website so that all relevant resources can be accessed quickly. Housing Benefits 101, located at <https://mn.hb101.org/>, Disability Benefits 101 located at <https://mn.db101.org/>, as well as 211.org, located at <https://www.211.org/> are all statewide resource websites used by outreach workers in the field.

Efforts are underway to ensure that resources are current and complete. Then these resources will be disseminated to agencies throughout the CoC so that they can be sent out with outreach workers.

4. additional steps your CoC is taking to ensure that people who are unsheltered or have histories of unsheltered homelessness can access housing and other resources in the community, including steps to:

- a. increase access to identification;

Youth are encouraged to apply for free identification through the State of Minnesota. A youth who was born in Minnesota and is homeless may get their birth certificate at no cost. As defined in law, a homeless youth is “a person 24 years of age or younger who is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and is without shelter where appropriate care and supervision are available, whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to provide shelter and care, or who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” A homeless youth younger than 16 years of age may get their birth certificate even if the birth record is confidential. Each no-cost birth certificate issued to a youth will expire six months after the date of issuance. This helps protect against identity theft and fraud should the birth certificate get lost or stolen. The expiration date is printed on the certificate. Youth experiencing homelessness may apply more than once for a no-cost birth certificate, for as long as they are eligible. Once they obtain the birth certificate, they can then obtain a No-Cost Standard Minnesota ID Card. Youth can get a no-cost standard Minnesota ID card if they are 24 years old or younger and experiencing homelessness. This is not a driver’s license and does not give them the authority to drive. There is no minimum age for obtaining a standard Minnesota ID. The card expires every four years on the cardholder’s date of birth. If they are under 21 years of age when they obtain their first card, they need to renew the identification card on or before their 21st birthday. Beginning May 3, 2023, federal requirements for REAL-ID take effect. They will not be able to use the standard ID card to board domestic flights or enter certain federal buildings.

Housing Navigators are also offered to households identified at Chronic Homeless or Long Term Homeless under Minnesota’s definitions. Navigators are able to assist clients in obtaining missing documentation, including identification. They assist with paperwork, are familiar with legal requirements, and know where offices are located to submit applications. VA staff assist Veterans in obtaining any missing military documentations, including discharge paperwork.

- b. provide housing navigation services; and

Central CoC funds three Navigators, one for each of the CoC’s three regions. The Navigators are responsible for certifying Chronic Homeless and Long-Term Homeless status for housing program eligibility. They also work with households to create housing histories, obtain missing documents, obtain Social Security Disability documentation and other paperwork as needed. They help clients complete housing applications and advocate with landlords on behalf of the clients. They can also assist with an appeal if a household is denied for housing. Navigators have been critical in housing people in the CoC. In focus group discussions with people with lived expertise of homelessness, they have all stated that this was one of the main things that led to their being housed. The advocacy piece was particularly important as well as the Navigator’s knowledge of programs, resources, and other connections. It was noted that landlords will work professionally with a Navigator even though they are difficult or act unprofessionally to the clients. The Rural NOFO application is seeking to add another Navigator position that can be focused specifically in the hardest to serve Rural regions. Extra time and attention are necessary as there

is a lack of available services, program offices are often not located in the area, there are significantly fewer housing options, and there are very few advocates available outside of the County staff who are not able to commit the time and attention needed for the highest barrier individuals.

c. provide access to health care and other supportive services.

A regional nonprofit has developed over the last year that provides a wide range of services including ARMHS workers. They have been expanding their area of coverage to include much of the rural areas of the CoC. They are growing quickly, just recently adding four more ARMHS workers. They also offer Housing Stabilization Services to eligible clients. Mobile clinics visit area emergency shelters on a regular basis. Trained medical staff are able to provide medical services on site as well as offer education and prevention information. These have also been used to provide vaccinations for Covid during the pandemic. The major health care system in St. Cloud has just added a second designated outreach nurse specifically to work with emergency shelters and unsheltered individuals. Coming Home St. Cloud is a partnership between CentraCare, Central Minnesota Mental Health Center and Hearth Connection to house frequent users of the St. Cloud Hospital. The program targets individuals who are experiencing severe mental illness and qualify for support services through Medicaid. Hearth Connection provides funds for housing and maintaining services while case managers provide support services and set up eligibility for Medicaid funds. CentraCare-Coordinated Care Clinic is designed for patients with complicated medical, mental health, and social needs that can result in frequent hospitalizations. Services offered include primary care, mental health, office-based opioid treatment, medication therapy management, outreach services, social and community resource management, and post-incarceration continuation of care. This clinic is available to patients by professional referral only, including medical professionals, faith community members, law enforcement, human service providers, or other community professionals. Counties also provide mental health/ARMHS workers. In many of the very rural areas, these often are the only resources located in the community.

#### **P-6. Involving Individuals with Lived Experience of Homelessness in Decision Making-Meaningful Outreach**

1. the meaningful outreach efforts (e.g., street outreach, social media announcements) to engage those with lived homelessness experience to develop a working group;

Central CoC has implemented a People with Lived Expertise Policy that articulates the importance of and requirement for intentional involvement of people with lived expertise of current or homelessness within the last seven years. This policy requires representation of various subpopulations represented throughout the entire area of the CoC. Up to seven people are paid consultants who are compensated for joining planning meetings, the CoC Full Membership Committee, sub committee meetings, and advisory groups to the CoC Governing Board. These voices have become crucial as the CoC reviews and revises its policies and procedures. Multiple emails have been distributed to the full CoC listserv to recruit consultants. Announcements were also made at a variety of CoC meetings. A property management company sent recruitment letters to tenants at several of their rural properties. The recruitment efforts led to an excellent response.

2. how individuals and families experiencing homelessness, particularly those who have experienced unsheltered homelessness, are meaningfully and intentionally integrated into the CoC decision making structure; and

Paid consultants are involved in planning meetings for the CoC. They are asked to provide ideas and insights on current policies and procedures and their ideas are solicited when areas are identified that have been ineffective or inequitable. They are involved at the planning level, Full CoC level, and Governing Board level. The consultants will be integrated into the planning process for next year's NOFOs in order to determine that the CoC is understanding the outcomes they are scoring and ensuring that the areas of scoring are in fact the areas that will assist households to become and remain stably housed.

**P-6a. Involving Individuals with Lived Experience of Homelessness in Decision Making-Letter of Support from Working Group Comprised of Individuals with Lived Experience of Homelessness**  
Lived Experience Support Letter is attached.

**P-7. Supporting Underserved Communities and Supporting Equitable Community Development**

1. your CoC’s current strategy to identify populations in your CoC’s geography that have not been served by the homeless system at the same rate they are experiencing homelessness.

The CoC conducts quarterly gaps analysis using HMIS data and Priority List data to determine specific populations that are not receiving equitable outcomes. Additional data analysis is conducted using Stella P. An HMIS/Data Committee was established during the last year which has data analysis as one of it’s key tenets. They are tasked with identifying gaps in services as well as determining outcomes that are not equitable to all populations. These concerns are then brought to the CoC Full Membership Committee to be discussed and addressed. As part of this process, people with lived expertise are included in the discussions and the planning to assist in identifying specific root causes and offering ideas and solutions. This feedback and analysis is ultimately passed from the CoC Full Membership Committee to the CoC Governing Board for further discussion, consideration, and ultimately, changes and revisions in policies and procedures. The changes are then monitored over time to ensure that they have achieved their desired outcomes and also to ensure that they have not developed additional unintended inequities.

2. how underserved communities in your CoC’s geographic area interact with the homeless system, including a description of those populations; and

The most recent 2022 Needs and Gaps Analysis shows the following:

Blacks are 3% of the CoCs population, represent 10% of all households in poverty, and 20% of all households experiencing sheltered homelessness.

Natives are 1% of the CoCs population, represent 3% of all households in poverty, and 13% of all households experiencing sheltered homelessness.

Whites are 92% of the CoCs population, represent 79% of all households in poverty, and 60% of all households experiencing sheltered homelessness.

Other/Multi-Racial are 3% of the CoCs population, represent 6% of all households in poverty, and 7% of all households experiencing sheltered homelessness.

Similar trends can be seen with youth where 4% of the CoCs population are Black but represent 15% of the homeless, 1% of the CoCs population are Native, but represent 16% of the homeless, 88% of the CoCs population are White, but represent 60% of the homeless, and 5% of the CoCs population are Other/Multi-Racial but represent 7% of the homeless.

Asian/Pacific Islanders are a very small population throughout Central CoC and appear to be represented at levels congruent to their percentage of the population across the various categories.

Time milestones by race and outcome measured in days:

<u>Race</u>	<u>To Referral</u> (Singles/Families)	<u>To Project Entry</u> (Singles/Families)	<u>To Housed</u> (Singles/Families)
Natives	254/159	67/93	63/173
Blacks	214/201	184/139	177/113
Multiple Race	173/114	198/119	198/90
White	162/158	108/138	111/155

3. your CoC’s current strategy to provide outreach, engagement, and housing interventions to serve populations experiencing homelessness that have not previously been served by the homeless system at the same rate they are experiencing homelessness.

Central CoC has multiple agencies that conduct outreach throughout the CoC. Outreach workers make regular visits to emergency shelters. They also regularly canvas local parks, parking lots, wooded areas, etc. that are known areas for encampments. When unsheltered individuals interact with the police, officers have contact information that is given to the homeless person to contact outreach services. Additionally, officers frequently contact outreach services directly to alert them to the location of encampments they

have identified. Intentional work is in progress to identify and engage with culturally specific organizations. These outreach efforts have led to a noticeable shift in the demographics of attendees at the CoC Full Membership Committee meetings. Although there has been representation from a wide range of populations historically, the percentage of participants from subpopulations has increased over the last year. Additionally, all CoC funded agencies are required to document the percentage of staff, leadership, and management positions that are held by BIPOC individuals as well as LGBTQ+ and those with lived experience of homelessness. They are required to document actions and programmatic changes they have or are implementing to create a more inclusive and culturally welcoming agency for all populations. These areas are all an important piece of the ranking and scoring process for the NOFOs and was included with the applications for the Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness NOFOs.