

**Southern Nevada Homelessness Continuum of Care  
2023 NOFO Competition**

**Scoring and Ranking Team  
SCORING INSTRUCTIONS**

**ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT!**

Any questions that you have as a member of the Scoring and Ranking Team should be directed to [elainedecoligny@gmail.com](mailto:elainedecoligny@gmail.com).

## Overview of Competition

Members of the Scoring and Ranking Team (SRT) are responsible for reading and scoring applications submitted as part of the 2023 HUD Continuum of Care NOFO Competition. The Scoring and Ranking process is conducted in accordance with the Scoring and Ranking Policies and Procedures approved by the CoC Board of Directors on July 13, 2023. The deadline for the local competition is Monday, August 14.

## Scoring and Ranking Timeline

Date	Activity
Mon. Aug. 14 – 5 PM	Local competition closes.
Tues. Aug. 15 – 5 PM	SRT members receive applications, Score Sheets, and instructions.
Thurs. Aug 17 – 1 PM	SRT training. Click on <a href="#">Zoom link</a> to join.
Wed. Aug. 25 – 9:30 AM	Office hours to support SRT members. Click on <a href="#">Zoom link</a> to join.
Mon. Aug. 28 – 12 PM	Deadline for SRT members to complete review and submit scores. Submit scores to <a href="mailto:elainedecoligny@gmail.com">elainedecoligny@gmail.com</a> . Please submit on or before deadline!
Mon. Aug 28 – 5 PM	Facilitators tabulate scores and prepare for 8/29 SRT Meeting.
Tues. Aug. 29 – 8 AM	SRT members meet to discuss, score, and rank all projects.
Wed. Aug. 30 – 8 AM	Deliberation Day – SRT presents Priority Listing and hosts discussion with applicants.

## Reviewer Responsibilities

Reviewers are responsible for:

- Reviewing all assigned applications.
- Using the Score Sheet to score each application.
- Sending completed Score Sheets back to facilitation team by noon on Monday, August 28.
- Participating in the August 29 meeting before Deliberation Day to agree upon Priority List.
- Participating in August 30 Deliberation Day public session to present results to applicants, respond to questions and gather feedback.
- Participate in confidential discussion after the public session to determine if revisions to the priority ranking will be made.

There are two types of application:

- Renewal Project – A project that was awarded previously and reapplies every year for ongoing funding. Renewal projects undergo a very thorough monitoring process every year for which they receive performance scores, so many elements of renewal projects are pre-scored. Reviewers need only review and score four narrative questions for each renewal project.
- New Project – A project that is applying for CoC funding for the first time. New project applications are longer, with more questions for reviewers to score, because there is no pre-existing performance information.

It is expected that the competition will involve roughly **20** renewal applications and **2-4** new project applications. **Each reviewer is asked to review 6-10 renewal applications and all new project applications** and to complete a Score Sheet for each application, by type.

Reviewers will receive the materials on Tuesday, August 15, after the competition closes. This will include the applications that they are responsible for reviewing, written instructions, and a Score Sheet for each application they will review.

There will be a training for SRT Members on Thursday, August 17 at 1:00 PM. This training is optional but strongly encouraged, especially for reviewers who are new to the process. This is a great opportunity for reviewers to ask questions! If possible, take a quick look at the scoring materials and applications before the training to see if you have any initial questions.

If you have questions after the training, feel free to send them via email to [elainedecoligny@gmail.com](mailto:elainedecoligny@gmail.com) with "SRT Question" in the subject line. You may also choose to by dropping into the SRT Office Hours on Wednesday, August 23 between 9:30 – 10:30 AM.

### Scoring Process

The applications that you receive will have been reviewed by the facilitation team to ensure that they meet the application threshold and include all required attachments. All the objective/pre-scored factors will have been scored by the facilitation team, but those scores will not be shared with the Reviewers until the SRT meeting on August 29.

### Renewal Applications

All reviewers will receive 6-10 renewal applications to review. Each renewal application has four narrative questions to be scored:

- Advancing Racial Equity
- Engaging People with Lived Experience
- Person-Centered and Trauma-Informed Care
- Connection to Mainstream Resources

**It is okay to repeat answers, as appropriate!** Responses to these narratives will likely focus on agency-wide initiatives that pertain to all programs. It is acceptable and expected that organizations submitting more than one project application will use the same language in different proposals. Reviewers should not penalize applicants for repeating responses. And those responses should be scored consistently; the same narrative should not receive 6 points in one proposal and 4 in another.

Please note that the questions in the applications may skip numbers. Do not worry about this. There are questions in the application form that only pertain to certain project types, and other projects can skip them. Please just use the Score Sheets to refer to the identified answers for each question.

Please refer to the end of this document for tips and suggestions about how to score the narrative questions.

Reviewers do not need to score any other parts of the renewal applications, as those are all pre-scored factors.

### New Applications

All reviewers are asked to review all the new applications received. Each new application has 10 narrative questions, plus a budget form to review.

- Experience Serving the Target Population
- Experience Operating a Comparable Program
- Experience Managing Federal or Other Complex Funding
- Fiscal Management Capacity
- Housing First
- Racial Equity
- Engaging People with Lived Experience
- Participants Assisted to Secure/Retain Housing and Not Exit to Homelessness
- Participants Assisted to Secure Jobs and Income
- Participants Connected to Mainstream Systems
- Budget Form

### **Be sure to allow additional time for review of New Applications!**

As with the Renewal Applications, the questions in the New applications may skip numbers. Do not worry about this. There are questions in the application form that only pertain to certain project types, and other projects can skip them. Please just use the Score Sheets to refer to the identified answers for each question.

Please refer to the end of this document for tips and suggestions about how to score the narrative questions.

Reviewers do not need to score any other parts of the new applications, as those are all pre-scored factors.

### **Score Sheets**

Applications must be scored using the Score Sheet provided. Reviewers must complete one Score Sheet for each application. Please note that Score Sheet for Renewals is different from the Score Sheet for New Projects.

The Score Sheet provides detailed information for scoring, including:

- The questions to be answered.
- Where to find the answers in the applications.
- How to assign points values to different answers.

- The maximum score for each question.

Reviewers should only complete the GREEN cells in the Score Sheet. All of the other cells are locked and cannot be modified. Please see example below.

APPLICANT CAPACITY		Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	NOTES
Experience Serving Target Population		4		
Q3, Q12	Does the narrative describe how long the organization has been providing assistance to homeless clients? Does is clearly demonstrate applicant's experience serving the specific population to be served, including an understanding of their common barriers to housing, service needs, and effective interventions? <b>(Strong = 4 pts, Average = 2-3 pts, Weak = 0-1 pts)</b>			

As noted above, the New Project Application has more questions for reviewers, so the New Project Score Sheet is longer than the Renewal Project Score Sheet.

You will receive an Excel Workbook that contains one sheet (tab) per project, plus a Summary tab that reflects scores for all the projects. If you are reviewing 8 applications, your Workbook will contain 9 tabs (8 application Score Sheets and one Summary). You are welcome to complete the Score Sheets electronically or in hard copy. If you complete your Score Sheets electronically, the scores will automatically tabulate in the Summary Sheet. If you complete them by hand, you will need to scan them back to the facilitation team for manual tabulation.

Please double-check your Score Sheets before you send them to ensure that all required elements are scored and all of your comments are saved.

When you are done scoring, please send the Score Sheets to the facilitation team at [elainedecoligny@gmail.com](mailto:elainedecoligny@gmail.com). **The deadline for scoring is Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at NOON.** Please submit your scores on or before the deadline to allow the facilitators to tabulate everything before the SRT meeting the following day.

### Rules/Parameters for Scoring

The Scoring and Ranking Team plays an essential role in determining which projects receive HUD funding and ensuring that the local competition is fair and transparent. When reviewing, please take the following steps.

- **Allow sufficient time for thorough review of all applications.** All proposals deserve to be reviewed with the same attention and care. Please remember that the New Project Applications are longer, with more questions to review. Factor that into your scheduling!

- **Start reviewing your proposals as soon as you can upon receiving them**, to ensure that you can get through all of them and that any questions you have can be answered.
- **Set aside any potential bias.** Please review each proposal based upon the contents of the application, not upon any experience you may have had with the agency or other information about the proposed program.
- **Remember that agencies submitting multiple proposals will likely repeat their responses to certain questions.** Do not penalize an agency if they use a narrative in multiple proposals. Please just score the narrative on its merits and score it consistently across proposals.
- **Whenever appropriate, give feedback to applicants.** This will help to strengthen future proposals and support your scoring logic.
- **Please be as consistent as possible when reviewing applications.** You may do this by reviewing each proposal in its entirety, or by taking one question at a time and scoring different applicants' responses to that question. Try to give each application equal time. If several days have passed between when you reviewed the first application and when you finished the last one, you might want to revisit the first application to see if you would still score it the same way. You are welcome to change your scores as you are reviewing, to be consistent and fair.
- **Do not hesitate to ask for clarification.** The facilitation team is available to support the SRT throughout the review process. If you are not sure you are scoring correctly or if you have any other questions, please ask for help!
- **Please do not submit your scores late.** The facilitation team has very little time to assemble all the scores in advance of the SRT meeting on Tuesday, August 29. Please submit your scores no later than noon on the 28. Early submissions are welcome and appreciated!

### Tips for Reviewing Narratives

Here are some tips for reviewing and scoring project narratives.

- **Look for the specific answer to the question that was asked.** It is common for applicants to provide a lot of text without answering the question. For instance, when asked about experience serving the target population, the applicant should clearly identify the target population, provide examples of programs that serve that population, and illustrate their understanding of the needs faced by the people served.
  - **Good example:** ABC Housing has provided permanent supportive housing and other services to chronically homeless adults for more than 20 years. We operate 6 PSH programs that together serve 85 chronically homeless adults at any point in time. Our programs are designed to address the complex needs of people who have long histories of homelessness and other conditions by offering intensive case management, substance use services, mental health support, and linkages to primary care and other essential services.
  - **Weak example:** XYZ Housing has a long history of providing housing and services to homeless people in Clark County. Our services are high-quality and focused on positive outcomes.

- **Look for examples that strengthen their claims.** Does the narrative simply state back the information in the question, or does it provide further examples and illumination?
  - **Good example:** ABC Housing relies heavily upon collaborations with other community partners to leverage existing resources, minimize duplication, and break down silos. For instance, our 123 Program is an initiative we lead with Partner A, who conducts street-level outreach; Partner B, who provides primary and behavioral health services, and Partner C, whose housing vouchers ensure connection to permanent housing. We also participate actively in the LMN Senior Collaborative to ensure our senior programs are integrated with other resources in the community that support healthy aging.
  - **Weak example:** XYZ Housing partners with numerous stakeholders in the community to support our participants. We attend community meetings and participate actively in the Continuum of Care.
  
- **Tips for Racial Equity question:** Applicants should talk about how they use data to understand racial disparities in their program, and what they have learned. They should describe how they review racial disparities with respect to ongoing program operations. For instance, do they look at the racial breakdown of who files grievances and how those grievances are resolved? Are there differences in outcomes among racial categories? What are the specific steps that they have taken to address issues?
  - **Good example:** When reviewing demographic data of our program participants, we observed that Black participants had lower rates of connection to primary care than White and Latinx participants. In one focus group, Black participants reported a preference for receiving primary care from Black providers. We have since initiated a partnership with 456 Community Clinic, which specializes in serving Black community members, and hosted an information session with two of 456's providers to inform participants about the services that 456 offers. 456 also offered to host a quarterly health fair to further engage residents. We will revisit primary care data quarterly to see if this intervention has helped to address this barrier.
  - **Weak example:** Our programs serve a diverse array of clients, and we work diligently to ensure that all participants feel welcome. Our staff receive regular training about unconscious bias and structural racism, and we actively seek to hire people who reflect underrepresented populations.

**Tips for Question about People with Lived Experience.** This should not just be about gathering information from people with lived experience. It should be about actually using that information to inform program design and operations or other key agency functions. Responses should also cite how people with lived experience are invited into decision-making roles in an active way.

- **Good example:** ABC Housing incorporates the insights of people with lived experience of homelessness into program operations through several channels. In addition to regular client surveys and focus groups that allow us to gather input from participants, we have convened a Lived Experience Advisory Board of 10 individuals that meet monthly to inform various aspects of program design and operations.

Recent LEAB topics have included reviewing a new Intake Form for all PSH programs, advising on the agency's Staff Training curriculum, and helping to define program outcomes for a new Job Training Program. In addition, two of the members of the ABC Housing Board of Directors have experienced homelessness in the last 5-7 years, and 12 of our 84 program employees also have lived experience.

- **Weak example:** Every year, we conduct a client satisfaction survey to gather input from program participants. Last year, 94% of clients reported full satisfaction with our programs.

### **Deliberation Day**

On August 29<sup>th</sup>, the SRT will gather to prepare for Deliberation Day (which is the following day, August 30<sup>th</sup>). All reviewers should attend that meeting and be prepared to share their scores, discuss their scoring rationale, and resolve any disagreements about how projects were scored. Once all scores have been compiled, the facilitation team will share a preliminary Priority Listing of the project applications ranked by score. This meeting will not be open to applicants or other interested members of the public. **This will be an opportunity for reviewers to review and finalize your scores.**

The facilitation team will then lead the SRT team through a discussion of potential changes to make to the Priority Listing to make the whole application package more competitive. The SRT will finish their Pre-Deliberation Day activities by releasing the Priority Listing to applicants.

The following day, Deliberation Day, is a public meeting at which the facilitation team will present the proposed Priority Listing to attendees, who will have the opportunity to ask questions. After fielding comments and questions, the SRT will convene a final closed-door session and finalize the Priority Listing.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE LOCAL COMPETITION!**