



**Boston City Council**  
**Committee on Housing and Community Development**  
**Councilor Kendra Lara, *Chair***

September 28, 2022

Dear Councilors:

The Boston City Council's Committee on Housing and Community Development to which was referred the following:

Docket #0926 - Message and order authorizing the City of Boston acting through it's Mayor's Office of Housing to apply for, accept and expend Sixteen Million Five Hundred Twenty-Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty-One Dollars (\$16,527,831.00) provided under Section 231 of the Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations Act for the Continuum of Care program from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

These funds will be used to support programs that provide services and housing to the unsheltered homeless.

Docket #1018 - Message and order authorizing the City of Boston, acting through its Mayor's Office of Housing, to apply for, and to accept and expend, the Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Continuum of Care grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in an amount not to exceed Forty Five Million Dollars (\$45,000,000.00).

These funds will be used to support programs that provide services and housing to persons experiencing homelessness.

These matters are sponsored by the Mayor and were referred to the Committee on Housing and Community Development (Docket #0926) on August 10, 2022 and (Docket #1018) on August 31, 2022.

The Committee on Housing and Community Development held a public hearing on September 23, 2022, to take testimony and consider the same.

Councilors Present: Chair - Councilor Kendra Lara and Councilor Erin Murphy

Letters of support/attendance were read into the record from Council President Ed Flynn and Councilor Liz Breadon

**Administration Officials: Laila Bernstein, Deputy Director of Supportive Housing Division and Tim Davis, Deputy Director for Policy Development & Research, Mayor's Office of Housing - attended the hearing, made a presentation regarding these grants and funds and responded to questions from Councilors.**

**The presentation by the Administration Officials included: Background of the grants and funding history, eligible recipients and activities, the processes of distribution and uses of the funds, and the various other particulars for each of these grants and funds. (Copy of the presentation and pertinent fact sheets are attached)**

**Based on the testimony and information presented at the hearing and having considered the same I respectfully recommend that these matters ought to Pass.**

  
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**Councilor Kendra Lara, Chair  
Committee on Housing and Community Development**

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**What is the Continuum of Care Program?**

Continuum of Care (CoC) is a program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designed to provide housing and supportive services for homeless individuals and families. The City of Boston, Mayor's Office of Housing is the designated Collaborative Applicant on behalf of the Boston Continuum of Care.

**How are the funds allocated?**

This is a competitive grant opportunity designed to provide new funds dedicated to serving highly vulnerable individuals and families with histories of unsheltered homelessness.

**How much is the City of Boston eligible to apply for?**

Based on HUD guidance, the City of Boston is eligible to apply for up to \$16,527,831 million. The grant term is three years.

**How will the CoC Unsheltered funds be used?**

The City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for all of the eligible activity types under this funding opportunity:

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**

Long term subsidized housing paired with supportive services

**Rapid Rehousing (RRH)**

Short to medium term subsidized housing paired with supportive services

**Joint Transitional Housing–Rapid Rehousing (Joint TH-RRH)**

Rapid rehousing that includes the option for people to access transitional housing prior to moving into their own housing

**Supportive Services Only- Coordinated Entry (SSO-CE):** Creation of projects to develop or operate a centralized or coordinated assessment system

**Supportive Services Only - Street Outreach (SSO-SO):** Funds may be used to provide supportive services to unsheltered homeless persons for whom the recipient or subrecipient is not providing housing or housing assistance.

**Supportive Services Only - Other**

**To whom will the City be awarding funds?**

The City will award the funding to non-profit organizations or units of local government selected through the procurement process or through MOA. The funding will be awarded based on this ranking policy and applications through the RFP will be scored based on this scoring tool. Both

**HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) Supplemental  
to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness**

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documents are publicly posted on MOH's webpage about the Continuum of Care Program, found [here](#).

**What is the City doing to encourage applications from new providers or for new initiatives?**

The City widely advertised the Request for Proposals, including on the [Boston Continuum of Care webpage](#) and through a broad mailing list that anyone can join for information about funding and other opportunities related to the Continuum of Care Program. MOH hosted an information session as well as Applicants' Conference for all interested parties and was available to answer questions from potential applicants. MOH also conducted outreach about the RFP to certified MWBE homeless services providers in the City's database, many of whom have not contracted with MOH before.

**Who does the funding assist? How many households will be served?**

The funding must assist people with severe service needs and histories of unsheltered homelessness.

**Who are the supportive service partners?**

This is yet to be determined through the procurement process. MOH convened the review committee for the first meeting on 9/21/22 and will finalize scoring on 10/3/22.

**Where are the rental assistance and leasing program units located?**

This is yet to be determined since funds haven't been allocated yet. Housing vouchers will be used in the private market.

**What is the Continuum of Care Program?**

Continuum of Care (CoC) is a program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designed to provide housing and supportive services for homeless individuals and families. As the designated Collaborative Applicant on behalf of the Boston Continuum of Care, the City of Boston is funded for the following eligible program activities within the CoC Program: leasing and rental assistance for Permanent Housing (PH), Supportive Services Only (SSO), Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and CoC Planning.

**How are the funds allocated?**

HUD allocates the funds through the national annual McKinney-Vento Homeless Continuum of Care funding competition. This year HUD has an abbreviated application timeline; the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was published on August 1, 2022 and responses are due to HUD on Friday, September 30, 2022.

**How much was the City of Boston awarded under the CoC PY21 program?**

The City of Boston was awarded \$36,958,241 in CoC Program funding under the PY21 NOFO.

The renewal funds will be used to fund 38 grants that serve over 2,000 households, including nearly 1,300 chronically homeless individuals at any given point in time. The application includes the renewal of nearly 300 permanent housing slots for families. Renewal funds also include permanent housing programs for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, and assessor, navigation and technology resources to further support Coordinated Entry, which is a coordinated City-wide housing placement system. The PY21 renewal grants also incorporate 5 grants for permanent housing for youth and young adults that were originally awarded to Boston through HUD's 2017 Youth Housing Demonstration Program (YHDP) competition.

Boston's PY21 CoC award also includes grants to support our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) software, a federally mandated client-level data collection and reporting system and planning resources to support strategic operations of the CoC and to ensure compliance with HUD regulations.

The grant term for the renewal awards is for one year (the City will seek continued funding for them annually).

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<b>Component</b>	<b>% of Award</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Permanent Housing (leasing & rental assistance) for homeless individuals and/or families.	89.5%	Over 2,150 units of PH. The CoC funds approximately 300 PSH opportunities for families and 1,850 for individuals.	\$33,081,841
HMIS	3.5%	Client-level data collection system	\$1,321,878
SSO- Coordinated Entry	4%	Funding for all required components of the CoC's Coordinated Entry System, including the technology to match clients to housing, the Coordinated Entry System Manager and assessor and navigator staff at multiple access points	\$1,445,775
HEARTH Act Planning and Implementation	3%	Implement HUD's HEARTH Act requirements	\$1,108,747
100.0%			\$36,958,241

**How will the CoC funds be used?**

By HUD regulation, funds may be used **ONLY** to fund these program components:

1. **Rental Assistance** is paid to private property owners that rent housing units to homeless households. Clients are required to pay 30% of their income towards the cost of the rent.
2. **Leasing Assistance** is paid directly to landlords to lease units on behalf of homeless households. It is not required that the lease be in the client's name nor that the client contributes a portion of their income towards rent.
3. **Transitional Housing** programs provide housing for up to 24-months for individuals and families exiting the shelter system. During their stay, clients are assisted with housing search services to locate permanent, affordable housing upon exit.
4. **Supportive Services** programs provide an array of services to assist homeless households, including, but not limited to, assistance with obtaining permanent housing, housing stabilization services, job search, education and employment training, referrals to substance abuse programs, assistance with accessing mainstream benefits, nutritional and health services. CoCs may also create Coordinated Entry Systems within this component type.
5. **HMIS (Homeless Management Information System)**. A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness.

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6. **Continuum of Care Planning** funding may be used for designing and carrying out a collaborative process for the development of an application to HUD; evaluating and monitoring the outcomes of CoC and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) projects; and developing a coordinated community-wide or region-wide process with stakeholders, nonprofit service providers, and community partners.

**To whom will the City be awarding funds?**

The City will award CoC funds received in PY21 renewals to all currently funded non-profit agencies that administer rental assistance, leasing and support service programs for permanent housing.

**What is the City doing to encourage applications from new providers or for new initiatives?**

In Spring 2022, in anticipation of a regular PY22 competition, the City drafted a Request for Proposals (RFP), intending to release it once HUD published the CoC NOFO. MOH announced its intention to issue the RFP at public CoC meetings, the goal being to give interested prospective applicants more lead time to conceptualize new projects, identify potential project partners and become familiar with HUD's project application forms; connect with new partners who may have decided not to apply to prior years' Continuum of Care program RFPs due to the short RFP timeline or other constraints (the timeline is mandated by HUD's application schedule); and facilitate connections between agencies who may want to partner together on a new project. However, given the unprecedented accelerated NOFO schedule, MOH was unable to issue the RFP within the mandated timeframe that HUD imposed this year. Therefore, MOH reached out to respondents to last year's RFP to find out if they would like to resubmit an application for new funding. At the same time, MOH has focused its efforts on soliciting applications from new providers and initiatives under the Special Unsheltered NOFO.

**Who does the funding assist? How many households will be served?**

The funding is used to assist individuals and families that meet the HUD definition of homeless. HUD and the City of Boston strongly encourage that CoC permanent housing resources (rental assistance and leasing programs) be prioritized to assist the most vulnerable, including chronically homeless households. Additionally, under certain component types and programs, specific homeless sub-populations can be targeted for assistance, such as veterans, victims of domestic violence, and severely mentally ill.

During the COVID-19 public health crisis, it became critical to target resources and prioritize people who meet CDC criteria for being at increased risk for COVID-19 and are staying outside or in congregate shelters that cannot follow CDC physical distancing guidance.

The funding has a Point In Time capacity of over 2,000 participants.

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**Who are the supportive service partners?**

Supportive service project partners provide case management, housing search and stabilization services for clients housed through the CoC program. Partner agencies also provide, or help their clients' access, other appropriate services including, but not limited to, health care, transportation assistance, mental health treatment, alcohol and other substance abuse services, counseling, education and job training, child care and employment.

**Where are the rental assistance and leasing program units located?**

The units supported through the CoC program are located predominantly in Boston, with 77% having a Boston address and 23% in surrounding Greater Boston communities. Under the CoC Program, all new lease ups are required to be within the City, with the exception of Tenant-Based Rental Assistance. For units located within the City, every neighborhood, as identified by zip code, is represented as follows:

Allston / Brighton:	3%	Mattapan:	10%
Boston:	24%	Roslindale:	2%
Dorchester:	33%	Roxbury:	15%
East Boston:	2%	South Boston:	0%
Hyde Park:	6%	West Roxbury:	1%
Jamaica Plain:	4%		