



# **Boston City Council**

## **Committee on Housing and Community Development**

**Councilor Lydia Edwards, *Chair***

**October 27, 2021**

**Dear Councilors:**

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

**Docket #1010 – Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to apply for, and to accept and expend, the Federal Fiscal Year 2021 Continuum of Care grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 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.**

**This matter is sponsored by the Mayor and was referred to the Committee on Housing and Community Development on September 29, 2021.**

**The Committee on Housing and Community Development held a public hearing on October 21, 2021, virtually via Zoom Meeting to take testimony and consider the same.**

**Councilor Kenzie Bok the Vice-Chair of the Committee on Housing and Community Development, Chaired the Hearing at the request of Councilor Lydia Edwards the Chair of the Committee on Housing and Community Development.**

**Councilors Present: Councilor Ed Flynn, Councilor Julia Mejia and Councilor Liz Breadon**

**Laila Bernstein - Deputy Director for the Supportive Housing Division, Department of Neighborhood Development - made a presentation on the particulars of the Continuum of Care grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that will be used to support programs that provide services and housing to persons experiencing homelessness (attached), and responded to questions from the Chair and Councilors.**

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

**Councilor Lydia Edwards, Chair  
Committee on Housing and Community Development**

## ***HUD's PY21 Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Fact Sheet - Application to HUD for PY21***

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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. 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 Homeless Continuum of Care funding competition. Due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, HUD did not hold a Program Year 2020 (PY20) CoC competition. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, allowed HUD to renew PY19 grants without the PY20 competition.

### **How much was the City of Boston awarded under the CoC PY20 program?**

The City of Boston was awarded \$38,685,686 in CoC Program funding in the 2020 renewals.

The renewal funds will be used to fund 42 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 PY20 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 PY20 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).

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 PY20 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?**

Under HUD's 2021 Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Boston CoC is eligible to apply for new project funding. Based on the formulas stipulated in the NOFO, the CoC can apply for up to \$1,884,032 in CoC Bonus funding and up to \$2,254,662 in DV-Bonus funding.

Bonus funding can be used to create new permanent housing programs, including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing and joint transitional -rapid rehousing, SSO-CES programs to support the CoC's required Coordinated Entry system and funding to support the CoC's HMIS.

DV-Bonus funding is an opportunity to create projects that serve survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking. DV-Bonus can be used to create rapid rehousing and joint transitional - rapid rehousing programs, as well as SSO-CES programs to better connect survivors to CoC housing and service resources.

DND issued a publicly advertised Request for Proposals to solicit applications from non-profit homeless service providers interested in creating eligible projects to be included in the CoC's overall application to HUD. The RFP was made available on September 27, 2021, with responses due on October 15, 2021. The RFP was advertised through public notifications via the CoC's listserv, as well as announcements in CoC meetings and on the CoC's webpage.

**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, as part of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the Boston CoC's shared goals of eradicating homelessness.

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.

**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, substance use disorder 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%  |               |     |