

Morris County Continuum of Care

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Rebecca Sherrod
Child & Family Resources

To: All Morris County Community Service Providers
From: Allison Delcalzo-Berens, Chair
Re: CoC 2024 Request for Coordinated Entry Lead Agency
Date: Monday, July 1, 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to secure an organization to serve as the Coordinated Entry Lead Agency for the Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC).

Background

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has established an initiative to end homelessness in the United States, with an established priority for persons experiencing chronic homelessness and other vulnerable persons. As part of this initiative, HUD implemented the Continuum of Care under the Homeless Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act). The mission of the Morris County CoC is to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to address and prevent homelessness in Morris County. To facilitate this mission, the CoC is committed to organizing its homeless system into a trauma-informed “Housing First” collaborative system. This model will serve to prioritize households with the greatest need and barriers to housing solutions including, but not limited to, shelter, permanent housing, rapid rehousing, supportive services and prevention programs.

Coordinated Entry (CE) is a community-wide system to standardize and expedite the process by which people experiencing housing crisis access housing and homeless resources. Through Coordinated Entry, people experiencing literal or imminent homelessness will be matched to available services and housing solutions based on their level of need and availability of resources. Standardizing the intake and assessment process across the region, sharing information in real-time and adopting uniform prioritization policies are all at the core of a high-performing CE system.

The CoC Allocations Committee is seeking proposals from qualified housing and services organizations to serve as the Morris County CoC Coordinated Entry Lead Agency. The CE Lead Agency selected through this RFP will be the organization that has the strongest application showing a clear vision and plan for how they will implement a high performing CE system in collaboration with the CoC. The CoC has the ability, if deemed necessary, to reissue this RFP if they do not feel that a qualified provider has submitted a proposal to serve as the CE Lead Agency.

All funds awarded are subject to the availability of federal appropriations from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). If awarded, the agency will be responsible for carrying out all activities associated with the CoC grant, including a required 25% match (cash or in-kind) of the grant funding.

The funds will be awarded for one year followed by a one-year renewable option based on the availability of funding. The renewable option will be executed on review by the CoC.

Detailed Scope of Services

The Coordinated Entry Lead Agency's role in the Morris County Homeless System will be to standardize accessibility, assessment, prioritization, and referrals to housing and services necessary for housing stability.

The Coordinated Entry Lead Agency will act as the Project Manager to ensure the service delivery and compliance of all features of the program including:

1. Ensure the Coordinated Entry process is easily accessed and well-advertised.

- A) Ensure the coordinated entry process is available and accessible to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or level of English Proficiency.
- B) Adhere to the CoC's written safety planning protocols to ensure people fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence and victims of trafficking have safe and confidential access to the coordinated entry process and victim services and immediate access to emergency services such as domestic violence hotlines and shelters.
- C) Follow an after-hours process to ensure households can access emergency services independent of the operating hours of the coordinated entry's intake and assessment processes.
- D) Partner with outreach providers to ensure standardized accessibility throughout the system.
- E) Ensure that clients can access ESG-funded homelessness prevention services through the coordinated entry process.

2. Administer a standardized assessment tool to all clients that are considered literally homeless in Morris County.

- A) Operate a Coordinated Assessment process based on one of the four common Coordinated Entry Access models:
 - (1) Single Point of Access
 - (2) Multisite Centralized Access
 - (3) No Wrong Door
 - (4) Assessment Hotline
- B) Enter client assessment information into the Morris County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), including any updated information that may be collected on clients after their initial assessment.
- C) Coordinated with Victim Service Provider(s) to assess individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

3. Follow standardized prioritization protocols based on the criteria established in coordination with the CoC.

- A) Use and oversee the Housing Prioritization List of all clients with whom the Assessment Tool has been completed, ensuring households are prioritized based on their level of need and barriers to housing.
- B) Deidentify the Housing Prioritization List to ensure client confidentiality.

4. Facilitate appropriate referrals to housing and service providers who participate in the Morris CoC.

- A) Collaborate with participating CE partner agencies to collect and maintain real-time data, as much as possible, on available service and housing opportunities.
- B) Implement a uniform and timely referral process to all available service and/or housing opportunities.
 - a. Be able to refer households fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim service providers.

- C) Facilitate case conferencing meetings regarding the top prioritized clients and troubleshooting barriers to housing.
- D) In the instances of referral rejections, follow a standardized process to connect rejected households with a new project.
- E) Work collaboratively with partner agencies to assure compassion for clients, efficiency in operations, and warm hand-offs during the appropriate placement of households.
- F) Collaborate with the CoC Lead to manage oversight of participating CE projects.

5. Manage the overall operations of the Coordinated Entry System.

- A) Adhere to HUD regulations and the Morris County CoC's written standards on Coordinated Entry.
- B) Prepare performance reports on the outcomes and performance of the Coordinated Entry program. Regularly submit reports and findings to the Executive Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee with recommendations for improvement.
- C) Ensure adequate privacy protections throughout the Coordinated Entry process.

Applicant Qualifications

The selected project must be a nonprofit organization with proven experience serving homeless populations in case management and must demonstrate:

- Knowledge of Coordinated Entry best practices for implementation into the Morris County Coordinated Entry System.
- Awareness of existing resources and services within the CoC and state.
- Familiarity with various permanent housing interventions (e.g., rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing) and homeless prevention providers and programs.
- Willingness to work with populations with high service needs and barriers to housing.
- Incorporation of Housing First principles and other evidence-based practices
- Knowledge of the evolving data elements per HUD and CoC directives.
- HMIS licensure or willing to engage in the process of becoming a licensed HMIS user.
- Ability to prepare monthly, quarterly, yearly and CoC-requested reports including performance benchmarks defined by the CoC.

Submission Instructions, Deadline, & Scoring

Please submit one electronic copy of the agency application, new project application, and budget worksheet to Rebecca Sherrod at rsherrod@cfrmorris.org. All application materials including the Coordinated Entry RFP Scoring Criteria can be found on the Morris County Department of Human Services website, CoC webpage.

All applications must be submitted in full by **4:30pm on July 19, 2024**.

Resources

Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize the following resources when completing funding proposals:

- HUD website (www.hudexchange.info)
- CoC Strategic Plan 2024-2025 ([coc-strategic-plan-2024-2025.pdf \(morriscountynj.gov\)](https://www.morriscountynj.gov/Departments/Community-Behavioral-Health-Services/Continuum-of-Care))
- Application Scoring Criteria (<https://www.morriscountynj.gov/Departments/Community-Behavioral-Health-Services/Continuum-of-Care>).