

## Changes to Project Rating for 2017

There have been a number of changes in the 2017 NOFA. Also, this year HUD released a Project Rating Tool that reflects many of those changes. ECHO's Grant Applications Selection Committee has updated the the ECHO CoC Project Rating Forms for 2017 to reflect these changes and HUD's new tool.

This year, for the first time, HUD is allowing Expansion grants for already existing CoC grants. Expansion Grant applications are new grants using reallocated or bonus funds (but not mixed), but will be rated as renewal projects because much of the score, like renewal applications, is based on prior performance of the grant. If an Expansion Grant is awarded, it will be combined with the original grant to simplify administration of the combined grants.

You should thoroughly read over the new Project Rating Forms. Below are highlights of some of the changes.

### New Projects

The New Project Rating Form 2017 has all of the Threshold Items of the 2016 form. This means that if your agency or the grant application does not meet all of the Threshold Items it will be rejected and NOT included in the CoC application to HUD. Other than the Threshold Items, nearly all of the New Project Rating Form 2017 has been rewritten using HUD's rating tool. The questions and points have changed! The breakdown in points is:

- Experience and Capacity: 32%
- Design of Housing and Services: 20%
- Financial: 32%

The remaining 16% is in Timeliness, Leverage and CES Participation.

HUD's tool does not allow partial allocation of points; you either meet a line item and get all the points available for that item, or not, and get 0 points for that item. ECHO has in the past, and will for MOST, BUT NOT ALL questions, allow partial points. If the Points column shows a **range of points**, e.g., 0 – 10, then partial points may be awarded. If a single value is shown, either that amount is awarded or **0**. One line item that we did maintain HUD's recommended, all-or-none option is the budget line item. It is worth 20 points. Double and triple check your budget numbers and allocations to ensure they are reasonable, allocable, and allowable! You could lose 20 points if not perfect or near perfect. Also, this year, there is a specific cost-effectiveness question in the Financial section: "Is the project cost-effective when projected cost per person served is compared to CoC average within project type?" ECHO is looking at its current grant types and will have an average cost/person (or per family/household if that is the more appropriate number).

### Renewal Projects

The primary change to the New Projects Rating Form 2017 is that it will also be used for Expansion Grant applications, AND, the Performance section has been replaced by the more detailed questions and points from HUD's 2017 Rating Tool. I don't believe we have any TH projects to renew, but you will

notice that they are significantly penalized in the ratings: the Serve High Need Populations sub-section in Part E. allows a maximum of 30 points for the first 3 questions for PSH and RRH projects, but only 15 points for TH projects.

As with the New Project Rating Form, some questions allow a range of points, others are all-or-none. The instructions to the members of the Selection Committee will be: If the line item does not show a range of points, then if the reviewer cannot affirm that the agency/application fully, or nearly meets the question or statement of that line item then **0** points will be awarded. Some of these items are simple Yes/No and are straightforward all or none of the points. Others may allow a bit of subjective interpretation, in which case only minor or insignificant deviations from what was asked for will be allowed or you will receive **0** points for the item!