

CoC Debriefing Summary | FY 2012

CoC Name: Maine Balance of State CoC
CoC Number: ME-500
High Score: 127.35
Low Score: 48
Funding Line: 97

The below chart indicates the maximum amount of points available for each scoring category and the actual score a CoC received.

Scoring Category	Maximum Score (Points)	CoC Score (Points)
<i>CoC Housing, Services and Structure</i>	14	12.25
<i>Homeless Management Information System</i>	13	10
<i>Point-in-Time</i>	8	7.75
<i>CoC Strategic Planning</i>	55	42.75
<i>CoC Performance</i>	34	23.25
<i>Leveraging</i>	6	3
CoC Application Score	130	99
<i>Bonus Points</i>	4	2
Total CoC Score with Bonus Points	134	101

Competition Summary:

- More than \$1.66 billion was awarded in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 CoC Program Competition, the first competition under the CoC Program interim rule.
- There were 32 Collaborative Applicants who requested Unified Funding Agency (UFA) status. Only six (6) Collaborative Applicants passed the initial threshold requirements. After second phase of assessment, HUD determined these applicants did not meet the minimum qualification standards. HUD did not award UFA designation to any Collaborative Applicants.
- Given the possibility that the national Annual Renewal Demand (ARD) amount would exceed the amount available under the FY 2012 CoC Program NOFA, CoCs were required to rank all projects applying for grant funds – renewal and new (including CoC planning).
- CoCs were instructed to prioritize their projects locally. All new (including CoC Planning projects) and renewal project applications were required to be ranked on the CoC Project Priority Listings, using the a rank number only one time.
- The FY 2012 CoC Program NOFA included detailed scoring information for the CoC application. The CoC Application scoring information included the sections scored, the total score for each section, and a further breakdown within each section of the items that were scored and how the CoC could receive the maximum score available.
- The CoC Consolidated Application was a three-part submission in FY2012: the CoC Application, Project Application(s), and the Project Priority Listings which included the locally approved project applications. All three parts must have been submitted in order for the CoC Consolidated Application to be considered complete.

- The tiers in the FY 2012 CoC Program Competition were financial thresholds. Tier 1 was equal to the CoC's ARD approved in the Registration process, less 3.5 percent. Tier 2 was the amount between a CoC's Tier 1 and the CoC's FPRN and any approved amounts for CoC planning and the Permanent Housing (PH) Bonus.
- A project application was required for both renewal and new projects, including CoC planning projects. Renewal project applicants were only required to verify basic project and budget information, select the grant term, and certify the request of renewal. All renewal projects within the CoCs that met project quality and threshold requirements received one year of funding. New project applicants had to complete the project application in its entirety in order to be considered for funding.
- The FY 2012 Tier 1 renewal awards were announced March 13, 2013 followed by FY 2012 Tier 2 renewal award announcement on May 2, 2013.
- HUD determined, after the Tier 1 Renewal project announcement, based on the calculations of all project applications submitted by the January 18, 2013, submission deadline, that it would be able to fund Tier 2 renewal projects that passed threshold review.
- The final announcement for new awards was issued on July 31, 2013. The minimum score to receive new projects was 97 out of a possible 130 points.
- New project applications created through reallocation were not dependent on the CoC Application score. All other new project applications including CoC Planning that passed threshold and assessment review were awarded only if the CoC scored 97 or higher on the CoC Application.
- Some CoCs took advantage of the Permanent Housing Bonus category to increase the permanent housing stock for chronically homeless individuals and families. However, some CoCs exceeded the amount available for the bonus project(s) which were reduced.
- Many CoCs used the Reallocation process in the FY 2012 CoC competition with a mixture of projects for new permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and HMIS. Some of the project applications requested a higher amount of funding for new reallocated projects that resulted in the request amounts being reduced.
- Renewal project budgets were expected to match the HUD-approved FY 2012 Grant Inventory Worksheets (GIWs). Project application budgets that requested more funding than approved on the HUD-approved GIW were reduced to bring in line with the approved ARA (Annual Renewal Amount).
- There were a total of 4 bonus points possible:
 - 2 bonus points were awarded to CoCs where 100 percent of the project applications requested 7 percent or less in project administration costs. The key is that all projects submitted by the CoC must have met this goal.
 - 2 bonus points were awarded to CoCs where 100 percent of new project applications (excluding CoC planning cost applications) proposed to serve chronically homeless individuals and families.
- No CoCs were approved to serve persons defined as homeless under paragraph (3) of the definition of homeless in 24 CFR 583.5.

Points to Consider:

- It is imperative that CoCs have a full accounting of ALL CoC-funded projects within their geographies. This includes knowing the total number of CoC-funded projects, the types, and the expiration dates. It is imperative that all eligible renewal grants are indicated on the final HUD-approved Grant Inventory Worksheet.
- During the FY 2012 CoC Competition, many CoCs requested changes to GIW that was approved registration process.

- Every year, changes are made to the CoC Program NOFA. The categories and scoring issues discussed in this debriefing apply specifically to the FY 2012 competition.
- Language in the NOFA, CoC Application, and project applications may place more emphasis, or less, on certain sections than previous years.
- It is the responsibility of the CoC and project applicants to ensure that all questions are fully addressed.
- As the FY 2012 was the first competition under the CoC Program, all CoC and project applications had to be completed in full as previous year's information was not imported. On-screen instructions, detailed instructions, training modules, and FAQs were available on the HUD Homelessness Resource Exchange (HUD HRE).
- For non-rental assistance renewal requests that exceeded the approved Annual Renewal Amount(s) (ARA), the budget line items were reduced accordingly.
- Project applicants that requested less funds or units than what they were eligible for received the lesser amount and will not be able to apply for the higher ARA in future competitions.
- Project applicants were required to give a project description on page one of the project applications. The project description should have addressed the entire scope of the proposed project.
- Project applications that exceeded the Final FPRN, available ARA, Permanent Housing Bonus, reallocation, or CoC planning amounts were reduced accordingly.
- New project applications that requested an amount that was completely outside the CoC's FPRN were rejected.
- If a project application was reduced to the point where it was not enough to fund 1 unit or serve 1 person in the project, the reduced project was rejected.
- Project applications that indicated they would serve persons defined as homeless under paragraph (3) of the definition of homeless in 24 CFR 583.5 were conditioned and required to confirm that the project(s) will only serve persons who are homeless.
- Overall, it was apparent that many applicants, CoC and project, did not fully read the provided detailed instructions for each application type. The responses provided to the questions within the applications were either incomplete or unresponsive.

FY 2012 Point Structure:

For the FY 2012 CoC Program Competition, HUD awarded up to 130 total points for all scoring categories: CoC Performance, CoC Strategic Planning, CoC Housing, Services, and Structure, Leveraging, Homeless Management Information System, and Point-in-Time. A detailed explanation of each category is provided below to assist your continuum in its self-evaluation

Part I: CoC Performance - 34 possible points

For this section, CoC Performance was measured based on the CoC's progress in reducing homelessness in its geographic area as well as decreasing the number of recurrences of homelessness, including chronic homelessness. Additionally, CoC's were evaluated on previous performance regarding homelessness, including performance for projects funded through the Emergency Solutions Grants program in the geographic area. CoC scores were awarded based on the following:

- Information provided by the CoC on the length of time individuals and families remain homeless, and the extent to which individuals and families leaving homelessness experience additional spells of homelessness and how this is tracked within the CoC's geography.

- The CoC's demonstrated plan for reaching homeless individuals and families that clearly indicated 100 percent of the CoC's geography is considered, and described the specific outreach procedures in place that were used by homeless service organizations to identify and engage homeless individuals and families, including meaningful outreach to persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. A description of the procedures used to market their housing and supportive services to eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, familial status, or disability was also required.
- The overall reduction in the number of homeless individuals and families who have become homeless since the number reported in the FY 2011 CoC Homeless Assistance Competition.
- The overall percentage of program participants obtaining employment income, with at least 20 percent or higher of the program participants obtaining employment income, or at the minimum, an increase from the FY 2011 reported percentage.
- The description of the strategy used to reduce the number of individuals and families who become homeless that specifically described the current homelessness prevention efforts in place with the CoC's entire geographic area, and how the jurisdictional Consolidated Plan(s) addressed issues and programs that are designed to reduce the number of individuals and families who become homeless.
- At least 65 percent of program participants are able to successfully move from CoC-funded transitional housing to permanent housing, or at the minimum, an increase from the FY 2011 reported percentage.
- At least 77 percent of the participants successfully remain in permanent supportive housing for at least 6 months or longer, or at the minimum, an increase from the FY2011 reported percentage.
- CoC-funded projects have a demonstrated systematic approach to assisting homeless persons identify and apply for mainstream benefits with other federal agency programs such as TANF, Medicaid, Food Stamps, SCHIP, WIC, etc. This included assisting participants in applying for mainstream benefits, supplying transportation to appointments, use of a single application for multiple types of benefits, and follow-up procedures to ensure mainstream benefits were received.
- An increase in the number of permanent supportive housing beds designated for use by chronically homeless individuals and families and how progress was made toward eliminating chronic homelessness.

Summary of CoC Results on Part I:

- Overall, failure to read and follow all instructions and training materials that were provided for this competition resulted in a loss of points in each section of Part I.
- For achievements, CoCs were scored based on how they performed in comparison to the proposed achievements indicated in the FY 2011 application and the extent in which they met HUD's objectives. CoCs that did not submit an application in the FY 2011 competition were not expected to have data in this section, and their scores were adjusted accordingly to compensate. CoCs that did not meet proposed numeric achievements were able to provide an explanation as to why goals were not met. However, there were a number of CoCs that either failed to provide an explanation or the narrative provided was non-responsive in addressing why the FY 2010 achievements were not achieved.
- Most CoCs provided partial answers to the questions in this section and did not provide fully detailed information which affected the score for each question in the section that was scored.

Part II: CoC Strategic Planning - 55 possible points

For this section, CoCs were to provide information and were evaluated on the CoC's strategic planning process within its geographic area.

- How the number of individuals and families who become homeless will be reduced. CoCs were to describe both the short-term and long-term plans for reducing homelessness in the geographic area, provide a base number from the last official point-in-time count as reported in HDX and the estimated decreases for the next 12 months, 5 years, and 10 years.
- How the length of time that individuals and families remain homeless will be reduced. This was to include the planning process in place, or proposed, and demonstration that the plan was developed in coordination with ESG recipients within the CoC's jurisdiction.
- Active and demonstrated collaboration with local school districts to identify homeless individuals and families to ensure they understand their eligibility for educational services.
- The comprehensive strategies in place for the geographic area to address the needs of homeless subpopulations that included, but not limited to, homeless veterans, youth, victims of domestic violence, etc. Carry out activities within the CoC that were proven to be effective at reducing homelessness in general, reducing homelessness for a specific population, and achieving homeless prevention and independent living goals. CoCs were to provide activities and measurements that addressed the goals and clearly identified and individual or entity responsible for overseeing implementation of specific strategies.
- CoCs were to clearly demonstrate an increase in the following areas:
 - permanent housing beds for chronic homeless individuals and families;
 - at least 65 percent of participants in transitional housing who successfully moved to permanent housing upon exit from the transitional housing projects;
 - at least 80 percent of homeless individuals and families who remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months or longer;
 - at least 20 percent of participants in projects who exited with employment income; and
 - at least 20 percent of participants in projects who exited with mainstream benefits.
- The description of the process used to identify consistently low-performing projects and specifically indicate the protocols in place to improve the performance of those projects.
- How they coordinate with and/or assist in State or local discharge planning efforts to ensure that discharged persons are not released directly to the streets, emergency homeless shelters, or other McKinney-Vento Homeless assistance programs.
- Demonstrated coordination with other Federal, State, local, private, and other entities serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness in the planning and operations of projects. This was to include a discussion of coordination with and participation in HUD-VASH, HOPWA, NSP, CDBG, and ESG.
- If a coordinated or centralized assessment system is already in place, the description should have clearly identified the organization responsible for operating the system, the date the system was implemented, how it is utilized within the CoC, how the system is funded, and how the success of the system is monitored.

Summary of CoC Results on Part II:

- Overall, failure to read and follow all instructions and training materials that were provided for this competition resulted in a loss of points in each section of Part III.
- It was apparent that most CoCs did not consult the information provided in the HDX which resulted in lost points as the numbers provided by CoCs in HDX did not match the numbers provided in the application responses.
- For the CoC Strategic Planning Objectives, many CoCs responded to the narrative questions by restating the objective. CoCs should have provided their local planning objectives, along with timeframes, indicating the steps created to reach each stated.
- Despite examples indicated in CoC Application Detailed Instructions, many CoCs miscalculated their "Proposed Numeric Achievements" for each benchmark. CoCs were expected to show cumulative increases for Objectives 1 through 5 and a cumulative decrease for Objective 6.
- Most CoCs did not provide a clear process for identify poor-performing projects that included a plan for improving performance.
- In this competition, many CoCs improved their overall discharge planning narrative scores by providing a clear description of the policies and procedures that were either being developed or already in place. However, a number of CoCs continue to utilize emergency shelters and other McKinney-Vento funded projects as locations for persons being discharged.
- Most CoCs indicated a level of coordination with other planning efforts; however, in many cases, the narrative responses did not fully explain how the CoC was collaborating with these other initiatives.

Part III: Housing, Structure and Services – 14 possible points

Scores were based on the extent to which a CoC demonstrated the existence of a coordinated, inclusive, and outcome-oriented community process, including an organizational structure(s) and decision-making process for developing and implementing a CoC strategy that is inclusive of representatives from both the private and public sectors, has a fair and impartial project review and selection process, and has created, maintained, and built upon a community-wide inventory of housing for homeless individuals and families.

- The use of periodically collected data on the projects within the CoC in order to conduct analysis on the effectiveness of each project and to determine the extent to which each project has resulted in rapid return to permanent housing for those served by the project, taking into account the severity of barriers faced by the project participants.
- Consideration of the full range of opinions from individuals or entities with knowledge of homelessness in the geographic area or an interest in preventing or ending homelessness in the geographic area when establishing CoC-wide committees, subcommittees, and workgroups.
- Use of a review and ranking process based on objective criteria that were publically announced by the CoC. This was to include a clear demonstration of how project applications were solicited in an open manner and that the project selection process was followed to include the methods and process the CoC used to assess project performance, effectiveness, and quality of all requested new and renewal projects and how this was communicated to project applicants.
- CoCs were to indicate an open process to receive proposals from entities that have not previously received funds in prior Homeless Assistance Grants competitions. The description was to specifically describe how the CoC worked with homeless services providers that expressed an interest in applying for HUD funds and what steps were taken to discuss and review proposals as well as provide feedback.

- Whether the CoC submitted the Housing Inventory Count to HDX by the April 30, 2012 submission deadline.

Summary of CoC Results on Part III:

- Although HUD encourages the primary decision making group to meet at least monthly, almost all CoCs met at least quarterly.
- Most CoCs did a good job of identifying CoC Committees, Subcommittees and Workgroups that are involved in CoC-wide planning activities.
- Most CoCs selected the majority of the processes used to review and rank project applications; however, failed to describe **how** the processes selected were used in the CoC's own selection process. Most CoCs simply stated that the selected criteria was used or restated the selections.
- Many CoCs indicated that they had a process for receiving proposals from entities that had not previously applied for or received CoC funds; however, the information provided was missing the feedback process for the new entities.

Part IV: Leveraging – 6 possible points

CoCs were to demonstrate the extent to which the amount of assistance to be provided to the CoC was supplemented with resources from other public and private sources, including mainstream programs.

- CoCs were expected to have 100 percent participation in leveraging from all project applicants and a minimum of 150 percent in total leveraging.

Summary of CoC Results on Part IV:

- Many project applications did not enter leverage information; therefore, many CoCs did not receive the full score for leveraging.

Part V: Homeless Management Information System – 13 possible points

CoCs were to clearly demonstrate a functioning HMIS that facilitates the collection of information on homeless individuals and families using residential and other homeless services and stores the data in an electronic format. It should be noted that although domestic violence and legal service organizations are prohibited from entering data into HMIS, they are required to have a comparable database that supplies aggregated, non-personally identifiable information to the CoC.

- CoCs should have a governance agreement in place and were required to attach the governance agreement to the CoC application.
- CoCs were assessed on the bed coverage rate for each housing type within the CoC that included emergency shelter, safe havens, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing.
- CoCs were to report the number of unduplicated client records with null or missing values for the Universal Data Elements on a single day, as selected by the CoC, within the last 10 days of January 2012.
- CoCs were assessed on the existing HMIS policies and procedures used to ensure that valid program entry and exit dates were recorded in HMIS. CoCs were to specifically describe the existing policies and procedures in place to ensure the dates were accurately captured and audited on a regular basis and demonstrate that an annual review of the HMIS policies and procedures by the CoC and HMIS leads.
- CoCs were to indicate that they were able to generate APR data from the HMIS for the CoC-funded projects. This included specific descriptions on how the CoC audits the data collection and evaluates the HMIS.

Summary of CoC Results on Part V:

- Many CoCs indicated that there was a governance agreement in place; however, did not attach the governance agreement to the CoC Application.
- CoCs lost points for having a high percentage of null or missing values.
- Failure to address each question in full resulted in a loss of points for this section.

Part VI: Point-in-Time – 8 possible points

CoCs were awarded points based on the collection, use and submission of the 2012 Point-in-Time count data.

- CoCs were to: 1) conducted both a sheltered point-in-time count and an unsheltered point-in-time count during the last 10 days of January 2012; 2) successfully submitted the information in HDX by the April 30, 2012 submission date; and 3) clearly demonstrates how the information obtained during the count was used for local planning purposes.
- CoCs were to specifically indicate if there were increases, decreases, or not change to the sheltered and unsheltered point-in-time count from the previous official counts as well as identify the gaps and needs in the CoC.
- CoCs were to clearly and specifically describe methods used to collect data on sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations and subpopulations.
- CoCs were assessed on the ability to provide data that is accurate and of high quality based on the point-in-time count. Responses should have described how the CoC engaged in activities that reduced the occurrences of counting unsheltered persons more than once during the point in time count.

Summary of CoC Results on Part VI:

- Although CoCs indicated that they conducted a point-in-time count, the numbers provided in the CoC Application did not match the numbers reported in HDX which resulted in a loss of points.
- Failure to address each question separately resulted in a loss of points. Responses should have demonstrated consistency with HUD's point-in-time guidelines. CoCs are reminded to read the sheltered and unsheltered questions separately, as some questions may appear to be similar but may ask for distinct information. A number of CoCs did not indicate if there was an increase or decrease or no change in the count outcomes from the previous count (2010 to 2012 or 2011to 2012) and/or did not describe the factors that may have resulted in the increase, decrease, or no change for both the sheltered and unsheltered populations.