

2024 San Mateo County Continuum of Care RACIAL EQUITY GUIDANCE FOR ALL APPLICANTS

I. Objective:

On July 31, 2024, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the *Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY 2023 Continuum of Care Competition*. In several places throughout the NOFO, HUD indicates that the CoC and funded projects must demonstrate their work to promote and advance racial equity. In furthering this direction from HUD, the following document contains guidance to support applicants as they prepare their narrative responses related to racial equity.

To inform the content of this document, feedback was solicited from the CoC's Racial Equity Committee in May 2024. The recommendations and considerations from the Racial Equity Committee that are included in this document are intended to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Support applicants in strengthening their project applications for permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, joint transitional housing/rapid rehousing, and transitional housing projects
- (2) To provide guidance to review panel members as they complete their review of application responses related to racial equity

II. Background:

As part of this application for federal funding, the County must facilitate a local competition process that requires a review panel to score and rank project applications. The review panel will evaluate project applications and score them based on several factors, including "Promoting Racial Equity." The questions in the project applications seek to determine:

- If renewal applicants have identified any racial barriers faced by people participating in their program, especially for populations that are over-represented in the local homeless population, and if the project has taken steps to address any barriers identified.
 - If no barriers have been identified, renewal applicants are asked about the steps they have taken to ensure the project promotes racial equity.
- How new project applicants plan to conduct ongoing assessments to ensure the project is promoting racial equity and how they plan to address any identified disparities.

III. Definition:

Racial Equity is defined in the NOFO as “the elimination of racial disparities, and is achieved when race can no longer predict opportunities, distribution of resources, or outcomes – particularly for Black and Brown persons, which includes Black, Latino, Indigenous, Native American, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other persons of color.”¹

¹ United States Department of Housing for Urban Development, “FY 2024 and FY 2025 Continuum of Care Competition and Renewal or Replacement of Youth Homeless Demonstration Program Grants”, https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/coc/competition, Page 12.

IV. Racial Equity Recommendations and Considerations:

As applicants craft their application responses, they may consider the following recommendations and considerations from Racial Equity Committee:

- Inclusion of any available data demonstrating racial disparities in program performance (e.g., successful outcomes of participants, access to applicant programs, length of stay in programs etc.) and a description of how the applicant plans to address those disparities.
 - If data is unavailable, a description of the applicant’s plan to collect and monitor data related to racial disparities in program outcomes.
- Discussion of the efforts that the applicant has made to broaden language accessibility for participants including, but not limited to hiring of multi-lingual staff, availability of translated materials, access to interpretation and translation services, etc.
- Description of staff training related to promoting and advancing racial equity including but not limited to implicit bias, cross-cultural competency, monitoring data with an equity lens, etc.
- Description of hiring, employee retention, and promotion practices that utilize an equity lens. Some examples include but are not limited to demonstrated efforts to hire staff that racially and ethnically reflect the population served and retention and promotion practices that are rooted in racial equity principles.
- Description of how applicants address the intersection between race, public health, and housing access. Some examples include but are not limited to techniques that the applicant uses to reduce barriers for Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) participants in connecting to healthcare resources and staff training on how to support participants in accessing and navigating healthcare systems (e.g., Medicare or Medicaid, outpatient clinics, etc.).