



December 2, 2013

SNAPS Weekly Focus: Getting Back on Course

You all know what they say about the best laid plans of mice and men. They often go awry.

The sentiment has not been truer than with our plans to bring the CoC Program competition back onto an earlier timeline this year. The FY 2012 CoC Program competition was difficult for all of us and we've been working diligently to get back on track. Prior to the shutdown, we were on target to open and close the competition before the end of the calendar year. Unfortunately, the shutdown happened and those 16 days cost us about a month in productivity. We are working hard to try and get back on track.

The [FY 2013 - FY 2014 CoC Program Competition NOFA](#) was published and *e-snaps* opened on Friday, November 22. The competition will be open until Monday, February 3rd. While this is later than the FY 2012 closing date, we believe that extra time is needed to ensure that CoCs have enough time to plan for and complete the CoC Application (formerly Exhibit 1), which now applies to both FY 2013 and FY 2014 fiscal year appropriations. The CoC Application, Project Applications for FY 2013 funds, and the FY 2013 Priority Lists are due February 3. HUD will let you know - once we have an FY 2014 appropriation - how and when to submit project applications for FY 2014.

Our plan is to use this opportunity to get the CoC Program Competition back onto an earlier schedule, therefore easing the cash flow issues of recipients with grants that expire early in the year and allowing more time for field offices to execute grant agreements. By having only one CoC Application for FY 2013 and 2014 funds, we also eliminate duplicative work for CoCs that would occur as the result of having two fully separate competitions very close together. We anticipate that this will allow for FY 2014 funds to be awarded quickly and are aiming to have the FY2014 process complete around the end of the fiscal year.

So while the timeline for the FY 2013 portion of the competition is less than ideal, we believe that we are better prepared to get FY 2013 grant agreements executed than we were for the FY 2012 awards, and that this schedule will get us where we need to be by FY 2014.

You will also find that the FY 2013 - FY 2014 CoC Program Competition NOFA very clearly lays out HUD's homeless policy priorities. They should sound familiar as they were the basis for each SNAPS Weekly Focus. As you review the policy priorities section of the NOFA, it may be useful to go back and read each of the prior messages on the [SNAPS Weekly Focus page](#), as these will provide you with additional insight as to why these are our priorities. The scoring criteria in the NOFA are closely linked to these priorities as well. These priorities were developed in consultation with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and are intended to help CoCs think and act more strategically to put us as nation on track to meeting the goals of [Opening Doors](#).

Making strategic decisions is even more important this year than ever before. As stated in the NOFA, there is \$1.7 billion available for the CoC Program Competition. We do not anticipate that this amount of funding is enough to fund all projects eligible for renewal in FY 2013. In other words, the national Annual Renewal Demand that was submitted as part of CoC Registration for 2013 funds exceeds \$1.7 Billion.



It is critical that CoCs carefully consider the policy priorities included in the NOFA as they begin to make strategic decisions about how to prioritize projects within the two tiers. To help CoC's think strategically and outside of the box, we asked two of our non-Federal partners—Community Solutions and the National Alliance to End Homelessness—to share some ideas on tools that will help you think strategically. You can find these guest blogs on the [SNAPS Weekly Focus page](#).

Just like every year, we will do a NOFA broadcast to walk through the highlights and will cover what you need to know to compete for funds that are increasingly limited. We strongly encourage you to view the broadcast and to carefully review the NOFA as you will find some significant changes from prior years.

I know that the timelines as well as the implementation of new programs without new resources has been difficult for our grantees and stakeholders. I commit to continue to have an open dialogue, using this and other forums, and to be as transparent as possible when it comes to our policies and priorities. The SNAPS staff is committed to making this work better for all of us as we move forward.

I want to thank all of you - as well as the HUD field office teams - for your patience as we implement the 2013 - 2014 CoC Program competition. It has been a tough year, made tougher by the shutdown – a sentiment that I had the opportunity to express in an [opinion piece for the Washington Post](#) last month. I hope you have a chance to read it.

More to come on previous topics in the coming few weeks. As always, we thank you for your commitment to ending homelessness.

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