



2026 YHDP NOFO: Project Rating Criteria

NEW PROJECT CRITERIA		Maximum Score
Criteria	Metric and Point Allocation	128
Addressing System Gaps	Demonstrates that the project will meet a clear gap in local services that is preventing an end to youth and young adult homelessness and details how the proposed project specifically addresses that gap, in alignment with the priorities and goals of the NOFO. 5 points: Applicant clearly describes the project proposed, the gap in local services in order to end youth and young adult homelessness (including data demonstrating needs or service gaps), and how the proposed project fills that gap. 3 points: Application describes the project and a general or partially supported service gap, includes some data, but limited or not clearly tied to the gap, shows a basic connection between the project and the gap. Explains how the project fills the gap but lacks detail or clarity. 0 points: Application describes the project without information on what gap it aims to address. Or the project does not fill the identified gap.	5
Demonstration of Experience Operating Proposed Services	Demonstrates experience and expertise in providing proposed services and experience working with youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Provides adequate experience to deliver Transitional Housing or Supportive Services projects. 10 points: Demonstrates experience of 4+ years with operating the same services proposed in the application and 4+ years of experience working with youth and young adults. 7 points: Demonstrates 2-3 years providing services proposed, or demonstrates 4+ years of homelessness service provision but no direct experience with the services proposed in the application. Does have experience working with youth and young adults. 5 points: Demonstrates 2-3 years providing services proposed, or demonstrates 2+ years of homelessness service provision but no direct experience with the services proposed in the application. No experience working with youth and young adults. 0 points: No prior experience providing homelessness services and no experience working with youth and young adults.	10

Staffing and Qualifications & Staffing Needs	Clearly explains how staff positions and their qualifications are designed to meet the needs of the program participants. 5 points: Staffing model and justifications are reasonable based on proposed number of households to serve. Minimum Recommendation for staffing: RRH and TH - staffing ratio is around 1 case manager to 15 households, SSO - staffing ratio is around 1 case manager to 20 households. 0 points: Staffing model is not reasonable and ratio of staff is below minimum required to provide quality services.	5
Trauma-Informed Services Approach	Demonstrates a commitment to trauma-informed, person-centered approaches that maintain confidentiality and encourage wellbeing. 5 points: Applicant demonstrates excellence in their ability to utilize a trauma-informed and person-centered approach. Applicant provides policies, procedures and describes an agency culture that ensures the approaches will be used and improve client outcomes. 3 points: Applicant adequately addresses their ability to utilize a trauma-informed and person-centered approach. Applicant provides policies or procedures and describes an agency culture that ensures the approaches will be used and improve client outcomes. 0 points: Applicant does not meet and/or address their ability to utilize a trauma-informed and person-centered approach.	5
Positive Youth Development	Demonstrates high youth engagement and measurable growth across the six core outcomes - confidence, character, connection, competence, caring, and contribution. The project provides meaningful leadership and skill-building opportunities supported by consistent, caring adult relationships, while emphasizing youth voice and a strengths-based approach to development. 10 Points: Demonstrates regular youth engagement and clear, measurable growth across all six PYD outcomes (confidence, character, connection, competence, caring, contribution); Provides meaningful leadership and skill-building opportunities; Shows consistent, supportive adult relationships; Clearly incorporates youth voice and a strengths-based approach. 5 Points: Shows periodic youth engagement and limited evidence of growth across PYD outcomes; Includes some leadership or skill-building opportunities, but lacks depth or consistency; Mentions supportive relationships or youth voice, but approach is not fully developed. 0 Points: Little to no evidence of youth engagement or PYD outcomes; Lacks leadership opportunities, supportive adult relationships, or strengths-based approach; Does not demonstrate youth voice or meaningful development activities.	10
Safe and Stable Housing	Demonstrates how youth will be provided or transition to safe and stable housing that appropriately matches their level of need. Housing options may include moving in with family, other permanent housing, residential treatment centers, or substance abuse treatment facilities. 10 points: Clear, detailed plan for safe and stable housing; Demonstrates strong matching of housing to youth needs (e.g., family, independent living, treatment); Includes transition planning and identified/likely placements or partnerships. 5 Points: General housing approach described but lacks detail; Some consideration of youth needs, but matching is inconsistent; Limited or vague transition planning.	10

	0 Points: Little to no description of housing plan; No clear connection to youth needs or safety/stability; No meaningful transition planning.	
Social and Emotional Well-being	Demonstrates how youth will connect to trauma-informed providers for services related to physical health, substance use, mental health, personal safety (such as potential trafficking situations), and sexual risk behaviors 10 points: Clear, comprehensive plan to connect youth to trauma-informed providers across all domains (physical health, mental health, substance use, safety, sexual risk); Demonstrates coordinated, youth-centered approach with strong partnerships or established referral pathways. 5 Points: General description of service connections with some trauma-informed elements, Covers several key domains but lacks depth, coordination, or clear pathways. 0 Points: Little to no detail on connecting youth to services; No clear evidence of trauma-informed approach or relevant provider linkages.	10
Education or Employment	Demonstrates how youth will connect to school or vocational training programs, improve job search skills, or obtain employment. 10 points: Clear, well-defined plan to connect youth to school, vocational training, and/or employment; Includes skill-building (job search, resumes, interviews); Demonstrates active partnerships or established pathways to education and employment opportunities. Provides documentation, i.e. process documentation, letter, MOU, contracts, etc. that prove partnerships or established pathways. 5 Points: General description of education or employment support; Some mention of skill-building or connections but lacks detail or clear pathways. 0 Points: Little to no detail on connecting youth to education, training, or employment; No clear plan for skill development or access to opportunities	10
Substance Use Services	Demonstrates how the project will partner and connect youth and young adults with substance use disorders to youth-specific treatment options. OR Project will operate as a sober living environment. 10 Points: Clear, specific plan to connect youth to youth-focused substance use treatment providers with established partnerships or referral pathways; Includes access to age-appropriate treatment options and/or sober living environments; Demonstrates coordinated, supportive approach with ongoing engagement in recovery services. If using partnerships, provides documentation i.e. process documentation, letter, MOU, contracts, etc. that prove partnerships or established pathways. 5 Points: General description of substance use treatment connections or sober living; Some evidence of youth-specific services but lacks detail or strong partnerships; Limited clarity on how youth will access or remain engaged in services. 0 Points: Little to no detail on substance use treatment connections or sober living; No evidence of youth-specific services or access to recovery supports.	10

Permanent Connections	Demonstrates how the project will support youth to experience or reestablish positive ongoing attachments to their families, communities, schools, and other social networks. A positive ongoing attachment may look like youth having at least one adult in their life to whom they can go for advice or emotional support. 10 Points: Clear, intentional plan to help youth build or reestablish positive, ongoing connections with family, community, school, and social supports; Emphasizes development of at least one trusted adult relationship; Includes structured strategies (e.g., family engagement, mentoring, peer support, community integration). 5 Points: General approach to supporting connections but lacks detail or consistency; Mentions relationships or supports, but strategies are limited or unclear. 0 Points: Little to no detail on fostering positive attachments or social connections; No clear effort to support trusted adult relationships or community integration.	10
HMIS & Data Management	Demonstrates previous experience or provides a detailed explanation of their knowledge and capacity to collect and manage Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data. Has experience meeting reporting requirements for state, local, and/or federally funded programs, or demonstrates the ability to fulfill these requirements. 5 points: Agency has experience and/or capacity to utilize HMIS and manage sensitive participant data. Agency has capacity to meet reporting requirements. 3 points: Agency has no experience but has capacity to utilize HMIS and manage sensitive participant data and reports. 0 points: Agency has no experience and no capacity to utilize HMIS and manage sensitive participant data or reports.	5
Fiscal Management	Maintains a fiscal management system with checks and balances that adheres to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) to safeguard all awarded funds. If the applicant lacks fiscal management capabilities, they must identify a fiscal sponsor. 5 points: Applicant describes revenue, financial health, and financial management systems. Applicant has a fiscal management system which maintains checks and balances and follows Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to safeguard all funds that may be awarded under the terms of this funding opportunity. 3 points: If the applicant lacks fiscal management capabilities, a signed letter of agreement stating an appropriate fiscal sponsor is provided. 0 points: Applicant do not describe revenue, financial health, and financial management systems or does not have a system that maintains checks and balances and follows Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to safeguard all funds that may be awarded under the terms of this funding opportunity.	5
Budget Justification	Provides a clear explanation for each budget item and its intended use. Budget items are logical and cost-effective, meets 2 CFR 200.404 standards. 5 points: Budget is logical and cost effective with items meeting 2 CFR 200.404 standards. 0 points: Budget is not logical, does not meet the needs of the clients or program, or does not meet 2 CFR 200.404 standards.	5

Match Requirement	Demonstrates the ability to meet the 25% match requirement for the funding. 5 points: Submitted budget includes eligible 25% match. 0 points: Submitted budget does not include a 25% match or match provided is not eligible.	5
Program Component Priority	Full points based on component type: 2 points: Transitional Housing, Support Services Only	2
Program Population Priority	Full points based on the core target populations the program serves: 3 points: 100% of units/program dedicated/prioritizes Unsheltered Youth and/or Young Adults 3 points: 100% of units/program operates as sober living or recovery based 3 points: 100% of units/program dedicated to/prioritizes high-need Youth and/or Young Adults 3 points: 100% of units/program serves Pregnant and/or Parenting Youth 3 points: 100% of units/program participants are fleeing Domestic Violence 3 points: 100% of units/program participants are youth exiting the foster care or justice systems 3 points: 100% of units/program participants are fleeing labor or sex trafficking.	3
Supportive Service Participation	Demonstrates that the projects requires program participants to take part in supportive services that are not disability-related services OR is a Supportive Services Only project. Except that consistent with 24 CFR 5.2005(b)(1) assistance may not be denied on the basis or as a direct result of the fact that the participant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, if the participant otherwise qualifies for admission, assistance, participation, or occupancy. 2 points: Agency requires participants to engage in non-disability related supportive services and provides evidence of required engagement in alignment 24 CFR 578.75(h) based on attached agreement, is a supportive services only project, OR proposed program exclusively serves victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. 1 point: Agency encourage participants to engage in non-disability related supportive services but does not require it. 0 points: Agency does not require participants to engage in supportive services or does not provide evidence.	2
Housing Partnerships & Coordination	Demonstrates Housing Partnerships: The project partners with long-term residential care facilities or permanent supportive housing providers to coordinate assistance for homeless youth with a disability that is expected to indefinitely prevent independent living or self-sufficiency. AND/OR The project has a connection with PHA housing resources for youth (e.g. developing a Foster Youth to Independence program, being a party to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a PHA and public child welfare agency for the Family Unification Program (FUP)).	6

	5 points: Clear demonstration of partnerships with both long-term care or PSH providers AND PHA resources for youth. 3 points: Clear demonstration of partnerships with either longer-term care or PSH provider OR PHA resources for youth. 0 points: Does not demonstrate ability to meet criteria. 1 bonus point for MOUs or other formal agreements provided.	
Coordination with Mainstream Resources	Demonstrates partnerships with SOAR, SSI, SNAPs, Medicaid/Medicare: MOUs, referrals, co-enrollment. 5 points: Agency demonstrates partnerships or referral processes AND supplies letters, MOUs, or other formal agreements that demonstrate partnerships or referral processes with mainstream resources such as Medicaid, SNAP, SSI/SSDI 3 points: Demonstrates partnerships or referral processes with mainstream resources such as Medicaid, SNAP, SSI/SSDI, but no formal agreements. 0 points: Does not demonstrate partnerships or referral	5
Demonstration of Commitment to Include Youth w/ Lived Experience	Partnership and Community Involvement: Clearly describes how they will partner with residents and community members who have experienced homelessness. This includes actively involving these individuals in planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. Incorporation of Customer Voice: Effectively communicates how they respond to customer feedback. This includes including the customer voice in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of services. Solicits qualitative and quantitative feedback more than once a year and provides clear examples of how practices have been adjusted based on this feedback. Board Representation: The board includes dedicated seats for individuals who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness. 5 points: Demonstrates excellence in all and/or most of the criteria. 3 points: Adequately addresses the criteria. 0 points: Does not meet and/or address the criteria.	5