

2022 Intent to Renew – Desk Audit Guidance

Chicago Continuum of Care



Introduction:

The goals of the Intent to Renew (ITR) are to: 1) identify areas where proactive support and technical assistance can strengthen the Chicago CoC, and 2) minimize risk to the Chicago CoC by ensuring compliance with HUD requirements and local priorities and thresholds. In this section of the Intent to Renew, narrative responses or copies of policies/procedures are requested for evaluation.

The 2022 ITR Desk Audit topics are listed below. The topics and the associated guidance are provided in advance to provide agencies with time to prepare. When the ITR process opens, responses to these topics will be accepted through an Alchemer electronic form. One submission will be required per agency. However, with each topic there will be an opportunity for you to upload multiple responses in case you have different responses for different projects. The criteria that All Chicago will use when evaluating the responses has been provided.

Informational Topics:

If a question is marked as *informational*, All Chicago will not assign any required technical assistance on this topic. The purpose is to gather information. If an agency does not have a current policy or practice related to an aspect of these questions, it is acceptable to indicate this and outline what the agency intends to do moving forward. After reviewing all the submissions, All Chicago may have questions to discuss with some agencies and may offer Technical Assistance based on information gathered through this process.

There are two topics: A) Housing First and B) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Topic A: Housing First

A1. In 2021, providers that operated projects taking matches from CES were asked to confirm standard eligibility criteria or submit a contract and/or scope detailing funder required eligibility criteria. This information will be referenced this year in relation to adherences to the Housing First approach. If this information has changed, please explain. To request a copy of what your agency submitted, contact cocprograms@allchicago.org.

A2. Describe challenges or barriers that can prevent or delay referral participants from enrolling into the project or moving into a unit. For each challenge or barrier listed below, describe how it impacts the project and any efforts that have been made to address it. If the project does not encounter the challenge, please state that.

- a) Providing or locating project-based or scattered-site units that meet the **needs and preferences of participants** (current or working towards enrollment or move-in).
 - a. Describe the challenge/barrier:
 - b. Describe any successes or efforts to address:
- b) Internal agency or program policies and procedures, such as agency-specific document requirements.
 - a. Describe the challenge/barrier:
 - b. Describe any successes or efforts to address:
- c) Requirements from other funding sources (please specify what other funding is used and what requirements it has that impact the project's ability to implement housing first).
 - a. Describe the challenge/barrier:
 - b. Describe any successes or efforts to address:
- d) Any other barriers participants may experience in the process of being approved for project enrollment or approved for a unit.

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- a. Describe the challenge/barrier:
- b. Describe any successes or efforts to address:

A3: Describe the project's efforts to **support** referral participants with project enrollment or movement into housing. This can include the ways a project tries to locate and stay in contact with participants and how the project supports participants in obtaining documentation or meeting any other program requirements. For scattered-site projects, a description of the ways a project advocates on behalf of participants in overcoming challenges to being approved related to lack of income documentation, instances of interaction with the criminal system, or others.

A4 (informational): Describe the interactions that take place between the project and the referral participant when the match is rejected for any reason. For example, describe how they are notified, what information they receive from the project, and whether this includes due process or the ability to appeal the decision.

Criteria

All Chicago will refer to the criteria listed below when evaluating responses to this desk audit question.

- A1-3: The responses should demonstrate how the project follows the Housing First approach. [From USICH](#), the Housing First approach follows the belief that people experiencing homelessness can achieve stability through permanent housing and appropriate support; it values client choice; and holds the following:
 - that access to housing should not be contingent on sobriety, minimum income, lack of criminal record, completion of treatment, participation in services, or other necessary conditions
 - projects should do everything possible not to reject or terminate participants
 - people with disabilities are offered clear opportunities to request reasonable accommodations
- A1: The project's policies and procedures align with the housing first approach
- A2: The project demonstrates that it exercises opportunities to extend the level of choice offered to participants when that is feasible
- A2: The project demonstrates effort to meet participant's needs and preferences before the participant requests another match
- A2: The project has assessed its internal policies and practices for potential barriers participants may experience to being approved for a program or unit, and the project has detailed a plan to overcome these barriers.
- A3: The project demonstrates an effort to avoid rejecting referrals unless eligibility criteria is not met
- A3: The project demonstrates effort to avoid rejecting referrals due to inability to obtain documentation, or gain landlord approval
- A3: Project demonstrates that it incorporates Coordinated Entry List and Housing Provider Contact Protocols
- A4: This is informational, and no criteria will be used to assess this response.

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Topic B: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Informational)

B1 (informational). Describe the agency/project's efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within the program and/or agency.

B2 (informational). Describe any steps the agency is taking to understand the extent to which the project's participants reflect the broad population of those experiencing homelessness in the Chicago CoC*.

B3 (informational). Describe any steps the agency is taking to understand the extent to which the agency's board of directors and its executive leadership reflect the diversity of its participants.

B4 (informational). Describe any steps the agency is taking to review internal policies/procedures with an equity lens.

* demographic information about the Chicago CoC participant population can be found here:

<https://allchicago.org/how-we-are-ending-homelessness/data-analytics/hmis/chicagos-dashboard-to-end-homelessness/>