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Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County Policies for Review and Endorsement of New Programs Serving the Homeless

I. Collaboration in Developing Projects to Serve the Homeless

- A. Notifying the Continuum of Plans for New Programs. The Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC) encourages any organization that is considering developing new programs or services for the homeless to notify the HCCSC's Collaborative Applicant of its intentions as soon as possible. By contacting the HCCSC early about its ideas for a new program, an organization can determine:
1. Whether, through its gaps analyses, the Continuum has confirmed that there is a need for the type of program the organization envisions;
 2. Whether there are opportunities available for collaborations that would reduce the costs or increase the benefits of the contemplated program;
 3. Whether, and under what conditions, the contemplated program is likely to be considered a priority for state or federal grants awarded with the Continuum's endorsement; and
 4. Whether, and under what conditions, the Continuum would endorse the proposed program for grants that might be available from private sources.
- B. Collaborating with The HCCSC and its Partners. An organization seeking help from the HCCSC in securing funding for a new program must keep in mind that the HCCSC is responsible for coordinating an efficient and effective system of care for the homeless in Stark County and that it cannot expect the HCCSC to endorse or champion its new program unless:
1. The organization provides timely notice of its plans to create the program and allows the HCCSC a meaningful opportunity to provide feedback on those plans and elicit feedback from other interested organizations;
 2. The organization demonstrates a willingness to work with the HCCSC and its partners to adjust its plans for new programs to achieve better outcomes or reduce costs for the homeless system; and
 3. The organization makes a commitment to participate in the Homeless Management Information System and support efforts of the HCCSC to meet other requirements of state and federal funding programs.

II. Obtaining HCCSC Endorsement for Funding

- A. Requests for Endorsement in Competitions for Limited Funds. In seeking funding for a new program, an organization may apply for competitive grants that require the HCCSC's endorsement even if it has failed to give the HCCSC timely notice of its plans for the program or a meaningful opportunity to provide feedback on those plans. However, in doing so, the organization should recognize that, in the middle of a grant competition, the HCCSC will have little time to collect additional information needed to resolve any questions about a new program and will be unable to help the applicant refine the program to make it a stronger candidate for endorsement. Accordingly, a program may be at a disadvantage in competing for the HCCSC's endorsement with programs that have been thoroughly vetted by the HCCSC before the competition or have a track record of success in serving the homeless.
- B. Other Requests for Endorsement.
1. Any organization seeking HCCSC endorsement to support an application for funding that is not competing with applications submitted by other HCCSC partners must submit a request for endorsement to the Collaborative Applicant.
 2. The Collaborative Applicant will provide the requested endorsement if:
 - a. The program has been reviewed previously by the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee and the Continuum of Care Board and received the HCCSC's endorsement for funding from one or more sources; and
 - b. The Collaborative Applicant has no reason to believe that the facts and circumstances influencing the HCCSC's previous endorsement have changed significantly.
 3. If the program has not been endorsed previously by the HCCSC, the Collaborative Applicant will:
 - a. Gather relevant facts and refer the matter to the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee to develop a recommendation for the HCCSC Board;
 - b. Seek Board approval for the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee's recommendation; and
 - c. Communicate the Board's decision to the organization requesting the endorsement.

4. If the program has not been endorsed previously by the HCCSC and there is insufficient time to refer the matter to the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee and the Board, the Collaborative Applicant will withhold the endorsement but may exercise its discretion to provide to a potential funder factual information that will support a request for funding, such as information about the HCCSC's needs and priorities and its historic support for other programs sponsored by the same organization.