Date: November 1, 2023
Title: Session 5 Coordinated Entry

Speaker 0   00:00:00   Welcome and thank you for joining today's Special NOFO startup session coordinated entry. Before we begin, please ensure you've opened the WebEx chat panel based the associated icon on the bottom right corner of your screen. Please note that all audio connections are muted until the q and a portion of the call you are have, or welcome to submit written questions throughout the presentation. To submit questions in writing, select everyone from the dropdown menu in the chat panel and to your question in the message box provided and send. As a reminder, this conference is being recorded. If you require technical assistance, please send a chat to the Teller events host. With that, I'll turn the conference over to Marlisa Grogan from HUD's Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs. Please go ahead.

Speaker 1   00:00:46   Hi everyone. Great to see you and hear from you today. And thanks for joining our final startup training for the Special NOFO, uh, awardees, CoC's recipients this session. We are going to again, have some time at the beginning and at the end to field questions. So please feel free to start entering any questions that you have pertaining to the last session, or if anything else from, um, related to this Special NOFO Awards has come up for you. Please feel free to post those in the chat. After having our question and answer session, we will focus the largest portion of today's session on coordinated entry. We'll hear from, um, Sharon Singer from the Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs at HUD headquarters, as well as Taylor Kieley from the Chicago Field Office. And then we will also sort of pan out. We've taken, um, sort of a journey into a lot of details related to grants management and administration.

Speaker 1   00:01:51   Now we're going to be, um, slowly backing up, uh, to the big picture and to help us do that, we'll have, um, Brett Esders from the Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs at Head Headquarters review some Special NOFO specific requirements before we hear from Norm Suchar, the director of the SNAPS office. Um, and then finally wrapping up with a final q and a session. Um, we will also at, um, at one point have, um, our TA providers, our, the TA leads for our direct ta, uh, for the unsheltered for, um, Special NOFO initiative, as well as the rural Special, um, NOFO initiative come. And then just give you all an update on what you can expect next in the world of technical assistance. So with that, um, I'm going to pause, take a look at the chat to see if we have any questions. And I know that there were some questions that have come up related to the material from last session with, um, what, um, Sue Watlov Phillips, one of our amazing technical assistance providers presented on, um, including people with lived experience, um, in the work that we're doing, that you're doing day to day. And I just wanted to turn it over to you, Sue, uh, to go over some of that additional information.

Speaker 2   00:03:24   Uh, thank you so much and it's good to be back with you all. Uh, good afternoon and good morning for you on the West Coast. Again, I'm Sue Watlov Phillips. I'm one of the TA providers for people with live experience and expertise, um, and been homeless myself and, uh, been working in the field, uh, with people experiencing homelessness for over 57 years. So I just wanted, um, a few folks have reached out to me and, uh, just asked me for some different resources. So just wanted to make sure you had these resources from the presentation last week. And so there's going to be links that are in the chat for you. One is the National Coalition for the Homeless has a Lived Experience Training Academy. This is a way of equipping, uh, folks that are experiencing homelessness or have experienced

homelessness so that they can right away get involved with your CoC or be on your board or on your staff or help you as far as your development of your different program.

Speaker 2   00:04:15   Um, this, um, format is both online, where you can just do it independently at your own pace. Um, it's also a virtual, and then it also can be done in person. So there's a link to how you can get more information about the Lived, um, experience Training Academy or what we call leada. The other thing that, um, wanted to just, uh, briefly mention is when you do, uh, pay people that are experiencing homelessness or have that expertise is again, to make sure that you are getting AW nine. And that would include even if you're doing gift cards, and that if they're paid more than $600, that you're going to need to give them a 1099. Now, for many folks that may impact their public assistance benefits, and this has been an issue that we've been dealing with here in Minnesota. So over the last couple years, we've been talking with our Minnesota Department of Human Services, and we've made regulation changes.

Speaker 2   00:05:06   So folks that are being paid for their expertise, um, uh, do not have that counted, um, as income against their state benefits. Obviously, they're still counted against, um, federal housing benefits and other federal benefits. And this has been really important as we had 10, um, folks, um, that have experienced homelessness and housing instability that helps develop our Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness Strategic Plan, as well as the Minnesota Housing, our State Agency, uh, that had 12 people that, uh, had experienced homelessness and unstable housing and other housing situations from diversity of, of, of communities. Uh, both of them, uh, were from diversity of communities, um, also in developing their new strategic plan. So this is a great way to really make sure that as we are paying folks, is that it doesn't impact their eligibility for public assistance benefits. And then, um, there is a link to a poem that was developed, um, by Julia Dinsmore, and, uh, she, uh, also wrote a book called, uh, my Name is Child of God, not those people. And so I think, uh, the video is a really quick look at how, uh, folks oftentimes feel when they're experiencing homelessness and when they're not listened to. So I encourage you, it's about a four to five minute video just to take a look at it and listen to her poem as she's talking about those experiences. Thank you again for the opportunity to present last week and the opportunity to share a few more resources today.

Speaker 1   00:06:38   Thank you so much, Sue. All right, as the questions continue to come in, I'm going to shoot a question over to you, Brett. So the trainings to date, they've emphasized that participants can't be required to participate in services to Rece receive housing assistance, and it's been suggested that we're required to offer monthly meetings for rapid rehousing participants once placed in housing, but can't require their participation. However, this app apparently contradicts 24 C FFR 578.37. Um, Brett, can you speak to housing first principles and, um, what, what is HUD going to hold Special NOFO recipients to as far as far as compliance and monitoring goes?

Speaker 3   00:07:32   Uh, sure, there is a lot to that question. So yes, there are two requirements. One is that the Special NOFO, all projects have to provide a housing first approach, and then there's the rapid rehousing requirement that says you have to provide monthly case management. And so in this, it is possible to have monthly case management and still be compliant with a housing first approach. But the purpose of that case management is going to be engagement. So your case managers are really going to work to try to get in the door, but if the program participant, uh, answers it and then after five minutes says go away, or since I don't have time to, like, that's okay, you're going to keep reaching out every month as the case manager and trying to engage program participants, uh, and, uh, ultimately try to see

if there are any services that they are interested in and that they are need. And if there's anything that case management can work on. Does that, did that answer all parts of it? Mari <laugh>? Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>. So in the case file from a compliance perspective, I would say document every time that the case manager reaches out the methods that they reach out. If going to the unit isn't working, maybe try a phone call, maybe try meeting at a coffee shop or something, try different modes and document all of that in the case file and every time that you, uh, try to reach out and all of the efforts that you make.

Speaker 1   00:09:02   Right? And so there was a follow-up question, so we won't be requiring the clients to meet. And it sounds like what you're saying, Brett, is that the attempts at eng at engaging program participants is what is counting as the case management, um, as the case management requirement. Okay, great. It appears that those are all the questions that we have. Uh, please remember, if any additional questions come up for you, that we'll have another session at the end to field questions, and then we will also do our best to answer questions in the chat as they come up during the presentations. So now we will shift over to coordinated entry and to kick us off, I will turn it over to you, Sharon.

Speaker 4   00:09:53   Hey, folks. Um, I, I'm Sharon Singer. I'm in the SNAPS office with Marlisa and Brett and Ebony and others on this call. Um, I'm the coordinated entry lead. And I'm going to give just kind of a quick overview. I know for some folks here you've been working on coordinated entry at the CoC level, but for other folks, you may be new, um, to our universe and to coordinated entry. So, um, it may be review for some of you, but I'm going to do a high overview and then I'm going to turn it over to Taylor, who is going to talk a little more in depth about each stage in the process and how you can do that work, um, at, in, in an unsheltered setting. So if you can go to the next slide.

Speaker 4   00:10:44   So, coordinated entry, um, officially became a requirement in 2012 when, um, HUD passed the, or finally, um, finished the interim rule, um, Continuum of Care and ESG. Um, so it just set a very basic requirement, but we, it was not being enforced and the policies hadn't been sort of laid out. So that was the very first sort of discussion of that at the HUD level. Um, in 2015, we set, um, a proof that started to flesh out, um, what these policies could look like, and then the official requirements with much more detail. Um, and hopefully if you have an opportunity to spend some time with the, the notice, this really has all the details about what the program requirements are. Um, and, and the 2017, uh, notice required folks to have it in place at their CoC, um, by January, 2018, which seems like a long time ago. But, um, the, so we've learned a lot over these last few years. You can go to the next slide.

Speaker 4   00:11:57   So what is coordinated entry? Um, this is a process of helping people through, um, a homeless and housing system, um, to have an inflow and outflow system that is collaborative, that creates efficiencies, um, and really intends to create a more fair, um, and streamlined access to services and housing. So this table kind of shows this at a high level. Um, we have folks coming in from, um, street outreach, non congregate shelter, um, and emergency shelter. And our ultimate goal would be hopefully to prevent people from coming into any of those settings to begin with. And then we want to be able to divert folks as well. So we're going to talk a little bit about that. Um, but then the goal is to ultimately get folks into a permanent housing setting with the supports that they need. Um, so the, you know, we are hoping that this is, um, works quickly. We know that sometimes this, this work can take a long time. And, and I think Taylor's going to talk a little bit about where those steps can, we can hopefully help facilitate that movement a little bit better. You can go to the next, uh, slide.

Speaker 4   00:13:20   So how did CE change the housing process? Um, and I'm sure folks here who've been working in the field for a long time are familiar with how things used to be. Um, everything was very project centric, um, and everything was sort of ad hoc depending on who you had talked to or what shelter you ended up in. Um, and it was sort of uneven depending on where you lived. Um, so the goal was to really have strategy, um, at a system level, but that is also person-centered, right? We want to make sure that people are getting the housing and services that they need, those who are most vulnerable are being served, um, and that there is something that is a standardized both form and assessment, um, used for everyone. And again, we'll talk a little bit more about what that standardization looks like, um, that it should be a CoC and community level, um, decision to decide how triage is going to look. Um, and, um, and then the, the whole process needs to be across the entire geographic area, um, and that everything is put in writing, um, for administering these, uh, resources. You can go to the next slide.

Speaker 4   00:14:42   So, um, there we've broken out coordinated entry into these sort of four core elements. Um, and we're going to, um, Taylor's going to talk more in detail. Access is sort of the front door, um, where people are finding out about, um, these resources. It, it may be at, um, from street outreach, it may be calling a 211 number. There are variety of ways that communities can choose to do that. Um, the assessment, um, the way this, uh, slide looks is to try and have a sort of, um, what is called, uh, sort of graduated, um, uh, assessments so that the really goal is to do diversion, if that is a possibility. Um, and, um, to get more in depth, um, as you get to know the household more, and to do a more comprehensive assessment, um, depending on the level of need. And sometimes we, I think conflate assessment and prioritization, the prioritization is where people, um, will or households will be, um, put depending on their vulnerability. And the community has an opportunity to design what that prioritization looks like. Um, and it can look slightly different based on what the projects are. Um, and then ultimately is the referral, um, to the project, um, that hopefully is a streamlined process to getting people the housing and services that they need. So I am going to turn it over to Taylor, who is going to get into a little bit more of the detail.

Speaker 5   00:16:26   Alright, thank Sharon. Next slide. Alright. Uh, so the first core element that, um, that Sharon was talking about as far as the front door, um, it's access. This is the engagement point for persons, uh, experiencing a housing crisis. They could look and function differently depending on the community's strengths, needs, projects available, whatever that engagement or access strategy for the community. It must ensure all people experiencing homelessness in that geographic CoC region, uh, including those living in encampments or other unsheltered locations. Rural locations have equal access to all crisis response system resources. So when you think about that, it's kind of like you're, you're really thinking about all aspects and all barriers that you're trying to address to make sure that you would, you were able to touch on every single one of those groups. Um, for folks in this room, the outreach teams will play a critical role in connecting people in unsheltered and rural locations to the CoCs coordinated entry process and the access points. Um, when determining how access works in your community, we want to ensure that we're focused on equity for all, including those in unsheltered rural locations and historically marginalized groups. Uh, to do this or real, it's really important to engage thought partners that work specifically with those groups and folks with lived experience. Those are the experts of those groups, um, to be able to come up with solutions to overcome barriers to equitable access. Next slide.

Speaker 5   00:18:02   The next element of coordinated entries assessment. Uh, we're assessing housing needs preferences and vulnerability. Uh, assessment is progressive and really only gathers enough

information needed to move on to the next step in the pro, uh, the process. So we're using a phased approach. You're meeting with the client where they're, where they're at, determining the immediate crisis and the immediate need, engaging in housing problem solving techniques, do they are, is diversion a better, uh, resource for this person? Um, doing, using those housing problem solving techniques can help the assessor pivot and or just collect just enough information to move to the next phase without wasting time or adding any trauma to the experience. Um, all staff administering assessment should use culturally, culturally competent trauma-informed practices, and receive training on safety planning and housing. Problem solving techniques, uh, assessments are based on participant strengths, easily understood, sensitive to participants' lived experience, if not already, street outreach activities, uh, should be a player in administering assessments. As I mentioned, uh, outreach folks are going to be crucial to engaging the unsheltered and rural populations, uh, based on their established rapport and existing relationships with those, um, those populations. Next slide.

Speaker 5   00:19:25   A big element of coordinated entry, as most of us know and have experience with is prioritization. So the participant's needs and level of vulnerability are used to determine prioritization. Uh, prioritization helps communities or CoCs manage its large inventory of resources and services. Uh, because while this new s nofo resource funding source is a huge lift to the system, we know it's still not enough. So this practice works to ensure that people with the greatest need and vulnerability receive the supports that they need to resolve their housing crisis. So greatest need and vulnerability in this kind of prioritization is based on a combination of factors that are outlined here in the slide, um, but also in the CES notice and, and the guidance. Um, the biggest takeaway is that we are not assuming vulnerability. So we are using a combination of these prioritization factors to factor into our prioritization ischemia.

Speaker 5   00:20:17   Um, as we get more thoughtful about coordinating these targeted resources, we should be thinking about updating prioritization based on new community needs or strengths. And a big one for this is, uh, many communities may have had a temporary, uh, prioritization during COVID. And this brought about conversations about how to address barriers to these four elements to coordinated entry. Uh, we, we now more than ever know prioritization cannot be static. Uh, it's kind of changing based on the needs of the community. And there also may be events or funding sources that provide an opportunity for the community to reevaluate, including the snowflake grants. Next slide.

Speaker 5   00:20:59   The last core element of coordinated entry is the referral process. Uh, households will refer to available housing resources in accordance with the prioritization standards set by the CoC is crucial for coordinated entry to engage providers and understand their program types, uh, and other funding sources that those same projects may be working with, uh, with the end goal of creating a streamlined referral process for households experiencing homelessness that follows housing first principles and accounts for client choice. Um, the core elements guidebook for coordinated entry has a lot of information about key components to referral protocol, including thinking about eligibility, screening and determination. What information do you need to collect for that? Uh, establishing a participating project list, again, what information do we need to collect to put that together? Uh, referral rejection protocols and referral data tracking. Next slide.

Speaker 5   00:21:55   So this slide, uh, just has some reminders to bring us back to the intent of coordinated entry and what this process was created to overcome. The do's and don'ts can almost be, um, seen as the, one of the first slides that Sharon went through is like, before and after coordinated entry, this was the purpose. We want to put the whole person first. We're always up to date on fair

housing practices. We're not assuming anything of the household. Um, we're only gathering enough information to make an appropriate referral. And this is done most effectively by prioritizing training and keeping up to date with best practices. Along with that, we're not steering folks to what we presume that they would want. Uh, we have, we prioritize, um, uh, client choice in our housing first practices, and we're, we make sure that prioritization is a thoughtful process that includes feedback. Next slide.

Speaker 5   00:22:48   So, uh, for most of us that have been around for a while, um, all of these elements that I've briefly gone over are much easier said than done, right? Um, all of you have probably had at least a year or two of coordinated entry implementation under your belts. And when I say you, I mean CoCs in general. Um, you may have already identified some low hanging fruit that you know you can work on as a community. Uh, everyone, uh, every community has their own strengths and needs. Thus, we all play a part in, um, figuring out how we can address those low hanging fruits be better together with this new funding resource. So that's CoC leads, coordinated entry leads, providers, field office, always thinking about ways to make this better. Um, so some low hanging fruits to think about more generally going into the implementation of these Special NOFO grants.

Speaker 5   00:23:37   Uh, communities should be updating their policies and procedures and written standards for, um, any updates and necessary to capture the needs and strengths of the, the targeted populations for this resource. But also if the community had a temporary prioritization during covid and needs to update it. So this is the time, uh, to do all of that in conversations about each of these elements of coordinated entry. We should always be considering, uh, simplifying and streamlining as much as humanly possible. I think a lot of, uh, folks in communities have had the same prioritization since the beginning. So this is the time to think about how we can streamline and simplify based on lessons learned, uh, and what we know about our own communities. Um, the written standards for your community regarding prioritization can be written separately for SNOFO funding. And I'm actually going to point to, uh, uh, Brett and Sharon, if y'all want to talk about thinking about, um, separating out different, uh, written standards for prioritization or other access points.

Speaker 3   00:24:39   Sure. I'm happy to jump in here. So there's, there's nothing that says coordinated entry. So all of this is based on, let me back up a minute. Actually, all of this is based on the regulatory requirement that you have written standards for administering your assistance and prioritizing your assistance. There's nothing in there that says, like every single pot of money that's going through your coordinated entry has to have the same prioritization standards. In fact, that's probably going to be impossible. The more that you, the more different sources that you layer into your coordinated entry, because some resources are going to be, um, have different preferences in them. So for the Special NOFO grant, for the Special NOFO dollars, the CoCs were required in their plans that they submitted with their application to establish some, to tell us how they were going to prioritize resources under the Special NOFO to ensure that the whole approach reduced unsheltered homelessness in your community.

Speaker 3   00:25:37   And so you are going to want as CoCs and as providers to develop written standards for administering assistance under these grants that, um, are consistent with the plan that the CoC submitted. Uh, so that's going to be different in every community, right? Some communities have said, we're going to prioritize people with X number of months of living on the street, um, and with X number of vulnerabilities, right? Or some, or these resources, or some people have sort of said, we have non congregate shelter. We're going to first move folks into non congregate shelter from the streets. And then from there, we're going to prioritize. And these are how we're going to look at the vulnerabilities.

That's going to be different in every community. And don't forget, in all of your community stability vouchers are also coming through coordinated entry, right? And so you're going to have those standards for prioritizing people for stability vouchers and where they're aligned with co with special nofo resources that might be one and the same, but where they're meeting a different need in your community. They might also have a different bucket of prioritization schema. Uh, so all that to say, add more layers of complication, but they can, the different standards can help you really target resources a little bit better.

Speaker 5   00:26:57   Thanks, Brett. I think, uh, another, um, big aspect that comes in with the SNOFO funding is, um, thinking about an outreach protocol. So, um, with both unsheltered and rural, we're, we're working with our outreach teams. These teams in our communities know these populations best. They're with them on a daily basis. So the staff, if you don't already have an outreach protocol or some sort of written standards regarding their role in this, uh, we need to be thinking about that and including them in that feedback loop. So whether it's about assessment, prioritization and referral, then folks with lived experience must have like this real input into these updates for them to be effective. Um, and then if there's any updates related to specific health and safety issues in your communities encampments, that should also be considered. Um, just thinking about that, uh, since we're coming out of COVID,

Speaker 3   00:27:53   And I would add Taylor, if it's okay, this is like the perfect, one of the, the a really great spot to engage your technical assistance providers, right? All of you have been assigned technical assistance providers, and they can help you think through some of these, uh, conversations as well.

Speaker 4   00:28:14   And to, to just add on what you were saying, Taylor, um, one thing that we didn't talk about here, I realize is the annual evaluation. So you are supposed to, uh, CoCs are supposed to do an annual evaluation of coordinated entry. And I think it'll be very helpful after a year of implementing these new grants to take the time to talk to people with lived experience, you know, talk to providers, how did this work? Um, what can we do differently, um, gather data to show whether or not you've been successful? If not, where have there been stop gaps, um, in terms of the process that we were just outlining. Um, so that is definitely an important and useful, um, piece of the process. Thank you. So I think we have the next slide. Is that you hitting that back to me? Oh, nope. You've got one more

Speaker 5   00:29:10   Almost. Yeah. No, just some final thoughts before we regroup and kind of recap go into, um, s nofo specifics. Um, reminder, if it wasn't already clear, coordinated entry should not be a static process. Um, we are within the first, you know, five or six years of it being, uh, required to be implemented. This is the time that we need to make it our own, as our own communities and figure out, um, how we need to be successful with this, uh, based on community factors, strengths and needs. Um, another factor that is a huge, huge, um, uh, huge technique to include is housing problem solving. Uh, making sure that we're in, we're training up our staff on housing problem solving. Thinking about ways to incorporate that into every step and substep of coordinated entry. Um, as most of us know, housing problem solving really kind of only works when you have buy-in from the resources to assist these populations.

Speaker 5   00:30:06   So just in the same sense that we're talking about engaging outreach, engaging our other funded, um, partners that are, um, providing resources that we may be utilizing for diversion or prevention to make sure that they feel, feel heard in our process and what we're, uh, trying to implement. Uh, and finally, um, just making sure that we are thoughtfully engaging the groups that work

and live these experiences on a daily basis. Next slide. Going to hand it back over to Sharon. To run through the resources that are available and HUD Exchange and other places on the web.

Speaker 4　00:30:41　Thank you Taylor. And I'm lucky to have Taylor working with me. Um, I'm the Chicago Field Office, um, desk officer, and so she is working with me on coordinated entry and it's been really helpful given, uh, her work on the Special nofo and working with some of, um, the big, uh, CoCs there. So I just wanted to quickly go over the resources that we have. Sometimes they're hard to find on the HUD exchange, so I just wanted to quickly walk through them. Um, and you will get this slide with all the links, uh, that are hidden in there. Um, so the key kind of really good document is the coordinated entry core elements. Um, it is a very user-friendly document that was created back, uh, in 2017 that came out with the, the notice. Um, it is a very good resource, thank you for putting all of that in the, in the chat.

Speaker 4　00:31:36　Um, the coordinated entry as a tool for equity is a long in-depth training that, um, I worked on and many TA providers and, um, our general counsel on Fair Housing worked on. Um, it is a great, um, the, it is broken up into a variety of pieces and you can go in and out. You don't have to go all the way through it. It has, um, a good coordinated entry, um, sort of 101 as well as a fair housing 1 0 1. And then it gets into more of the in-depth, how do you pursue equity within, um, the fair housing requirements and using coordinated entry. Um, and so we also took three short excerpts from the training that were just uploaded, um, I believe last week. Um, that also has the webinar that we did. Uh, so those three short excerpts, um, I believe the do's and don'ts came from that.

Speaker 4　00:32:32　Trying to just get to what are the key, um, takeaways, uh, around trying to pursue equity. Um, we have a community entry community samples catalog. Um, we are going to be updating it perhaps even later this month with some new, uh, or revised, um, examples. Um, I suggest taking a look at it, especially if you are looking for resources for communities that might be similar to yours or working on specific populations. Um, there's a lot of really good resources in there. Um, and we also have an email if you have suggestions for additional resources that are not there or any, um, recommended changes. We are very open to hearing your, um, your input. Um, there's a whole range of products that were created over the last three years under the COVID umbrella, but really they are coordinated entry resources that are useful, I think, for everyone.

Speaker 4　00:33:27　So if you click on that link, it'll take you to all of those resources that are housed under the, um, the covid, um, umbrella. And then, um, we have had a, um, two, um, cohorts of a racial equity community, excuse me, coordinated entry, um, demonstration. Um, the materials from, uh, cohort one are already up, but we are about, I'd say hopefully again before the end of the year. We have a ton of really great resources, um, related to cohort two. Um, these are communities that worked with TA providers to really dig into, um, issues around racial equity, how it, um, connects to coordinated entry and really how CoCs are structured in general is a piece that came out of that. Um, and lastly, if none of these resources has the answer to what you need, please submit and ask a question. Um, Taylor and I will be there to try and answer them, um, with our ta uh, support. And, um, we're happy to try and take questions, um, in the chat, uh, after this. So I'm going to hand it over to Brett, um, to talk about some other resources.

Speaker 3　00:34:43　Great. Thank you Sharon. Uh, can we go ahead a few slides, Tegan? One more. Great. So I wanted to close this out. We've spent a lot of the last, uh, four weeks talking about CoC program requirements that apply to Special NOFO grants, but the Special NOFO grants do have a few

unique requirements that apply to them. And I just want, they're all on the slide. Um, and I just wanted to go ahead and go over them, uh, before we closed out. So we've talked about this numerous times. All projects funded under the Special NOFO must adopt and follow a housing first approach. Um, all projects have to be consistent with the CoC's plan to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness with severe service needs. This was the 15 page plan that most that that most, that all CoCs submitted with their application that was scored.

Speaker 3   00:35:43   And in your project application, you had to tell us how, um, your project was going to be consistent with the CoC plan. And if it wasn't clear to us in that narrative, we conditioned it. And you have to tell us as part of the technical submission process how your project is going to be consistent with the CoC's plan. All projects have a three year grant term this has, this is, we haven't done three year grant terms in a long time in the CoC program. Uh, so what this means is that you got money upfront for all three years. You will not get money next year. You're expected with the money that you have to operate the project for three years from the date that you sign the grant agreement. Uh, if you have hard costs, then, um, you had up to two years to build, acquire, construct, rehab your project, and then once you start operating, you'll operate your grant for three years, um, from the time that you start serving people.

Speaker 3   00:36:46   And then specifically related to projects funded under the rural Seta aside, all projects funded through the rural setaside have to serve a rural area. The appendices in the nofo included the definitions of rural areas that went along with the, the funding under this nofo. So you can always refer back to that. We will keep the NOFO and those appendices up on the special NOFO website on HUD dot gov, where all of the other resources are so that you can keep checking back on that. Um, also, several projects funded through the rural setaside received points for serving a structurally disadvantaged area. And this in general is an area, uh, that didn't have resources in it before. Um, and had other, like things like high rates of poverty, high rates of homelessness when compared to the rest of your geography. If you receive points for this, you have to continue to serve that geographic area that you identified in your application throughout the three year term of your grant. And that is because you were, but you were poss most likely selected because you had those points.

Speaker 3   00:37:59   Uh, so those are the key NOFO specific requirements. We talked about the eligibility requirements tied to the NOFO in session two, so you can go back and review that if you have questions about, um, the eligibility requirements tied to this. Um, and then I think now we're going to go to the next slide. And like Marlisa said, I'm just going to take us back big picture. So we started with this, and let's kind of finish with this in the TA plan as well. So we have spent the last four weeks in the weeds with you, what are the fair housing requirements? What are the housing quality standards? What are, how do you calculate program participant income? Right? How do you cal do eligibility determinations? But let's come back and remember what we are trying to do with these grants. We are trying to end unsheltered homelessness. That is a big one. Uh, the nofo and the projects in general are supporting communities in reducing unsheltered homelessness, and it's helping us reduce unsheltered homelessness amongst individuals and families in rural areas as well. There was a huge rural focus to this nofo. So obviously there was a rural set aside, but the unsheltered homelessness set, set-asides can also serve rural areas. We are continuing to prioritize providing assistance on tribal lands and integrating our tribal partners into the CoC program.

Speaker 3   00:39:26   We are trying to involve a broad array of partners, your CoC's efforts to reduce homelessness. So Taylor said earlier that the, even with this influx of resources, which have been amazing, there's not enough money through this nofo to end homelessness in your communities for the most part. And so we need to really work with other organizations, uh, to end homelessness. And we need their resources, their supportive services, their, we need affordable housing developers to build more housing. We need victim service providers to help us ensure that we're providing the best services that we can to survivors of domestic violence. Uh, we need political leadership and we need the healthcare and the substance abuse providers to wrap around those supportive services. And the other mainstream and employment resources that we, that our program participants really need to stabilize in housing. Uh, we are looking to advance equity with these grants.

Speaker 3   00:40:25   Uh, so we just talked about that in the coordinated, how we can use coordinated entry to advance equity in your system. But throughout this entire process, you're going to be looking, are we increasing equitable outcomes throughout our continuum of care with these projects? And then use a housing first approach. All of these projects are supporting a housing first approach across your community. So that's taking it back big level, big picture. And this is what, in addition to meeting all of the regulatory requirements, we're really looking at these grants to help the community do. So I think at this point, I am going to turn it over to, am I turning it over to you, Michelle, or to Rashema to start us off on a conversation about the technical assistance that is available?

Speaker 6   00:41:11   Uh, I'm not sure what order. Uh, yes. I think it's us. We're first. Great. Yep. <laugh>, hello everyone. Um, we wanted to just share with you all kind of the, uh, what's next for the unsheltered communities and recipients in terms of ta. It's really wonderful that, um, these, uh, awards came with some dedicated TA for your community to help you achieve those policy priorities. So if we can go to the next slide. So we, we've divided the, um, the plan and I think the ta ta will be with you for, um, a significant period of time. So we've divided that kind of into phases that we think the work falls into. So we've been engaged in really the pre-planning and initial outreach. You should have heard from your, um, assigned TA provider. Um, and they should, they should be in conversation with you about your application.

Speaker 6   00:42:04   We know that we were starting our outreach, um, kind of during the NOFA process, so obviously we probably, um, maybe couldn't catch up with you at that time. So we extended that, um, that timeframe. And so through the month of October, um, you should have by now had, uh, initial con contact from your TA provider because we want to move into kind of that collaborative planning. And I know some communities have started that and others have not yet. But that's our goal, is to really start working with your community about planning for the initiatives that you were awarded funding for, helping you resolve, uh, any barriers that may exist, helping you consider be a thought partner in how to implement the NOFO policy priorities and have an understanding of the, uh, other things that, uh, came along with this, the PHA housing stability vouchers, um, to help you understand kind of conditions and politics within your community and how to navigate those.

Speaker 6   00:43:01   Um, and then solidifying your core team, I think, has been mentioned throughout these sessions, right? The idea was that we're involving people with lived expertise. We're involving people from overrepresented communities in the decision making and planning around services that are going to be implemented through these awards. So the expectation is that you're continuing and your coach, uh, your TA coach can provide you with support and kind of figuring out how to identify who

should be a part of that core team and, and what, um, support they can lend to your overall initiatives. And then starting in January, we're really working into what are the goals? How can TA support you? We have a solid plan for that, and that that's consistent with the special priorities, policy priorities, and the CoC plans. And then as you'll see, we'll move on to implementation. Obviously every community is at a different point, so we've kind of given some broad ranges in terms of these efforts. And we will continue to kind of update you with where we are. Next slide.

Speaker 6   00:44:05   So it's really great that through the TA we're able to provide some opportunities similar to this. Um, we'll be having monthly convenings for the full initiative so that we give opportunities an opportunity to engage with and learn from each other, um, around the things that are happening in the space. This is new ground in some areas. And so having that support, um, to come together, to learn from each other, to develop, um, camaraderie, right, and support. So you can call somebody else and say, oh my gosh, what is happening? <laugh>, right? And have someone who understands that we want to be able to help you make those connections. We'll continue through that process to provide kind of enhanced training, uh, and support for you around equity, around working with, um, people with lived experience. And we'll also, uh, be creating, uh, really an affinity space for those folks with lived experience who are helping you in your communities, who may be new to this work, and creating an opportunity for them to get support and get to know each other and to be a resource to each other. So, starting monthly convenings in November, we'll start the enhancer workshops in December. Um, and then look to ha um, have the folks with lived experience be able to start to come together in January.

Speaker 6   00:45:21   And I think that is all for us.

Speaker 1   00:45:26   Thanks, Michelle. And now could go to the next slide. We are going to turn it over to Hannah Roberts, one of the TA leads for the Rural Special NOFO Initiative.

Speaker 7   00:45:41   Um, hi everybody. Great to be with you all, and congratulations again on all of your SNOFO awards. We're super excited to be working with you all. Um, my name is Hannah Roberts. I use she her pronouns, and I am one of the co-leads for the Rural NOFO Initiative alongside, um, Maseta Dorley who couldn't be here today, but you'll see in all the rural NOFO meetings. Um, so you can go to the next slide. I'm just going to kind of quickly review some of the technical assistance supports that are specific to the communities that receive rural Setaside awards through the Special NOFO. So this is open to, um, CoC lead staff from those communities, as well as the project recipients. Um, so similar to what, um, Michelle just went over. Um, all of the communities that receive rural Set aside awards will, um, also be re be receiving direct technical assistance.

Speaker 7   00:46:36   Um, this should be really individualized to your com uh, community to your CoC and to the projects that were funded through, um, your applications. So, uh, by now, a technical assistance provider should have reached out to you. Hopefully you all are connecting with them, and they should really be spending some time right now getting to know you and understanding what it is that you would be most valuable to you and your community as you get started. So there are a few examples listed here of ways that technical assistance providers might be able to support you. Um, but really we want to hear from you as well about what may be most helpful, um, including any follow up from these startup calls. I know a lot of, uh, content was covered in the last, uh, five sessions, so please feel free. We'd encourage you to utilize your technical assistance providers as a support to continue to kind of process that information and think about how to set up your local policies and procedures.

Speaker 7   00:47:33   Um, so in addition to that direct technical assistance, um, you all should have also received, if you're a community that received rural setaside funding, you should have also received, um, a registration, a registration link to join monthly, um, rural Special Nofo special nofo community calls. Um, so that's a full group peer learning opportunity with other folks that are also receiving this funding. Um, and we'll include some combination of general updates, uh, with HUD staff, sometimes presentation of content, uh, opportunity for question and answer, and also for connecting with peers and other communities who are doing the same work that you all are doing. Um, and those are every or the first Thursday of each month from three to four 30 Eastern, um, and are open to all CoCs and project recipients receiving rural, uh, set aside Special NOFO funding. And then the final thing listed here is not NOFO specific. Um, it's an existing webinar series that's, uh, tailored to thinking about how to set up homeless response systems strategies within rural areas. So it's actually open to any CoC serving in a rural area, not just the SNOFO initiative communities. Um, but you are welcome to attend those as well, or, um, invite folks in your agencies if you think that it would be a helpful learning space for them. Um, and those are the fourth Mondays of each month from four to 5:00 PM Eastern.

Speaker 7   00:49:04   Um, next slide. Uh, and here is just a quick overview. If you're not sure if you're receiving direct technical assistance or not, hopefully someone's already reached out to you. But, uh, you can also see here that the level of technical assistance, uh, kind of falls across three levels with kind of varying amounts of hours that those technical assistance providers will have available to them to support you all. That doesn't mean you have to spend all of those hours, uh, in meetings together. They can also be doing work behind the scenes to support you all, um, and can, uh, travel to your community once or twice, uh, to provide support as well. And then there's a note at the bottom that the eight continuums of care that received both unsheltered and rural Setaside Special nofo Awards are receiving their TA under the unsheltered initiative. So you don't see those listed here, but they will still be getting their direct technical assistance just under, um, the, the initiative that Michelle and Rashema are leading. And I think that's it for us. We look forward to supporting you all and learning alongside you all in the coming years.

Speaker 1   00:50:14   Thanks so much, Hannah. Next slide, please. We are going to, um, shift over to questions, but before we do, we wanted to give, um, norm suture, the director of the SNAPS office at HUD headquarters, a time, a chance to just weigh in on some final thoughts. So if I may, uh, Nrom, can I turn it over to you?

Speaker 8   00:50:48   Sure. Thank you so much, Marlisa and team. Uh, these will definitely not be the final thoughts on this topic, uh, but I just did want to chime in here and, uh, both again, congratulate you all on the unbelievable work, uh, you've done to, uh, put in successful special nofo applications. It was not an easy process, as you have heard, I'm sure many times. Uh, so you really did outstanding work even just to apply and, uh, and be successful in your applications, but also just the level of commitment that everybody's putting into this is just really heartening to see, especially considering the really, really serious homelessness challenges that we're seeing across the country. I did want to just, uh, add a few comments around some of our, uh, racial equity and people with lived experience work, which is so important to our office and our programs in general, but also, uh, just really we have a unique opportunity in the special Nofo projects, uh, to really double down on that work and, and move it forward.

Speaker 8   00:51:53   Uh, you know, HUD strongly believes that involving people with lived, lived experience and representatives from communities that are overrepresented in homelessness counts, uh, that it's crucial to the successful implementation of the Special NOFO Awards. Uh, the involvement and, uh, and leadership of people with lived experience in the implementation of Special NOFO projects is going to make them more effective. Uh, this is, it's not just the right thing to do, but it just makes projects work better. Uh, we know that you all, uh, established some really ambitious goals in your plans that you submitted, uh, and we are very much ready, uh, to support you, uh, in achieving the racial equity and I inclusion goals that you, uh, that you included in those plans. Um, we are obviously providing a lot of technical assistance support. You've heard about it here. Uh, and, you know, we will keep reiterating it because we really do want to support you in this.

Speaker 8   00:52:53   And we have a great, uh, really, uh, intelligent and experienced team of technical assistance providers, uh, who are available to support you. Uh, we, and we want to continue supporting you and, uh, through the TA coaches, uh, through the TA co-leads, uh, and through the racial equity TA team. Uh, we know that you're all in different phases of racial equity work, and you're in different phases of the work on including people who lived experience and following the leadership of people with, with lived experience in the implementation of your programs. We know some of you are still in that sort of initial awkward conversation phase where these things are really hard to talk about. Uh, but many of you are really doing some incredible, uh, things with data, some incredible things with, uh, implementing innovative practices, uh, with reaching out to communities that have experience in racial equity, but not necessarily in, in, in CoC grants or, or anything like that.

Speaker 8   00:53:53   And really bringing them into the fold. Uh, that is very, just very heartening to see that progress. But wherever you are in that, uh, whatever stage you're in, uh, we want to help you move forward and, and keep this work rolling along. If you have any questions, if you, uh, have a need for support, uh, we really want you to reach out to your TA coaches, uh, to your TA coach, or one of the TA leads, uh, Rashema and Michelle for the unsheltered, uh, portion, uh, Maseta and Hannah for the rural portion. Uh, I think we are putting, if we haven't already, we'll make sure their contact info gets in the chat, but they can provide, uh, support and access additional technical assistance resources as necessary. So again, I just want to really close, uh, with, uh, a thank you for the incredible work you've put in and, and the, the path that you've, uh, set yourselves on and your communities on. And we're just incredibly excited to work with you and to, to keep these projects moving and to really, uh, turn the tide on homelessness. Uh, so thank you very much and I'll turn things back to you, Marlisa.

Speaker 1   00:55:03   Thanks, norm. Alright, we have a couple of questions that have popped up in the chat that we are going to cover, and please feel free to make use of the chat as we go over those to add any additional questions that you have, starting with some questions related to the special nofo specific requirements. I'm going to turn these over to you, Brett. The first one, is there a plan to request renewal funding for these grants, these special nofo grants from Congress?

Speaker 3   00:55:38   Yep. So our hope is that these are renewable, uh, when we were doing the kickoff webinars before the publication of the nofo, that is certainly, or right after the publication of the nofo, that's what we said. Uh, but we are several years, a few years out from renewing these. So we'll have to stay tuned for the process and what form that follows because we can't speak to future NOFO or future funding.

Speaker 1   00:56:07   And is there a process for a CoC to change the plan that they developed as part of the s uh, special nofo application process?

Speaker 3   00:56:16   Yeah, so stay tuned on that one. That is something that we are looking into, uh, uh, for how we update them if we're allowed to update them. It was a scored component of your application. So this is going to take us a little bit of work, uh, to see what's possible.

Speaker 1   00:56:36   Alright, and another question for you Brett. Uh, Rachel asks, for the purposes of the grant slash coordinated entry, can a client choose to move to a non-rural community or county and receive special nofo assistance? And I believe this is related to the rural, a rural project. So if, if not, Rachel, can you just submit additional information, but maybe you could take a stab at that one, Brett.

Speaker 3   00:57:04   Yeah, I'm going to make the assumption that this is a project that's serve, that's funded through the rural set aside and that somebody has been prioritized for assistance for let's say a rapid rehousing project, for example, and they want, they would like to then move outside of that rural county into another county. And in that case, absolutely like that is client choice. The person presented within your rural geography, you are serving them. They were a resident of your rural geography. And if they choose to take their tenant-based rental assistance outside of that rural area, that's okay.

Speaker 1   00:57:45   Great. And okay, great. Glad to hear that. Uh, Rachel's question was answered. Uh, Brett, since you are still there, um, do SNOFO projects have to participate in a CoC's annual evaluation process and ranking given that the grant doesn't need to be renewed each year? Or maybe that's a could go ahead.

Speaker 3   00:58:09   So yeah, that's something we're not actually going to be able to answer right now. So because, so these are funded for three years, these will operate for three years, and then I think this really comes into when it does come time to renew them, what will the, that's how I'm reading it anyways. And if that's not the case, uh, Ted perhaps you can provide more information. Uh, but these do not have to go through the competition process for the next three years because you have three years of funding. Uh, when it does come time to renew and we publish, we will publish information on how these can be renewed and what are the expectations of them. But for right now, these do not have to go through your competitive, like annual CoC program competition. You should still be monitoring them, evaluating them, CoCs, still have to look at their performance, right? Even though they're not up for renewal, but they don't have to go through the competitive process until we give you more information on that.

Speaker 1   00:59:08   Alright? And Susan had asked, will there be NOFO guidelines created with all of these requirements for reference? And I think that is asking about a TA resource that maybe highlights the NOFO guidelines that are specific to the special or the NOFO requirements that are specific to the special nofo unique from other, um, regular, normal COC requirements. And that sounds like a great technical assistance, uh, resource that we could work on. So, um, I believe we have some materials that have been released or will soon be released on, um, the unique eligible activities. And so we can also take that back as an idea. So thanks for that idea, Susan. Um, if any of you have other technical assistance resources that you think would just be super helpful, please reach out to either your technical assistance coach or you could also send us an idea in the chat or, um, whichever way that you typically communicate with us. It looks like a couple of additional questions have popped in the chat. This one from Colleen is HUD asking or requiring that people living in unsheltered settings are prioritized for all

CoC or CES coordinated entry resources, or only specific resources such as PH SNOFO resources. And two, is HUD asking or requiring that communities focus on encampments, especially larger encampments specifically, or people living in all unsheltered settings? So I think this sounds like one that maybe Brett or Sharon, since there's a coordinated entry component may want to take.

Speaker 3   01:01:10   Sure. I can start with the big picture and then Sharon, if there's something coordinated, entry specific, um, and you want to, you can weigh in on that. But these resources were, these resources were put out to help communities reduce unsheltered homelessness in their communities, right? And to help people reduce homelessness in rural areas. There was no requirement in the NOFO that you, that PSH for example, could only be provided to people who were currently living in unsheltered situations at the time that intake was done. Instead, what we asked was, for every CoC to submit a plan for how these resources would help your community reduce unsheltered homelessness. And so for some communities that might be targeting, it might not mean limiting eligibility to people living in unsheltered situations because you have implemented a massive non congregate sheltering, um, scenario in your community. And so you're able to quickly shelter people quickly, safely, and shelter people, and then move them on to permanent housing from there.

Speaker 3   01:02:17   And then you have flow through your shelter system and you're able to shelter more people who are living in unsheltered situations. And so that is your strategy or your strategy is a combination of housing people directly from unsheltered situations and from sheltered, or it's a move on strategy for moving on people, moving on, people who are in, who have been in PSH and no longer need the services. And then you have more PSH available for people who are living in unsheltered situations currently. So all of that we didn't dictate, we just said that the CoC needs to have a plan, and the CoC needs to determine how these resources are going to contribute to reducing unsheltered homelessness in your community. And so we are asking that, that that is the ask that you focus on reducing unsheltered homelessness, that includes people in encampments, and that includes people not residing in encampments who are sleeping outside or in other places, not meant for human habitation. I don't know if there's anything specific in there you would add for coordinated entry, Sharon, or anything you want to add, norm?

Speaker 4   01:03:22   Just I would just to build on that, we, you don't want to also make assumptions based on where people are at as to what their vulnerability is. So you still want to, so we wouldn't say, all right, everybody in this encampment, um, gets housed. We would want to look at the individual needs of the people experiencing it, and then look at the prioritization of what your community is asking for. And I had forgotten to mention that we do have two products that are coming along to talk about coordinated entry and unsheltered status. One we hopefully we'll be seeing before the end of the month. The other one, which is more about prioritization, is going to be coming a little bit later, but, um, stay tuned for those. And Norm you wanted to jump in?

Speaker 8   01:04:07   Yeah, I think this is an interesting question for a lot of reasons and speaks to some of the challenges, uh, of doing work, uh, especially in encampment. So I wanted, I wanted to focus on that a little bit. I did hear the question to be about both the special nofo resources, but also CoC resources in general. And I think we're going to be hesitant to say, you know, in a blanket way, everybody should be focusing more on unsheltered homelessness or more on encampments because, uh, different communities are just in different places and treating this differently now. But in general, I will say that most communities probably aren't focusing enough on unsheltered homelessness, especially with

permanent housing resources. Uh, and many communities are making it too hard to house people out of encampments. Uh, and this is one of the reasons we wanted to do this special nofo and really want to work with you all on, on creating systems and improving systems so that they're really, really effective for people who are unsheltered and people in encampments.

Speaker 8   01:05:12   Uh, Sharon's absolutely correct that like people in encampments are in, have different levels of needs, different levels of, uh, vulnerabilities. But we also, I think it's need to recognize that, uh, that the process of, of, uh, of, you know, helping people in encampments, uh, has its, has some unique challenges. Uh, you know, in cases where a community wants to work with an entire encampment it, for example, uh, you know, there may be 30 people in a particular encampment. It is entirely appropriate for the community to set aside a large chunk of resources for people in that encampment. Uh, because you can't just sort of do like, wait for everybody's name to come up on the list. Like you have a, a process to help work with those encampment residents. So it is entirely appropriate to prioritize through your coordinated entry, like a surge of resources for a particular encampment. Uh, and so again, these are the kinds of things we want to work with you on and, and the reason we, we, uh, publish this Special NOFO.

Speaker 1   01:06:24   Alright, that was a great question. Um, Brett, we have a follow-up question related to the, um, monthly meetings case management requirement and annual assessment for clients. So, uh, reading the question exactly, it says, similar to the requirement for participation in monthly meetings for RRH as far as the annual assessment for clients, will the CFR requirements stand or will there be specific guidance concerning exemptions for clients being served through the special nofo funding given the limit to participation requirements for those clients?

Speaker 3   01:07:04   So we talked a little bit about this, I can't remember anymore in which session. We talked about it one of the earlier ones, but we are not waiving the requirement that you do an annual assessment of service needs, um, for these grants. So each year that you're oping operating this grant, you will be required to do an as an assessment of the supportive services that program participants need in your project. Just because you aren't requiring services doesn't mean that people don't need services and your project should be working to identify and engage people in the services that they want. Um, and so part of that annual assessment is determining that the services, the services that people want and need, uh, and not waiving that, that requirement from the recipients. So recipients will still be expected to do an annual assessment of service needs of program participants and adjust your service packages as necessary.

Speaker 1   01:08:05   Alright. Tracy asks, what happens when those that were were sheltered for the winter and become unsheltered when it warms up? I don't know, don't know if that triggers any initial thoughts from anyone, or we may need additional information, Tracy, about whether you're asking about, um, possible housing interventions or, uh, maybe it's a question about effective outreach. We will stand by for any information that you may be able to add for that question. Um, what is the estimated timeframe to hear back from emailing the SNOFO team with questions? Um, I know that, um, I think those questions are answered pretty rapidly. However, some may just take longer than others if we, if, um, the team needs to go back to program council or if it's particularly complicated. So some take longer than others, but I know that the team, um, mainly Brett <laugh>, um, is very, very diligent in, um, in looking at those, the mailbox and getting back to you as soon as possible.

Speaker 3   01:09:24   Yeah, I would say generally they're being answered within a week. Uh, and a couple of days is usually more realistic. If you haven't heard back from us by then, it means you asked us a trickier question.

Speaker 1   01:09:38   Alright. Uh, so related to what Norm said about setting aside resources for encampments, how would those both be prioritized through coordinated entry while not waiting for everyone's name to come up on the coordinated entry list? Um, Sharon or Taylor? Oh, Norm's popping up. I think you have thoughts. Yeah,

Speaker 8   01:10:03   I'm happy to jump in and, and Sharon please feel free to jump in as well. But, uh, again, like a lot depends on how you run your coordinated entry. But, you know, having, uh, including in your coordinated entry prioritization, uh, for example, a sort of a priority for, uh, you know, people who are engaged in encampment resolution process, uh, so that, you know, for example, if you have a team that works with encampments and sort of moves from one encampment to another, uh, that you would prioritize resources for that team and the individuals they're working with, uh, it wouldn't necessarily, it wouldn't be the only, uh, factor that you'd use in your prioritization process, but that would be an example of a way you could, uh, incorporate like an encampment prioritization into your coordinated entry process. And, uh, this is a great example of something our TA is, and, uh, and the SNAPPERs here, uh, at HUD are happy to work with you in more detail on,

Speaker 4   01:11:10   I'd say it also goes to, to Brett's point, uh, uh, earlier about being able, you're going to have programs that have different, um, focus different priorities, um, populations. Um, and so that will also affect who is going to be placed into those, uh, resources.

Speaker 1   01:11:35   Great questions and some additional follow ups. Uh, related to, um, program participants engagement and participation. What if clients don't participate, refuse to meet for the annual assessment? You've done everything possible to engage during the year. And what if participants refuse to allow entry for an annual inspection? And similarly, um, a local field office advised that annual annual assessments are meant to be conducted at the individual client level. So can participation be required in order to complete the assessment? Brett, any additional thoughts?

Speaker 3   01:12:23   Yeah, and I may turn it over to Michelle, if that's okay with you. Uh, but this is really where you're going to be working with staff to engage program participants. It's not always easy and right, we're working with some of, we we're asking you to work with some of people with the highest vulnerabilities and a lot of severe service needs who have potentially been harder to engage, uh, over time, right? But this is where we've really got to work on engagement strategies. We really need to work on making our services as appealing as possible and making sure that we're providing services that people want. Not going to somebody and saying, here is the, here are the services that I can offer. It could be, here are the services I can offer right now, do any of these interest you? But also what do you need? Is there anything else that you would like? And then working as an agency to go out and see if you can find those services. Maybe providing different ways to conduct the assessment. Maybe you do it through a survey, maybe you do it through case management meetings. Um, but this is really a space where you're going to work on engagement, uh, and training your staff. Uh, but that's where I'm going to turn it over to you, Michelle. Because I think you probably have some more tips there than I do.

Speaker 6   01:13:41   Yeah. So one of the things that, um, I would, I will definitely put on our list for, um, part of our, uh, support for communities in our monthly convenings and other opportunities is this

particular topic. Um, it can be, uh, really challenging. And I think the first thing to recognize is that folks, you know, are coming to engage with us or not engage with us from the trauma of their experience. And so one of the things that we can support your community and doing is kind of learning some different, um, techniques, um, changing focus and, and training staff. I, I think that is probably the big thing that, um, we have to kind of work with staff around how to, um, have successful engagements with people. Um, and, and so that's something that we're adding to our list that we will definitely be providing support to all communities around through our monthly convenings. And if you need more specific support, certainly, um, we're happy to provide that through your assigned coach. Uh, and they can engage myself, oshima, and we will engage whoever we need to, uh, <laugh>, um, to help your community get that support. Because engagement is key to making sure that people can, uh, you know, end their homelessness right and remain stably housed for the future.

Speaker 1   01:15:01   Uh, another plug for the foundational series that we are gearing up to provide for you all that, um, that's going to feature some really key concepts that are, um, that are NOFA priorities as well. So, um, housing first, engaging people with lived experience and expertise, which can help more help inform more effective engagement strategies, as well as making sure that, um, that you're including people who are overrepresented populations and making key decisions about how projects are carried out and how you're approaching your overall strategy to addressing, um, unsheltered homelessness and rural homelessness. Um, another a question from Sarah. If program participants disappear, move out of the house or disappear before they're housed, would we terminate or just leave them open? How long are we expected to look or wait for them? I think that's, that's something that, yeah. Yep. I knew Brett was going to <laugh>.

Speaker 3   01:16:06   I can take this. We actually received this question quite a bit in the, uh, ask a question. And this is something that every time we receive it, we say, your own organization should have policies and procedures around this. Um, how so in terms of like, so take it from the, they've been referred from coordinated entry and they disappear before you're able to house them. Maybe you have a different set of policies and procedures for how long you look and the processes that you try, right? Like, do you work with the CoC? Do you check hospitals? Do you check jails? Do you check, do you have phone numbers? You should have policies and procedures around that. And then once they're housed, if they disappear, you should have policies and procedures around that, how long you're going to hold the unit on their behalf. Things happen and we would expect you to do some due diligence to try to find the person and find out what happened before, uh, moving on and reopening up the slot.

Speaker 1   01:17:16   Alright. And then Mary asked a question that's popped up a number of times about how to access special novo head technical assistance. Just wanted to remind everyone that we have assigned coaches to every continuum of care. So your coach or coaches, um, have, have been making contact to your CoC point of contact. If you, um, are a recipient and have not necessarily been in the loop on the, you know, who your coach is or how to access assistance from a technical assistance coach. First reach out to your CoC. And if you are a CoC and you, um, are just wondering why haven't I heard from someone yet, please reach out to the unsheltered ta@gmail.com address. Or you could also use the special nofo email box and we will make sure that you're connected. And, um, the idea of technical assistance is to both be able to help, you know, at the CoC level, the system level, ensure that there's, um, consistency between your project implementation and the CoC's plan.

Speaker 1   01:18:24   And then also help with, um, more of like the project level challenges and, um, issues coming up as, as you're ramping up your projects. So we want to try to be able to provide that individual level support, support at the project level while keeping in mind the system level needs that need to be addressed to be able to effectively implement your, your plan, the CoC's plan. And Hannah added another great comment, um, about engagement with program participants. So flagging that, um, that in the chat, the materials in the chat, um, or the, the chat q and a is going to be available on the on HUD dot gov as well as the materials, the recordings, uh, the PowerPoint slides. So please stand by for, for that the recordings take a little bit longer.

Speaker 1   01:19:21   All right, I'm going to pause for one more beat to see if we have any additional questions popping up. And, um, we want to make sure that you all have this as a resource, refer back to it as often as you need to, to try to remember those key, um, you know, grant administrative, uh, related requirements. Um, so, but this is not the end. This is, you will be hearing from the snap's office, your technical assistance providers. So we, we, um, hope to have multiple touch points throughout the next three years. So while this is the end of the Special NOFO training sessions, it's just one of many opportunities for the Snaps office technical assistance providers, and for you as peers to work together and learn from each other and, um, and make an impact in your communities. So I want to thank you all so much for attending. Um, really appreciate these amazing questions and don't hesitate to reach out in one of the various ways, uh, that you have available to you if you need any assistance at all. And with that, this concludes our, uh, Special NOFO startup trainings. Have a good one.

Speaker 0   01:20:47   That concludes our conference. Thank you for using internal events. You may now disconnect.