# Alabama Balance of State Continuum of Care (AL-507)

## FY 2026 Renewal Project Merit Scoring Tool

**Administrative Guidance: Renewal Projects Without a Completed APR**

If a renewal project's most recent Annual Performance Report (APR) is not yet due as of the local competition application deadline, the Ranking & Review Committee shall evaluate the project using the most recent completed APR together with available HMIS, grant management, expenditure, and monitoring information. An applicant shall not be penalized solely because the current APR reporting period has not concluded.

*Alabama Rural Coalition for the Homeless, Inc., Collaborative Applicant*

Local application document for the FY 2026 Continuum of Care Competition and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Grants NOFO.

*Threshold Eligibility Review is completed by the Collaborative Applicant; Merit Scoring is completed by the Ranking & Review Committee. For renewal project applications only. This tool follows the same four-part structure as the New and Expansion Project Merit Scoring Tool, with a Merit Scoring section specific to renewal performance. Committee members shall evaluate only the information contained within the application materials submitted by the published local competition deadline and any information provided uniformly to all committee members by the Collaborative Applicant as part of the review process.*

Applicant: ____________________________________________________

Project: ______________________________________________________

HUD Grant Number: _____________________________________________

Ranking & Review Committee Member: _____________________________ Date: ___________________

**PART 1: THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY REVIEW (COLLABORATIVE APPLICANT)**

## I. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY REVIEW (PASS/FAIL)

*Completed by the Collaborative Applicant prior to committee review.*

| Requirement | Pass | Fail |
|---|---|---|
| Eligible Applicant | ☐ | ☐ |
| Complete Local Application | ☐ | ☐ |
| Required Attachments Received | ☐ | ☐ |
| Coordinated Entry Participation | ☐ | ☐ |
| HMIS / Comparable Database Participation | ☐ | ☐ |
| Threshold Certifications | ☐ | ☐ |
| APR Eligibility Reviewed | ☐ | ☐ |
| Audit / Monitoring Requirements Satisfactorily Addressed | ☐ | ☐ |

**Threshold Result**

☐ PASS

☐ FAIL

*Applications that fail Threshold Review are not advanced to merit scoring by the Ranking and Review Committee.*

**PART 2: MERIT SCORING, 100 POINTS (RANKING & REVIEW COMMITTEE)**

## II. PROJECT PERFORMANCE (35 POINTS)

### A. Occupancy / Utilization (5 Points)

- Bed/unit utilization rate reported in HMIS or a comparable database
- Occupancy consistent with the project's proposed capacity

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

### B. Exits to Permanent Housing (5 Points)

- Percentage of leavers exiting to, or retaining, permanent housing
- Performance relative to HUD system performance benchmarks

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

### C. Housing Retention (5 Points)

- Percentage of participants who remained stably housed during program participation
- Retention performance relative to HUD benchmarks

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

### D. Returns to Homelessness (5 Points)

- Rate of participants returning to homelessness after program exit
- Trend in returns to homelessness over the reporting period

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

### E. Employment & Income Growth (5 Points)

- Percentage of participants who increased income during program participation
- Percentage of participants who gained or maintained employment or other income

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

### F. HMIS Data Quality (5 Points)

- Completeness and accuracy of data entered in HMIS or a comparable database
- Timeliness of data entry relative to HUD data quality standards

**Score ______ / 5**

| **Comments** |
|---|
| |

### G. Timely Grant Expenditure / Compliance (5 Points)

- Rate of grant expenditure relative to the project's operating year
- History of timely and compliant use of grant funds
- Timely submission of required HUD reports, including the Annual Performance Report (APR)

**Score ______ / 5**

| **Comments** |
|---|
| |

## III. PROGRAM DESIGN & FY2026 HUD PRIORITIES (25 POINTS)

*FY 2026 HUD Priorities: The FY 2026 NOFO's Goals and Objectives (Section III.B) identify six priorities for the CoC Program Competition: Improving Outcomes (reducing homelessness and increasing self-sufficiency), Creating Competition (merit-based evaluation of projects), Restoring Balance (expanding Transitional Housing and Street Outreach/SSO capacity), Prioritizing Treatment and Recovery, Promoting Economic Self-Sufficiency, and Advancing Public Safety. Committee members should score how directly the application's program design and narrative reflect these priorities.*

**Use the following rubric:**

| Rating | Points |
|---|---|
| **Outstanding** | **5** |
| **Strong** | **4** |
| **Adequate** | **3** |
| **Limited** | **2** |
| **Poor** | **1** |
| **No Response** | **0** |

A. Treatment & Recovery Connections **Score ______ / 5**

B. Employment & Self Sufficiency **Score ______ / 5**

C. Housing Stability **Score ______ / 5**

D. Overall Project Design **Score ______ / 5**

E. Narrative Quality & Alignment with FY2026 Priorities **Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

## IV. SYSTEM COORDINATION (15 POINTS)

Coordinated Entry Participation **Score ______ / 5**

HMIS Participation **Score ______ / 3**

Mainstream Resource Coordination **Score ______ / 4**

Community Partnerships **Score ______ / 3**

**Comments**

## V. ORGANIZATIONAL & FISCAL CAPACITY (15 POINTS)

Federal Grant Experience **Score ______ / 3**

Financial Management Systems **Score ______ / 3**

Audit / Monitoring History **Score ______ / 3**

Staffing Capacity **Score ______ / 3**

Internal Controls **Score ______ / 3**

**Comments**

## VI. BUDGET & COST REASONABLENESS (5 POINTS)

- Budget justification
- Cost effectiveness
- Reasonableness

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

## VII. EQUITY & ACCESS (5 POINTS)

- Reducing disparities
- Fair access
- Non discrimination

**Score ______ / 5**

**Comments**

## TOTAL SCORE

| Category | Points |
|---|---|
| Project Performance | ______ / 35 |
| Program Design & HUD Priorities | ______ / 25 |
| System Coordination | ______ / 15 |
| Organizational Capacity | ______ / 15 |
| Budget | ______ / 5 |
| Equity | ______ / 5 |
| **TOTAL** | **______ / 100** |

PART 3: COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (RANKING & REVIEW COMMITTEE)

## Committee Recommendation

*Recommendations shall be based solely on the application materials, published scoring criteria, and information provided uniformly to all Ranking & Review Committee members during the local competition process.*

☐ Recommend for Renewal (Full Funding)
☐ Recommend for Renewal with Reduced Budget
☐ Recommend for Renewal with Conditions
☐ Recommend Reallocation
☐ Reject (Threshold)
☐ Reject (Merit)
☐ Not Recommended for Renewal
☐ Withdrawn by Applicant

**Recommended Funding Amount: $____________________**

**Comments**

PART 4: RANKING & REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBER SIGNATURE

Ranking & Review Committee Member Signature: ______________________________ Date: ___________________

Note: Category weighting reflects the FY 2026 Continuum of Care Competition and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Grants NOFO (CPD-2600-DC-0025), including HUD's FY2026 program priorities, HUD renewal performance expectations, and standard CoC Program local scoring practice.

# Scoring Category Definitions

*Plain-language explanations of each scoring category above, for Ranking & Review members scoring renewal projects.*

## I. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

**Threshold Eligibility Review.** A pass/fail eligibility check completed by the Collaborative Applicant before the Ranking & Review Committee scores an application on its merits. It confirms baseline requirements are met: eligible applicant, complete local application, required attachments received, Coordinated Entry and HMIS participation, threshold certifications, APR status review, and audit/monitoring compliance. An application that fails Threshold Eligibility Review is not advanced to merit scoring.

**APR Eligibility Reviewed.** The Collaborative Applicant shall verify the status of the project's Annual Performance Report (APR). If the current APR reporting period has not concluded, the project shall be evaluated using the most recent completed APR together with available HMIS, grant management, expenditure, and monitoring information. If a required APR is delinquent, the delinquency shall be documented and may be considered during Merit Scoring as part of the project's overall performance and compliance unless the AL-507 Local Competition Policies and Procedures expressly identify the delinquency as a threshold eligibility failure.

## II. PROJECT PERFORMANCE

**Occupancy / Utilization.** Whether the project is operating at or near its proposed bed or unit capacity, based on HMIS or comparable database occupancy data.

**Exits to Permanent Housing.** The percentage of program leavers who exited to, or retained, permanent housing, relative to HUD system performance benchmarks.

**Housing Retention.** The percentage of participants who remained stably housed while enrolled in the project.

**Returns to Homelessness.** The rate and trend of participants returning to homelessness after exiting the project, based on the most recent available performance data.

**Employment & Income Growth.** The percentage of participants who increased total income, or gained or maintained employment or other income, during program participation.

**HMIS Data Quality.** The completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of the project's data entered into HMIS or, for victim service providers, a comparable database.

**Timely Grant Expenditure / Compliance.** The project's rate of grant expenditure relative to its operating year, its history of timely and compliant use of grant funds, and the timeliness of its required HUD reports, including the Annual Performance Report (APR).

## III. PROGRAM DESIGN & FY2026 HUD PRIORITIES

**Treatment & Recovery Connections.** Whether the project connects participants with substance use and mental health treatment and recovery supports, reflecting the FY 2026 NOFO's priority of prioritizing treatment and recovery.

**Employment & Self Sufficiency.** Whether the project helps participants increase income and move toward self-sufficiency, reflecting the FY 2026 NOFO's priority of promoting economic self-sufficiency.

**Housing Stability.** Whether the project design supports participants achieving and maintaining stable housing, reflecting the FY 2026 NOFO's priority of improving outcomes.

**Overall Program Design.** The overall strength and coherence of the proposed program model, independent of the specific priority areas scored elsewhere.

**Narrative Quality & Alignment with FY2026 Priorities.** How clearly the application narrative is written and how directly it connects the project to HUD's stated FY 2026 priorities.

## IV. SYSTEM COORDINATION

**Coordinated Entry Participation.** Whether the applicant participates in AL-507's Coordinated Entry system and accepts referrals through it, rather than through a separate intake process.

**HMIS Participation.** Whether the applicant enters data into HMIS or, for victim service providers, a comparable database that meets HUD's data standards.

**Mainstream Resource Coordination.** Whether the project connects participants to mainstream benefits and services, such as SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, or VA services, rather than relying solely on CoC Program funds.

**Community Partnerships.** The depth of the applicant's working relationships with other homeless service and mainstream providers in the community, as it relates to system-wide coordination rather than the project's own referral network.

## V. ORGANIZATIONAL & FISCAL CAPACITY

**Federal Grant Experience.** Whether the applicant has direct experience managing federal grant funds and complying with federal grant requirements.

**Financial Management Systems.** Whether the applicant's accounting and financial management systems are adequate to track and safeguard grant funds.

**Audit / Monitoring History.** Whether the applicant's most recent audit and any HUD monitoring findings show a clean or well-resolved compliance history.

**Staffing Capacity.** Whether the applicant has enough qualified staff, organization-wide, to administer this grant alongside its existing programs.

**Internal Controls.** Whether the applicant has written policies and procedures in place to prevent and detect financial mismanagement.

## VI. BUDGET & COST REASONABLENESS

**Budget & Cost Reasonableness.** Whether the proposed budget is justified line by line, cost-effective relative to the outcomes proposed, and reasonable for the scope and size of the project.

## VII. EQUITY & ACCESS

**Equity & Access.** Whether the project's design and outreach approach reduce disparities in access and outcomes, ensure fair access for all eligible populations, and reflect nondiscrimination.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION OPTIONS

**Recommend for Renewal (Full Funding).** The Committee recommends the project for the Priority Listing at the full renewal amount requested.

**Recommend for Renewal with Reduced Budget.** The Committee recommends the project for renewal at a lower funding amount than requested.

**Recommend for Renewal with Conditions.** The Committee recommends the project for renewal contingent on the applicant addressing specified performance, compliance, or documentation concerns.

**Recommend Reallocation.** The Committee recommends the funding source this project drew on be reallocated to a different project rather than renewed as proposed.

**Reject (Threshold).** The application failed Threshold Review and was not scored on its merits.

**Reject (Merit).** The application passed Threshold Review but did not score competitively enough on its merits to recommend for the Priority Listing.

**Not Recommended for Renewal.** The Committee does not recommend including this project on the Priority Listing ARCH submits to HUD, whether for performance, capacity, strategic, or other reasons.

**Withdrawn by Applicant.** The applicant voluntarily withdrew the application before scoring was completed or before the Priority Listing was finalized.

# Scoring Rubric

*General point-band guidance to help Ranking & Review Committee members, including first-time members, apply the scoring criteria consistently. This rubric is a scoring aid and is not a HUD requirement; the published criteria in Part 2 govern each category's specific expectations.*

## 5-Point Categories

| Points | Rating | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| **5** | **Outstanding** | Fully addresses the criterion with strong supporting documentation. |
| **4** | **Strong** | Addresses the criterion well with only minor weaknesses. |
| **3** | **Adequate** | Meets the criterion but lacks detail or supporting evidence. |
| **2** | **Limited** | Partially addresses the criterion with significant weaknesses. |
| **1** | **Poor** | Minimally addresses the criterion. |
| **0** | **No Response** | Does not address the criterion. |

## 4-Point Categories

| Points | Rating | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| **4** | **Strong** | Fully addresses the criterion with only minor weaknesses. |
| **3** | **Adequate** | Meets the criterion but lacks some detail or supporting evidence. |
| **2** | **Limited** | Partially addresses the criterion with weaknesses. |
| **1** | **Poor** | Minimally addresses the criterion. |
| **0** | **No Response** | Does not address the criterion. |

## 3-Point Categories

| Points | Rating | Guidance |
|---|---|---|
| **3** | **Strong** | Fully addresses the criterion with clear supporting documentation. |
| **2** | **Adequate** | Addresses the criterion but lacks detail or supporting evidence. |
| **1** | **Limited** | Minimally addresses the criterion, with significant weaknesses. |
| **0** | **No Response** | Does not address the criterion. |