

WHAT is SMAC??

A FAQ guide to your burning questions about CoC

What is SMAC??

SMAC stands for Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care (CoC)

What is a CoC??

A CoC or Continuum of Care is defined by the federal legislation called the HEARTH Act and is responsible for coordinating and implementing a system to meet the needs of the homeless population within the geographic area.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires CoCs to have a systematic approach to ending homelessness that includes:

- Outreach
- Emergency Shelter
- Rapid Rehousing
- Transitional Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Prevention Strategies

Available resources through the Continuum of Care program are not sufficient to prevent and end homelessness, coordination and integration of other funding streams, including the Emergency Solutions Grants program and mainstream resources, is integral to carrying out the Continuum of Care System.

The CoC is responsible to bring people with lived experience of homelessness, funding entities, community provider agencies, and other stakeholder groups together to form a cohesive homeless response system that can address homelessness upholding the following values:

- 1) Consistency
- 2) Transparency
- 3) Equitable
- 4) Community led prioritization

SMAC has an amazing network of community providers that are willing to collaborate in our effort to end homelessness. There is an active Directors Council, a group of individuals with personal experience with the SMAC Coordinated Entry System that work to set policies that make sense for the people impacted by homelessness. Every county covered in SMAC's geography are active participants in all

parts of the CoC. For a more comprehensive view of SMAC's infrastructure please see the "SMAC Infrastructure" document.

What is the SMAC Governing Board??

The Governing Board is a group of individuals from the SMAC community that come together to do:

- Strategic planning and goal setting for the homeless response system in SMAC
- Monitoring and evaluating performance goals for all homeless housing and service providers in SMAC, including all CoC, ESG and FHPAP providers
- Monitoring and evaluating the performance of SMAC Collaborative Applicant
- Monitoring and evaluating system-wide goals related to ending and preventing homelessness
- Ensuring the availability of data for planning and goal setting
- Establishing priorities and making decisions about the allocation of CoC resources
- Developing written guidelines that define CoC priorities, eligibility standards for all components of the CoC Plan, and data collection and reporting requirements for all providers
- Aligning and coordinating CoC and other homeless assistance and mainstream resources
- Establishing sub-committees and task forces, as needed, to carry out the work of SMAC

What is Coordinated Entry?

Coordinated Entry is a HUD requirement for all CoCs. It is a systematic approach to accessing resources that are designed to prevent and end homelessness. Coordinated Entry is intended to begin at the very front of the homeless response system and include a consistent, transparent, equitable way for households to access and receive resources in all of the following categories:

- Prevention,
- Emergency shelter
- Navigation
- Supportive Housing

Goals of CES are:

- Create a **client-centered** system by simplifying and streamlining access to assistance
- Create community driven prioritization policies
- Provide connection (with the most appropriate level of assistance needed) to transition from homelessness to stable housing
- Transparency throughout system
- Ability to easily identify gaps in resources

Key components of Coordinated Entry are:

- Access
- Assessment
- Assignment

For information on all of SMAC's Coordinated Entry policies please see the Policies document on the SMAC website.

What is the NOFA??

NOFA stands for Notice of Funding Availability and is an annual application process required by HUD of all CoCs across the county. SMAC receives around \$4 million toward, primarily, supportive housing projects that provide rental subsidy and support services for households across the region.

The NOFA is made up of 3 distinct parts:

- Collaborative Application
- Project Applications
- Planning Grant

The Collaborative Application requires the CoC to provide data and narrative to HUD about how well they system is functioning. It includes responses about all parts of the homeless response system, not just the parts funded by HUD.

Project Applications are submitted directly from the agency applying for the project to HUD and includes a description of the services to be provided by the project as well as a budget. The CoC is responsible to review all project applications and objectively score them based on past performance. The CoC then must rank each project based on the score and submit this ranking to HUD.

The Planning Grant is submitted with the overall application to HUD annually. The funds awarded to the CoC through the planning grant can support any planning and coordination function the CoC requires to ensure it can function day to day. In SMAC the primary use of planning funds is to fund the CoC Coordinator position.