

# MO BoS CoC Policy for Letters of Support, Letters of Participation, and Memoranda of Understanding Requests

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Missouri Balance of State's Continuum of Care (CoC)'s Policy on requests for Letters of Support (LS), Letters of Participation (LP), and Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) is to set the policy and guidelines the CoC will use regarding creating any of these documents for existing or new projects which provide housing and/or services to individuals or families who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness in the Missouri Balance of State.

## **Background**

Each year, the CoC receives numerous requests for LSs, LPs, and MOUs from agencies that provide housing and/or services to people experiencing homelessness across the 101 counties of the Balance of State. The CoC is establishing this policy for providing any of these documents to ensure it has the necessary information about the agency and project to evaluate whether the project meets the objectives of the Continuum of Care and to ensure it has the appropriate amount of time to compose requested documents for the proposed project. Information regarding document requests will be disseminated to the Balance of State through local representatives and via email. Letters of Support and Participation require signatures from the Collaborative Applicant and the Mo BoS CoC Board Chair. MOUs require signatures from the Collaborative Applicant and the MO BoS CoC Board Chair.

## *Process to Request a Letter of Support (from Mo BoS CoC Board)*

The agency requesting the letter should provide the following materials at least 30 calendar days prior to the date that they need the letter. Letters of support will not be provided if 30 calendar days' notice is not given. An agency may request an exception to the 30 day notice requirement when the timeframe required in a funding notice reasonably prevents the agency from submitting the request 30 days prior to the date needed. Requests must be sent via e-mail to the CoC at [moboscoc@outlook.com](mailto:moboscoc@outlook.com):

- **Cover Letter:** A cover letter, which may be in the form of an email, from the agency's Executive Director (or other applicable staff) requesting the letter of support. The Cover Letter must include the amount of funding being applied for, the funding source, the agency's BoS CoC region, and, where applicable, a request for an exception to the 30 day notice requirement including a description of the circumstances necessitating an exception;
- **One-Page Project Description:** A brief one-page description of the project which includes:
  - explanation of the need for the project,
  - a description of how the project anticipates participating in the Coordinated Entry System (if applicable),

- project details including the program and service delivery model being used, the location of the project, target population and the number of persons to be served, the number, type (i.e. PSH units), and configuration (i.e. 1 bedroom apartment) of housing units or beds,
  - expected project outcomes,
  - expected operation date of the project;
- Project Budget: A budget which includes the amount and sources for all supportive services;
  - Sample Letter of Support: A sample letter of support for the project, for the CoC to use at its discretion. The sample letter should be in the form of a Word document.

Please include the contact information for the person who should be contacted in case the BoS CoC Board has questions about the project or the requested letter of support.

A decision about letter of support requests will be sent to the contact indicated on the cover letter within 7 business days. If an agency is requesting an updated letter of support within six months of the original letter and there are no significant changes to the project, the agency may request an updated letter. Updated letters must be addressed in the same cover letter format as new letters. Significant changes include changes to partners, population, unit mix (type, configuration, amount), location, services provided, and funding sources. These changes require a new LS.

### *Process to Request a Letter of Participation (from MHDC)*

The agency requesting the letter should provide the following materials at least 30 calendar days prior to the date that they need the letter. Letters of participation will not be provided if 30 calendar days' notice is not given. An agency may request an exception to the 30 day notice requirement if the timeframe within a funding notice reasonably prevents the agency from submitting the request 30 days prior to the date needed. Requests must be sent via e-mail to the CoC at [moboscoc@outlook.com](mailto:moboscoc@outlook.com).

- Cover Letter: A cover letter, which may be in the form of an email, from the agency's Executive Director (or other applicable staff) requesting the letter of participation which includes the type and amount of funding being applied for, the funding source, and, where applicable, a request for an exception to the 30 day notice requirement including a description of the circumstances necessitating an exception;
- Proof of CoC Participation for the current calendar year: including CoC Meeting Attendance, CoC Leadership, and participation in BoS Regional Coordinated Entry Meetings, and other CoC involvement (committees, special meetings).

A decision about LP requests will be sent to the contact indicated on the cover letter within 5 business days. The signed LP will be submitted to the contact indicated prior to the deadline indicated by the requesting agency.

### *Process to Request a Memorandum of Understanding (with the Missouri Balance of State Continuum of Care)*

The agency requesting the MOU should provide the following materials at least 30 calendar days prior to the date that they need the MOU. MOU requests will not be provided if 30 calendar days' notice is not

given. An agency may request an exception to the 30 day notice requirement if the timeframe within a funding notice reasonably prevents the agency from submitting the request 30 days prior to the date needed. Requests must be sent via e-mail to the CoC at [moboscoc@outlook.com](mailto:moboscoc@outlook.com):

- Cover Letter: A cover letter, which may be in the form of an email, from the agency's Executive Director (or other applicable staff) requesting the MOU which, when the request is related to funding, includes the amount funding being applied for as well as the funding source and, where applicable, a request for an exception to the 30 day notice requirement including a description of the circumstances necessitating an exception;
- One-Page Project Description: A brief one-page description of the project which includes:
  - explanation of the need for the project,
  - a description of how the project anticipates participating in the Coordinated Entry System (if applicable),
  - project details including the program and service delivery model being used, the location of the project, target population and the number of persons to be served, the number, type (i.e. PSH units), and configuration (i.e. 1 bedroom apartment) of housing units or beds
  - expected project outcomes
  - expected operation date of the project;
- Project Budget: A budget which includes the amount and sources for all supportive services;
- Outline of Project Goals: List the specific goals of the Project.
- Outline of Roles and Responsibilities of Agency/PHA: List the specific roles and responsibilities of the requesting Agency and the integration of Coordinated Entry.
- Outline of Roles and Responsibilities of CoC: List the specific roles and responsibilities you expect of the CoC in regards to the Project.

Please include the contact information for the person who should be contacted in case the BoS CoC Board has questions about the project or the requested letter of support.

A decision about MOU requests will be sent to the contact indicated on the cover letter within 14 business days. The signed MOU will be submitted to the contact indicated prior to the deadline indicated by requesting agency. If an agency is requesting an updated MOU within six months of the original MOU and there are no significant changes to the project, the agency may request a simple updated version. Updated letters must be addressed in the same cover letter format as new letters. If the MOU includes a party or parties other than the CoC and the requesting agency, the requesting agency must receive written approval to update the MOU from the additional party or parties prior to submitting a request to the CoC and must include the approval(s) with the agency's request to the CoC. Significant changes include changes to partners, population, unit mix (type, configuration, amount), location, services provided, and funding sources. Any of these changes require a new MOU.

### **Additional Considerations**

HMIS Certification: The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or, for victim services organizations, comparable database is a critical component of the Continuum of Care. Therefore, the

CoC strives to ensure accurate and complete data quality. If the agency and/or its partner(s) enter data into HMIS or a comparable database, the following data quality standards must be met for all programs/projects within the agency at the time of request in order to receive the MOU:

- <https://icamissouri.helpscoutdocs.com/article/59-data-standards-oct-2017>

Written Standards: Projects receiving a letter of support are expected to align with the [CoC's Written Standards](#).

HMIS: Data will be entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or comparable database in accordance with the HMIS Policies & Procedures and as applicable to the type of project.

- *Coordinated Entry System*: Tenants experiencing homelessness will be selected via the Coordinated Entry System process ONLY, and homeless status and chronicity (if applicable) will be verified. Agencies with projects entering into HMIS or a comparable database will attend local Coordinated Entry meetings and case conferencing.

### **Denial Policy**

The CoC reserves the right to deny a Letter of Support, Letter of Participation, or a Memorandum of Understanding if the request does not conform to the submission guidelines outlined in this policy. The CoC may also deny a request if the proposal is not consistent with CoC strategic priorities and goals.

Examples of conditions in which a request may be denied include:

- The organization has lost funding through the CoC Program for poor performance.
- The organization has little or no history of performance or lacks organizational capacity.
- The project is for a service and/or population not prioritized by the CoC.

The examples listed above are not exhaustive.

If a request is denied, a notice of denial will be sent to the requestor via email. This notice will include the justification for denying the request. Denials will be communicated in writing to the requestor within 15 business days of receipt of the original request.