



**FY2021 Continuum of Care
New Project Application**

Agencies that apply for funds through the CoC Funding Process must complete an application for each program in E-snaps. In addition, agencies must complete this New Project Application for each program.

This form is due on **October 4, 2021 at Noon** by e-mail to hsc@cityofmadison.com. **Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Please do not wait until the deadline to submit the application. No grace period will be granted.** If you have questions, please contact Torrie Kopp Mueller, tkoppmueller@cityofmadison.com or call 608-266-6254.

Agencies with more than one CoC project must submit a separate form for EACH project.

Agency Name	Urban Triage
Project Name	Unhoused Neighbors Initiative

Project Contact Name	Brandi Grayson
Phone Number	(608) 520-0741
E-Mail	bgrayson@urbantriage.org

Funding Request	\$276,400
Proposed # of Units	N/A
Proposed # of Beds	N/A
DV Bonus Project – Yes or No?	No

Please answer the following questions:

Project applications will be reviewed based upon adherence to the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule, FY21 CoC NOFA, and FY21 CoC NOFA Policy Priorities, as well as results of the Project Performance Scorecard.

- 1. Please describe how your project takes proactive steps to minimize or overcome barriers to housing retention.**

Since 2019, Urban Triage (UT) has proactively connected individuals and families experiencing housing insecurity with support and resources in Madison, Wisconsin, and throughout the Greater Dane County Area. UT has developed relationships with organizations throughout

Madison and Dane County (both sponsors and service delivery sectors). Our investment in building social capital and trust within our communities and systems, along with our experience, commitment, success, and positive reputation, has led to our unique standing and ability to overcome critical barriers in housing retention. It has also contributed to our ability to develop and implement dynamic programming quickly and efficiently.

Our goal is to establish a Coordinated Entry System through our Unhoused Neighbors program to ensure responsiveness and minimize the burden on individuals already facing severe hardships, including homelessness. A community-based staffing model is used to ensure rapid response and immediately mitigate wait times to hear from and receive assistance. Additionally, people often need multiple services but do not know where to go due to a lack of provider collaboration or a collaboration's failure to demonstrate an action-based analysis of interpersonal, cultural, and systemic racism. By collaborating with organizations across Dane County, which provide direct access points for UT, we can connect families to services seamlessly. Thus, offering us the opportunity not just to support the current coordinated entry system but expand it.

While Madison and Dane County have several organizations designed to address challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness, there are significant gaps in the system entry process that need attention. For example, being able to gather the necessary documentation and disability verification (as required) is a tremendous barrier for applicants. Due to our extensive network of partners, we can quickly gather the documentation needed for permanent housing; thus establishing a broader holistic community approach. UT prides itself on working jointly with partners while centering on the needs of the applicant. By establishing a partnership with the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) and serving as their CoC grant subrecipient, we're able to expand on our current relationships and strengthen the Coordinated Entry System by way of our partnerships. We'll be working closely with our current partner, Anesis Therapy Center, to gather disability verification and other documentation in a culturally specific setting. Anesis is made up of a racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse team that brings insight into the dimensions of identity. Their staff bring community knowledge that deeply supports structural inclusivity within all aspects of their reach.

2. Describe your agency's overall quality improvement efforts. Please include how you solicit and incorporate feedback from program participants.

We advocate for the rights of community members, review empirical studies, and build trusting relationships with neighborhood residents and other service providers as part of our community-based programming. UT values flexibility and meeting community members where they are. Our Coordinative Entry program will utilize the Community-Based Project design that codifies the community's organized set of actions highlighting the choices and desires of the community. Our program actions are based on community engagement sessions, advocacy work, outreach, and training. We asked and continue to ask community members: What's working? What doesn't work? What was and is your experience? Etc. These questions relate to each other: (1) the desire is identified, (2) the current resources are identified, (3) the means to use those resources to reach desired ends are identified, and (4) we're able to predict some impact and consequences. Our community-project design questions are restructured to fit the needs of each program and to answer the following question: What is the problem? We then define the goal and solve the problem, determine the available resources and the constraints,

and devise strategies to make the most of the resources and avoid the restrictions. The problem we are trying to solve, methods we are using, and skills we need to accomplish, and our objectives determine our organizational structure and staff assignments.

To ensure accountability, we evaluate the impact and effectiveness of our work using a logic model. Every three months, we examine inputs, outputs, and our quality indicators to determine any adjustments. We review and assess each program and discuss our data in staff meetings using a strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats (SWOT) approach to determine what's working and not working and where and how we may need to pivot. We use quarterly and annual evaluations to monitor and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programming and the purpose of our executive team. Our Board of Directors also plays a significant role in providing guidance and advice to balance staff and community perspectives. We accomplish this through the use of regularly scheduled, structured, and data-driven meetings to review performance indicators with program personnel. Data is the centerpiece of our meetings and discussions, although non-quantitative information naturally plays a major role as well. We directly survey program participants, staff, executive leaders, and advisory board members and gather feedback from partners and stakeholders in key service sectors. We use Basecamp, a project management software, for an organizational tool and repository of program participant data.

3. CoC-funded projects are required to comply with the Dane County Written Standards. Describe how the agency plans on ensuring compliance with the Written Standards including plans for internal review and monitoring of project policies and practices.

The Dane County Written Standards for Coordinated Entry focus on creating a streamlined, user-friendly response system. We do that by quickly assessing and connecting individuals or families to appropriate, tailored housing and mainstream services within the community. As noted, Urban Triage has spent years developing partnerships with organizations throughout Dane County to better and more effectively serve those who need it most. We will make service connections, partner directly with housing providers to connect individuals and families to permanent housing and promote low barriers to entry or service and quickly identify people experiencing homelessness. We will also use the standardized Coordinated Entry assessment tool and practices. However, we will tailor them to better fit individuals who often fall through the cracks and cannot access the documentation needed to access permanent housing. Through our housing partnerships, we will conduct our Coordinated Entry assessments. Additionally, to comply with the Dane County Written Standards, we will also use our current system of mobile hubs to reach our most vulnerable unhoused neighbors.

Coordinated Entry staff will use our 90-day Supporting Healthy Black Families and Co-Conspirator Workgroups, along with a federal and state housing law training, to guarantee the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of federal civil rights laws are met. Our staff will also hold daily office hours throughout housing locations in Dane County along with the mobile hubs. A key element of our program will be using communication services understood by individuals with disabilities.

We will monitor project policies and practices to determine where we can make adjustments. As with other Urban Triage programs and the organization as a whole, Coordinated Entry staff will conduct internal reviews every three months to identify what is working well, where

improvements can be made and where gaps occur. We will also send short assessments to partner agencies to certify we are operating with integrity and make adjustments if we find that we aren't. All Coordinated Entry staff will receive a mandatory checklist to include program standards and case management services outlined in the written standards. Every staff member will have a copy of the written standards and it will be reviewed every three months to ensure compliance. If we are out of compliance, we will adjust immediately. To further streamline the program, recommended practices will be included in our standard operations procedures.

The efforts above will ensure compliance with Dane County Written Standards for Coordinated entry

- 4. All projects, including non-housing projects, must operate with the Housing First approach as described in the CoC Written Standards general requirements. Describe how the Housing First approach will be applied to the proposed project. Include aspects of project policies and staff training that can support the Housing First approach such as trauma-informed care and harm reduction.**

All Urban Triage programming is built on the concept(s) of Housing First and rooted in transformative justice, including our Coordinated Entry System. Our concern is always the root cause and compressive outcomes. Our streamlined approach will provide the appropriate levels of housing and services based on the individual's needs and will prioritize individuals with severe service needs for the most intensive interventions. We believe that an unhoused individual or household's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing. Other issues that may affect the family can and should be addressed once housing is obtained.

In contrast, many other programs operate from a model of "housing readiness"-that is, an individual or household must address other issues that may have led to the episode of homelessness before entering housing. Our Coordinated Entry System will be the initial contact point for many experiencing homelessness in Madison and the Dane County area. During this process, our Coordinated Entry staff will determine program eligibility, gather documentation, link the individual to vital community resources, provide information on emergency shelters in the area, and work with local agencies to provide the greatest assistance possible for the individual or family to secure permanent housing. By utilizing our trained staff and strong community partnerships, we will process requests as quickly and effectively as possible. Additionally, all our services are volunteer-based versus mandatory. We work closely with housing programs to ensure that individuals or families who cannot be served at their locations have access to other housing and services with one of our other partners.

We recognize the role trauma may play in an individual's life, including our staff. As such, all Urban Triage staff go through the 90-day personal leadership, advocacy, and development training, "Supporting Healthy Black Families" (for Black adults) or the "Co-Conspirator" (for non-Black adults) Workgroups. These trainings cultivate and sustain an organizational culture of service, self-analysis, trauma-informed care, leadership, and action. The Workgroup experience equips Coordinated Entry staff with the skills needed to engage with individuals in a person-centered approach, utilizing a housing first philosophy and the tools to practice and prioritize self-care to combat burnout and the effects of secondary trauma. The trauma-informed portion

of each Workgroup offering relates to addressing the trauma experienced in an individual's life and the historical trauma faced by the Black community and how it impacts people's day-to-day lives. Additionally, all staff who participate in these Workgroups act as case managers for other participants (past or present), providing them with intention, care and access to resources and working closely with them to problem-solve together and independently.

5. Describe key partnerships your agency has established that will help with implementation of this project.

Along with our Anesis Therapy Center partners, Urban Triage has partnerships across different sectors, including public health, community organizations, education, government, business, and civil society. We participate in Dane CORE meetings, a partnership between Dane County, the City of Madison, Urban Triage, Tenant Resource Center, Community Action Coalition, and other community partners. We also partner and have immediate referral processes established with 10 of the Homeless Services Consortium organizations.

To engage the whole community in our work and increase the accessibility of resources and support through a well-organized process that identifies and matches needs across multiple services, we rely on partners including the Dane County Collaboration of Black Service Providers (DCCBSP-made up of 10 organizations) and the Dane County Homeless Services Consortium. Our DCCBSP partnership allows us to expand our capacity, networks, reach, and services. It led to our person-centered coordinated rapid response to immediate needs, including housing. However, we understand that neighbors will need assistance in more than one way and often at more than one time. Each success we have opens up new possibilities for gaining trust and serving someone more effectively and comprehensively. Our collaboration and partnerships with organizations such as the YWCA, Rape Crisis Center, Briarpatch, End Abuse of WI, Freedom Inc, FOSTER, Mt Zion Baptist Church, Family Works, Social Workers of MMSD, Dane County Human Services, MACH 1, Tiny Homes, Porch Light, Urban League of Greater Madison, Just Dane, Anesis, Madison Metropolitan School District, and others ensure that we can efficiently connect those most impacted and forgotten with multiple agencies.

6. What percentage of staff members identify as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Color? (Info only, to be scored in FY22)

At this time, Urban Triage employs 14 full-time and two part-time employees. 88% of our staff are Black and 94% are women.

7. How does this program work against systemic racism and other structures of oppression? (Info only, to be scored in FY22)

UT names white supremacy racism as the most critical relevant feature of society and connects this concept directly to systemic racism and the maintenance of oppressive systems. Our organizational framework is firmly rooted in the mantra: *For Us, By Us*. We promote increasing the capacity of Black families and communities to identify, develop, implement, and sustain their solutions to problems *in a way that helps them shape and exercise control over their physical, social, economic, and cultural environments*. Our mission is to empower and inspire

Black communities. To accomplish our mission we provide the people we serve with the tools and skills to navigate white supremacy inside themselves and within institutions.

Successful work can't be done effectively without engaging those most impacted, as they are the answer. UT's *for the community by the community* approach means providing humanity-centered services and relying on trusting partnerships within communities, institutions and systems. All programming of UT is informed and guided by advocacy work and community engagement sessions. Utilizing our workgroups--including Supporting Healthy Black Families, we can engage systems and the people most impacted.

8. How will this program and its practices be culturally responsive to the population(s) who participate? (Info only, to be scored in FY22)

Urban Triage is culturally responsive in all we do. We are an organization that is unapologetic in centering Black families, Black needs and Black communities. All of our programming includes positive racial socialization strategies, messages, and techniques to help promote trust, social capital and resilience in communities that are most vulnerable. Racial socialization provides vital protective factors, including positive racial identity attitudes, self-esteem, and lower internalizing behaviors, including depression, anxiety, and anger. Our intentional framework moves marginalized populations from being victims to victorious. With the support of those who look like them and who have been in the same shoes.

9. How did you hear about the CoC funding opportunity? (INFO ONLY)

Torrie Kopp Mueller, the Continuum of Care Coordinator for the City of Madison and Homeless Services Consortium of Dane County. She forwarded the grant information to us.