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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program for Fiscal Year 2005

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This NOFA announces the timeframe to submit applications for section 515 Rural Rental Housing (RRH) loan funds, including applications for the nonprofit set-aside for eligible nonprofit entities, the set-aside for the most Underserved Counties and Colonias (Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act), and the set-aside for Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/ECs) and Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) zones. This document describes the methodology that will be used to distribute funds, the application process, submission requirements, and areas of special emphasis or consideration.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of all applications in response to this NOFA is 5 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State Office on May 13, 2005. The application closing deadline is firm as to date and hour. The Agency will not consider any application that is received after the closing deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by the United States Postal Service or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX) and postage due applications will not be accepted.

ADDRESSES: Applicants wishing to apply for assistance must contact the Rural Development State office serving the place in which they desire to submit an application for rural rental housing to receive further information and copies of the application package. Rural Development will date and time stamp incoming applications to evidence timely receipt, and, upon request, will provide the applicant with a written acknowledgment of receipt. A listing of Rural Development State offices, their addresses, telephone numbers, and person to contact follows:

Note: Telephone numbers listed are not toll-free.

Alabama State Office
Suite 601, Sterling Centre
4121 Carmichael Road
Montgomery, AL 36106-3683
(334) 279-3455
TDD (334) 279-3495
James B. Harris

Alaska State Office
800 West Evergreen, Suite 201
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 761-7740
TDD (907) 761-8905
Debbie Andrys

Arizona State Office
Phoenix Courthouse and Federal Building
230 North First Ave., Suite 206
Phoenix, AZ 85003-1706
(602) 280-8765
TDD (602) 280-8706
Johnna Vargas

Arkansas State Office
700 W. Capitol Ave., Room 3416
Little Rock, AR 72201-3225
(501) 301-3250
TDD (501) 301-3063
Greg Kemper

California State Office
430 G Street, #4169
Davis, CA 95616-4169
(530) 792-5830
TDD (530) 792-5848
Jeff Deiss

Colorado State Office
655 Parfet Street, Room E100
Lakewood, CO 80215
(720) 544-2923
TDD (800) 659-2656
Mary Summerfield

Connecticut
Served by Massachusetts State Office
Delaware and Maryland State Office
4607 South Dupont Highway
PO Box 400
Camden, DE 19934-9998
(302) 697-4353
TDD (302) 697-4303
Pat Baker

Florida & Virgin Islands State Office
4440 N.W. 25th Place
Gainesville, FL 32606-6563
(352) 338-3465
TDD (352) 338-3499
Elizabeth M. Whitaker

Georgia State Office
Stephens Federal Building
355 E. Hancock Avenue
Athens, GA 30601-2768
(706) 546-2164
TDD (706) 546-2034
Wayne Rogers

Hawaii State Office
(Services all Hawaii, American Samoa
Guam, and Western Pacific)
Room 311, Federal Building
154 Waiuanue Avenue
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 933-8305
TDD (808) 933-8321
Jack Mahan

Idaho State Office
Suite A1
9173 West Barnes Dr.
Boise, ID 83709
(208) 378-5630

TDD (208) 378-5644
LaDonn McElligott
Illinois State Office
2118 West Park Court, Suite A
Champaign, IL 61821-2986
(217) 403-6222
TDD (217) 403-6240
Barry L. Ramsey

Indiana State Office
5975 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278
(317) 290-3100 (ext. 423)
TDD (317) 290-3343
John Young

Iowa State Office
210 Walnut Street Room 873
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 284-4666
TDD (515) 284-4858
Sue Wilhite

Kansas State Office
1303 SW First American Place, Suite 100
Topeka, KS 66604-4040
(785) 271-2721
TDD (785) 271-2767
Virginia M. Hammersmith

Kentucky State Office
771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200
Lexington, KY 40503
(859) 224-7325
TDD (859) 224-7422
Paul Higgins

Louisiana State Office
3727 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302
(318) 473-7962
TDD (318) 473-7655
Yvonne R. Emerson

Maine State Office
967 Illinois Ave., Suite 4
PO Box 405
Bangor, ME 04402-0405
(207) 990-9110
TDD (207) 942-7331
Bob Nadeau

Maryland
Served by Delaware State Office
Massachusetts, Connecticut, & Rhode Island
State Office

451 West Street
Amherst, MA 01002
(413) 253-4333
TDD (413) 253-4590
Donald Colburn

Michigan State Office
3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 324-5192
TDD (517) 337-6795
Ghulam R. Simbal

Minnesota State Office
375 Jackson Street Building, Suite 410
St. Paul, MN 55101-1853
(651) 602-7782
TDD (651) 602-7830
Peter Lundquist

Mississippi State Office
Federal Building, Suite 831
100 W. Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269
(601) 965-4325
TDD (601) 965-5850
Darnella Smith-Murray
Missouri State Office

601 Business Loop 70 West
Parkade Center, Suite 235
Columbia, MO 65203
(573) 876-0990
TDD (573) 876-9480
Colleen James

Montana State Office
900 Technology Blvd. Suite B
Bozeman, MT 59715
(406) 585-2565
TDD (406) 585-2562
Deborah Chorlton

Nebraska State Office
Federal Building, Room 152
100 Centennial Mall N
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 437-5594
TDD (402) 437-5093
Phil Willnerd

Nevada State Office
1390 South Curry Street
Carson City, NV 89703-9910
(775) 887-1222 (ext. 25)
TDD (775) 885-0633
Angilla Denton

New Hampshire State Office
Concord Center
Suite 218, Box 317
10 Ferry Street
Concord, NH 03301-5004
(603) 223-6046
TDD (603) 229-0536
Jim Fowler

New Jersey State Office
5th Floor North Suite 500
8000 Midlantic Dr.
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054
(856) 787-7740
TDD (856) 787-7784
George Hyatt, Jr.

New Mexico State Office
6200 Jefferson St., NE, Room 255
Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 761-4944
TDD (505) 761-4938
Carmen N. Lopez

New York State Office
The Galleries of Syracuse
441 S. Salina Street, Suite 357 5th Floor
Syracuse, NY 13202
(315) 477-6419
TDD (315) 477-6447
George N. Von Pless

North Carolina State Office
4405 Bland Road, Suite 260
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 873-2066
TDD (919) 873-2003
Terry Strole

North Dakota State Office
Federal Building, Room 208
220 East Rosser
PO Box 1737
Bismarck, ND 58502
(701) 530-2049
TDD (701) 530-2113
Kathy Lake

Ohio State Office
Federal Building, Room 507
200 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43215-2477
(614) 255-2418
TDD (614) 255-2554
Melodie Taylor-Ward

Oklahoma State Office
100 USDA, Suite 108
Stillwater, OK 74074-2654
(405) 742-1070
TDD (405) 742-1007
Ivan S. Graves

Oregon State Office
101 SW Main, Suite 1410
Portland, OR 97204-3222
(503) 414-3352
TDD (503) 414-3387
Margo Donelin

Pennsylvania State Office
One Credit Union Place, Suite 330
Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996
(717) 237-2281
TDD (717) 237-2261
Martha Eberhart

Puerto Rico State Office
654 Munoz Rivera Avenue
IBM Plaza, Suite 601
Hato Rey, PR 00918
(787) 766-5095 (ext. 249)
TDD (787) 766-5332
Lourdes Colon

Rhode Island
Served by Massachusetts State Office
South Carolina State Office
Strom Thurmond Federal Building
1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 253-3432
TDD (803) 765-5697
Larry D. Floyd

South Dakota State Office
Federal Building, Room 210
200 Fourth Street, SW
Huron, SD 57350
(605) 352-1132
TDD (605) 352-1147
Roger Hazuka or Pam Reilly

Tennessee State Office
Suite 300
3322 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37203-1084
(615) 783-1375
TDD (615) 783-1397
Housing Program Director

Texas State Office
Federal Building, Suite 102
101 South Main
Temple, TX 76501
(254) 742-9758
TDD (254) 742-9712
Julie Hayes

Utah State Office
Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building
125 S. State Street, Room 4311
Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0350
(801) 524-4325
TDD (801) 524-3309
Janice Kocher

Vermont State Office
City Center, 3rd Floor
89 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 828-6021
TDD (802) 223-6365
Heidi Setien

Virgin Islands
Served by Florida State Office
Virginia State Office
Culpeper Building, Suite 238
1606 Santa Rosa Road

Richmond, VA 23229
(804) 287-1596
TDD (804) 287-1753
CJ Michels

Washington State Office
1835 Black Lake Blvd., Suite B
Olympia, WA 98512
(360) 704-7730
TDD (360) 704-7760
Robert Lund

Western Pacific Territories
Served by Hawaii State Office
West Virginia State Office
Federal Building
75 High Street, Room 320
Morgantown, WV 26505-7500
(304) 284-4889
TDD (304) 284-4836
Craig St. Clair

Wisconsin State Office
4949 Kirschling Court
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 345-7615 (ext. 151)
TDD (715) 345-7614
Peter Kohnen

Wyoming State Office
PO Box 11005
Casper, WY 82602
(307) 233-6715
TDD (307) 233-6733
Jack Hyde

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, applicants may contact Barbara Chism, Senior Loan Officer, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Housing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Stop 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, 20250, telephone (202) 690-1436 (voice) (this is not a toll free number) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Programs Affected

The Rural Rental Housing program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under Number 10.415, Rural Rental Housing Loans. Rental Assistance is listed in the Catalog under Number 10.427, Rural Rental Assistance Payments.

Discussion of Notice

I. Authority and Distribution Methodology

A. Authority

Section 515 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1485) provides RHS with the authority to make loans to any individual, corporation, association, trust, Indian tribe, public or private nonprofit organization, consumer cooperative, or partnership to provide rental or cooperative housing and related facilities in rural areas for very-low, low, or moderate income persons or families, including elderly persons

and persons with disabilities. Rental assistance (RA) is a tenant subsidy for very-low and low-income families residing in rural rental housing facilities with RHS financing and, when available, may be requested with applications for such facilities.

B. Distribution Methodology

The total amount available for Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 for section 515 is \$99,200,000, of which \$25,792,000 is available for new construction as follows:

Section 515 new construction funds	\$5,904,000
Set-aside for nonprofits	8,928,000
Set-aside for Underserved Counties and Colonias	4,960,000
Set-aside for EZ, EC, and REAP Zones	5,000,000
State Rental Assistance (RA) Designated reserve	1,000,000

C. Section 515 New Construction Funds

For FY 2005, the Administrator has determined that it would not be practical to allocate funds to States because of funding limitations; therefore, section 515 new construction funds will be distributed to States based on a National competition, as follows:

1. States will accept, review, score, and rank requests in accordance with 7 CFR 3560.56. The scoring factors are:

(a) The presence and extent of leveraged assistance for the units that will serve RHS income-eligible tenants at basic rents comparable to those if RHS provided full financing, computed as a percentage of the RHS total development cost (TDC). Loan proposals that include secondary funds from other sources that have been requested but have not yet been committed will be processed as follows: the proposal will be scored based on the requested funds, provided (1) the applicant includes evidence of a filed application for the funds; and (2) the funding date of the requested funds will permit processing of the loan request in the current funding cycle, or, if the applicant does not receive the requested funds, will permit processing of the next highest ranked proposal in the current year. Points will be awarded in accordance with the following table. (0 to 20 points)

Percentage of leveraging	Points
75 or more	20
70-74	19
65-69	18
60-64	17
55-59	16
50-54	15
45-49	14
40-44	13
35-39	12

Percentage of leveraging	Points
30-34	11
25-29	10
20-24	9
15-19	8
10-14	7
5-9	6
0-4	0

(b) The units to be developed are in a colonia, tribal land, EZ, EC, or REAP zone, or in a place identified in the State Consolidated Plan or State Needs Assessment as a high need community for multifamily housing. (20 points)

(c) In states where RHS has an on-going formal working relationship, agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State to provide State resources (State funds, State RA, HOME funds, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, or Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)) for RHS proposals; or where the State provides preference or points to RHS proposals in awarding such State resources, 20 points will be provided to loan requests that include such State resources in an amount equal to at least 5 percent of the TDC. Native American Housing and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) funds may be considered a State Resource if the Tribal Plan for NAHASDA funds contains provisions for partnering with RHS for multifamily housing. (National Office initiative)

(d) The loan request includes donated land meeting the provisions of 7 CFR 3560.56(c)(1)(iv). (5 points)

2. The National Office will rank all requests nationwide and distribute funds to States in rank order, within funding limits. If insufficient funds remain for the next ranked proposal, the Agency will select the next ranked proposal that falls within the remaining levels. Point score ties will be handled in accordance with 7 CFR 3560.56(c)(2).

D. Applications That Do Not Require New Construction RA

For FY 2005, new construction RA will be available in limited amounts. Therefore, the Agency is inviting applications to develop units in markets that do not require RA. The market study for proposals must clearly demonstrate a need and demand for the units by prospective tenants at income levels that can support the proposed rents without tenant subsidies. The proposed units must offer amenities that are typical for the market area at rents that are comparable to conventional rents in the market for similar units.

E. Set-Asides

Loan requests will be accepted for the following set-asides:

1. Nonprofit set-aside. An amount of \$8,928,000 has been set aside for nonprofit applicants. All loan proposals must be in designated places in accordance with 7 CFR 3560.57. A State or jurisdiction may receive one proposal from this set-aside, which cannot exceed \$1 million. A State could get additional funds from this set-aside if any funds remain after funding one proposal from each participating State. If there are insufficient funds to fund one loan request from each participating State, selection will be made by point score. If there are any funds remaining, they will be handled in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 1485(w)(3). Funds from this set-aside will be available only to nonprofit entities, which may include a partnership that has as its general partner a nonprofit entity or the nonprofit entity's for-profit subsidiary which will be receiving low-income housing tax credits authorized under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. To be eligible for this set-aside, the nonprofit entity must be an organization that:

(a) Will own an interest in the project to be financed and will materially participate in the development and the operations of the project;

(b) Is a private organization that has nonprofit, tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) or section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(c) Has among its purposes the planning, development, or management of low-income housing or community development projects; and

(d) Is not affiliated with or controlled by a for-profit organization.

2. Underserved counties and colonias set-aside. An amount of \$4,960,000 has been set aside for loan requests to develop units in the 100 most needy underserved counties or colonias as defined in section 509(f) of the Housing Act of 1949.

3. EZ, EC, and REAP set-aside. An amount of \$5,000,000 has been set aside to develop units in EZ, EC, or REAP zone. Loan requests that are eligible for this set-aside are also eligible for regular section 515 funds. If requests for this set-aside exceed available funds, selection will be made in accordance with 7 CFR 3560.56(c).

II. Funding Limits

A. Individual loan requests may not exceed \$1 million. This applies to regular section 515 funds and set-aside funds. The Administrator may make an exception to this limit in cases where a

State's average total development costs exceed the National average by 50 percent or more.

B. No State may receive more than \$2.5 million, including set-aside funds.

III. Rental Assistance (RA)

In addition to the State Matching RA program as described in Section VI. E. of this Notice and subject to its availability, new construction RA will be held in the National Office for use with section 515 Rural Rental Housing loans. Because the amount of RA available for new construction is minimal, RA will be granted to projects which best meet the scoring and ranking criteria at 7 CFR 3560.56(c). In addition, preferential consideration for RA will be given to projects: (1) where a subsidy for rent is provided from within the state jurisdiction; and (2) where the least amount of RA is needed to make the project feasible, calculated as a percentage. New construction RA may not be used in conjunction with a transfer or subsequent loan for repairs or rehabilitation, preservation purposes or for inventory property sales.

IV. Application Process

All applications for section 515 new construction funds must be filed with the appropriate Rural Development State office and must meet the requirements of 7 CFR 3560.56 and Section V. of this Notice. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and will be returned to the applicant. No application will be accepted after 5 p.m., local time, on the application deadline previously mentioned unless that date and time is extended by a Notice published in the **Federal Register**.

V. Application Submission Requirements

A. Each application shall include all of the information, materials, forms and exhibits required by 7 CFR 3560, subpart B as well as comply with the provisions of this Notice. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to include a checklist and to have their applications indexed and tabbed to facilitate the review process. The Rural Development State Office will base its determination of completeness of the application and the eligibility of each applicant on the information provided in the application.

B. Applicants are advised to contact the Rural Development State Office serving the place in which they desire to submit an application for the following:

1. Application information; and

2. List of designated places for which applications for new section 515 facilities may be submitted.

VI. Areas of Special Emphasis or Consideration

A. The RHS encourages the use of funding from other sources in conjunction with Agency loans. This year there will be a National Office Initiative pursuant to 7 CFR 3560.56(c)(1)(iii), whereby preference points will be awarded to loan requests that meet the selection criteria as follows: In states where RHS has an on-going formal working relationship, agreement, or MOU with the State to provide State resources (State funds, State RA, HOME funds, CDBG funds, or LIHTC) for RHS proposals; or where the State provides preference or points to RHS proposals in awarding these State Resources, 20 points will be provided to loan requests that include such State resources in an amount equal to at least 5 percent of the TDC. NAHASDA funds may be considered a State Resource if the Tribal Plan for NAHASDA funds contains provisions for partnering with RHS for multifamily housing.

B. \$8,928,000 is available nationwide in a set-aside for eligible nonprofit organizations as defined in 42 U.S.C. 1485(w).

C. \$4,960,000 is available nationwide in a set-aside for the 100 most Underserved Counties and Colonias.

D. \$5,000,000 is available nationwide in a set-aside for EZ, EC, and REAP zone.

E. \$1,000,000 is available nationwide in a reserve for States with viable State RA programs. In order to participate, States are to submit specific written information about the State RA program, *i.e.*, a memorandum of understanding, documentation from the provider, etc., to the National Office.

Dated: March 3, 2005.

Russell T. Davis,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

[FR Doc. 05-4773 Filed 3-11-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XV-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) for Section 514 Farm Labor Housing Loans and Section 516 Farm Labor Housing Grants for Off-Farm Housing for Fiscal Year 2005

Announcement Type: Initial Notice inviting applications from qualified applicants for Fiscal Year 2005.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers (CFDA): 10.405 and 10.427.

SUMMARY: This NOFA announces the timeframe to submit applications for section 514 Farm Labor Housing (FLH) loans and section 516 FLH grants for the construction of new off-farm FLH units and related facilities for domestic farm laborers. The intended purpose of these loans and grants is to increase the number of available housing units for domestic farm laborers. Applications may also include requests for section 521 rental assistance (RA) and operating assistance for migrant units. This document describes the method used to distribute funds, the application process, and submission requirements.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of all applications in response to this NOFA is 5 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State Office on May 13, 2005. The application closing deadline is firm as to date and hour. The Agency will not consider any application that is received after the closing deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline. Acceptance by a post office or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX), COD, and postage due applications will not be accepted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Douglas H. MacDowell or Henry Searcy, Senior Loan Specialists, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division—STOP 0781 (Room 1263-S), U.S. Department of Agriculture—Rural Housing Service, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20250-0781 or by telephone at (202) 720-1627 or (202) 720-1753, respectively. (This is not a toll free number.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Paperwork Reduction Act

The reporting requirements contained in this Notice have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control Number 0575-0045.

Overview

The FLH program is authorized by the Housing Act of 1949: section 514 (42 U.S.C. 1484) for loans and section 516 (42 U.S.C. 1486) for grants. Tenant subsidies (RA) are available through section 521 (42 U.S.C. 1490a). Sections 514 and 516 provide Rural Housing Service (RHS) the authority to make loans and grants for financing off-farm housing to broad-based nonprofit organizations, nonprofit organizations of farmworkers, federally recognized Indian tribes, agencies or political subdivisions of State or local