



United States Department of Housing and Urban Development NEWS FROM REGION V March 2012



From the Regional Administrator

Saying the funds "will literally keep the doors of our shelters open and will help those on the front lines of ending homelessness do what they do best", HUD Secretary Donovan announced the award of \$269.1 million to renew funding for 1,348 Region V homeless programs in December. The Continuum of Care funds announced by the Secretary provide permanent and transitional housing to homeless persons as well as services including job training, health care, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment and child care. See releases here: [Illinois](#); [Indiana](#); [Michigan](#); [Minnesota](#); [Ohio](#); [Wisconsin](#).

The encouraging news is that the figures from the 2011 count show an across-the-board drop in the number of homeless people. This shows the administration's homelessness strategy is working and eradicating homelessness is an achievable goal. Overall homelessness is down by 2 percent and veterans' homelessness was reduced by 12 percent. I, along with many of our HUD Field Office Directors and program area people volunteered to participate in the 2012 point-in-time homeless count. It was a humbling experience that spurs us to continue working to end homelessness in America once and for all.

The New Year started out with very good news for the Midwest Region, out of 13 cities receiving Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants in early January, four were in our region! [Cincinnati, Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio](#) received grants, as did [Rockford, IL](#). All across the country, local planners are serious about rolling up their sleeves to transform distressed neighborhoods into choice neighborhoods -- four of our communities can now begin the comprehensive planning needed to turn distressed housing and long-neglected neighborhoods, into viable and sustainable mixed-income communities that support a positive outcome for families. I had the pleasure of making the announcement with our partners at the Rockford Housing Authority while Assistant Secretary Sandra Henriquez visited Columbus, Ohio to spread the good word.

We had a great turn-out on January 30th as I helped launch HUD's [Section 3 Business Registry](#) that will expand job opportunities for low-income people and public housing residents by maintaining a registry of businesses that hire them. HUD is also implementing the pilot program in New Orleans, Los Angeles, Miami and Washington DC to give contractors, agencies and low-income residents a single source to find eligible Section 3 businesses and job opportunities. I was gratified to see Detroit picked for this pilot program and am very happy to see Section 3 getting the emphasis it deserves!

In late January, I convened a ground breaking meeting of federal, community, private and state collaborators to discuss our Northwest Indiana Alignment strategy. The right people and the right vision are in place in this coordinated regional effort to make a sustainable difference in Northwest Indiana. From a medical pediatric facility to improvements in transportation and public housing to economic recovery and the environment - we are united to build a stronger Northwest Indiana. Find out more [here](#).

And finally, this month saw more good things coming from the White House Faith-Based and Neighborhood Conference held in December. As I mentioned in the last newsletter the event entitled, "Connecting Communities for the Common Good" drew over 500 participants and was co-hosted by the city of Chicago and numerous federal agencies. An important component of the conference was a meeting of a dozen representatives of Urban Indian Centers to discuss issues of importance to their constituents. On March 1, many of those leaders came to HUD to continue that vital dialogue and hear

presentations. We spent a productive morning together discussing access to HUD programs and hearing issues of interest from the community.

HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan unveiled HUD's fiscal year 2013 budget proposal. Titled "*Housing and Communities Built to Last*," the budget reflects the President's vision of an America that can draw strength from its vibrant communities and momentum from a robust housing market. It also reflects the reality that robust growth requires tough choices -- doing more with less and holding ourselves accountable for results. Read HUD's proposed [2013 budget](#) here.

The Federal Government and State Attorneys General reached a \$25 billion agreement with five largest mortgage servicers to address mortgage loan servicing and foreclosure abuses. "This historic settlement will provide immediate relief to homeowners - forcing banks to reduce the principal balance on many loans, refinance loans for underwater borrowers, and pay billions of dollars to states and consumers," said HUD Secretary Donovan. "Banks must follow the laws. Any bank that hasn't done so should be held accountable and should take prompt action to correct its mistakes. And it will not end with this settlement. One of the most important ways this settlement helps homeowners is that it forces the banks to clean up their acts and fix the problems uncovered during our investigations. And it does that by committing them to major reforms in how they service mortgage loans. These new customer service standards are in keeping with the Homeowners Bill of Rights recently announced by President Obama - a single, straightforward set of commonsense rules that families can count on." Read release [here](#).

HUD launched a new web tool that features - for the first time - contact information and proposal details for the highest-scoring applicants to HUD's flagship community development initiatives. [Partner.hud.gov](#) leverages the Department of Education's technical platform [data.ed.gov](#) and is designed to boost public/private partnership and philanthropic support for the most promising plans for turning the nation's distressed communities into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods linked to good schools, retail, transportation, and access to jobs. [Partner.hud.gov](#) will initially feature Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Implementation grantees, as well as the highest-scoring runners up from each competition. The web feature is intended to provide information funders and other local stakeholders can use to find and support applications that HUD deemed promising, but was unable to fund as well as grantees eager to attract additional resources to their transformation plans. It will also offer communities greater

access to work happening around the country and best-practice models that might help shape their efforts. Over time, partner.hud.gov will grow as more grant programs take advantage of this capability.

Fair Housing. HUD Secretary Donovan has announced publication of a final rule "to ensure that HUD's core housing programs are open to all eligible persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity." The rule, which will take effect 30 days after publication, requires owners and operators of HUD-assisted housing, or housing whose financing is insured by HUD, to make housing available without regard to the sexual orientation or gender identity of an applicant for, or occupant of, the dwelling, whether renter- or owner; Prohibits lenders from using sexual orientation or gender identity as a basis to determine a borrower's eligibility for FHA-insured mortgage financing; Clarifies that all otherwise eligible families, regardless of marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity, will have the opportunity to participate in HUD programs; and prohibits owners and operators of HUD-assisted housing or housing insured by HUD from asking about an applicant or occupant's sexual orientation and gender identity for the purpose of determining eligibility or otherwise making housing available. [Read press release here.](#)

In an effort to continue stabilizing home values and improve conditions in communities experiencing high foreclosure activity, Acting Federal Housing Administration Commissioner Carol J. Galante extended a temporary waiver of FHA's anti-flipping regulations through 2012. [Read FHA's anti-flipping waiver.](#) "This extension is intended to accelerate the resale of foreclosed properties in neighborhoods struggling to overcome the possible effects of abandonment and blight," said Galante. "FHA remains a critical source of mortgage financing and stability and we must make every effort that to promote recovery in every responsible way we can."

HUD has launched the HUD Language Line, a telephone language service pilot (to run through September 2012) that will offer live, one-on-one interpretation services in more than 175 languages. Accessible throughout the nation, the language line will help HUD staff communicate with people who have limited English proficiency (LEP) about HUD housing programs, services, and activities. "Access to government should not be determined by how well a person speaks English," said John Trasviña, HUD Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. "The HUD Language Line is another example of HUD's efforts

to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency have equal access to HUD programs and services."

Resources:

NOFA web page: Apply for Choice Neighborhoods Demonstration Small Research Grants by March 13, One CPD Technical Assistance by March 15, Fair Housing programs by March 16, ROSS Service Coordinators Grants by March 27, Natural Experiments Grants by March 29, Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grants by April 10, and Housing Choice Voucher Family Self Sufficiency Grants by April 24. Visit [here](#) to find out about funds available.

Check out the [Housing Assistance Council \(HAC\)](#) website for news on affordable rural housing

See [Fact sheet on President Obama's Plan to Help Responsible Homeowners and Heal the Housing Market](#)

HUD has a new guidebook that addresses combining HOME and NSP funds. "[HOME and NSP : A Guide for Successfully and Effectively Combining Funding Sources](#)" explains how to comply with both the HOME and Neighborhood Stabilization Programs when using both.

Rural Support Partners collected data from 24 practitioners at six successful networks working across the country on issues related to local food, housing and conservation. The report "Rural Networks for Wealth Creation" led to the development of a toolkit with worksheets designed for a range of audiences. Also note their tool kit on building a sustainable Network. To access these and other materials, click [here](#).

The [Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act \(PTFA\)](#), Title VII (pages 30 - 32) of the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act of 2009 [has been extended](#) to December 31, 2014, and provides protections to tenants in foreclosed properties. Under the Act, the immediate successor of interest (generally the purchaser) of a foreclosed property must provide all tenants with at least 90 days notice prior to eviction because of foreclosure. Additionally, tenants must be permitted to stay in the residence until the end of the lease, with two exceptions: The property is sold after foreclosure to a purchaser who will be an owner-occupant, or there is no lease or the lease is terminable at will under state law. Even if these exceptions

apply, the tenant must be given at least 90 days notice prior to eviction. The rights of Section 8 tenants are also protected under the Act.

HUD launched the [Public and Indian Housing One-Stop Tool \(POST\) for Public Housing Authorities \(PHAs\)](#) in November 2011, as part of HUD's Delivering Together initiative. POST for PHAs is a one-stop website that enables PHAs to quickly access Public and Indian Housing (PIH) systems, tools, program requirements, and much more. The POST homepage organizes information into eight categories PHAs have indicated make the most sense to them: (1) Public Housing Program; (2) Housing Choice Voucher Program; (3) Grants; (4) Other Programs; (5) Systems; (6) Tools; (7); Laws and Policies; and (8) Directories. One of the features available on POST, a [PIH A-Z Index](#), provides an alphabetical list of information relevant to PHA programs.

The newest feature up and running on [POST](#) is the Calendar of Due Dates, which contains all PIH due dates generally applicable to PHAs. Due dates are hyperlinked to their authoritative source. Further, the Calendar of Due Dates provides a list of additional PIH submission requirements that may apply to certain PHAs. PHAs can also access a printable version of the Calendar of Due Dates as well as an Excel version that can be modified to meet individual PHA needs, and includes the form(s) associated with each particular due date noted on the Calendar of Due Dates homepage. Keep your eyes open for many other Delivering Together customer service improvements being implemented in the near future!

Vacant junior high school becomes affordable senior housing in Holland Michigan. To find out more [read here](#).

ThriveDetroit newspaper helps homeless earn a living. To find out more [read here](#).

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