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PROGRAM GUIDANCE

PROGRAM: All HUD Discretionary Programs

FOR: All Tribal Government Leaders and Tribally Designated Housing Entities

RJB

FROM: Rodger J. Boyd, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Native American Programs, PN

TOPIC: General Section to HUD's FY 2012 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs

Purpose: The purpose of this guidance is to notify tribes and tribally designated housing entities (TDHE) of the criteria for applying for funds available from HUD in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012.

The General Section was posted on the Grants.gov website on September 19, 2011, to give applicants time to become familiar with and address those provisions that constitute part of almost every HUD grant application. Its official title is: *Notice of HUD's Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Policy Requirements and General Section to HUD's FY 2012 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs*. It can be found at:

http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail and also at <http://www.grants.gov/search/>.

HUD plans to post FY 2012 program NOFAs ahead of appropriations to provide applicants with sufficient time to prepare applications. If issued in advance of appropriations, the program NOFAs will not provide a total dollar amount of HUD funds available but will indicate the approximate size of grant awards to be made. HUD will publish a list of programs available in FY 2012 after a final appropriations bill is enacted. Applicants are urged to sign up for the funding opportunity subscription service at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp to receive any changes to the General Section or to HUD's FY 2012 NOFAs.

General Section: The following select information from the General Section should assist you in submitting applications for HUD programs for which tribes/TDHEs are eligible.

- Register Early. In FY 2012, HUD will again require applicants for HUD programs to submit their applications electronically via Grants.gov. The registration process can take from 2 to 4 weeks to complete so interested applicants are urged to begin the process immediately.
- Grants.gov Customer Support. The customer support center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week except federal holidays. It has information on its website at <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>. You can reach it by calling 800-518-GRANTS (this is a toll-free number) or by sending an e-mail to support@grants.gov.

Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number. All applicants seeking funding directly from HUD must obtain a DUNS number and include the number in their Application for Federal Assistance. A copy of the Office of Management and Budget *Federal Register* notice and HUD's regulation implementing the DUNS number requirement can be found at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/duns.cfm>

- Webcasts. HUD provides technical assistance and training on its programs announced through the individual NOFAs. A schedule of the webcasts is located at <http://www.hud.gov/webcasts/index.cfm>. Webcasts that have already occurred can be viewed by accessing the webcast archives at <http://www.hud.gov/webcasts/archives>.
- Adobe Forms. In FY 2012, HUD is again using Adobe Forms in the application packages. Before you can view and complete an application package you MUST have Adobe Reader 9.4 installed or the newest version of Adobe Reader available from Grants.gov. To obtain the latest version of Adobe Reader and ensure compatibility with your system go to http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html. Once you have the correct version of Adobe you can download the application as explained below. All persons working on the Adobe forms in the application package must use the same version of Adobe Reader.
- Application Packages. Applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov unless the applicant has received a waiver of the electronic submission requirement (see page 4 of this guidance for further information). Instructions on the general process for downloading, completing, submitting, and tracking grant application packages can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp. Copies of the individual NOFAs and application forms may be downloaded from the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/find_grant_opportunities.jsp. If you have difficulty downloading forms, call 1-800-518-GRANTS or send an e-mail to support@grants.gov. If you do not have Internet access, contact the NOFA Information Center at 1-800-HUD-8929 for paper copies.
- Organization Registration User Guide. Before you can submit an application through Grants.gov you must complete several important steps to register as a submitter. Grants.gov has posted a brochure to walk you through the process. It is at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. The five steps are:

Step 1 - Obtain a DUNS number. Most applicants should call 866-705-5711 (option 4); applicants in Alaska should call 800-234-3867. Applicants may also obtain a DUNS number by accessing the D&B website at

<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. If the applicant organization entity already has a DUNS number it must use that one to apply.

Step 2 - Register with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). This can be done by telephone at 888-606-8220 or 334-206-7828 or online at <http://www.ccr.gov>. Registration, including update/renewal, can take several weeks as CCR compares its records to those maintained by D&B and the Internal Revenue Service. CCR registration expires on an annual basis and must be updated to remain active. If you need assistance with the CCR registration process you can contact the CCR Assistance Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time at the numbers above.

Step 3 – Create an account, user name password with Grants.gov. To do so, go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp. When you register an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) to submit an application, the Grants.gov system will send an e-mail to the organization’s E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC). The e-mail will contain a password that the E-Biz must use to authorize the AOR to submit the application.

Step 4 - Grant approval for the AOR to submit the application. The E-Biz POC (identified in Box 8a of the SF-424 form) must log onto the Grants.gov website and give the AOR approval to submit an application to Grants.gov. This is done at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/AorMgrGetID>. AORs are urged to check with the E-Biz POC to make sure they are authorized to make a legally binding commitment for the applicant.

Step 5 - Check AOR status at Grants.gov. Applicants can track the status of their applications at any time by going to the applicant home page at Grants.gov. To do so you will need the user name and password created in Step 3.

- **CFDA Number.** Applicants will have to enter the Funding Opportunity and/or CFDA number for the specific program to access application packages and instructions. The CFDA number for the ICDBG program, for example, is **14.862**.

Application Submission Deadline: Applications must be received by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. eastern time on the date in each program NOFA. Received means that the application has been successfully uploaded to the Grants.gov server and the applicant has received confirmation of same. In FY 2012, HUD will again provide a one-day grace period. This means that applicants that successfully upload an application prior to the deadline date and time and who receive a rejection notice from Grants.gov have one day beyond the deadline date and time to submit a corrected application. Applications uploaded to Grants.gov after the deadline date do not qualify for the grace period and will not be considered for funding. The grace period does not apply to applications submitted on paper. Applicants should ensure that e-mail notification addresses contained in the Grants.gov registration are up-to-date so messages about the status of their applications from Grants.gov can be delivered.

Application Validation: Applications must also be validated before they can be considered for funding. This occurs after an application has been successfully uploaded and the applicant receives confirmation of this. Applications will be validated if:

- ✓ They are virus-free;
- ✓ The DUNS number submitted on the application matches the DUNS number in the Registration;
- ✓ The AOR has been authorized to submit the application for funding by the organization identified by its DUNS number;
- ✓ All the mandatory fields and forms were completed in the application, and
- ✓ The correct version of Adobe Reader was used in completing the application forms.

If the application fails any of the above criteria, Grants.gov will send the applicant an e-mail explaining the reasons for the rejection. The applicant can try to cure the deficiencies in the application in accordance with the grace period. HUD strongly advises all applicants to submit their applications at least 48 hours prior to the deadline so that problems can be resolved in advance of the deadline date and grace period. Applicants are also reminded to track the status of their applications on the Grants.gov website at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/checkApplStatus.faces> and not to depend solely on the receipt of e-mail notifications from Grants.gov. If the applicant has submitted multiple applications, HUD will review the last application received and validated.

Waivers: Applicants can seek a waiver of the electronic submission requirement for good cause in accordance with 24 CFR 5.1005. Check the individual HUD program NOFAs for instructions on how to do so. A waiver request granted during FY 2011 is not valid for FY 2012.

Technical Assistance: Contact staff at your Area ONAP for general guidance and technical assistance regarding the NOFA and electronic submission requirements. ONAP staff is not, however, permitted to help you prepare your application.

Training on NOFA Requirements: HUD's Office of Departmental Grants Management and Oversight will hold a webcast on the General Section. The date and time will be announced on <http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/webcasts/schedule>. HUD urges potential applicants to tune into this broadcast to get tips on how to submit applications successfully.

Applicants should not rely solely on information in this Guidance since it does not include all applicable General Section requirements on the subjects addressed. Contact your Area ONAP Grants Management Specialist if you have any questions.