

# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

For Federal Affordable Housing and Community Development Programs



*Upon request, this document will be provided in a format that accessible to persons with disabilities and persons with limited-English proficiency. The Idaho Department of Commerce and Idaho Housing and Finance Association prohibit discrimination based on race, color, nation origin, religion, sex, familial status, sexual orientation /identity, disability, and age in the HUD-CPD programs covered herein.*



**INTRODUCTION.....3**

**ADOPTING A CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN .....4**

**ADOPTING A HUD-CPD PLAN [24 CFR 91.115] .....4**

    CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS ..... 4

    PUBLIC NOTIFICATION ..... 4

    REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION ..... 5

    WRITTEN COMPLAINTS..... 5

    ACCESS TO RECORDS RELATED TO HUD-CPD PROGRAMS ..... 5

    SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT ..... 5

    SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION ..... 5

**STATE OF IDAHO (COMMERCE) DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 6**

    TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ..... 6

    COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES ..... 6

    NEEDS OF NON ENGLISH-SPEAKING PERSONS ..... 7

    LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ..... 7

**EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT PROGRAM .....8**

    TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ..... 8

## Introduction

Idaho receives approximately \$14 million in block grants annually from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for affordable housing and community development programs: The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), National Housing Trust Fund (HTF), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP receives no new funding from HUD).

HUD-CPD Grantees are the Idaho Housing and Finance Association (for HOME, HTF, NSP, and ESG programs) and the Idaho Department of Commerce (CDBG program). HUD-CPD refers to IHFA and Commerce collectively as the "State". The State's CDBG program funds are not awarded to HUD-designated "Entitlement Areas".

Grantees are required to submit a five (5) year strategic plan to HUD-CPD that summarizes the Idaho's affordable housing and community development needs, priorities, goals, and strategies, called the ***Five-Year Consolidated Plan***.

Plans are based on the State Grantee's Program year, which begins April 1 and ends March 31 of the subsequent year. Beginning with the first program year the Plan, HUD requires the Grantees to submit an annual plan that identifies individual program allocations, and one-year goals, strategies, and anticipated outcomes. This annual plan must be submitted to HUD 45 days before the Program year begins, or as determined by HUD-CPD. This annual plan is the ***Annual Action Plan***.

Within 90 days of the last day of the program year (June 30th), grantees are required to submit an annual report to HUD regarding the previous program year's outcomes as they relate to the goals and strategies identified in the Annual Action Plan. This annual report is the ***Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report*** (CAPER).

## **Adopting a Citizen Participation Plan**

HUD-CPD requires its grantees to adopt a plan that identifies how they will inform citizens and other interested parties of the opportunity to review and provide comment regarding proposed or amended HUD-CPD plans (see definition of **Substantial Amendments**- [click here](#)). Before a plan is submitted to HUD-CPD, it is adopted, following a process. This process is called the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP).

When this Citizen Participation Plan is amended, grantee will provide a 30-day comment period in which to allow interested parties to provide comment regarding the amendment. The notice for the 30-day comment period will be published in Idaho's major newspapers and posted on grantees' website.

## **Adopting a HUD-CPD Plan [24 CFR 91.115]**

The process includes a minimum of one (1) 30-day comment period and one (1) public hearing to allow Idaho's citizens, agencies, local units of government, private entities, and other interested parties to review the draft plan and submit comment.

Individual Plan requirements:

1. Five-Year Consolidated Plan- Requires at least one public hearing before the proposed plan is made available for comment [§91.115(b)(3)].
2. Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER)- Requires a period of not less than fifteen (15) days to receive comments on the performance report that is to be submitted to HUD [§91.115(d)(1)].

## **Consideration of Comments**

Grantees are required to consider all public comments received during the comment period related to the proposed plan. A summary of comments will be included as part of the plan.

## **Public Notification**

Notification of a comment period will be published in Idaho's major newspapers, email distribution lists, IHFA branch offices and grantee's websites.

Legal notice will be published twice, prior to the beginning of the comment period, and prior to the public hearing. A legal notice will include the following information:

- The beginning and ending date of the 30-day public comment period
- A statement in Spanish that directs the reader to the Spanish version of the legal notice
- Where the plan is available
- How to request the plan in a form that is accessible to persons with disabilities

- How to request the plan in an alternative format for persons with limited English proficiency
- How and where to submit comment
- Date, time, and place of the public hearing
- How to request a reasonable accommodation for the public hearing

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

A reasonable accommodation request is available to persons with a disability and persons with limited-English proficiency. The public hearing will be held at a location and time that is reasonable and handicap accessible.

### **Written Complaints**

When a written complaint is received regarding a plan, when practical, the appropriate program administrator(s) will provide a written response within 15 working days.

### **Access to Records related to HUD-CPD Programs**

Reasonable and timely access to information and records related to the consolidated plan regarding the use of assistance during the preceding five years will be given to the public, public agencies, and other interested parties. The State's Five-Year Consolidated Plan and related annual plans, reports, and substantial amendments will be available online.

### **Substantial Amendment**

Substantial amendment is defined as a significant alteration to the focus, priority(s), action(s), or strategy(s) in the current Five-Year Consolidated Plan. Examples:

- A change in allocation priorities, or the method of distribution of funds
- An activity that is not identified in the current Five-Year Consolidated Plan
- A variance in a specific program's funding allocation that exceeds 25% of the annual average of previous years of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan in effect at the time of the allocation.
- A change in the purpose, scope, or location of a specific program
- A change in a program's intended beneficiaries

### **Supplemental Appropriation**

The plan assumes that public review requirements for supplemental appropriations will be described and defined as part of any such specific appropriation. A supplemental appropriation outside the normal scope of activities may supersede this plan and/or be accompanied by requirements that are specific to the appropriation.

## **State of Idaho (Commerce) Department of Commerce-Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

Commerce provides for, encourages public participation, with particular emphasis on participation by persons of low and moderate income, and residents of slum, and blighted areas in which funds are proposed to be used in conjunction with this process.

Commerce will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information, and records relating to the state's proposed method of distribution, as required by regulations of the Secretary, and relating to the actual use of funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended with respect to the distribution methodology.

### **Technical Assistance**

Commerce provides technical assistance to communities and groups in developing proposals, CDBG applications, and proposals. Commerce also provides ongoing technical assistance to open CDBG projects.

- Groups' representative of persons of low and moderate income shall be notified of the CDBG application process and schedule,
- Regional workshops may be conducted to acquaint local communities with the application process.
- Commerce shall develop and make available a CDBG Application Handbook.
- Commerce staff shall be available to provide technical assistance when needed.
- Public participation hearings or meetings shall be held after adequate notice, at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries and with accommodations for the handicapped. Hearings and meeting should only be held in buildings, which are accessible to handicapped persons.
- Commerce shall follow the Idaho Administrative Procedures Act for its CDBG Rule Adoption process. This process includes appropriate notices, public hearings and comment period schedules. Both written and verbal comments shall be solicited in order to give potential and actual beneficiaries an opportunity to respond.

### **Complaints and Grievances**

Commerce will respond in a timely manner to written complaints and grievances, within 15 days where practicable:

- As a part of the state and local Public Participation Plan, local citizens shall be informed of the complaint procedure and what constitutes a legitimate complaint.

- A written complaint or grievance is formal notification of a concern, allegation or protest to a proper authority. A formal complaint will be considered filed at the time it is delivered to the appropriate authority's office. The complaint should be clear and concise and include the following information:
  1. Identification of the project and project location;
  2. The reason for the complaint;
  3. Sufficient data or evidence to substantiate a claim(s) or charge(s). If possible, supporting documentation should be included.
  4. If desired, complainant may propose a solution or resolution to the problem.

Complaints and grievances shall be first filed with an appropriate elected official if the complaint or grievance is related to local activities or project implementation. If this is the case, grantees shall be required to notify the Commerce of the complaint. A copy of the response shall also be submitted to the Commerce. Grantees should attempt to respond within fifteen (15) days where practicable.

If the complainant feels the response from the local jurisdiction is unsatisfactory, he or she may appeal to Commerce to review the complaint for resolution. Additional information may be requested at that time. Every effort will be made to provide a full response within thirty-(30) days.

If valid and sufficient data has been provided to substantiate the complaint, an investigation will be conducted. The extent of an investigation depends on the scope and depth of the issues involved.

### **Needs of non English-Speaking Persons**

Commerce will identify how the needs of non-English speaking residents will be met in the case of public participation hearings or meetings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate.

### **Local Governments**

CDBG applicants shall be required to formally adopt a Commerce-approved public participation plan and do the following:

- A copy of the Public Participation Plan must be submitted with the CDBG application.
- A public hearing shall be required to permit public review of the CDBG application.
- A minimum of two public hearings must be held. The first is held prior to application submission, and the second is held during project construction.
- Public hearings are required to be scheduled in ways and at a time, that facilitates full participation. A public hearing shall be held at times and locations which are reasonable and accessible.
- Proper notification is required by public advertisement in a local newspaper no less than seven (7) days prior to the public hearing date. For those localities where there is no local newspaper,

public notification must be through some other acceptable method where there is wide distribution to all citizens within the community. This method must be approved by Commerce.

- The information included in the public notice and public hearing minutes is specified in the CDBG rules and must be included in the CDBG application.
- Identify how the needs of non-English speaking residents in the community are being met.

### **Emergency Solutions Grant Program**

Citizen participation in the Emergency Solutions Grant planning process by any stakeholder is encouraged through the publication and open review of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER.

Participation is further encouraged through regular regional housing and homelessness stakeholder meetings, monthly Idaho Balance of State Continuum of Care committee meetings, quarterly Continuum of Care open board meetings, and semi-annual regional Housing Roundtable meetings.

Notification on application periods will be provided to citizens through news releases and direct mailing to interested parties.

### **Technical Assistance**

IHFA provides technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in developing proposals, with the level and type of assistance to be determined by IHFA.

- Groups' representative of homeless persons shall be notified of the ESG application process and schedule.
- Statewide workshops may be conducted to acquaint local homeless service providers with the application process.
- IHFA shall develop and make available ESG Written Standards to guide the use of program funds.
- Service providers shall be publicly notified of the availability of Grantee staff to provide ongoing technical assistance.
- IHFA staff shall be available to provide technical assistance as needed. Additional technical assistance materials shall be developed and provided when determined practicable.

~END~