

Take it for Granted

A quarterly newsletter released by Office of Community & Rural Affairs

Updates from the CDBG Program Manager

By Matt Wakefield



First off, thank you to everyone who attended our 2019 Regional Conferences. We have quickly settled back into preparing for this current CDBG round as well as implementing the new Grant Management System.

Currently, the system is on track to be ready for CDBG Round 2 of 2019. Training and other details will be released over the coming months.

There have been a few minor changes to the handbook and the tools for conducting income surveys. The most notable change has been the clarification of documents we are requiring at application.

National Objective

The national objective page must have a clear and detailed description of the service area along with a comprehensive list of beneficiaries and reference maps (as needed). Grant Services will need to recreate your service area to ensure it matches HUD data.

- If you are qualifying by Census Data and have

received email verification from me, please reference it here.

Income Surveys

If you are qualifying by an income survey, please include my written approval in your application. This applies to both prior and new income surveys. Remember to provide:

- An income survey justification letter from the CEO along with any maps you may have included;
- Surveys started prior to April 1 must include a letter justifying the past survey;
- Surveys started after April 1 must include a letter justifying why an income survey was conducted.

If a survey is conducted, documents that are required to include are:

- The survey worksheet and tool calculations;
- A survey methodology description;
- Copy of the sample survey form; and
- Copies of the written survey materials (instructions, etc.).

Many have asked me what is a comprehensive list of beneficiaries? This is a requirement met by including a completed beneficiaries table at the time of the application.

New policies are open for public comment

Two new draft policies are now available for review and public comment:

- Planning Grant process - feedback was provided to OCRA;
- CDBG Grant Administrator Certification - legal guidance and feedback was provided to OCRA on this policy.

Public comments will be collected via [an online survey](#). Drafts of these policies are available on our [website](#). In order to avoid missing comments, we do require all comments be submitted via the survey. The public comment period for this set of policies is open through 4 p.m. (ET) July 1, 2019.

At the end of the public comment period, OCRA will review the feedback, make revisions if needed, and then, with the approval of the executive staff, post them. Once they are posted, they are to be considered final and effective on their respective effective dates.

If you have any questions on these policies, please contact [Matt Wakefield](#) or [Eric Ogle](#).

2019 GA Certification Training

Registration is still open for the remaining CDBG courses, which are scheduled on the following dates and costs:

- 201: July 9-11 (\$120)
- 301: September 4-6 (\$120)
- 401: Case Study (no cost)

All of the courses above are held in the Blue Heron Ballroom at The Garrison (6002 N Post Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46216) which is located just outside of Fort Benjamin Harrison State Park. Lunch is provided each day giving participants a chance to network. Parking is free and located directly in front of the building.



New website for wage determinations

The U.S. Department of Labor announced that on June 14, 2019, WDOL.gov was transitioned to <https://beta.SAM.gov>, which is the new website for wage determination data.

Features of the new website include:

Search-based structure: Users may search for a variety of information including specific Davis-Bacon Act and McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act wage determinations.

The **Learning Center** is filled with tutorial videos, tools and other information to familiarize users with the new site. A few features include:

- Ability to filter and search for content in the Learning Center. Users will find links to Federal Acquisition Regulation and Code of Federal Regulations citations for specific subjects via a cross index page for Contract Labor Standards;
- The site features more FAR Supplements and other acquisition regulations than WDOL.gov;
- A Transition Quick Start Guide will be available soon.

Create an account

By creating an account, users have access to certain system features only available to account holders. For example, users will have the option to:

- Save previous searches;
- Start or modify a Collective Bargaining Agreement;
- "Follow" specific wage determinations and receive email alerts when changes or modifications are published;
- Users will determine what to follow and the email alerts frequency; and
- See a timeline and history of changes to wage determinations.

Support for the wage determinations in beta.SAM.gov will continue to be provided by the [Federal Service Desk](#).

Employers can find compliance assistance resources from the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division [online here](#).

Grant Services reminders

Grant Semi-Annual Reports

As a friendly reminder, please submit all Semiannual Reports to [Emily Brackemyre](#) by July 31, 2019. If you have any reporting related questions, feel free to reach out to Emily.

CDBG & Local Match Percentage

Monitor the ratio of grant vs. local match funds spent throughout the project but especially when its under-budget. If a project is over-budget, this is generally not an issue but the percentages should still be tracked. If a project is under-budget, pay close attention to the percentages, using whole percentages per CDBG and Local Match totals as reflected in the executed grant agreement.

For example, a \$300,000 grant was awarded an expected total project cost of \$555,550. According to the grant agreement budget below, no more than 54 percent of the total project may be paid using CDBG funds. The calculation table below is an example of how to calculate the maximum CDBG draw amount for a project that is under budget. In this example, the total project costs are \$450,000. The final, total project costs multiplied by the total CDBG percentage from the executed grant agreement yield the maximum allowable CDBG draw amount. If this grant were to draw more than the \$243,000, it would be a finding during monitoring and the grantee must pay the overage back to OCRA.

Budget					
	CDBG	Percent	Local	Percent	Total
Construction	\$300,000	60%	\$201,550	40%	\$501,550
Labor	\$0	0%	\$5,000	100%	\$5,000
Environmental	\$0	0%	\$5,000	100%	\$5,000
Grant Administration	\$0	0%	\$44,000	100%	\$44,000
Totals	\$300,000	54%	\$255,550	46%	\$555,550

Calculation	
Total Project	\$450,000
CDBG %	54%
Max CDBG Draw	\$243,000

OCRA Calendar reminders

Please ensure you are aware of the following:

June

- Friday, June 21 – CDBG Round 1 overdue docs due
- Friday, June 28 – CDBG Round 1 applications due

July

- July 9 to 11 – CDBG 201

August

- Thursday, August 8 – GA Advisory Session, One North Capitol, 1:30PM
- Thursday, August 15 – CDBG Round 1 awards announced
- August 18 to 20 – Great Lakes Main Street Conference

- Monday, August 19 – CDBG Round 2 open for applications
- Wednesday, August 21 – CDBG Round 2 webinar
- Thursday, August 22 – GA Update Training: Rochester Public Library
- Friday, August 23 – GA Update Training: Mid-America Science Park, Scottsburg

September

- September 4 to 6 – CDBG 301

2020 calendar now available

The Office of Community and Rural Affairs is excited to release the competitive grant and state program calendar for 2020. Click [here](#) to view the calendar, or it can be [our website](#).

Grant Services reminders

Document Reminders

Remember to submit Labor Release documents (Labor Standards Form 7, 8, 9, 12) to [Adam Servies](#) before submitting a draw with construction funds. Construction funds cannot be drawn until the Labor Release has been granted.

Conformance Rate Request

Please include a few sentences of the specific duties and tasks the workers will be performing. What type of equipment or power tools will be used? What specific tasks will be completed with the equipment? This type of information is requested by the Department of Labor to determine the correct classification and wage. This should be submitted via email and should not be included on the conformance rate request form.

For example, **Millwrights** will be completing the layout and installation of the Sequential Batch Reactor equipment inside the new concrete tanks using various tools ranging from lifts, chain hoists, cranes, rigging, rotary hammers, impact drivers and hand tools ranging from torque wrenches, spud wrenches, adjustable wrenches, hammers, and screwdrivers. **Millwrights** will also be completing the lift station pump equipment layout and installation using various tools ranging from chain hoists, cranes, rigging, rotary hammers, impact drivers, and hand tools ranging from torque wrenches, spud wrenches, adjustable wrenches, hammer, sand and screw drivers.

- Box 14 – include both the signature and the title of the subcontractor (if applicable);
- Box 15 – include both the signature and the title of the prime contractor. Don't list their title in the box below labeled "Title" – that section is meant for the employees;
- Box 16 – is only for an employee's signature who will be working in the classification being requested. Their title should be included in the box to the right under "Title". The employee should check if they agree or disagree in the furthest box to the right. The prime or subcontractor shouldn't write anything in those boxes since it's for the employees.



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