Jennifer Hylton: Hello, everyone, and welcome to the CDBG-DR Action Plan webinar. My name is Jennifer Hylton and I'm with HUD's Office of Disaster Recovery and Special Issues Division in Washington D.C. And this is our second webinar in a series of webinars to reach as many of our CDBG-DR grantees and their partners as possible. Today, we're really hoping to reach not only our new grantees and grantees that are about to get funding, but also new staff with our grantees that have been around for a while, but maybe you're new to the DR program.

This webinar series is going to focus on key topics around grant administration. And today's webinar specifically, we'll focus on all things related to the CDBG-DR action plan and including outreach to folks with limited English proficiency. Today, from HUD, joining us on the webinar, besides myself, we'll also have Marty Horwath and Sandra Donaldson answering questions behind the scenes. And I will now turn it over to Sue to take the rest of the presentation.

Sue Southon: Thanks, Jen. I'm Sue Southon with ICF International. I've been working in disaster recovery for about the past 10 years in various capacities. Most recently, since February of 2013, I have been working with the state of New Jersey, first under a HUD technical assistance assignment and then, later, under direct contract with the state to assist with program design, policy development, and implementation support. This is the second in our series of CDBG-DR webinars for new CDBG-DR grantees and our NDR grantees. Although we are not going to be covering specific NDR guidance in this, you will find most of the information you hear this afternoon very relevant.

I'd also like to bring your attention to the fact that this is the second in the series and on your screen, you will see the additional dates and topics that will be coming up. Today, as I mentioned, we're going to cover preparation of the action plan and how do expectations related to the critical components of system participation and access to person with limited English proficiency. Our webinar is going to include some polls. So if you're attending as a group, feel free to talk among yourselves before you answer. Chantel Key from ICF is going to be giving us a little more information. And I'd also like to introduce Shawna Moraille, who will be taking and asking some of your questions. So Chantel, you want to explain a little bit about the question and the poll process?

Chantel Key: Sure. Thank you, Sue. So in your GoToWebinar toolbar, you will see a question textbook. We'll be taking questions throughout the entire webinar. But if you have any questions, please type your question in the question textbox and we will get to them at different times throughout the webinar.

Sue Southon: Great. Thanks, Chantel. Today's agenda, we're going to cover the following topics. The recovery PD's evaluation; your CDBG action plan development; the initial implementation stages for your action plan; managing citizen participation; your outreach to vulnerable
populations and those with limited English proficiency; and, as Chantel mentioned, throughout the course of the presentation, we'll take some pauses and take some of your questions.

This is the big picture, if you will. Think of it as the life cycle of a CDBG-DR grant. And to coin a March Madness phrase, this is not a one and done, guys. For those of you who are new, what you're going to find is that as you go through the recovery process, your priorities, your programs, and your activities are going to change over time. And these will necessitate modifications in your action plan in the form of amendments. And as we walk through this today, you'll learn a little bit more about that process as well.

Our graphic here represents the steps in the process. The first is your needs assessment. What was the impact of your disaster? What's your plan going to be to respond to those most critical disaster recovery needs that you're not able to address with other identified resources? How you're going to go about implementing your plan, distributing your resources, tracking your implementation and expenditure progress, and then, periodically, reassessing those needs and the effectiveness of the programs that you've designed to be sure that you're achieving the metrics -- the important metrics that you selected. You will be amending the plan as you need to to address unmet needs and potential expenditure deadline requirements.

Before we start the discussion of the actual action plan development, and while you're waiting for the Federal Register notices, there are two things that you can be doing right now to prepare. And this is particularly true of you that are new DR grantees, but it may also well apply to the existing Public Law 113-2 grantees because there will be some changes. Start by reading the March 3rd, 2013, Federal Register notice. And you're going to be able to find that along with all of the Federal Register notices and CPD guidance related to CDBG-DR on the HUD Exchange CDBG-DR website.

Now, we've got the exact address in the resources at the end of this presentation, so you'll be able to see that, and we're going to be referring to that. That's a wonderful source of information for you as you start this process. It's important to take a look at this notice because it was the first one for the large allocation that was done in 2013 and it lays out pretty specifically the requirements for action plan submission. Now, granted, these may change with the new Federal Register notices. However, there's going to be a lot that's very similar. So this is a good place for you to start.

The second thing you're going to notice as you review this is that there are pre-submission requirements for grantees. So even prior to submitting your action plan for HUD approval, you're going to need to submit a certification checklist. The latest version of this list can, again, be found on the CDBG-DR website on the HUD Exchange. It was developed, just as a caveat, prior to the finalization of Super Circular.

So there will be, no doubt, some minor modifications in it going forward. But again, it's a good place to start. It gives you a sense of the requirements that HUD will want to see in terms of financial management and some of the other things that they're going to look for before they begin the grant activation process. Now, what isn't really clear at this time is whether or not those of you who may be on the line and our current grantees will need to resubmit that certification
checklist, which will, again, incorporate the changes done in the Super Circular, which is 2 CFR Part 200.

The first step in your action plan development process is going to be your needs assessment. Unmet needs assessment is basically the disaster impact and damage minus available resources that you can identify. So first of all, you're going to need to quantify the impact of your disaster, and this is typically done in terms of hard data units, homes, businesses, and dollars. HUD is going to expect that you're going to use the best available data that you have to make this analysis. And you're going to be required whether or not you're intending to deploy resources in the three core aspects of recovery. HUD will expect you to assess the need in all three.

So for example, for housing, you're going to be expected to evaluate the needs for interim and permanent housing; for owner-occupied and rental housing; for single family and multi-family housing; for affordable and market rate housing; and also for HUD-assisted housing, which includes housing for special needs populations and your public housing authority facilities. The second sector that you're going to need to evaluate is infrastructure. And here, you're looking at the needs for restoration of roads, bridges, and other public structures and facilities.

The caveat here will be that that data may be very limited, particularly for you -- those of you who are getting your first DR grant. That data takes longer to develop at the federal level so it may be a while before you can actually make that assessment. You may have to come back and redo some things. And the third sector is economic revitalization. And here, they will expect you to look not only at physical damage to businesses, but also how damage -- and other storm impact, such as power outages, may have resulted in jobs and revenue loss.

For example, here, in New Jersey, a study that was done by Rutgers regarding the impact of Super Storm Sandy revealed that certain sectors of the economy were disproportionately impacted economically, although they may not have sustained much physical damage. Retail and service sectors are particularly vulnerable as the storms may cause prolonged power outages in commerce due to displacement of customer bases.

There are two types of data sources that HUD is going to look to see if you've used. The first are the federal data feeds and the second is consultation with your stakeholders. Both of these are equally important, although they supply at some level different types of data. The Federal Register notice, when the allocations are announced, in its appendices, is going to give you very specific information on the methodology that HUD has used to make those allocations based on federally available unmet need data. And typically, what this will be is the FEMA individual assistant data, which gives you information on damage, all the way from minor to severe, it's going to help you with unmet housing needs, it's going to give you a sense of how many of your citizens made application to HUD and received HUD assistance.

SBA is also a good federal source of data for both homeowners and businesses because they offer loans for both homeowners and business owners. The national flood insurance program will provide you with data on flood insurance claims. And the FEMA public assistance data provides information on a range of categories related to debris removal; emergency protective measures; public infrastructure, including public facilities. Now, if I mentioned --
Shawna Moraille: Hey, Sue, I'm sorry. We're getting a lot of, like, in and out of your voice.

Sue Southon: Really?

Shawna Moraille: So I just want to make sure that we get that correct, and I'm sorry to stop you and I think we need to go back and recap a couple of things.

Sue Southon: Okay. Tell me what we need to redo.

Shawna Moraille: Why don't you start on the slide before and we'll see if your phone has been corrected. If not, we will need you to try another phone. Thank you.

Sue Southon: Okay. So we talked about the disaster impacts. Let me just go back and recap that HUD will be looking for data in three core aspects of recovery. The housing, which is, as I said, a variety. Owner-occupied, rental, multi-family, affordable, market rate, and HUD-assisted housing, public housing, special needs housing, emergency shelters also. Public infrastructure, roads, bridges, transit systems, public facilities, public buildings, schools, and economic revitalization data, which will be, again, not only physical damage to businesses, but also business losses due to stoppage of power and loss of jobs because businesses have been unable to open because they have no market.

Let me just stop a second and verify, Shawna, that people can hear me better.

Shawna Moraille: The last stretch was perfect. So just keep going. If not, then we'll let you know and we'll have you dial back in on another phone.

Sue Southon: Okay. Let's see. We were talking about data sources. There are federal data feeds that you can get and you will want to get because these will be the source not only of your initial assessment of hard data, but it will also provide you with an ongoing source of updating the data, both the needs and what kinds of federal resources are flowing into your area.

I think I stopped around FEMA public assistance, which is the FEMA -- the FEMA assistance to states and local municipalities to assist them in repair of infrastructure and public facilities. Now, some of you, if you have good working relationships with your insurance regulatory agencies, may also be able to get private insurance data, which is a very helpful form of supplemental data, although, quite honestly, oftentimes very difficult to get.

In order to get the federal feeds, you're going to need to make a specific request to FEMA and SBA to secure access to that data. Your state emergency management agencies may already have access, but you may very well find that it's extremely useful for your implementing agencies to have it directly. And if you need assistance securing that resource, your HUD representative will be able to help you do that.

In terms of the consultation, this helps get both quantifiable and quantitative data on what's happening closer to the ground. The kinds of data you would want to collect here would be
information from your PHAs and your special needs housing providers, local governments, your local councils of government, your 211 and 311 lines and county social services agencies and non-profit services provides. Chambers of commerce and trade associations are all good examples of organizations to whom you're going to reach out to get additional data and to encourage them to be engaged with you in consultation as you begin to get a picture of your storm impacts and how you're going to go about addressing your needs.

Disaster recovery resources are scarce. And so, you're going to want to think of your CDBG-DR funds as your funding of last resort and look to the other resources that you could identify that will assist you in meeting those needs. Because no matter how many things you can find, there will always be more need than there are resources available to cover them. But once you have completed this initial needs assessment, it's going to lead you to some conclusions regarding what your unmet needs are that you're going to want to -- for which you're going to want to use your CDBG-DR data. And it will help you provide a rationalization for how you want to distribute your funds. I'm going to stop here and pause just a second to see if we have any questions and, again, to apologize for our initial problems with our technology here. Shawna, any questions?

Shawna Moraille: Thank you, Sue. Yes, we do have a question in the queue. "Are there any exemplary model action plans that should be the model or master action plan they can use?"

Sue Southon: Boy, that's a really good question. Because they tend to be creatures of the local environments, I think the elements of them are similar. I guess I'm going to ask Jen if she can think of some -- I, obviously, you know, I'm very partial to the fact that I think the folks in New Jersey did a really excellent job with their action plan. But then, I have to admit I'm biased. But Jen, how about you could just make some suggestions as to something they might want to take a look at?

Jennifer Hylton: So I don't know that we'd, you know, point one grantee out in particular. But what I'd say is all grantees are required to put their action plans online. So a quick Google search, if you search for CDBG-DR action plan, maybe disaster recovery action plan, you'll find a lot of those online. So you can kind of look at, you know, I mean, it depends on what kind of grantee you are.

If you're a small grantee, you don't really want to look at -- if you don't need a New Jersey plan that's, you know, so big, maybe you want to look to a community that's a little more like your community. So I would just Google it. Look and see what you can find there, but also know that each allocation, you know, has its own rules and notices and everything. So must make sure that you're paying particular attention to the FR notice that rules your funding.

Sue Southon: Thanks, Jen. Good advice. Shawna, do we want to do our first poll now?

Shawna Moraille: Just one more question and then we'll --

Sue Southon: Oh, I'm sorry.
Shawna Moraille: That's okay. And then, we'll turn over to Chantel.

Sue Southon: Okay.

Shawna Moraille: In the event the impact is so excessive it is unsafe to rehab or rebuild in an effective area, could funds be used to assist that business to reestablish itself in a different area?

Sue Southon: That's a really good question. Jen, I'm going to pass that one to you.

Jennifer Hylton: You know, so I don't know if we want to get -- do we want to get into the weeds on these through specific [inaudible] activity questions? I'm not sure if we do or not. But let me -- I'm going to do some research on that to find out the answer and I'll come back, Sue, and let you know what the answer is.

Sue Southon: Great. Thanks, Jen. So we will get back to the -- our audience person who asked that question and try to get you a more specific answer. Chantel, do you want to do the poll?

Chantel Key: Sure. Thanks, Sue. I am launching the first poll right now. Poll is open. Indicate the status of your action plan. Has it been submitted to HUD already? Is it under development? Or action plan, what exactly is that? We have about 25 percent of our participants voted so far. So I'll leave the polls open for just a few moments. And about 50 percent have voted so far. So I'll leave it open for just a few more seconds. Okay. I've closed the poll and sharing the result. Please indicate the status of your action plan. We have 43 percent voted submitted to HUD.

Sue Southon: Wow.

Chantel Key: Thirty percent voted -- yeah. Thirty percent voted under development. And 26 percent voted action, what is that?

Sue Southon: Okay. Thank you, Chantel. Well, we've got a lot of experienced folks with us, it seems, and a variety of those who are looking for a little bit more information. So here we go. We talked initially about -- the action plan actually has a number of different components. The first one we talked about is the needs assessment. The second one is the plan, if you will, which is what are you going to do? HUD is going to expect you to provide a series of programs and activities that are going to find how you intend to use your CDBG-DR funds. And for each of those, three things are going to be required. You're going to need to be sure that you've identified an activity that's CDBG eligible or has received a waiver. And probably the most common example of that is for those of you who do a lot of work with CDBG-DR, new construction is typically not an eligible activity. Under CDBG-DR, reconstruction is an eligible activity and it's permitted by waiver.

And for each of those, three things are going to be required. You're going to need to be sure that you've identified an activity that's CDBG eligible or has received a waiver. And probably the most common example of that is for those of you who do a lot of work with CDBG-DR, new construction is typically not an eligible activity. Under CDBG-DR, reconstruction is an eligible activity and it's permitted by waiver.

So the first thing is to make sure that your activities are eligible. The second is it must meet one of the three national objectives, urgent need; benefits to low and moderate income populations, beneficiaries, households, or areas; or it must eliminate slums and blight. And the third one, and
this is the one that's really quite new for disaster recovery, but an absolute requirement, is that it has to have a direct or an indirect impact of the storm that you must be able to document.

Now, obviously, the easiest one is physical storm damage. However, it is possible that economic revitalization or economic impact through loss of jobs or revenue can also be documented, and that's a perfectly legitimate tie to the storm as well.

HUD is going to expect that at least 50 percent of your allocation -- and again, for those of you who are state grantees, CDBG is normally 70 percent. But 50 percent of your allocation, excluding your planning and admin, has to address the needs of low and moderate income individuals, households, or predominantly LMI areas. The conclusions that you've drawn from your needs assessment, along with potential other sources of leverage, are going to lead logically to the activities that you intend to fund with CDBG-DR. And I would encourage you, because, as we mentioned previously, those CDBG-DR funds are limited and precious, that you look for creative ways to leverage other sources of funds. And I'll give you a couple of examples of this.

The one that's probably the most prevalent and also will provide the most substantial bang for the buck, if you will, of CDBG funds, is to use it to match other federal resources. This is an eligible activity under CDBG-DR and you can use your CDBG to provide the state and/or local match for FEMA funds, for highway administration funds, and for a number of other federal-funded sources. There are a few that are more difficult than others. I will say that our experience in New Jersey is that the EPA programs are a little more of a challenging, where to use CDBG-DR to address. But what the impact of this is is it allows you to use a little bit of CDBG-DR to access a lot of other federal resources. And again, in New Jersey, we used about $175 million of CDBG-DR and that leveraged -- that will leverage $1.6 billion of other federal resources.

Another thing that you might want to take a look at is your -- many of your states with a significant disaster are going to get SSBG money, which is social services block grant money. Probably comes to your departments of human services or potentially your public -- your department of health. These are also funds that can be used very well in tandem with CDBG-DR funds.

I could give you an example what you're going to find for those of you who are going to be doing some kind of homeowner restoration program is that you have a lot of homeowners who have a mortgage, can't live in their home, and will have to rent while they're waiting for their homes to be repaired. And particularly for lower and moderate income individuals, that is going to provide a significant financial burden. An eligible use of SSBG is to provide them with interim mortgage assistance or interim leasing assistance to help them bridge that gap so that they're not trying to make two large multi payments at the same time. This also has the added benefit of preventing mortgage foreclosures.

The second thing you need to think about is your delivery system, if you will, how you're going to distribute your funds. And unlike state CDBG-DR, you have options to you to either fund local units of government or other subrecipients, carry out the activities directly, or use a combination of the two. And one way to think about this is that DR funds at the state level can be
used very similar to the way entitlement communities use these funds. In other words, they can run programs directly, something you can't do with state CDBG programs.

And in this instance, your local governments are subrecipients. They're considered subrecipients, and that's a little bit different. The other differentiation in these is -- oftentimes comes when you think about how you're going to be dealing with environmental review and responsible entities. And that will come in a later webinar, but just to advise you that these are things to think about. There are pros and cons and we're going to talk a little bit about the pros and cons of each method as we go forward.

The other thing to think about is it's not just local government units that can be subrecipients, but other state agencies can be subrecipients; quasi-governmental units, like economic development corporations or state housing finance agencies can be subrecipients; or they can be non-profit organizations. If you're going to be giving grants to your local units of government or other subrecipients, there's a numbers of pros to that. They're closer to the ground, they're more familiar with local needs perhaps, they've got relationships that will help them with outreach and prevalent implementation, and they typically directly serve those in need. They have direct beneficiary programs.

Cons to those are that they're going to require perhaps a little bit more oversight to ensure that the programs are compliant, particularly if you have subrecipients who haven't used CDBG funds before because of the level of -- and complexity of some of the federal regulations that go along with them. So it's important that if that's a delivery system that you intend to use, that your subrecipient is -- has the implementation structure or could ramp it up quickly to deliver those funds in a compliant manner.

Another alternative is to do the program directly. And there are also some real significant pros and cons to that. You can very narrowly target your programs. You have a lot more control over the design and the implementation. You have more oversight, which allows you to minimize your risk and exposure of things like fraud, waste, or abuse. The costs of this are that most state agencies, who typically are your CDBG grantees, don't have significant capacity to do direct program delivery.

So this is something that you will need to think about and how you want to get that capacity, and there's a number of different ways to do it. You can hire contractors to run specific programs. You can augment your existing staff. What I will caution is that most of the state programs who try to do direct implementation with existing staff find that they just don't have enough local staff resources to do it by themselves. So building and implementing a service delivery system takes time, but it also ensures that you have maximum control over what's going on.

And in these instances, you'll have direct beneficiaries, as opposed to subrecipients. And this, again, refers back to the differentiation, if you will, between state and entitlement CDBG grantees. Or you can use a combination of both, and I think a lot of successful grantees have discovered that this may be your best avenue. There will be programs that make sense to have subrecipients deliver because they know the population that's going to be targeted for the
programs. They have delivery channels already in place. They have infrastructure in their agencies to do the work.

And then, there may be others that none of you have really run before because you haven't had this level of disaster, and those may be the ones you want to think more closely about trying to do yourself. I will say that overall, if you're contracting with subrecipients, if you're granting subrecipients funding to do programs, the -- you as grantee are going to assume more responsibility for training, technical assistance, compliance, and monitoring because, ultimately, as grantee, HUD is going to hold you responsible for the actions of your subrecipients.

I talk a little bit about system participation because that's basically the third step in the action plan development process. Prior to the formal submission, HUD is going to require you to post your action plan for public comment. Now, when the Federal Register notices governing your particular programs come out, it will provide you with alternative requirements for how HUD is going to require you to do this. With the initial round of allocations under 113-2, it was a seven-day posting and no public meeting requirement. In subsequent rounds of allocations, a 30-day public notice and a one public hearing requirement was implemented, and this is also the current requirement for any substantial amendments under that application.

In the course of developing your -- determining your unmet needs and your action plan, you're going to be working directly with various impacted constituent groups and you may well have found assistant advisory committees to help you identify needs and design your programs. This is a very effective way of developing your action plan, but it doesn't substitute for that public comment period requirement of your system participation that you absolutely must do.

We're going to be talking in a little bit more detail about this in a later section of the webinar, so I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it now. Except to tell you that one of the last things you will need to do as part of your action plan submission to HUD is to summarize and respond to all of the public comments that you received through that public posting and public comment process. Let me pause here a minute and ask Shawna if we have any questions.

Shawna Moraille: You do. "Can you clarify who needs to submit the action plan to?"

Sue Southon: Yes. It needs to be submitted by the agency or the organization that will be the grantee. Now, it may be done on behalf of a state. So if the allocation, for example, in the state of New Jersey went to -- the governor designated the Department of Community Affairs as the grantee. So they were responsible for the submission. So once your governor or your chief elected official makes the designation of the agency or department to be responsible, they would be the one submitting the plan.

Shawna Moraille: The next question is can the CDBG-DR action plan be combined with the regular CDBG action plan for smaller entitlements?

Sue Southon: The -- let me clarify. Your -- the DR action plan with a regular CDBG action plan?
Shawna Moraille: Yes.

Sue Southon: I believe the answer to that is no. But Jen, can you clarify?

Jennifer Hylton: Yeah. They have to be separate documents, though. You're normal CDBG grant that you do an action plan for would not be the same action plan that you would do for your DR funds. You would have to do those separately in separate documents and upload those separately into your DR. They'll be different grants and different grant numbers and different requirements. So, I mean, you could certainly, in terms of planning, you know, think about what you're doing in your normal CDBG program, but it's got to meet all the disaster-related requirements.

Shawna Moraille: Okay. Two more, Sue. Will I require public meetings in the Federal Register? If so, will more than two-week public notices be required?

Sue Southon: That I'm absolutely going to have to defer to Jen on because my understanding is that we won't really know that till the public notice is actually public.

Jennifer Hylton: The Federal Register?

Shawna Moraille: Yes.

Jennifer Hylton: Once the Federal Register notice is out, you know, you can get all that information from the specific Federal Register notice that deals with your grant.

Shawna Moraille: Okay. Last one. Public comment responses need to be part -- do they need to be part of the action plan or can it be a separate document that's posted?

Sue Southon: It's included as the -- part of the action plan submission to HUD. So it's actually integrated as a -- it's a separate section within your action plan submission and in part of the document that you submit to HUD. So -- and it also will be posted on your state or your entitlement website. Jen, any comment -- any additional clarification there?

Jennifer Hylton: No. I think you got it.

Sue Southon: Okay. All right. Next thing. We're going to talk a little bit about how you're going to think about implementation. Now, let's say by this time you have done your needs assessment, you have created your action plan, determined what you're going to do, for whom you're going to do it, what your eligible activities are, who your beneficiaries will be, how you're going to be delivering the funds. You've integrated your public responses.

So now, you've submitted to HUD and you're waiting for their approval. There's a couple of things that you can be doing. While you're waiting for HUD to approve your action plan, grantees should be developing the policies and procedures for each of the programs that they've identified in their action plan. And these are a much more detailed description of how your
program is going to operate. It's the business process, if you will; how you will do your outreach, how you will do your applications.

How you'll determine eligibility and selection of beneficiaries if you're running the programs directly or if you're, you know, the same information would obviously be required for any of your subrecipients. Creating your subrecipient contracts and your MOUs and any other contractual work that you have to do. Determining how you're going to document what your metrics are going to be and how you're going to handle monitoring and close-out for each of those programs.

For the first time in DR history, if you will, under the public law 113-2 that was the major allocation for Super Storm Sandy, Congress placed timelines on these expenditures. And so, this has added a new level of complexity, if you will, and challenge to the work that you, as grantees, have to do. The timeline is two years, which HUD, in its wisdom, decided was, you know, given the nature of the work that you're doing, the fact that you have to be ramping up, some of these projects become very engaged and involved, and particularly the larger infrastructure.

It's just not work you could do in two years. So the way they will have structured it is that the two-year timeline is triggered by an obligation of funds. So basically, of the total grant, you don't have to take the whole thing at once. You will be obligating in tranches or rounds, if you will, and once you request that draw down, you start your 24-month clock.

So what you will be doing, your hard copy action plan that you've posted on your website has all the information on your needs and your requirements and the rules that you're going to go under, basically your process. Your DRGR action plan will provide much more specificity regarding your performance metrics and your expenditures and your anticipated outcomes. And as part of the process, once you get your action plan approved, HUD is really going to want to see projections on your expenditures. So this is a new wrinkle, if you will, and something to start thinking about.

If you'll go back to the life cycle slide that we kind of started out with, it refers to continuous reassessment. This is really important and something that you're going to have to be doing. You will be wanting to update your federal source data. And I mentioned that the FEMA public assistance data tends to be a little bit longer in coming, partially because they are evaluating by project a myriad of various kinds of infrastructure projects. But they are also making assessments on insurance -- potential insurance coverage that they anticipate coming in on those projects before they make decisions on how many FEMA funds they're willing to designate to each of those.

And it's really not until that point that you can assess what your [inaudible] is or what your unmet need is for those infrastructure projects. In addition to that, your beneficiaries and your businesses are going to be receiving grants and/or loans and/or insurance from the national flood insurance program, they may be SBA loans; they may be getting private insurance payments. So again, as time passes, the unmet need may be reduced.
And as a result of that, because it's very difficult to project, you're going to want to start monitoring what's happening with your programs as it relates to utilization because of that expenditure deadline that I referred to in the prior slide. It's important to monitor utilization and also to monitor capacity for your subrecipients to move the funds expeditiously to meet the expenditure deadlines. And you're going to want to make some mid-course corrections to make sure that the programs that you've originally designed are meeting the need that you intended and that they're expending at a level that is going to avoid you having to return unspent funds to HUD.

An example of something that we're doing here is, on a weekly basis, our senior leadership and program managers get expenditure updates for every single [inaudible] one of the DR programs, which then serves as their management tool to determine where there may be issues related to timely expenditure so that they can work more directly with either contractors or their subrecipients to try to identify and address whatever log jams or mid-course corrections need to be made. When those changes need to be made, it may be small internal things that you need to be doing, but there are also changes that you may want to make that are going to involve action plan amendments, and there are basically two varieties.

There's non-substantial amendments, which are minor, don't involve -- they may involve a movement of a small amount of money, it may be a clarification of a definition, maybe something that you thought you had covered in the action plan but you find maybe it wasn't sufficiently specific and you need to give some additional clarification. The requirement on those is that they're just sent to HUD, who will acknowledge the receipt. There's no formal approval required and you can -- and no system participation requirement and you can implement in five days. If it's more substantial, then it's going to trigger a process that basically will be identical to probably your action plan approval procedure or if there's been a change in participation requirements in subsequent Federal Register notice, you'll need to follow those.

And to go back to 113-2, in that original notice, it was seven days and no public hearing. But in subsequent public register notices, it turned out to be an extension to 30 days public notice and one public hearing requirement for any substantial amendments. So again, you'll have to wait for a Federal Register notice to let you know what those requirements are going to look like.

When you submit a substantial amendment to HUD, they're going to want you to cover a checklist, if you will, of items. They're going to want to know activity level questions, what's the eligible activity that you're going to be doing, what are your beneficiaries, what's the eligibility going to be? Similar to what you do in your initial action plan. There may be requirements or questions specific to the kind of a project. Probably a good example on this one is the covered infrastructure projects.

And then, they're going to want specificity as to -- if you're moving money, where you're moving it from and where you're moving it to. And because we're not dealing with the specifics of the NDR requirements on this webinar, I will just refer you to a couple of public notices, 56-06 and -08. And again, both available on the CDBG-DR webpage of the HUD Exchange. But they give you the specific requirements for larger infrastructure and covered projects.
And for any of you who may be doing those, I would encourage you to start now to review those because they will be requirements you're going to have to fulfill. A substantial amendment is triggered by a major modification. If you change a program benefit, so if -- for example, if you're raising the amount of a grant from, say, $100,000 to $150,000, or if you're modifying an eligibility criteria, that triggers a substantial amendment. If you're allocating or reallocating more than $1 million, that will also trigger a substantial amendment. And if you're adding or deleting an activity.

Now, those are the three that, at the moment, HUD requires that you submit a substantial amendment. You have the ability to add additional requirements that, internally, for your own programs, you want to go back to the public and ask -- and let them know that you're doing it. And again, this is entirely up to you, but at the moment, these are the Federal Register notice requirements triggering a substantial amendment. Shawna, let me pause for a minute here and see if we have any questions.

Shawna Moraille: There are a couple of questions in the queue.

Sue Southon: Okay.

Shawna Moraille: "Does something need to be added to -- I have assumed CPP is the consolidated plan, about amendments to the DR action plan."

Sue Southon: Yes. You will have to submit assist and participation plan. It's actually part of your action plan submission for your CDBG-DR funds.

Shawna Moraille: "How much time does a grant recipient have to develop an action plan once the grant is awarded?"

Sue Southon: If I remember, the initial one was 90 days. But Jen, can you confirm that?

Jennifer Hylton: Yeah. So this is another one, it just depends on the Federal Register notice that comes out from your allocation. And the one Sue is talking about is the March 5th notice for the Sandy funds, as an example, and that March 5th notice gave grantees 90 days to submit their action plan. But you want to make sure you're looking at the FR notice around your allocation and make sure you check for the date.

Sue Southon: Great. Anything else, Shawna?

Shawna Moraille: You just covered it on the last slide, about the dollar amount, threshold for small amount of movement for it not to be considered non-substantial.

Sue Southon: Yeah. It would be under $1 million. Well, let me put it this way. For the Federal Register notice that governs the Sandy allocation, that was what it was. I suppose that that could potentially change, right, Jen, with the new Federal Register notices?
Jennifer Hylton: Yes. Definitely possible. So definitely check out -- so the new one, when it comes out for the South Carolina and Texas grants, just -- if that's what you're covered under, look at the information in that Federal Register notice.

Shawna Moraille: And let me clarify the question before. I didn't know what CPP -- I didn't know it was "citizen participation plan." I've never heard it called that. So let me read that question and the citizen participation plan context too. "Does something need to be added to the citizen participation plan about amendment to the DR action plan?"

Sue Southon: Yes. There needs to be -- most of your grantees are going to have citizen participation plan that they've already adopted.

What I would suggest -- and again, I'm going to turn to my HUD colleagues for additional clarification on this -- a citizen participation plan component is a requirement of your CDBG-DR action plan submission. So they may wish to use the framework, if you will, of the citizen participation plan that they normally use, but they will have to make sure that any alternative requirements of the Federal Register are integrated appropriately into that plan. Jen?

Jennifer Hylton: Yeah. No. I think -- yeah. What you said is right. Again, it's one of those things where you want to look at your Federal Register notice. Because, again, all of these things are -- can be different based on your allocation. And you will have to go to citizens for amendments and you will be making amendments.

Shawna Moraille: And I think we want -- we had another question about when a Federal Register notice was going to be published and we don't give out those dates because most of the time, we don't know those dates ourselves. So we're waiting, just like you, for that to move your concurrence and get published.

Sue Southon: Okay. All right. Let me -- let us move on to spend a little bit more time on citizen participation. It's a very important aspect of the CDBG-DR process and it's not just the action plan and its amendments. It's the area that's apt to cause the most problems for grantees if the system done well. And also, a lack of strong citizen participation leads to complaints by elected officials to HUD, to the president, and potentially to lawsuits. So it's important to make sure that you have a very robust citizen participation plan for your CDBG-DR programs.

And the primary goal if you, and those of you who have been working with CDBG for years know this already, is to make sure that you're engaging your citizenry, and particularly those of low and moderate income, and providing an opportunity for them to have a meaningful participation in planning and implementation and assessment of your programs and projects.

As I mentioned that some of these are waived to make sure that you can deliver the funds in a timely manner. So again, in reference to that fact that some of this we realize is unknown because we don't have the Federal Register notices yet, and we've talked a little bit about the fact that it changed, if you will, with the 113-2 allocation from the initial being seven days. Again, I think reflective of HUD's interest to move the money -- the initial disaster money quickly.
But then, to come back and make sure that the subsequent allocations and any alterations in the
plan that were done with substantial amendments had adequate time -- allowed adequate time for
assistant inputs and consideration, if you will, in submitting those changes. So be prepared. It
may, as with 113-2, start out shorter and then be changed in subsequent Federal Register notices.

These are the alternative requirements that were published in the original Super Storm Sandy
[inaudible]. And again, they were streamlined by HUD to get the money moving as quickly as
possible and, as a result, didn't mandate public hearings at the state entitlement or local
government level. However, they did require that you post for at least seven days and that you
review and comment on all public comments. And just as a suggestion, what we did here is we
took those comments and basically tried to group them and respond to groups of questions that
were related.

So we had a whole bunch of variety, for example, of questions about, "How come you're not
funding second homes?" And those came in all different varieties, but basically, that was a major
concern. And that was a pretty easy one because the Federal Register notice specifically
prohibited it. So it wasn't an option that the state could even consider. But that can become a
fairly cumbersome process if you're doing a 30-day public notice and public hearings. Because,
again, there is an expectation that you respond to all of those comments. There are five basic
alternative requirements that HUD put in place for its grantees to make sure that that public
participation occurred.

The plan and the time for comments, we've already talked about. How it got published on the
Web, typically in a newspaper [inaudible] the areas of impact and we're going to talk a little bit
more about that when we talk about LAP plans. It also requires you to identify the criteria for
triggering a substantial amendment. And, as I said, the minimum we talked about previously was
a change in beneficiary or eligibility, moving more than $1 million, and adding and/or deleting a
program or an activity.

The third is to summarize the comments and then respond to them for HUD. And the fourth is to
make sure -- and this may be new to some of you, and this is something that you'll see in the pre-
requirements that we discussed a little bit at the very beginning, things that you need to be doing
before you start crafting your action plan. You are going to create a website that specifically
captures information on your recovery programs and make sure that that is widely accessible to
the public and publicized. It's where you're going to put your action plans. It's where you're going
to put your program availability, your program requirements, any substantial amendments, your
quarterly progress reports. So be aware that that will be a requirement, likely, of the new Federal
Register notice.

And then, there is a requirement that you put into place a procedure for responding to any
complaints within five working days of receipt, and this is something that perhaps you haven't
had to do before, but may well be a requirement of your new Federal Register. So you'll need to
certify that citizen participation plan and, again, that's part of your action plan submission. By
adopting the requirements, not only is the plan you may already have in place and are very
comfortable in using, but also when any additional requirements HUD may impose to the
Federal Register, and then make sure that you are following those and that they continue to satisfy all of the regulatory requirements.

Citizen involvement takes place on two levels, the program level and the project level. And it's really important not just at the beginning or when you want to make a change, but to have a continuity of participation throughout all the stages of your program. And the grid that you see here in front of you gives an example of that, things that will be required to be published, the action plans and amendments, public notices, notices of public hearings. You're going to want to make sure that periodically, you have some community meetings. You're required to have a website.

I think many of you were already implementing a citizens advisory committee structure and process, and that's a really good thing and something to continue. There are paragraphs of the regulations that are going to describe some specific methods of involvement. And, again, these are addressed in the graph that you see.

But they also continue throughout the process. It's not just the submission of the action plan and it's not just when you want to do a substantial amendment, but any time you're thinking about reviewing implementation, getting, you know, taking the temperature of some of your program, participants on how they're feeling, how the program is going. You know, are you getting the kinds of outputs and in the timeframes that you're expecting?

And then, there's also the involvement at the project level. Some very effective things that they've done here, in New Jersey, involve having regular sessions with applicants at their home ownership rehab programs, where staff actually goes into the communities that were most impact and sits with applicants and helps them address problems or concerns or issues that they may have.

It's done a couple of things. It's really, really helped to move the program forward and it has significantly reduced the complaints and the concerns about the program because people know where to go to get help they need, and that help is delivered by the people who have the information and understand how the program works and really make a difference in getting things done.

The public notice and the public input is also – I think you're going to find, for some of you, NDR applicants, particularly important for these larger infrastructure projects, where you have a broad geographic area you may be impacting and a large constituency. And again, we said why it's important.

It builds understanding and support for your program. It builds ownership for your program among your citizens and your elected officials and your local governments. It speeds up your implementation because people understand the programs that are out there that you're working with in the community and they're able to access them easily and implementation moves a little bit quicker. It demonstrates that you're being really responsive to the local needs that have been identified.
And again, it reduces the citizen complains and legal challenges that I think most of you who have run grant programs know can be, you know, a major, major issue. Let me stop and take a couple of questions if there are any on citizen participation before we go into our language proficiency.

Shawna Moraille: Sue, there are no questions in the queue.

Sue Southon: Okay. Well, we must have covered citizen participation really well. Just let me ask quickly if Jen or any of her colleagues have anything they would like to add from the HUD perspective on citizen participation.

Jennifer Hylton: No. I think you covered everything, Sue. Thanks.

Sue Southon: Okay. Let me stop for a minute. One of the things that we're going to spend a little bit more time on, and it's something that you may be unfamiliar with but has become increasingly more important, part of that strong citizen participation plan is a thoughtful approach to reaching vulnerable populations and individuals in the service areas or your impacted areas where English may not be the primary language or they have a limited English proficiency. And I'm going to stop here and ask Chantel if she would assist us in doing another poll.

Chantel Key: Sure, Sue. So the -- I'm watching the poll now and the poll is now open. So please indicate if you know the neediest limited English proficient population in your area. About 35 percent of our participants have voted. We'll keep it open for just a few more moments.

Okay. The polls are now closed and the results, 59 percent voted yes, 34 percent voted no, and 6 voted LEP, what exactly is that?

Sue Southon: Okay. All right. Well, thanks, Chantel.

Being able to do effective outreach to vulnerable populations and those with limited English proficiency is extremely important in a post-disaster environment. Because it's often these populations that may have been the most impacted, the most in need of resources, and the most difficult to reach. And by vulnerable populations here, we're talking generally speaking about the elderly, people with disabilities, people of low or moderate income, and people with limited English proficiency. Now, there may be in your area additional populations that you've identified as well that were particularly impacted or that you believe may have been particularly impacted by the storm and you want to take a look at where those people are and how you might be able to help them.

And there's a couple of different ways to do this. And again, what I'd suggest is that you do a combination of both. One of the things that we found to be really helpful and effective, and I'm a visual learner, so I love maps, is to do some GIS mapping where we actually took the FEMA damage data and looked at the areas where there was the highest concentration of major and severe damage. And then, overlaid that map on maps of ACS data, American Community Survey data, that showed where various populations were that might have limited English proficiency.
We looked that areas where they may be concentrations of low and moderate income populations. We did not, although we could have, looked at areas, for example, where there were higher concentrations of people with disabilities or the elderly. And again, you know your geographies better than anyone else and you will know, you know, where those -- where you want to take a look to focus in on where those extra special areas that you think are going to need more focus, maybe. And by focus here, I'm referring to both outreach, so that people know what's going on, understand the programs that are available, and then help them perhaps to provide additional resources to help them be able to access those programs.

Another important resource in this regard is to do outreach consultation to your service providers, your continuum of care groups, groups that provide special needs housing or homeless shelters, and your advocacy groups. Long-term recovery groups are sometimes really excellent sources of information.

Other groups that may be your first responding FEMA groups, which are typically Red Cross. I think in many areas, Catholic Charities does a lot of work on FEMA individual assistance programs. But again, in your area, you're going to know who those people are and they can help you to make sure that you're getting input from those areas and those vulnerable populations as you craft your plan. And then, again, you're targeting your outreach on the availability of programs and program resources to those folks.

This is, again, in talking with my HUD colleagues, for grantees are most apt to have difficulty and gets us complaints with regard to lack of access to program resources. So it really does help you -- and I can't -- the mapping was enormously helpful to us and I think what -- if you do it, you may find it will be helpful to you as well because in some instances, you get information you didn't maybe expect in terms of where damage is overlaid [sic] with areas where you really want to do some special focus.

What is limited English proficiency? And it -- but it does sound like a number of you are very well versed in this already, but the Census Bureau defines it as people that speak English less than very well. And with the influx of immigrants in many of your states and your jurisdictions, we're finding that there are more households where English is not the primary language.

And Title VI and language access prohibits discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal assistance on the basis of race, color, and national origin. So failure to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency can effectively participate in your programs and benefits may result in a national origin discrimination complaint under Title VI. So it's important that you make an effort to provide meaningful access to programs and services.

And meaningful access, what do we mean by that? Well, your limited English proficiency plan is based on your language access plan, and that plan involves a four-factor analysis. And I know a number of you are very familiar with this, but for those of you who may not be, for this analysis, HUD wants you to look at the number of people in your community where English is not the primary language and the number of people in the various service areas that are impacted by your storm event.
Another thing they’re going to want you to assess is, you know, the programs that you’re delivering and how important those are to that population. You know, particularly beneficiary programs that may impact homeowners or renters or business owners clearly are very important to make sure that you’ve got broad access to those programs for people that may have language challenges. And the importance of the programs and the resources, to make sure that they’re available.

And this also gives you the guidance, if you will, for determining the need for translation for vital program documents. And vital program documents, HUD defines as any document that involves program information, eligibility information, applications, intake forms, grantee award information, appeals processes; anything that in any way, shape, or form impacts access to a program is considered a vital document.

Now, to give you some help for this, there are a number of tools that you can use, and you see two resources on here. I’m going to direct you to the Migration Policy Institute data because I found that to be a very user friendly resource and really provides you with data that you will need for your language access plan without your having to do a lot of data manipulation or calculations.

What it does is it gives you data by state and county for the variety of languages that may be spoken in that particular jurisdiction, the number of people where the household has indicated that that is the primary language through the American community data, and once you know that number and the percentage in your service area, it will help you to determine the steps that you need to take in crafting your language access plan.

And HUD requires meaningful access. And the safe harbor for this is shown in the graph that you’ve got right there on your screen. So if you have 1,000 or more people in an eligible population in the area that you’re going to be serving, you need to be translating your vital documents, and those are the documents I just talked about, in addition to that -- the -- your action plan and substantial amendments will need to be translated on your websites. So they'll need to be in whatever the predominant languages are other than English where the incidence is higher than the numbers on the chart.

The essential elements of the language access program for people with limited English proficiency include translation. Now, and again, the threshold from the prior -- let me go back a minute to the prior slide and let you take another look at that. So it's 1,000 people. That would be the major threshold. Anything over 1,000 in any county, for example, is going to trigger a requirement for translation.

If it's a small county and it's more than 5 percent of the population of that county or more than 50 people, that will trigger it as well. And then, to the lesser numbers, you need to provide them, and now I'm going to go back to the page I just showed you, with the I Speak cards, with access to translation lines, and make sure that they are able to learn what the program benefits may be to them and how they might be able to access that program.
The next page gives you some additional LEP resources, and I know that most of you, if not all of you, hopefully, at this point, have these slides, and I would encourage you to check out these resources. Even those of you who are well-versed need to remember that if you did exercise as part of your consolidated plan or the annual update, if it's been a period of time and there's new CS data, you may want to double check that data to make sure there's nothing that's changed in your area. Let me stop one more time because we're getting close to the end here and ask if we have additional questions. Shawna?

Shawna Moraille: Yes. We do have additional questions. "How do I find out if we have a language access plan and follow it?"

Sue Southon: Your CDBG grantee at -- depending on where you are -- whether it's a state grantee or you're an entitlement community, would have that as part of your annual and consolidated plan because it's part of that requirement, and I believe that that's where it would most likely be found. Jen, is that true?

Jennifer Hylton: Yeah. I was going to say the same thing.

Sue Southon: Okay. But again, I would caution you. If it's not recurrent, like, for example, hasn't been in the last 12 months, you may want to double check because DR programs are very visible and very sensitive. And you want to make absolutely sure that you are providing the maximum amount of access -- meaningful access to all of the citizens that you're going to be serving in your impacted area.

Shawna Moraille: Next question. "Is having a link to Microsoft Word Translator considered adequate to meet the documentation translation?"

Sue Southon: My understanding is that it would not be adequate if you've exceeded that safe harbor threshold. So in other words, if you had, for example, in your geography, 5,000 families where Spanish is the primary spoken language of the household, you would actually need to translate your document into Spanish.

I think for -- and again, I'm going to ask my HUD colleagues to collaborate this because I don't want to give you the wrong information, but I think for those languages less prevalent in the general population, where maybe there are, you know, 10 families in a county that speak Hmong, for example, that you could use the Google translation. But again, Jen, can you confirm that for me?

Jennifer Hylton: So I am definitely not an LEP expert, but I do -- I'm being told by the help of my HUD colleagues that you do need to have interpreters available at hearings and public meetings and that you should be translating those documents, and not just your action plan, but other relevant documents related to that, like application forms.

Sue Southon: Right. And yeah. We are --

[talking over each other]
Sue Southon: Go ahead.

Shawna Moraille: "We are a large city and have many LEP populations above 1,000 people. Are we required to translate the whole action plan or just the summary would be sufficient?"

Sue Southon: I believe you have to translate the entire plan if you exceed that threshold. Jen, can you verify?

Jennifer Hylton: I think that's correct. I'm getting confirmation from my other folks online. But yeah. I think you have to -- let me get back to you. Let me check with Sandra and Marty and then we'll clarify that.

Sue Southon: We'll get back to you -- I know for example, in New York City, which obviously has a very diverse population and many languages represented as a whole variety of translations on their website of their documents in multiple -- their entire documents in multiple languages. I will also tell you that in New Jersey, applications are translated, letters that go out to applicants advising them of eligibility are translated. We do that in Spanish and then in -- if there is a request for a different language, that request for language services is part of the application process for our beneficiary programs.

Spanish is the one we see most often and those are pretty automatically translated, so almost any document that would be sent out to an individual beneficiary and applicant would go out in English and Spanish. And then, as a part of the process, we specifically ask them if there is a language in which they want their documents translated.

And if the answer to that is yes, that's taken care of. We also have translation lines available at all our intake sites so that if there is someone that comes in that requires translation into another language, if there's not a staff on hand that's conversant in that language, then that line is used.

Shawna Moraille: Okay. There are no further questions right now. But if you want to go ahead and send in some more questions, we still have time available to answer them, folks.

Sue Southon: Okay. Let me move on just a second and we've got a group discussion question, and since we have a couple of minutes to spare here, I've got some things you can think about if you're together with a group of your colleagues. Here's three questions to think about in terms of what are you thinking that your -- what should be your first priority programs post-disaster? What are the activities you're thinking about undertaking?

And then, secondly, should you do them all at once? Do they need to be staged? What are the pros and cons of each of those? And then, are there activities that are better administered by non-profit subrecipients as opposed to the grantee? What might those be? And what potential effect would that have on your timelines? So think about those for a couple of minutes and then we'll entertain some comments from some of our colleagues on what they think about that.
And if those of you who may have some first-hand experience with this and would like to share it with some of your colleagues, that would be great. What I would ask is that any of you who have questions, comments, want to share your thoughts with your colleagues, if you would just let Shawna know. We'll give it a couple more minutes here and then wrap it up.

Shawna Moraille: I can also just share some observations, Sue, that have started to come into the chat box.

Sue Southon: Great.

Shawna Moraille: Let me know when you're ready for those.

Sue Southon: Sure.

Shawna Moraille: I think that one point that somebody mentioned is various non-profit organizations handle relocation better than others. So thinking about, like, your partner strengths and weaknesses.

Sue Southon: That's a great idea. And relocation is a major challenge if you will be doing any kind of rental rehab or buy-out program. And even in some instances, depending on your housing stock, there are a number of grantees I know that have, as a typical housing stock, duplexes, where you've got one side is an owner-occupant and the other side may be a tenant. All of those will trigger Stafford 414 Uniform Relocation Act requirements. It's one of the things, I think, that the grantees may struggle with because the cross-cutting federal regulations, particularly if you're working with local units of government or other state agencies and departments that have never had to deal with relocation, this is a major deal.

And it's very prescriptive and it's very important that it be done right. Because the Stafford Act has a series of requirements that are a little bit different from other relocation because of its tie to the storm and the fact that there are rights for people who were in tenancy at the time of the storm that may have been displaced by the storm.

But then you will need to find and provide opportunities for refusal and potentially relocation benefits. So that's a really good point and I would encourage any of you who are doing homeowner rehab with potential for duplexes or any rental rehab or any buy-out programs to be particularly familiar with the Stafford Act and the Uniform Relocation Act requirements.

Shawna Moraille: Okay. Well, other people are still chatting in about the discussion. Let's go back to the LEP in terms of translation. Jen, I think you wanted to provide some clarification?

Jennifer Hylton: Yeah. So it does seem that for the most part, you need to be translating your entire action plan. And I know we have another question about following these guidelines and what's the best way to do that. So I want to direct everybody to the HUD notice on this. So it's the Federal Register. It's 72 FR 2732.
That's the number for the Federal Register notice. If you want, you could just Google HUD guidance LEP Federal Register notice. It's from January 2007 and it's about 20 pages and it goes through HUD's requirement and its guidance we issued that will help everyone follow the rules for that. So definitely take a look at that.

Sue Southon: Thanks, Jen.

Jennifer Hylton: And maybe you could tap back to the LEP resources, for a second, Sue.

Sue Southon: Yeah.

[talking over each other]

Shawna Moraille: And even better, there's the link.

Jennifer Hylton: And these materials are on the HUD Exchange. Hopefully, people saw those before the webinar.

Sue Southon: Another helpful hint I'd share is that on our CDBG-DR website are all of the Federal Register notices for the Super Storm Sandy allocation. And in those notices are all the waivers that were granted so far, which is an interesting source of reference. Sometimes they are specific to a grantee; other times they're general to all grantees.

But for those of you who may need or feel you're going to need a waiver on a specific program that you want to implement, that's a good way to go back and figure out if HUD has ever done that before. And if so, look at the documentation that they provide with that waiver that was the justification for making the waiver. It will help inform the way you craft those waivers.

It also has some really excellent guidance on other aspects of DR that will be helpful to you. I know that there is one on activity delivery. There is on duplication of benefits. There's one on pre-award costs and -- by the way, for those of you who are in the process of creating your action plan, any planning costs that you incur to prepare that plan are an eligible activity to be funded under the planning portion of your planning and admin. So that's oftentimes good news to grantees.

Jennifer Hylton: So while people are still chatting in on the discussion, can you maybe go to the resources slide?

Sue Southon: Mm-hmm.

Shawna Moraille: They're the general resources for the entire training.

Sue Southon: Yes.

Shawna Moraille: Thank you. There was one of the folks that wrote in that was looking for a list of everything and to know what's on the HUD Exchange.
Sue Southon: That's a really excellent resource. The other one I would recommend is there's -- also on the HUD Exchange, you will find CDBG guidebooks for state and entitlement communities. And those will be very helpful in identifying eligible activities and logical national objectives to tie to each of those activities. It provides some really great scenarios that you can read through to see, you know, this is a fit with what I want to do. So the national objective would logically be LMI limited clientele, for example. Or LMI area benefits. So that's another great resource for grantees.

Shawna Moraille: Okay. Another question that came in was, "Can one or two of the folks on the call, like, give the rest of us some helpful tips? Just some barriers, what to avoid?"

Sue Southon: So that's a question to the fellow participants?

Shawna Moraille: It's a question to, I think, the HUD staff and yourself.

Sue Southon: Oh, okay. All right. Jen, do you want to start?

Jennifer Hylton: I guess I'm wondering, tips for which part? There's a lot that was covered, so are they asking -- which part, specifically, are they asking about?

Shawna Moraille: I would say that this is probably in general, that they're looking just for some guidance. Like, what are some things that, you know, they should avoid, barriers is what they're asking about, and how to be, you know, just some best practices. I remember, Sue, you talked about the chart at one point. I'm not sure you did it on this webinar, just -- that's an easy reference for cross-walking the requirements. Maybe you should mention that tool.

Sue Southon: The checklist?

Shawna Moraille: Yes.

Sue Southon: Yeah. And we talked a little bit about it at the very beginning. It may change slightly, but there are a number of checklists on the HUD Web Exchange that will be used for making sure that you've checked all the boxes.

Another thing I'm going to suggest is that also on the HUD Exchange, you will see the HUD CDBG-DR monitoring guides, which are the guides that your HUD staff use when they're going to come out to monitor your CDBG programs.

And this is not a "gotcha." It's really, really helpful to take a look at those because it really forms an excellent checklist for you for the things that they would expect you to have in place. Another thing I would suggest is that, we talked a little bit about while you're waiting for your action plan approval, you're developing your specific program process maps and guidelines and business procedures, that you make sure that those are posted and followed.
And if the practice differs from what you initially wrote, which happens all the time, folks, because once you get into this, you’ll learn there are efficiencies and there are things that we should do that we forgot to write in, but we're actually doing anyway, it's very important that those match your actual practice.

Because when HUD does come to monitor you, that's the first thing they're going to look at. So if you're saying we're going to do, you know, these three verifications that a homeowner is eligible for the program, then they're going to look in your file and say, well, where are those three verifications that the homeowner is eligible? Because that's what you said you were going to do.

So that would be one tip. Those program guidelines are very [inaudible] very, very helpful. And if you are using subrecipients, you need to require that they do it as well and you need to double check to make sure that, when you get them, that they've covered all of the relevant cross-cutting federal requirements related to environmental review, related to section three - your section three requirements. You'll have -- you may have [inaudible] requirements if you're doing construction. You may have small [inaudible] participation requirements. I'm sorry. What was that?

Shawna Moraille: Sue, I'm sorry.

Sue Southon: Hello?

Shawna Moraille: Yeah. Sorry, Sure.

[talking over each other]

Shawna Moraille: We can't hear you.

Sue Southon: I can. I can hear you fine. [inaudible] So I'm not exactly sure what's going on here. Maybe we're having weather that I didn't know about. Anyway, I was saying that you need to be cognizant of --

[talking over each other]

Sue Southon: No. I just was going to say, you need to be cognizant of those cross-cutting federal requirements because they will not be just grantee requirements, but they will be requirements of the -- your subrecipients as well.

Shawna Moraille: Okay. I just want to make two final points on the discussion and then I think we need to end.

Sue Southon: Okay.

Shawna Moraille: These came in from the chat box, of course. So one of the things that was mentioned is when designing programs and guidelines, it's good to set floors and ceilings on the amount to qualify, organizations, individuals, et cetera.
Sue Southon: Good point.

Shawna Moraille: And program design may fizzle out much earlier than you project. Be ready to adjust your action plan and programs accordingly.

Sue Southon: Also good point. It's one of the reasons why it's important, as a grantee, to have good quality monitoring and compliance of your programs. Have a plan and implement it so that you're very much aware of how things are moving, particularly critical because now, we have timelines associated with these programs. Anything else?

Jennifer Hylton: This is Jen. I just wanted to chime in, too, for some tips that I think it's sort of the way the presentation was designed is exactly how you really want to come at your action plan. And it's really important that you're picking activities based on your needs assessment and your unmet needs analysis.

And I know there's a lot of political pressure to try to fund projects that you've always wanted to fund and you, as program staff, you know, this is when you can use sort of HUD as the bad guy, if you would like, and say, look. We have to do this unmet needs analysis. We have to do this needs assessment. And once that's done, then we pick projects based on that.

So that's really important to not try to back into projects, but instead let that process determine what your projects are going to be. And the other thing is if you are a grantee who has what we call a field-held grant, so if your HUD contact is someone at your local office, you just want to make sure that you're working with that field office. And then, the field office will come into HQ and ask us questions if there's something they can't answer. So that's a really important relationship that you want to develop so that you can get your questions answered pretty quickly. So those are just some of the tips I'd add to the --

Sue Southon: And I think Jen read my mind because the three final thoughts I was going to leave you with are this is hard work and post-disaster environments are very challenging. You will be under a lot of pressure to respond to the needs of your citizenry, they're impacted. There'll be political pressure to move money quickly and possibly do, as Jen referred to, activities that may be not your -- necessarily your first priority. And then, you have to balance all of this with a need to run programs that are complaint with a myriad of federal requirements and regulations.

And second, it's okay to modify as you go. In fact, it's encouraged. Needs change, capacity may be challenged, and don't be afraid of mid-course corrections. And finally, and I think Jen made this very eloquent -- point very eloquently, the HUD DR staff are your partners in this process and they really want you to be successful. So I cannot encourage you more, create strong working relationships with your HUD DR team. You're going to find them extremely helpful and supportive.

And I think with that, I want to thank you all. I apologize for our intermittent technology problems here and I'm still not exactly sure why that happened. But we are delighted that you all joined us today and thanks so very much.

(END)