

HOME-ARP-Public Participation Requirements Video FAQ

Speaker: Welcome. This brief video FAQ will provide the details of the HOME-ARP Public Participation Requirements and Potential Best Practices. The purpose of this video FAQ is to provide a detailed summary of the public participation requirements outlined in Notice CPD-21-10, the final HOME-ARP implementation notice. For additional information about public participation, participating jurisdictions known in this video as PJs should refer to 24 CFR 91.105. In addition to outlining requirements, this video FAQ will offer best practice strategies PJs can employ to strengthen participation.

The HOME-ARP allocation plan will be submitted to HUD as a substantial amendment, as such PJs must follow their current citizen participation plan for substantial amendment. The HOME-ARP public participation process must be consistent with the Community Citizen Participation Plan, except where it conflicts with the HOME-ARP notice and appendix. PJs should refer to 24 CFR 91.105, a CPD-21-10 participation requirements are based upon 24 CFR 91, except for the waiver to decrease the normal time of public review and comments as the substantial amendment from 30 to 15 days. PJs are not required to amend their citizen participation plans to incorporate HOME-ARP alternative requirements in order to take advantage of the waivers and flexibility.

Throughout the HOME-ARP allocation plan, public participation process, the PJ's must follow applicable fair housing and civil rights requirements and procedures for effective communication, accessibility, and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. They must also provide meaningful access to participation by persons with limited English proficiency. That should be in their current citizen participation plan as required by 24 CFR 91.105 and 91.115. PJs are required to outline fair housing and civil rights procedures as part of the public's notice.

We will now review the reasonable notice and public comment requirements for the HOME-ARP allocation plan. First, PJs should encourage citizen participation in the development of the allocation plan. PJs must provide reasonable notice to the public consistent with the process outlined in the PJ citizen participation plan and as required by 24 CFR 91.105 and 91.115. Public notices should provide the public with reasonable notice on how they can provide public comments. As noted in 24 CFR 91.105 (b), the requirement for publishing may be met by publishing a summary of each document in one or more newspaper of general circulation, and by making copies of each document available on the internet, on the jurisdiction's official government website, as well as at libraries, government offices, and public places. We will provide examples of other places that it could be shared to truly get the word out and encourage participation in the best practices section of this video FAQ.

The notice should also provide the start and end date of the public comment period and where the comments can be sent. In addition, the notice should include information on the date, time,

and location of the public hearing, how persons requiring special accommodations or bilingual services for the public hearing to make these arrangements, and how the public wishing to submit written comments during the public review and comment period may do so. The notice should provide a link to obtain more information on the details of the substantial amendments, such as the amount of money, how the funds are proposed to be used, and to make the allocation plan available for review. Any links to websites must be correct and functioning.

PJs are required to provide reasonable notice of the public hearing. As outlined in 24 CFR 91.105(e), reasonable notice is defined as at least 14 days from the date the notice is published. It is also important to be clear that public comments can be provided in different ways during the public comment period, including at the public hearing or in writing. We will discuss ways to broaden outreach and opportunity for comment in a later section of this presentation.

Through the public notice, PJ's must include the amount of funds they will receive and the range of activities the PJ may undertake. The proposed allocation plan must be available for public comment for no less than 15 calendar days. In accordance with the PJ citizen participation plan, PJ should publish the proposed allocation plan in a manner that affords the public a reasonable opportunity to examine its contents and submit comments. PJs must ensure materials are in a form accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.

PJ's must hold at least one public hearing during the public comment period prior to submission of the allocation plan as an opportunity to solicit comments and feedback from the public. Accommodations must be provided as requested.

PJs must consider any comments received during the 15-day public comment period when preparing the HOME-ARP allocation plan. This includes comments received in writing or any comments received in any format during the public hearing. The allocation plan must include: A description of the public participation process, a description of any efforts made to broaden public participation, a summary of comments and recommendations received, and any comments or recommendations not accepted and why. PJs are not expected to accept every comment that is provided during the public participation process. It's understood that there are a wide range of viewpoints and that the public may have different opinions and concerns, but it is the PJ's job to use the information they've already received through the public participation process to balance the reviews that are received and to respond in a way that demonstrates the comment shared were taken into consideration during the planning process,

As noted in the HOME-ARP appendix waivers and alternative requirements, once HUD notifies a participating jurisdiction that the plan is accepted, the participating jurisdiction must make the final HOME-ARP allocation plan available to the public in accordance with the same requirements in the participating jurisdiction's current citizen participation plan that are followed to make the participating jurisdiction's adopted consolidated plan and substantial amendments available to

the public, including the availability of materials in a form accessible to persons with disabilities and translated in different languages to accommodate persons with limited English proficiency upon request.

PJs must meet the requirements that have been outlined in order for their allocation plans be accepted and approved by HUD. This next section of the discussion will provide suggestions on how to incorporate best practice strategies into the public participation process to make the process more meaningful and informative for PJs as they finalize and submit their allocation plan.

A PJ must take appropriate actions to provide effective communication and encourage the participation of all its citizens, including non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities in the public participation process. PJs can consider using alternative methods to expand outreach to the public and encourage greater public participation. Some suggestions include: Using local television and radio stations to reach a wider audience. Featuring the home ARP funding award and public participation opportunities prominently on the PJ's website. Sharing the public notice on a variety of media platforms, including newspapers, newsletters, local Facebook pages, Instagram, and Twitter. Distributing on listservs for membership organizations such as tenant orgs and advocacy organizations that can help provide a broader audience, help reach a broader audience. If possible and practical translating the notice and allocation plan into languages commonly spoken in the geographic area. Lastly, coordinating with organizations that serve persons with limited English proficiency to post notice of public common opportunities on their website, social media, and in their physical location.

Some best practices to encourage greater and more meaningful input include: Providing the public with more information on the allocation plan to increase the depth of citizen input. Information that teachers can share from the allocation plan includes: The basis for the proposed funding strategy, the information learned through the consultation process, the needs assessment and gaps analysis results, and the details of why the PJ is proposing the identified activities in the allocation plan. Including the option to submit comments in different formats can help to increase the comfort for those who may not like to speak in public settings or are unable to attend the public hearing in person. Offering several public hearings in different locations or in virtual formats can also increase citizen input. Lastly, you consider - can consider holding additional public hearings for non-English speakers.

Strategies to encourage broader public participation can include: Providing video recordings or audio recordings of the notice and materials, hosting the public hearing in a community center or other building that's centrally located and available on public transportation. Additionally, as you schedule your hearing, choose a day of the week and a time convenient to members of the qualifying population, for example, holding the session on the weekend or in the evening. Additionally, allow for public comment in a variety of formats, including email and text.

In order to help the field office approve plans in a timely manner, it is suggested that PJ's submit the published notice to HUD along with the allocation plan, include the affidavit of publication to HUD along with the allocation plan, submit a screenshot of the webpage where the HOME-ARP plan has been posted.

This slide provides the link to the HOME-ARPP landing page on the HUD Exchange and outlines resources that may be available to reference, to ensure that the PJ complies with all public participation requirements. The AAQ portal is available to answer any additional questions you may have about public participation requirements. Thank you.

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