



HOPWA Intake, Initial, and Annual Certifications: *Using Remote Methods*

August 26, 2020



Presenters

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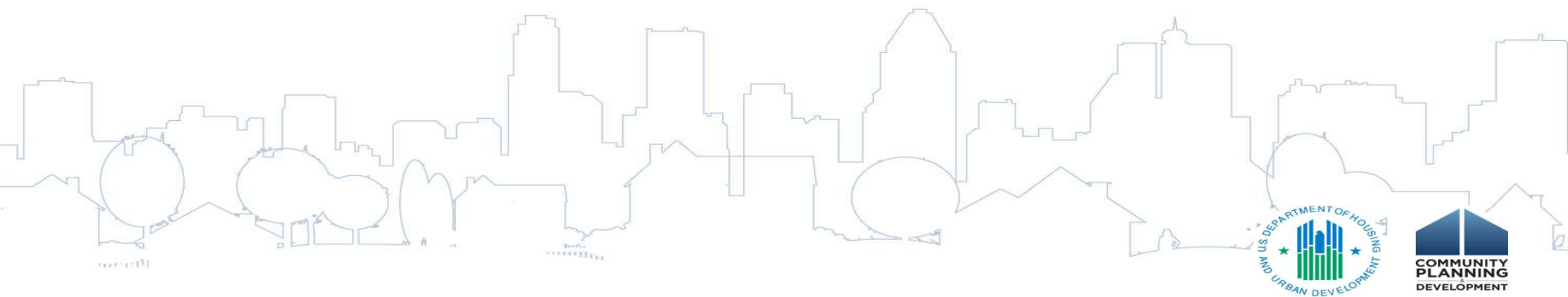
Ben Ayers, Deputy Director

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Learning Objectives

In today's webinar, you will gain a better understanding of how you can continue to deliver HOPWA assistance using remote methods.



Webinar Agenda

Today's webinar is organized as follows:

- HOPWA eligibility requirements (just a refresher!)
- Income and HIV Status waiver flexibilities
- HOPWA activities that can be conducted remotely
- Different types of remote methods
- Managing, planning for, and implementing remote methods
- Questions & Answers
- Resources, reminders, and more reminders



What are the HOPWA eligibility requirements?

Except for Housing Information Services, to be eligible for HOPWA....

- At least one family member must be diagnosed with HIV / AIDS
 - This may include a minor
- Total income of all family members must be at or below 80% area median income (AMI)
 - Verified initially and annually thereafter



Are there waivers available regarding obtaining HIV/AIDS and income documentation?

Yes!

Income – may be verified via Self-Certification

HIV/AIDS diagnosis – may be verified via other credible information



What does the waiver regarding HIV verification mean?

Pursue obtaining source documentation if still possible (i.e., testing centers , medical facilities)

Must update policies and procedures to include 'other credible information' when source documentation cannot be obtained

Must obtain source documentation within 3 months after safety measures are no longer needed



What happens if source or third-party verification of HIV status cannot be obtained within 3-months or at all?

HUD expects this will be rare

- Should this occur, the individual (and family members) for whom HOPWA assistance is being provided is no longer eligible, and;
- The individual (and family members) should be terminated by following your current policies and procedures, and;
- Directed to non-HOPWA (non-HIV)-specific program resources.



What are some examples of other credible information?

- Review of HIV medications
- Doctors in the area who treat HIV
- Viral suppression
- Self-Certification of their own status and HIV medical history
- A referral from another HIV-specific agency
- An acknowledgment from a case manager in the same agency who has already worked with the client and knows them to be HIV positive



What does the waiver regarding income verification mean?

Self-certification of income may be used in lieu of source documentation, when needed.

This applies to any program delivery activity in which documentation of income is a factor, including:

- Intake and overall HOPWA program eligibility
- Income and rent calculation for TBRA, Master Leasing, or Facility-Based Housing

• Annual and interim reassessments for rental assistance Programs should continue to collect appropriate source documentation for household income whenever possible.

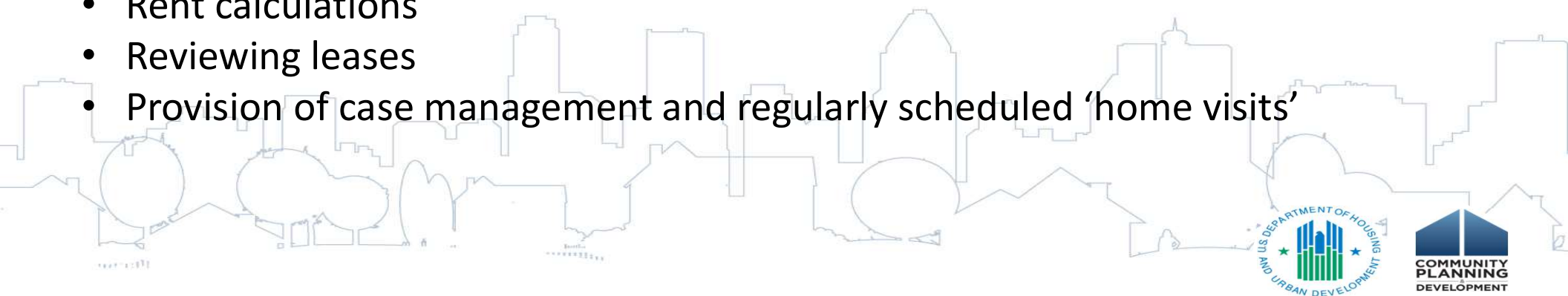


Are there any flexibilities for working with clients remotely?

Yes and great news, a waiver is **NOT** required!

HUD encourages grantees and project sponsors to conduct program processes remotely, including;

- Verifying income
- Rent calculations
- Reviewing leases
- Provision of case management and regularly scheduled 'home visits'



Are there flexibilities for obtaining signatures from applicants and HOPWA assisted households?

Yes and great news, a waiver is **NOT** required!

Grantees are encouraged to allow temporarily bypassing locally imposed hard signature requirements, including using remote methods, such as;

- Documents signed/scanned and emailed back to programs
- Use of electronic signatures

Or, if the above are not possible.....

- Verbal agreements to sign
 - Documented by program staff and maintained in client files

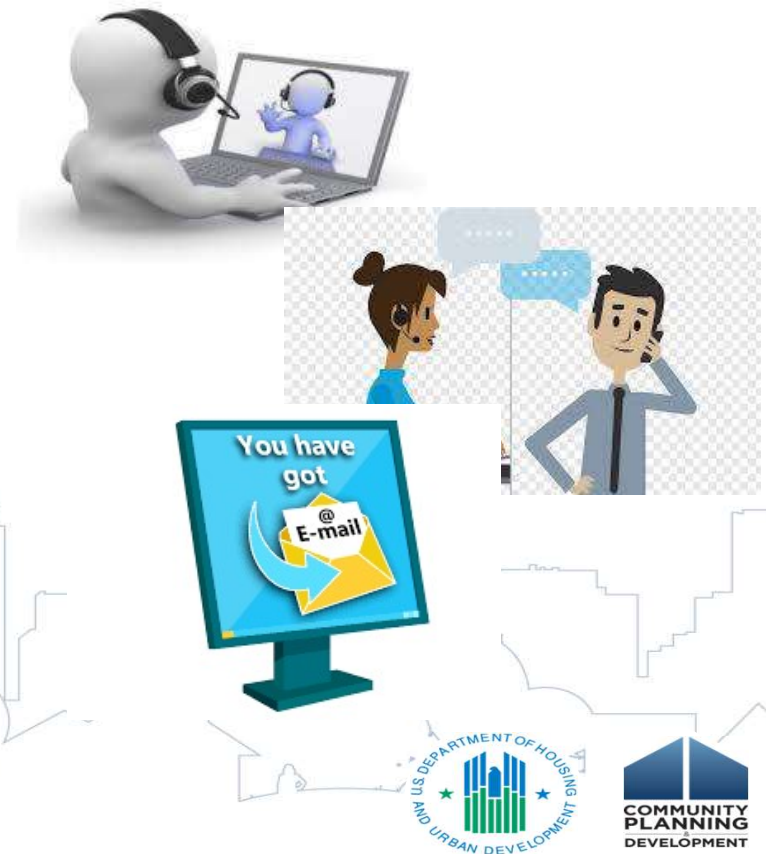


What are the types of remote methods?

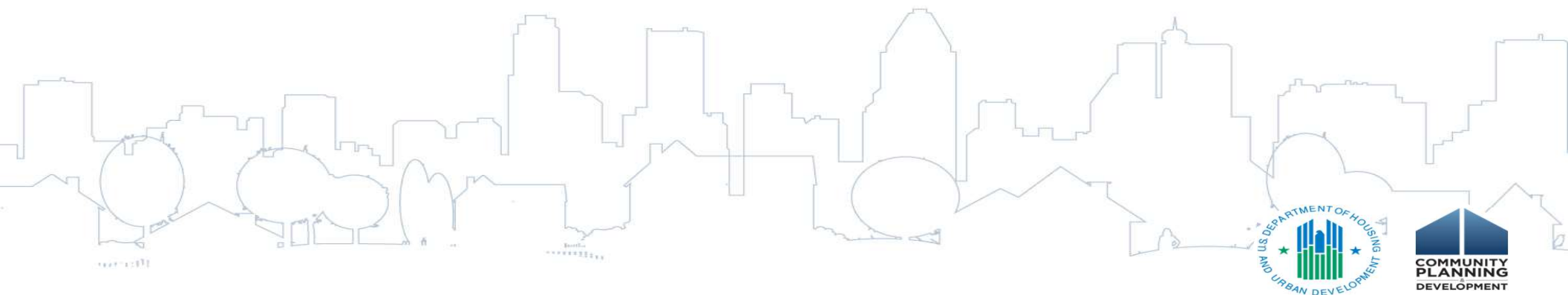
Remote methods may include:

- Video conferencing
- Phone calls and texts
- Exchange of information via email or mail

NOTE: Don't forget about confidentiality!

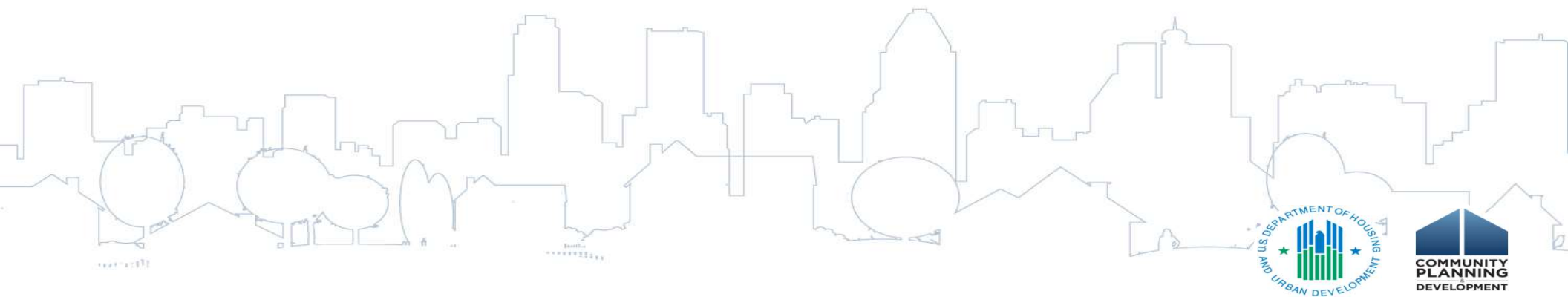


What does it mean to conduct intake, initial and annual certification remotely?



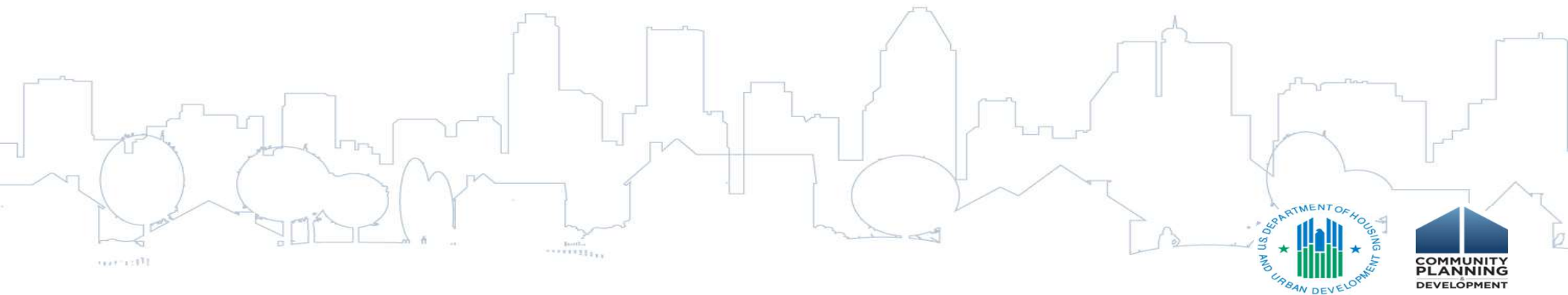
Example #1

Video conferencing – Review of HIV Status

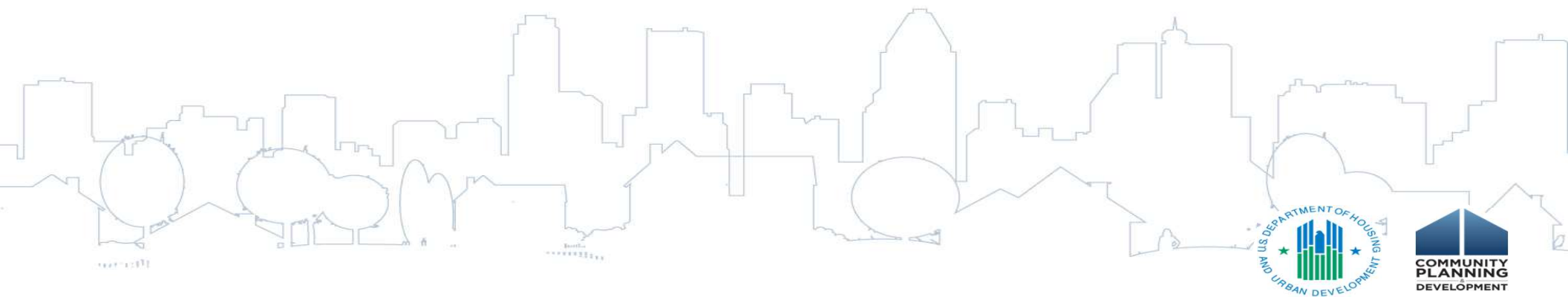


Example #2

Video conferencing – Review of Household Income



How do you manage the different virtual certification methods?



Considerations Before Conducting ANY Remote Methods

Before discussing any confidential information, including program eligibility, program staff should review:

- Confidentiality policies
- The identity of the client/household
- The topics that will be discussed, especially any sensitive information
- Any goals/limitations of the call



Video Conferencing

Key management elements:

Visually and personally interactive throughout the entire conversation.

- Almost like meeting with an applicant/assisted household in-person!
- Provide the applicant/assisted household with information about what you need from them to complete the intake, initial or annual certification (by mail or email)
 - Be prepared to let the applicant/assisted household know you might need additional information about income, assets, income deductions
- Practice using the technology, especially if you plan on taking screenshots, prior to the actual assessment
- Set the pace – not too fast or too slow



Video Conferencing, continued

Key management elements:

- Ask the household about the type and sort of technology they have
 - Determine if video conferencing is still feasible
- All devices should be fully charged
- Be mindful of confidentiality
 - Remember this is a live interaction in which protected information may be discussed, most likely using computer or phone speakers, and voices travel
 - Check the background and surroundings of your workspace to make sure there isn't anything identifying your organization
 - Find out who, if anyone else, may be present
 - Refer to your program under a pseudonym
 - For example, refer to the program as the *Housing and Rental Assistance Program* – make sure the program name doesn't identify HOPWA as the funding source



Phone or Text

Key management elements:

Phone conversations can be personally interactive, but texting isn't as personal. This method will likely require some additional follow up, especially regarding any documents also needed from the applicant/assisted household.

- May not be suitable for new households or sensitive/important conversations
- Consider who else might be present with the applicant/assisted household
 - ask if continuing the call is okay
- Discuss safe and confidential ways to send documents, especially via texting



Email or Mail

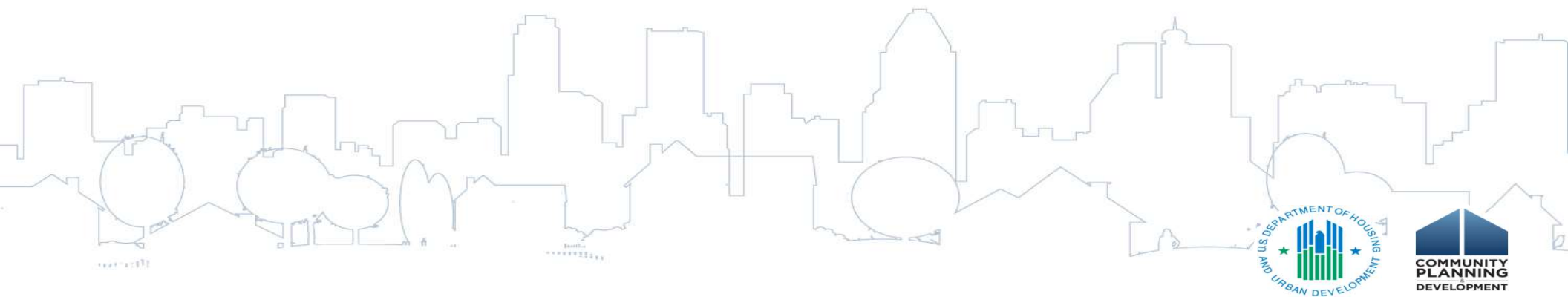
Key management elements:

Not personally interactive, but useful for obtaining documents and/or signatures.

- Send self-addressed stamped return envelope along with any paperwork or assessment that needs to be returned to the program
- Discuss with the households safe and confidential ways to send source documents, especially via email
- Refer to your program under a pseudonym
 - For example, refer to the program as the *Housing and Rental Assistance Program* – make sure the program name doesn't identify HOPWA as the funding source
- Find out who else in a household may be using the email address or checking the mail during an assessment



How do you plan for and implement remote methods?



Planning For and Implementing Remote Methods

Notify HUD of intent to use the waiver flexibilities

Review and update current policies and procedures to include use of remote methods – case management, intake, initial, interim, and annual certifications

Develop and include an addendum in your current manual!

➤ Use the soon to be released Guide to assist you

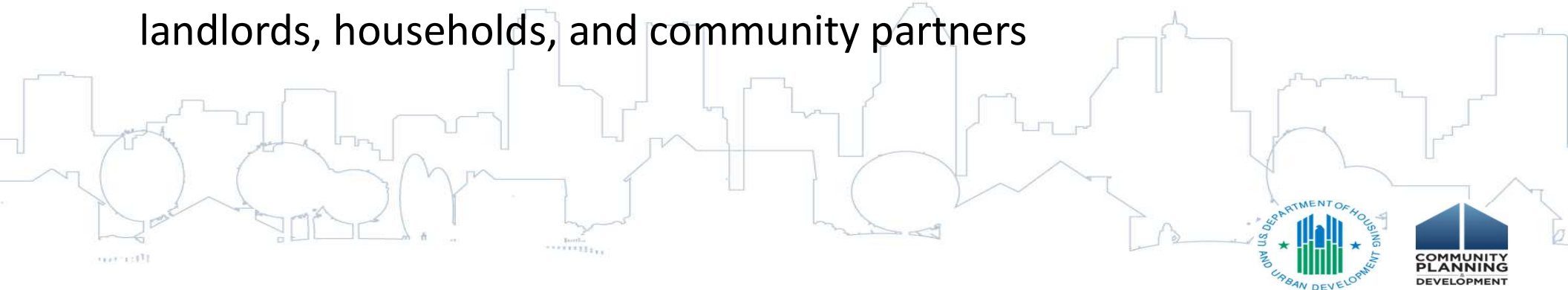


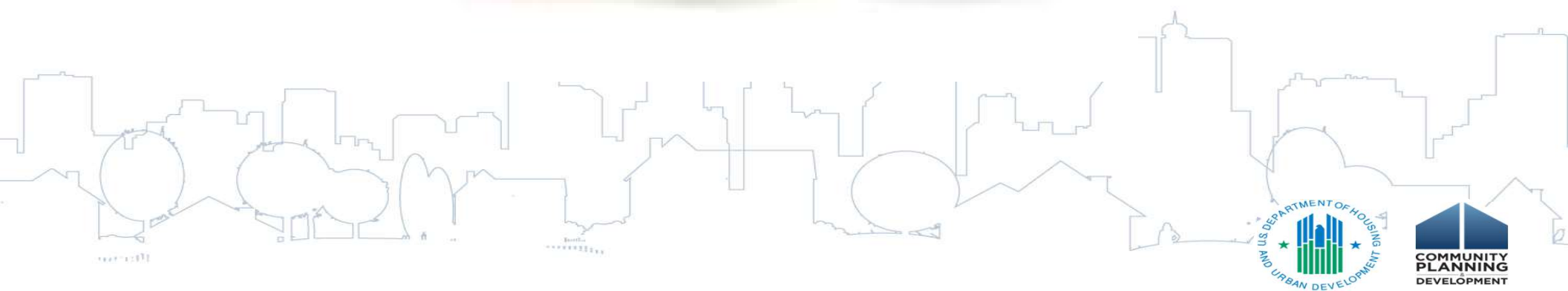
Planning For and Implementing Remote Methods, continued...

Train HOPWA program staff on using remote methods

Assess the current type of technology on hand and identify if upgrades or new technology tools are needed

Communicate this change of policy and procedures with landlords, households, and community partners





Stay Informed

All guidance for HOPWA grantees and project sponsors related to infectious disease preparedness and response to COVID-19 will be sent to the HOPWA Mailing List:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/mailinglist/subscribe/>

- To subscribe, enter the requested contact information, select “HOPWA –Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS” then select Subscribe.

Updates on HOPWA Guidance for COVID-19 are also available on the HUD Exchange and HUD.gov:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hopwa/covid-19/#resources-and-guidance>

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/hopwa_covid-19



Resources

[HOPWA Guidance for COVID- 19 Webpage on the HUD Exchange](#) and on [HUD.gov](#)

[Mega Waiver 1 \(April 2020\),](#) and [Mega Waiver 2 \(May 2020\)](#)

Available waiver flexibilities

[CPD Director Contact Information For Waiver Notification](#)

Email addresses that must be utilized by grantees to notify CPD Directors of intent to utilize available waivers

[CPD Program Formula Allocations and CARES Act Supplemental Funding for FY2020](#)

[HOPWA Notice CPD-20-05](#)

[HOPWA IDIS Set-Up and Draw Instructions for CARES Act Grants](#)



HOPWA Ask-A-Question (AAQ)

Have a question about the HOPWA Program, a HOPWA Notice, waivers, or implementing COVID-19 activities?

We love to hear from you; submit your question to the HOPWA AAQ - [HOPWA AAQ Portal](#).

In Step 2 of the question submission process, select “HOPWA: Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS.”



HOPWA Technical Assistance – *In Depth Program Assistance*

Technical assistance is available!

HOPWA Grantees can submit a request for individualized TA related to responding to COVID-19 or regular HOPWA program administration.

To submit a TA request simply visit the HUD Exchange portal and request TA via the “Request Program Assistance” at:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/technical-assistance>.

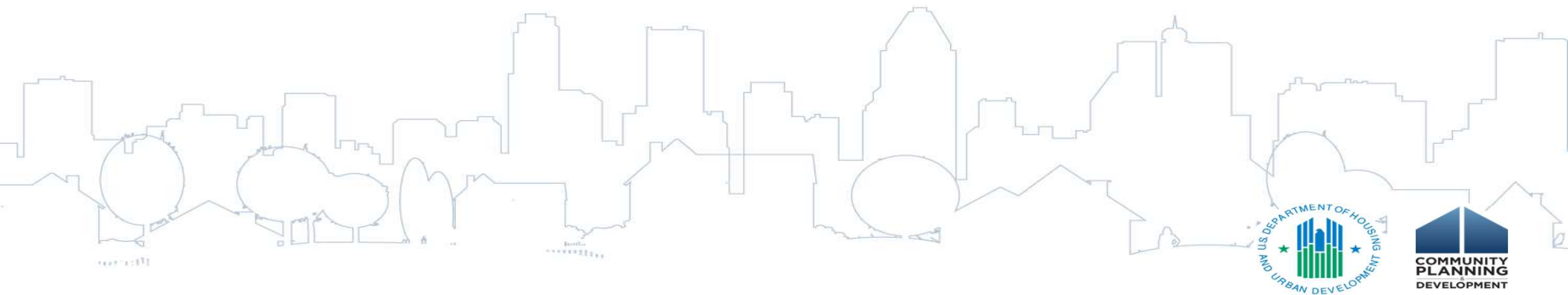
In the TA request submission process, select “HOPWA: Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS” as the topic and write “Health Preparedness and Response” in the subject line.



Coming Attractions to Video Technology Near You

Upcoming Webinars

Day/Date	Time	Topic
Wednesday, September 2, 2020	2-3 pm	Supportive Services



Reminders

Make sure you are applying HUD guidance to the proper program(s).

- Waivers and program guidance issued for other programs such as CoC and ESG in most cases do not apply to HOPWA

Grantees are responsible for waiver notifications and development of new procedures

- Project sponsors are reminded to follow plans and develop new procedures as outlined by their grantees

Guidance related to funding and implementation of COVID-19 activities is evolving as new information and requirements emerge.

- Stay tuned to the [HOPWA Listserv](#) and the HOPWA guidance for COVID-19 on the HUD Exchange: [HOPWA COVID-19 Guidance](#) and [HUD Community Planning and Development HOPWA COVID-19](#)

