



Final Transcript

HUD - US DEPT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT: How to Apply for FY19 Comprehensive Housing Counseling NOFA

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SPEAKERS

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Sarah Gerecke
Joel Schumacher
Rebecca
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PRESENTATION

Moderator Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for standing by. Welcome to the How to Apply for Fiscal Year '19 Comprehensive Housing Counseling NOFA call. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. Later we will conduct a question and answer session. Instructions will be given at that time. [Operator instructions]. Also, as a reminder, today's teleconference is being recorded.

At this time, I'll turn the call over to your host, Ms. Virginia Holman.

Please go ahead.

Virginia Thank you very much, and welcome to today's very important webinar to go over how you need to apply for the 2019 comprehensive housing counseling grant. Apparently, it's a long presentation, but we know that you will get a lot out of it, but before we start, I want to give you some logistics on it.

Next slide. [Audio drops]. Please be patient.

M I have advanced the slide. Is it not showing up on your screen, Virginia?

Virginia It's not showing up on my screen yet.

M Oh, dear.

Virginia Is it showing up on other people's screens?

Joel No, it hasn't advanced yet.

M How about now?

Virginia Yes.

Joel Yes.

M Okay, great. I had my screen paused. I apologize, everyone.

Virginia That's all right, and we apologize to the audience, but you know technology does have its own free will and does what it wants. So, logistics. As the operator said, the audio is being recorded, and we will be posting a playback number along with the PowerPoint and a transcript of the webinar. We'll post it on HUD Exchange in the archives section of the webinars, and that usually happens in about seven to ten days. The training digest will be updated when the webinar is posted, so watch for that.

I did send out the PowerPoint to everyone who had registered this morning, but they're also available on the control panel on the right hand

side of your screen where it says Handouts. If you click on that, you can click on the document and download it.

Next slide. Your questions are very important to us. We need to know what we've missed, what's good, what needs to be clarified. Because of the large number of participants, we are not going to take live questions, but there are a couple of ways you can ask questions.

One, again, in the control panel on the right hand side of your screen, there's a box labeled questions. You just type your question in there, we have staff [audio drops] for those questions, and we'll answer some of them during the webinar but probably not all. You'll be able to look forward to getting answers to the common questions.

You can also send your questions and any comments to housing.counseling@hud.gov, and put the webinar topic, Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant, in the subject line so we get the questions to the right person.

If you logged onto the webinar, you're going to receive a certificate of training from GoTo Webinar within 48 hours. So, you'll just need to print

it out and save it for your records. We will not have a record of those certificates.

Next slide. You can also, as I mentioned, the webinar is going to be posted in the archives, and if you look at them after the live performance here, you can actually obtain credit for watching it on HUD Exchange. You go to the webinar, and you click on Get Credit for this Training, and you'll get it for future information.

Next slide. On "Housing Counseling Training Digest," again on HUD Exchange, this is where we provide all the upcoming training by us and by other partners, and it's also where you will find the archives.

Next slide. That's the logistics for today, and at this point, let me turn it over to Sarah Gerecke the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Housing Counseling. Sarah.

Sarah

Thank you, Ginger. Good morning and good afternoon, everyone. This is always a very exciting moment for all of us to be in the middle of a funding process, and I'm particularly pleased to be here today. I wanted to thank all of you, those whose job is to worry about the NOFA for your

counseling agencies. It's an important role. We know we don't make it fun for you, but we do try to make it as easy and straightforward as possible, and I really want to thank you for continuing to be such good users of the federal funds.

I also wanted to thank an entire village at the Office of Housing Counseling who is responsible for the grant process every year, and there are a lot of folks on the phone and behind the scenes who've contributed both to the NOFA and to the scoring and to this webinar, and I just have to say thank you to all of them.

Well, let me pull out on the next slide a couple of the highlights of this NOFA and a couple of changes that you can expect from previous years. This isn't all of them, but they're the ones that I thought you might be the most interested in.

First of all, we are making available funding of approximately \$43 million. This is slightly less than last year because the amount appropriated by Congress was slightly less than before, but the vast bulk of the funds that Congress appropriates goes through this NOFA, and it's not any different this year.

We heard a lot of the comments you had on the fiscal '18 NOFA, and we definitely heard that we needed to reduce the stress, time, energy, and resources that the application entails, and so I'm pleased to let you know that this is a two-year NOFA which means that if you apply and are funded this year, and if Congress appropriates funds for next year, there would not be a second application process until fiscal 2021.

We would distribute any funds that are available for fiscal 2020 based on the amount appropriated by the score on this NOFA, so there will be two different—each funding year, fiscal '19 or fiscal '20, would get its own grant agreement period of performance and all that, but there will not be a need to compete for funding in 2020 unless you are not funded in 2019, so we will reserve the right to add a NOFA if necessary, but this is a two-year NOFA.

The period of performance here is 18 months through March 31st of 2020. You can utilize the grant funding for any part or all of that period of time. There are overlaps possibly with the fiscal '18 funding, and we did give a two-year period of performance for that because the awards were so late. This year, we are back to an 18-month period to utilize the funding. We'll

talk about that more because I know that's a confusing issue for many of you, but we really do it to try to give you as much flexibility as we can.

The application due date, let me jump up and own, pause, and point the arrow here, is July 1, 2019, which feels like it's right around the corner.

We heard that you wanted more time in the application, and we really wanted to give it to you, especially to the intermediaries and state housing finance agencies that have to collect the materials from their affiliates.

Unfortunately, we also are under a deadline in the statute to have the funds awarded as quickly as possible, and so we really were not able to move that due date.

July 1st is, I believe, a Monday, and I strongly suggest that you submit your response as early as possible and do not wait until July 1st, especially at the end of the day. Every year we have heartbreaking stories of people with glitches in the submission process. You want to make sure that your grant is submitted, and you want to confirm that it's been submitted, and you don't want to wait until July 1st to do that.

The good news, I think, is that we have streamlined a lot of aspects of the application even further. There are only four charts this year; we've

reduced the number of charts you'll have to fill out, and there's no separate narrative. We are asking for less information than we have in the past in part because if we have the information already, we're not going to ask you to give it to us.

So, where in the past we might have asked you to provide us with information that's contained in your HCS profile or in your reporting. We will draw that information directly, and that should make the application process easier for you.

There are two charts that are particularly important. I just want to highlight Chart A2 supplement is for parents, and that lists the characteristics of their network, and Chart B is the supplement for leveraged funds. I do know that for you and for us, the collection of leverage funding is very painstaking.

I want to, in advance, tell you how grateful we are and how important and impressive it is that we are able to validate in our performance review and through the NOFA that, in fact, you are really engaging in major partnerships to stretch the federal dollars as far as possible, and in 2018, the grant dollars awarded under this NOFA leveraged \$6 of non-federal

funds, which is extremely impressive. So, we do collect and pay close attention to the leveraging information.

Next slide, please. There's a change in clarification in an issue that I know caused quite a bit of excitement in fiscal '18, and that is the definition of eligible costs. Applicants have been asked—last year, we had a definition of eligible cost that limited funding for some types of expenses, and groups raised good questions about that. At the same time, the administration definitely wanted to implement a policy of seeing the federal dollars used directly tied to services as much as possible.

So, to be eligible for reimbursement, for direct costs, we've defined in the NOFA that the costs have to be incurred pursuant to one of the program activities that is permitted under the program. So, we break down what's eligible into these areas of housing counseling, group education, oversight compliance, quality control, supervision, counselor training, certification, and marketing and outreach.

If you have a cost that is eligible for this NOFA, you basically have to document that it is tied to one of those eligible uses, and we will respect the cost classifications that you have from a duly-approved negotiated and

direct cost rate agreement or cost allocation plan. So, if you have a NICRA or a cost allocation plan, if you're state and local government, and that has defined what is direct and indirect, we will respect that decision and not disallow anything that's negotiated within your NICRA.

If you're not using an approved indirect agreement, then you do have to show us that the costs you're claiming are connected to, bear a relationship to an eligible use, but I think you'll find this to be clearer and more in direct relationship to the program than what the language that we used last year. I'm sure there will be questions about that, and we will be issuing FAQs along the way to clarify any questions that you have.

Next slide, please. I'm going to turn it now over to Joel Schumacher, who has done a fantastic job as the team lead for this year's NOFA. He's going to tell you about the agenda and the rest of the call. Joel.

Joel

Thank you so much, Sarah, for explaining those key changes. I'm going to lay out the agenda for everyone as this call progresses.

Next slide. We have a number of presenters who will discuss the different rating factors starting with me and continuing on with Rebecca, David, Melissa, Tracie, Shae, and Kristin.

Next slide. The agenda will cover eligibility requirements and funding methodology along with finding and submitting the grant application, how to complete the grant application which will take the bulk of our time, and the rating factors, and what they consist of.

Next slide. So, first I'm going to cover the eligibility requirements and funding methodology topics.

Next slide. Just to reiterate what Sarah already said, we have a two-year NOFA this year. The application due date is July 1st. That's in the 4th of July week, so make sure you get your applications in early, and the period of performance has returned to an 18-month period of performance, and that does have some overlap with FY '18.

Next slide. The NOFA format has been simplified, as Sarah pointed out. We have reduced the total number of application charts. We're now down to four, so Charts A, B, C, and D, and to clarify, locals, in your

application, it'll be Chart A1, B1, C1, and D1, and then intermediaries, multistate organizations, and SHFAs, it'll be A2, B2, C2, and D2, but that really hasn't changed from last year

Another thing is we are increasing our use of internal data, so part of the reason we were able to streamline the application is because we had a lot of info on record already. To the extent that we had it, you don't need to provide it making life easier for all of us.

As a reminder, applicants will complete the appropriate chart based on your agency type. So, local housing counseling agencies will use the application or the forms that are called HUD-9906-L along with the Chart B Supplement if you have leveraged funds, which we hope you do.

Then, parent organizations will use the forms HUD-9906-P along with the Chart A2 Supplement which Sarah already described. That's how you describe the characteristics of your network. Those are your funded subgrantees and branches. Then, Chart B for you as well to indicate the leveraged funding.

Next slide. The full eligibility requirements are laid out in Section 3 of the NOFA. This hasn't changed from previous years. So, all housing counseling agencies that were approved to participate in our housing counseling program prior to the issue date, and SHFAs are eligible for this NOFA.

If you are an agency that is not HUD approved yet, but you do meet the approval criteria that's laid out in our regulation 24 CFR 214. Then, we encourage you to affiliate with a HUD approved intermediary or SHFA so that you can help them get grant funds and get the experience and knowledge that come from being affiliated with an intermediary.

Next slide. Double-dipping prohibitions still exist. Applicants are prohibited from getting grant funds from multiple sources. To simplify that, if you're a local housing counseling agency, you cannot apply and become both a direct grantee on your own and then also affiliate and become a subgrantee with a parent. You have to either apply on your own or as part of a network.

The only exception for double-dipping is the same one we've had in the past, and it relates to HECM funding. So, if a grantee or subgrantee has

one or more HECM counselors and is awarded HUD grant funds either directly or as a subgrantee, then you're allowed one additional subgrant that would be for HECM counseling from an intermediary that exclusively provides reverse mortgage counseling.

So, for those of you to whom that apply, you know the deal on this one, but it doesn't apply in the vast majority of cases.

Next slide. The funding methodology, how we calculate the funds, the award size, that's specified in Section 5B-3 of the NOFA if you wanted to get more details, but to lay out the main pieces that go into determining an award size, there's a base amount which is determined by the size of your network. Your score obviously counts for a good deal. Counselor FTEs, so how much work is being doing as judged by your counselors, and there's different funding layers for both all counselors, HECM-specific counselors, along with those counselors which are getting trained in and providing default counseling to reverse mortgage clients.

Finally, those applicants who commit to reviewing members of their network using the HUD-9910 form and who share results with us, there's funding available for that as well.

Next slide. Application checklist. This is in Section 4B of the NOFA, but I'm just going to review it quickly. There are forms that are required of every applicant, so those are SF-424, standard form. It's across federal government. The HUD-2880 is the application disclosure and update form. The application itself, which is the HUD-9906 charts, so again 9906-L and 9906-P, choose the set as appropriate, an organization description, external audits and investigations, and the certification regarding lobbying.

Next slide. Then, as applicable, there's additional documents which are very important if they do apply to you. So, for newly-approved applicants, and newly-approved means this fiscal year, so after September 30th of 2018, you're going to be required to submit the HUD-9902 as part of your application, the reason being you were not required to have submitted the 9902 for FY '18, and we really, really need that data in order to rate you.

So, those newly-approved applicants will submit their 9902 covering FY '18. For everyone else, we have your data in HES already. Thank you.

If you're an SHFA and you're applying, we need to see your statutory authority. If you are engaged in lobbying activities, submit the SF-LLL. Finally, if you are seeking the preference points for the Promise Zone, there's the Promise Zone form, HUD Form 50153.

Next slide. I'm now going to pass the mic over to my colleague, Rebecca, who will explain how to find and submit the grant application.

Rebecca

Great. Thank you, Joel. Good afternoon, everyone. Like Joel said, we're going to walk quickly through this section to show you where on grants.gov you'll find all this relevant information.

Next slide. There are several steps that you need to do in order to successfully apply for this. Most of them are in grants.gov, but there are a couple that you have to do first. So, you can see the list including obtaining a DUNS number if you don't already have one, registering your system for award management, so SAM registration if you haven't already done so, registering for grants.gov, and finding the NOFA on grants.gov, and then all the process itself of actually completing and submitting the application.

Next slide. Here's what the DUNS website looks like. If you don't currently have a DUNS number, it's a requirement for applying for federal funds. It's a unique nine-character number used to identify your specific organization. You can go online to their website or call them to get a number if you haven't already, but that's something that's required for grants.gov, so please make sure you have that before you go and apply.

Next slide, please. SAM registration is also required to use grants.gov, and then there's a central location that is login.gov where you then access SAM. It's different from prior years where there was an actual SAM.gov login. It's now streamlined through login.gov.

So, if you are an existing SAM user, and you want to verify you have access to your record, if there's been staff changes on the person who used to update your SAM record who's no longer on staff, you'll need to make sure that you have access to your SAM record, and then also there's a date that's an expiration date. SAM is usually once per calendar year. Double check that date as well to make sure your registration won't expire before our application deadline.

If you have not registered with SAM previously, it can take some time. If you need an ESI number, it can take a lot of time, so this is something that you need to definitely do as soon as possible. You can see on the screen, it says it takes anywhere from two to five weeks if you've not previously registered with SAM.

Next slide. Here's a screenshot of what SAM looks like once you get through the login.gov process. The screen is here, and then you can search for your agency as well.

Next slide. Once you have those two items, then you're ready to register for grants.gov if you've not previously registered, and that's an easy process. Here you can see on their website, and now they also have a mobile app which should be easy for you to use across platforms.

Next slide. What's important to understand in grants.gov is that there are different roles, and you can assign roles for people in your organization. So, if you have multiple people working on your application, you can assign pieces to each person.

What's really important to make sure you understand is the authorized organization representative, the AOR, is the only person in your organization who can physically submit the application once it's completed. So, if you are moving up to the July 1 deadline, and you're AOR goes on vacation, you need to make sure that they submit your completed application before they do that. That's the only person in your organization who can actually submit the application in grants.gov.

Next slide. Once you're in grants.gov, finding the NOFA is very important. You can see our NOFA number here in red, and there's a couple of places that you can search for it on the grants.gov screen itself.

Next slide. Then, once you've found it, and you're ready to start the application process, you would go ahead and apply to create a workspace, and then you'll be able to find the forms and download instructions there in the workspace. Those will download a zip file which has compressed files for the NOFA instructions and the attachments that Joel referenced earlier.

Grants.gov has lots of information online for online user guide. If you're having trouble in the system as well, you can reach out to grants.gov if

you need help directly. Keep in mind that the HUD staff do not work for grants.gov, so we are able to answer some questions, but we're limited, so if you're having technical issues, you definitely want to talk to grants.gov directly with that problem.

Next slide. Here's a screenshot for you of what the zip files should look like in grants.gov for our NOFA, and you can see the charts that Joel referenced, a copy of the NOFA itself, and other relevant forms. Also, keep in mind that in addition to these forms, you will have to fill out the standard forms that Joel referenced, SF-424 of the HUD-2880 and other forms as relevant to your situation. These forms are ones that were specifically designed by the Office of Housing Counseling for process, and any additional forms are used more broadly either at HUD or across the federal government.

Next slide. So, also keep in mind, there are multiple versions of some of these forms. The SF-424, for example, you can fill it out either as a web form or as a PDF. You don't have to do both. So, depending on your preference and how the forms work in the system, you could either download a PDF or you could access it directly in a web form. If you're doing it as a web form, it will ask you to lock the form so that other people

in your organization aren't able to work on the form at the same time and have dueling copies of the form, and then when you've completed the form, you would upload it if it's a PDF or hit save if it's a web form.

Next slide.

Joel Rebecca, sorry to interrupt, but some people are asking if you could just slow down a little bit.

Rebecca Oh, sorry about that. I talk quickly. I apologize. Okay. Go ahead, next slide. Here's the HUD-9906 charts, what they look like this year, and you can see that they have gray fields for standardized answers and attachments, and those are the fillable PDF sections where you would actually type the answers in, keeping in mind you will have character count restrictions, so if you're putting in a number, it's not going to be 5 million. It will stop at some point and restrict you as needed. So, keep that in mind both for text and numbers that you need to be succinct in these fields.

Next slide. When you're ready to submit your application, you're going to want to go ahead and hit Check the Submission for Errors in making sure

there's no errors that might impact your submission. Then, once you've double-checked the application and made sure that it's ready to go, you would hit complete and notify your AOR. Like I mentioned earlier, the AOR is the only person who can submit the application on behalf of your organization. Then, when the AOR has been notified, then you're ready to go ahead and click Sign and Submit.

Next slide. As Joel and Sarah both referenced, the deadline is a hard deadline. It is one second before midnight on July 1st. We highly recommend that you do not wait until that late in the day on that day to submit your application. There are many potential errors that could happen, and it's always good to have two to three days in advance at least to make sure that grants.gov has accepted your application.

It's also really important to watch your email to make sure that the application was validated or rejected. If it's rejected, and you need to go in and change it, there's a grace period that you have to go in and adjust things. It's also really important to save the emails that you get if for any reason that you might need to discuss this with HUD in the future or have some sort of verification that you did submit online on time. Having those

copies of those emails is very important. Then, relevant to that, you need to make sure that grants.gov has your email address correctly.

Go ahead, next slide. Then, also, once you've been validated in the system, you will get a confirmation of receipt and an application tracking number. If you haven't received a confirmation notice or application tracking number, your application is not considered received, so you need to double check. You should get some sort of receipt and application tracking number. Watch for that. Only completed applications received by the deadline will be considered eligible for consideration by HUD.

Next slide. There's two different application status updates that you need to watch for. If it was rejected with errors, and you haven't corrected those errors before the grace period, we cannot review your application. If it's rejected with errors, and you do correct the errors, there's a 24-hour grace period to resubmit your application, so if you've submitted it, it comes back rejected with errors, look for that email, and you get that notification, you have 24 hours to resubmit your application before that grace period ends.

Then, if your application goes through the first time, or if you've been able to resubmit successfully, it will become validated, and that will be forwarded to HUD for review.

Next slide. That's it for submitting the application overview. Next up is David Valdez talking about preference points and Rating Factor 1.

David

Hi, everyone. Let's jump right into preference points. So, preference points are only available should you reach the fundable score, which is 75. So, if you get a 73, and you do qualify for the maximum, which is 2 points in preference points, it won't put you at a 75 to meet the threshold, however, if you have a 75, and you're right on the cusp, you just met threshold, and you qualify for preference points, it would raise your score to a 77. So, that's how preference points work.

There are three roads to preference points. Option number one is Opportunity Zones, which is new. We have option two, Promise Zones, option 3, Disaster Awareness and Emergency Preparedness. Let's get started.

Your first option is Opportunity Zones. So, this year, HUD is encouraging activities in Opportunity Zone communities. You can click on this link here for a list of the designated Opportunity Zones, and if you need to find your census tract number, you'll use the Census Bureau tool available at the second link here. If you're not located in an Opportunity Zone, you're not going to need to enter any of this census tract information.

Let's go back to the previous slide. Here we have a screen shot from the Census Bureau, and if you entered your address, it will give you your census tract number. Let's go to the next.

Then, here's a map which will actually show you in that link, you would click on the right hand side, qualified Opportunity Zone tract and your state as well, and this will show you whether or not your agency falls within an Opportunity Zone tract. If so, you're going to enter this information on Chart A, Field 01, and this is where you're going to enter your census tract number.

The second option for preference points is through Promise Zones. So, we've done this in the past. We encourage activities in Promise Zone communities. You have to submit a specific form which is the HUD-

50153, and then that form has to be signed by an authorized Promise Zone official, and you would click this link to get a list of the persons authorized to certify. You would also see when you click the link that there are a list of Promise Zones, and there were three different waves of Promise Zone. So, you would look at each one to verify whether your agency is located in a Promise Zone.

Next slide. So if you, or in the case of a parent, if you're an intermediary, a state housing finance agency, an MSO, if the subgrantee is located in one of these Promise Zones communities, you're going to indicate that on Chart A, Field 02.

The third option is Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Preparedness. HUD is encouraging agencies to have housing counselors who are trained in disaster and emergency preparedness. So, you're going to describe your activities in Chart C.

Let's go to the next slide and see what that looks like. So, here's Chart C. Here's an excerpt with Fields I and J, and in these fields what you do is you indicate the type of relevant activity in that first section in I. So, you'll see different activities, workshops, one-on-one counseling types

that are specific either to emergency or disaster or any combination of these.

Then, in J, in that box below, you would tie together for us how you're implementing these activities. You would do that in narrative format, and just a brief description would do.

Let's get into the rating factors. Rating Factor 1 covers the capacity of the applicant. So, let's jump in. As Joel mentioned before, I just wanted to show that this year we really trimmed down the rating factors, so essentially before, it was a rating factor, and then you had a series of up to three to four sub, sub, sub, sub-factors, so this year they were trimmed down to just a rating factor and a sub-factor.

So, Rating Factor 1, we have four sub-factors that we're looking at A, B, C, and D. Rating Factor A is 2, the second rating factor B is 6—I'm sorry Sub-factor C is 7, and Sub-factor D is 4. So, let's take a look at each one in turn. Just as a quick reminder, you're going to use a chart to respond to Rating Factor 1 questions in here. You'll see as we go ahead how these correspond, so let's go to the next slide.

The first Rating Factor 1A, we're looking at the duration of HECM counseling sessions. The good news is that you don't have to provide any information to us. We're going to use our own records to score this factor, and really what we're looking at here is this only applies to agencies with HECM counselors, first of all, so for those agencies, we are looking at the average duration of a counseling session and awarding points based on that duration.

Rating Factor 1B is counselor training and industry standards adoption. This is worth a total of 6 points. Chart A is where you would respond to these questions, and they would be in Fields I, J, and K, so in Field I what you would do is if 50% or more of your counselors received formal training in the past two years, you would indicate so on this Field I.

On Field J, we're looking at whether your agency has any counselors, so one or more on staff who passed the HUD certification exam, and just a reminder that certification will be implemented in just over a year, so in about 14 months. So, we are incentivizing Field J.

Field K covers whether or not your agency has adopted the national industry standards for homeownership education and counseling.

Let's go to the next slide, and just a note. These will be inserted throughout, but just a reminder for the parent organizations, intermediaries, state housing finance agencies, and MSOs, you're going to have to specify this information for each of your branches and your subgrantees on the Chart A2 Supplement.

Then, you're going to transfer the totals onto Chart A2, and as a reminder if you also provide direct counseling services at a main office, you're going to include that office in the list of branches and subgrantees, so don't miss out on that.

The A2 Supplement should only include branches and subgrantees that provide services to 30 clients or more a year. So, if they don't serve that many clients, they cannot be listed on the supplement. One exception is that this does not apply to agencies that only offer HECM counseling. In that case, there can be less than 30 clients a year.

Next slide. Rating Factor 1C is the third of the four sub-factors under Rating Factor 1. This is the performance reviews. Again, this is an area where we try to take the burden off you as an applicant. We're going to

use our own records to score this factor, and really we're just looking at whether you have any kind of significant findings during performance reviews or something similar, and we'll be considering that information in scoring this factor.

Finally, 1D. Here we're looking at client satisfaction and progress. You would fill out Chart A, Fields L, M, and N. So, here we're looking at different forms of measuring customer satisfaction, measuring progress of a client. So, in Field L, specifically we're looking at whether your issue client exit surveys at the end of counseling or at the end of your group ed sessions.

Field M, we want to see whether you issued follow-up client surveys at the end of counseling or education sessions, and Field N, we want to see whether you pulled credit reports as part of post-counseling follow-up six months or after the counseling was completed.

Again, just an aside, you have to specify if you're a parent, information for each of your branches and subgrantees. You're going to transfer those totals back on the Chart A2. Always include your main office if they do

direct counseling, and the 30 client minimum is enforced here unless it is a HECM-only agency.

Now, I'll pass it over to Melissa Noe.

Melissa

Thanks, David. Hi, everyone. My name is Melissa Noe, and I'm in the Office of Policy and Grant administration with the Office of Housing Counseling. Today, I'm going to go through Rating Factor 2.

So, Rating Factor 2 is the Needs and NOFA Priorities, and it's worth 15 points total for the application. There are several sections of it. Most of it we will cover in Chart C in your 9906 Form, so whether you are an intermediary, MSO, or state housing finance agency, or an LHCA that's applying individually, you will find Chart C in your 9906 Form labeled Chart A1 or A2.

So, we will be covering in this rating factor first rural communities and then vulnerable populations. There will be a few questions on that around fair housing, and then also on staff training for fair housing needs, disabilities, limited English proficiency, and lead paint.

Next slide, please. The first question in this rating factor is rural communities. This is worth 5 points, and like what David was saying, we are trying to take the burden off the applicants when applying for this NOFA now, so we will be using our own internal data source to determine if the applicant serves rural clientele, and as always, rural clientele is defined by the USDA.

Next slide. Rating Factor 2B. This is when we start getting into identifying impediments to fair housing. So, there are a few questions on this, and if you turn to your Chart C, you'll see that this is where I'm pulling these questions from.

So, Field A for Chart C, we will begin by asking for you to cite the service area and the source that you used such as a consolidated plan, an analysis of impediments, or assessment of fair housing that provides us with fair housing issues that you'll provide us in Field B. So, we'll be going onto Field B in a second, but this is where you will cite the source that you used in order to identify for us what types of fair housing issues that you see in your community or your agency's community.

Just a note for parents, because this could be a big section for you to fill out with your subgrantees, we're not trying to get an answer for each of your subgrantees. We're just asking here cite no more than three jurisdictions served by your network. So, this is where you could give three examples of the different sources that you used, and then going forward in the next two questions, you'll also be responding based on these examples, the sources that you give in Field A.

Next slide, please. So, Field B is where you'll actually just indicate the fair housing issues that are cited and the sources that you put in Field A, and as you can see here, we've made it somewhat easy for you. We've cited things that we've seen as very common when it comes to fair housing issues in the areas that our housing counseling agencies serve, but then we also have an other line there. So, if you do want to indicate there something that you want to add besides what we have, that is completely fine, too.

Then, in Field C, what you'll actually do is describe an activity that will address and overcome the impediments that were listed in Field B, but just to note, something that's written in the NOFA, but it's not on the chart, we just want to make sure that if you are describing these activities that your

agencies will be doing, just make sure to maintain those records of the activities that you cite here.

Next slide. So, then we're going on to staff training, which you'll see is Field D on the C Chart, and this is where you will describe the staff training that addresses fair housing issues or factors that you identified in Field C. So, again, what you take from Field B, the kind of issues that you have identified as fair housing issues in your area, you will state here, you'll describe to us some ways that your agency or agencies try to address these fair housing issues. Here we have a note that there is a limit of 2,000 characters.

Next slide. After fair housing issues, we're going to move onto issues for persons with disabilities. So, this is Field E on the Chart, and here you will describe how your agency provides access to programs and activities that are readily accessible to people with disabilities. So, again, there will be a limit of 2,000 characters, and you'll want to describe what appropriate steps your agency takes to ensure effective communication happens for people with disabilities.

Similar to the last slide, for people with limited English proficiency, how does your agency work with people with limited English proficiency. So, here on Chart C, Field F you will describe the steps that your agency takes in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency still have meaningful access to your housing counseling program and are able to access the activities.

Then we have a question about mobility counseling. This is Field G, and in this field, you will describe how counselors will provide clients with mobility counseling and what information they will provide to clients that will enhance their housing choice outside of areas of minority and poverty concentration. Again, there's a limit here of 2,000 characters because we want you to be concise but brief.

Then, finally, we have 1 point for lead-based paint. In Field G, you will describe to us how your agency informs clients about the hazards of lead-based paint. Here the limit is only 1,000 characters.

I believe that is—yes, that's my rating factor, so I'm going to hand this off now to Tracie, who will discuss Rating Factor 3.

Tracie

Thank you. Hi. Again, my name is Tracie Oaks. I'm with the Office of Policy and Grant Administration for the Office of Housing Counseling.

Next slide.

So, Rating Factor 3 is a total of 44 points, and we'll be taking a look at the impact of your services and expenses for parent organizations. We'll evaluate the sub-allocation of your grant award to your network. We'll evaluate the types of counseling and education services that you provide, the modes of delivery for those services, and any oversight that you conduct for your network.

Next slide. So, for the first sub-factor under Rating Factor 3, which is Sub-Factor A, we will evaluate the total number of clients that you have served as reported on the 9902 that we already have on record. So, you do not need to provide any information for this sub-factor with the exception of newly-approved applicants that received an approval after September 30, 2018. So, if you are newly approved after September 30, you will need to prepare and submit a 9902 in your application for the period of October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018.

This is very important. Again, we want to reiterate that any applicant that is newly approved, if you do not provide a hard copy paper 9902 as part of your application, you will not receive any points for this sub-factor.

Additionally, it will have a negative impact on other sub-factors that are scored throughout the NOFA.

Next slide. Sub-factors B, C, and D will evaluate your agency's expenses. So Sub-factor B is the cost per client, and this looks at the actual expenses of your agency's housing counseling program and the clients served. In doing so, you will need to provide your total housing counseling program expenses which should include both your indirect costs and your direct cost for the fiscal year for your parent agency and your entire network.

So, again, this is the total cost for not just you as the parent, but your entire network, and this has not changed from previous NOFA years.

These instructions are generally the same from past NOFA years. So, if your agency became HUD approved during or midway through the fiscal year, you want to make sure that your total program expenses that you provide in Chart A, Field R must reflect the entire fiscal year, not just the period in which your agency was approved.

Again, we want to reiterate and we want to emphasize that if you do not provide this information in the application, you will not receive any points for this sub-factor, and again, it could impact the scoring of subsequent sub-factors in Rating Factor 3.

Next slide. Sub-factor C also evaluates your agency's expenses, but only those funds expended on salaries and fringe benefits for your employees that provide direct housing counseling and education services. Again, for parent agencies, this is not just if you're providing direct counseling services, but your entire network, and that information will be entered in Chart A in Field S.

Next slide. Sub-factor D will also calculate your expenses based on your previous HUD grant to your total program expenses. So, as I mentioned in an earlier sub-factor, it's very important that you provide your expense information in the application. As Joel mentioned earlier in the presentation, there are no separate narratives for this NOFA, so you want to make sure that the expense information is provided on the appropriate charts in the appropriate sub-factors as identified in the NOFA.

Next slide. Sub-factor E, allocation to subgrantees. Now, this is specific to parent organizations, and it's a two-step process. So, you will start by completing Column P of the Chart A2 Supplement in Excel. Flip to the next slide for me, please. Here is a screen shot of Column P where you will input that information.

So, on this example on the screen, the agency has listed its subgrantees and branches and provided the percentage of the grant award that's sub-allocated to each. As you can see, it totals 90% of the total grant award for this example agency.

Next slide. Now, once you have completed the A2 Excel Supplement, you will need to transfer that total from the Chart A2 Excel Supplement to Field P2 of the Chart A2. Now, Field P2 is the percentage of the award applicants intend to sub-allocate to its branches and subgrantees.

You will also need to complete Field P1 which is the percent of the award the applicant intends to allocate to itself, and these two fields should equal 100% of your award.

Next slide. Sub-factor 3F, we will evaluate the types of housing counseling and education services that you provided throughout the fiscal year, and for this sub-factor, you do not need provide any additional information. We will be using the 9902 data that we have on record, but again, I want to mention as stated earlier in the presentation, if you are newly approved after September 30, you must prepare and submit a 9902 with your application for the entire fiscal year as outlined in the NOFA.

Next slide. Rating Factor 3G, this is where applicants will indicate their modes of service of delivery such as in person, telephone, internet, or in multiple languages. So, for local housing agencies, you will complete Chart A1, Fields T through W and mark an X in the appropriate boxes, and for parent agencies, again this is a two-step process.

Next slide, please. So, you must complete Chart A2 Supplement in Excel, Fields P through W for each of the branches and/or subgrantees. At the end of each column, you're going to see a total for the number of Xs that you've marked in the chart.

Next slide. You want to transfer those totals from the Chart A2 Supplement to the Chart A2, Fields P through W.

Next slide. The last sub-factor in Rating Factor 3 is oversight. This is where applicants will indicate their oversight in quality control activities, so additionally parent organizations will provide the number of HUD 9910 performance reviews up to five that will be conducted during the grant performance period.

Next slide. Locals will complete Column B on the Chart D1.

Next slide. Chart D2 for parent organizations, so again, in Field 1 above, you would need to provide the number of performance reviews up to five, and in Column B, you will indicate the proposed number of subgrantees and branches in your network that will perform specific oversight activities identified to the left in items 1, 2, and 3.

Next slide. This is a certification statement. It's located at the bottom of the Chart D Form. It's D1 for local housing agencies and D2 for parent organizations. This certifies that the information that you've provided on all of the 9906 forms is true and accurate. So, both locals and parent organizations are required to check the certification box at the bottom of the form as part of your submittal of your application.

That concludes Rating Factor 3, and Shae is going to provide an overview of Rating Factor 4.

Shae

Hello, everyone. I am Shae Williams of the Office of Policy and Grant Administration within the Office of Housing Counseling, and I will be going over Rating Factor 4.

Next slide. So, there is a maximum of 5 points available for Rating Factor 4. Please note that this is a change from last year's NOFA which was a total of 6 points. The points given in this rating factor are based on your leveraged resources, so in this rating factor, your agency will be evaluated on its ability to show additional non-federal funding resources.

Please note that HUD funds cannot be your only source of funding.

Agencies that do not demonstrate that it has any other available resources will not receive any points for this rating factor. Grantees are required to maintain evidence of leveraged funds that are provided to your agency.

Next slide. Now, the most common types of leveraged funds are non-federal grants, fees charged and collected by the agency, program income,

and any in-kind contributions such as services, equipment, office space, and labor support.

Next slide. As stated earlier, leveraged funds cannot be federal funds.

This includes funds that are directly or indirectly passed through local or state government entities. Some examples of federal funds are the Hardest Hit Funds known as HHF, any community development or services block grants, emergency homeowner loaner program, the Fair Housing Initiatives Program also known as FHIP, and Home Investment Partnerships Program also known as HOME funds.

Some federal program funds may also be known by other names depending on your state or local government program such as the Home Saver Program.

Next slide, please. Now, Rating Factor 4's information is first entered into Chart B Supplement which is in Excel spreadsheet format within the NOFA application. The information entered should include the name of the applicant, the organization providing leveraged funds, the type of contribution which can be cash, fees, in-kind contributions, or program income. The use of funds should also be entered.

Agencies should also enter funds and/or resources that are actually allocated for housing counseling services and are available from October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2020.

Next slide, please. Of course, funding that is available outside of these dates will need to be prorated. For example, if the funds are available from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018, then the applicant can only include funding that is available from October 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018.

Next slide, please. So, here's a screenshot of the Chart B Supplement in Excel. All fields must be completed in this chart supplement, and applicants should not combine sources into one entry. So, although there is a one point change in this rating factor, it is still a significant amount of points, so we would encourage applicants to make sure you complete this rating factor in its entirety.

Next slide, please. Finally, after Chart B Supplement in Excel is completed, the total amount of leveraged funds that are available during the grant period is being transferred to Chart B as indicated in the snapshot

on your screen. This chart is in the PDF form within the NOFA application.

Next slide. This ends Rating Factor 4. I will now pass the mic to my colleague, Kristin Ackerman, who will talk to you about Rating Factor 5.

Kristin

Thanks, Shae. My name is Kristin, and I work with the team that you're hearing from today in the Office of Policy and Grant Administration, and I'll be talking about Rating Factor 5.

Next slide, please. Thanks. Rating Factor 5 is meant to evaluate an applicant's success in achieving performance goals and their efforts to maintain the commitments made under previous applications. This rating factor is worth 17 points, and it's going to be comprised of HCS reporting, grant expenditure history, and also counseling outcomes.

All the elements in this section are going to be scored based on existing sources, and as a result, we've been able to eliminate several questions that were formerly on the 9906. There's also going to be two new scored items in this area, and that's going to be reporting in HCS and Section 10 outcomes on the 9902.

Next slide, please. Rating Factor 5A covers HCS reporting, and it's worth 4 points. This is based on the evaluation of timely validation of your profile in HCS, the timely submission of HUD-9902 reports during fiscal year '18, and the use of your agency's CMS to submit 9902s. Again, applicants are reminded that they don't need to provide a response here and that the evaluation is going to be based on our existing sources.

Next slide, please. Rating Factor 5B, grant expenditure history, and this is worth 6 points. This factor will review the applicant's timely expenditure of funds awarded under the FY '17 NOFA, and basically any delays in expenditure past the period of performance and recaptures will be taken into consideration under this factor. Again, this will be based on our existing data sources, and there's no response necessary in this sub-factor.

Next slide, please. Rating Factor 5C, counseling outcomes, is comprised of 7 points, and the evaluation here is based on counseling outcomes data provided in Section 10 of the applicant's 9902. Again, this will be based on our existing data unless you are a newly-approved applicant that did not submit an FY '18 quarter four 9902. So, newly-approved applicants

are reminded to prepare and submit a HUD-9902 to be submitted to be part of their application.

Now, I'm going to hand it off to Joel to close the training out for everybody.

Joel

Great. Thank you very much, Kristin. Next slide.

So, for assistance and for any questions you have related to the NOFA, you'll send those, as we said before, to housing.counseling@hud.gov.

Now is also a good opportunity to point out we've been receiving a lot of questions via the chat box here on GoTo Webinar, and while we're trying to answer as many of them as we can, some of them will require additional research, or we need to promulgate the answer in a public manner in order to comply with the HUD Reform Act.

So, we apologize for those to whom we haven't been able to immediately answer your response, but we are going to receive a transcript of the questions along with your contact information. So, after the webinar, in the next couple days we'll be sorting through the questions, coming up with answers, and getting them cleared for public dissemination after.

So, I just wanted to point that out for people who have sent in questions and then sent follow-ups saying that we haven't answered your question yet.

Returning to the slide, again housing.counseling@hud.gov for your NOFA-related questions, but I do want to point out that grants.gov is not a HUD system, so for any technical assistance in terms of where are the forms, or how to I upload, or how do I attach, or my computer has crashed, please contact grants.gov.

Here's the contact info. They should be available 24/7 including the week of 4th of July, although they might not be the nicest then if you call. So, send your application early. The phone number is 1-800-518-4726.

There's also hearing impaired options, and they have an email address, support@grants.gov.

Always keep copies of emails that you send to grants.gov because if something happens in the future, and there is an appeal, holding onto these communications will be helpful to support your appeal.

Next slide. Tips for success. Read the NOFA, follow the instructions.

We tried to be very clear with the NOFA this year. We hope that in reading it, you find it to be a little clearer, a little more understandable this year, but again, if you have questions you can reach out to us, and we'll try to get back as soon as possible.

Understand the charts, how to fill them out, how to submit them. A lot of people, the biggest way people lose points isn't that their agency is low quality. It's that they actually fill out the charts wrong, and they just lose a ton of points because they provided the wrong information. So, I think one of the biggest things you can do is make sure you understand what is going into the chart, where to put it, etc., to make sure you can get as many points as you're actually eligible for.

Relatedly, answer all the questions. If you think something might be blank, follow up with us just to make sure. Then, submit on time, and save all your confirmations and emails that accept or reject your application in case you need them for the appeals process.

Next slide. So, here is contact info if you need it. We post our FAQs. We already have two rounds of FAQs posted on HUD Exchange. I'm sure

everyone has HUD Exchange already bookmarked on your browser for getting to the Office of Housing Counseling, but if you go to the Grants section, that's where you'll find the NOFA posted, although you'll get that in grants.gov, but importantly, when we post our FAQs, and you should receive the listserv email blast that Jerry sends out quite regularly indicating new FAQs are being posted, but those FAQs, again two batches already there, a third batch probably will be posted any day now, that's on HUD Exchange.

Counselor training and testing. There's your website. Email for the 197th time is housing.counseling@hud.gov, and finally to subscribe to our newsletter, *The Bridge*, you can follow this email address.

Next slide. So, I'd like to thank you all for attending.

Next slide. That concludes today's webinar, so thank you for attending, and if you have any questions, feel free to send them at housing.counseling@hud.gov. Again, for everyone who's been submitting questions via the question box, we are going to get a transcript, and we hope to respond to you as soon as possible.

So, thank you very much, and that concludes our webinar.

Moderator

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, that does concludes your conference call for today. We do thank you for your participation and for using AT&T's Executive TeleConference. You may now disconnect.