



# HUD Approval Requirements for Housing Counseling Agencies

Please call: **800-260-0712**

Participant Access Code: **420530**

to join the conference call portion of the webinar

**June 13, 2017**

# Webinar Logistics

- The presentation is available for download right now under the webinar's documents section
- Audio is being recorded. The playback number along with the PowerPoint and a transcript will be available on the HUD Exchange at [www.hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/webinars/](http://www.hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/webinars/)
- An OHC LISTSERV will be sent out when the Archives are posted. Posting will usually be within 7-10 days.

# Questions & Comments



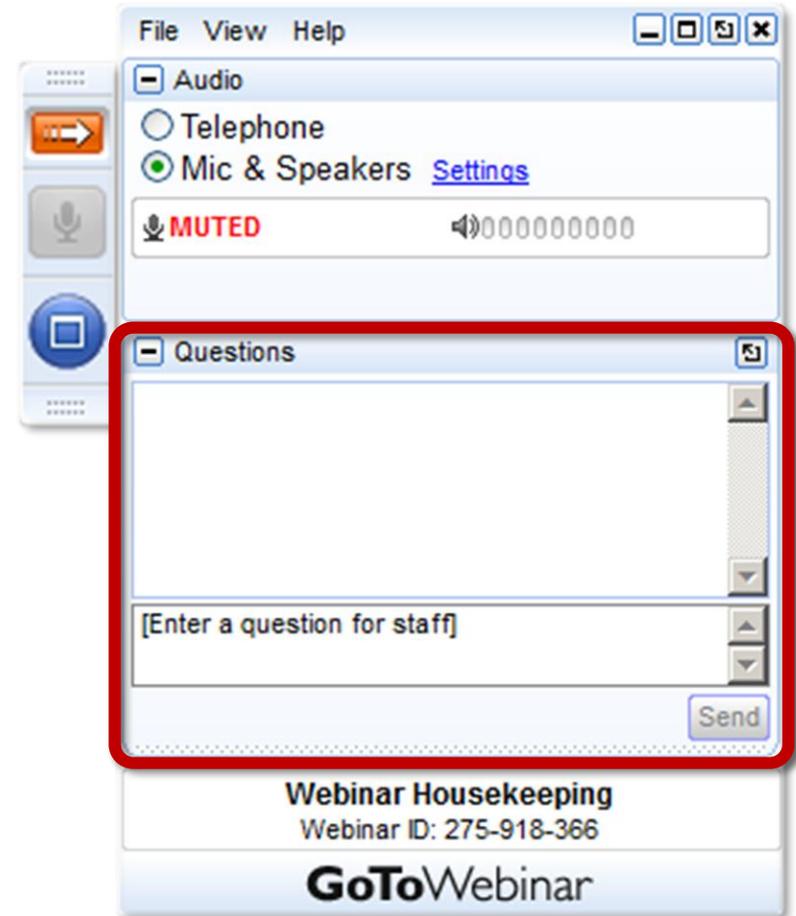
- Attendee lines will muted during presentation.
- There will be opportunities for Q&A,
  - The operator will give you instructions on how to ask questions or make your comments.
  - If unmuted during Q&A, please do not use a speaker phone

# Other Ways to Ask Questions

## Your Participation

Please submit your text questions and comments using the Questions Panel. We will answer some of them during the webinar.

You can also send questions and comments to [housing.counseling@hud.gov](mailto:housing.counseling@hud.gov) with HUD Approval in the subject line.



# Brief Survey

- Please complete the brief survey at the end of this session.
- Your responses will help OHC better plan and present our webinars.



# Certificate of Training

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Thank you for attending our XX hour Webinar on XX. We hope you enjoyed our event. This is your CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING. Please print out and save this email for your records. Please send your questions, comments and feedback to:  
[housing.counseling@hud.gov](mailto:housing.counseling@hud.gov).



# **HUD's Office of Housing Counseling and Housing Counseling Agency Approval**

# Agenda

- **Introduction to the HUD Office of Housing Counseling**
- **Housing Counseling Certification Requirements**
  - Options for compliance
- **HUD Housing Counseling Agency Approval**
  - Regulations on HUD Housing Counseling Approval
  - Self-assessment tool
  - Speaking with HUD application advisor
  - Submitting application for approval
  - Working with HUD Point of Contact

# HUD Office of Housing Counseling

**“The mission of the Office of Housing Counseling is to help families to obtain, sustain and retain their homes.**

**We will accomplish this mission through a strong network of HUD-approved housing counseling agencies and counselors.”**

- HUD’s network of approximately 2,000 housing counseling agencies
- HUD monitors compliance with HUD regulations and oversees independence, conflicts of interest, content and process standards
- HUD connects clients with participating housing counseling agencies
- HUD provides grant funding for qualified applicants

# Benefits to HUD approval

- Funding
- Networking
- Leveraging
- Credentials
- Increase visibility of counseling
- Attract more clients

# HUD Programs Impacted by Counseling Certification

- Rule applies to **all organizations** that deliver housing counseling required by or provided in connection with all HUD programs
  - Counseling in connection with programs such as CDBG, PIH, and HOME may be affected
- The rule narrowly defines housing counseling

# HUD Certification Requirement

HUD published the Final Rule for Housing Counseling Certification in the Federal Register on December 14, 2016.

**Housing counseling required under or provided in connection with HUD programs must be provided only by certified housing counselors who work for organizations approved to participate in HUD's Housing Counseling Program.**

# Options for Agencies

- Apply to HUD for approval or join a HUD-approved intermediary or state housing finance agency
- Partner with and refer clients to an existing Approved Housing Counseling Agency to deliver housing counseling
- Modify the program in order to become compliant
- Stop delivering housing counseling services before the Final Compliance Date

# KEY CONCEPT

If your agency is covered by housing counseling certification, you will need to become HUD approved and have counselors pass the certification exam before the final compliance date to continue providing housing counseling.

**The Final Compliance Date for Certification is August 1, 2020.**



# HUD Housing Counseling

## Agency Approval

Presented by:

**Esther Richardson**

# Preparing and Submitting your Application

- Step 1:** Review hudexchange website for instructions on completing your application
- Step 2:** Use Housing Counseling Agency Eligibility Tool
- Step 3:** Contact HUD to be connected with application advisor
- Step 4:** Prepare required documentation, including form 9900
- Step 5:** Submit application to HUD
- Step 6:** Work with HUD reviewer
- Step 7:** Approval!
- Step 8:** Work with assigned HUD Point of Contact

# Step 1: Review hudexchange website

- <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/agency-application/>
- **Read the full content** of the page to prepare for applying
- Review the links to regulations listed under qualifying Criteria

## Qualifying Criteria

Section 106(a)(2) of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 USC 1701x) provides the legislative authority for HUD to provide housing counseling services directly or through private or public organizations with special competence and knowledge in counseling low and moderate income families.

Detailed information and additional requirements of the housing counseling program are provided in the [Housing Counseling Program Handbook 7610.1](#) The program handbook lists the qualifying criteria that all applicants must meet to receive HUD approval. A few of the more important are:

# Step 2: Housing Counseling Agency Eligibility Tool

- Developed as a companion piece to the New Certification Rule
- Used by both prospective local housing counseling agencies as well as new affiliates and sub-grantees of oversight agencies
- Developed to streamline new applications reviews
- Provides an agency with a user report to follow up on next steps
- **Does not replace a formal application review by HUD**

# Step 2: Housing Counseling Agency Eligibility Tool

- <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/housing-counseling-agency-eligibility-tool/>

## Housing Counseling Agency Eligibility Tool

### What is a HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agency?

HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agencies (HCA) are organizations supported or sponsored by HUD and administer housing counseling services across the country. A HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency is eligible to apply to HUD for grant funding under its Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

HCAs represent a diverse set of organizations who work among HUD programs including public housing authorities, community housing development organizations (CHDOs), tribally designated housing entities, community development corporations, etc.

HCAs provide a valuable service within a community and serve consumers with counseling across housing needs from homeless and rental housing to pre-purchase homebuyer education.

For more information on the overall process and the requirements for becoming a HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency, please visit this page within the HUD Exchange: [How to Become a HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agency](#).

### What is the Housing Counseling Agency Eligibility Tool?

#### Get Started

Sign in and complete the tool.

Sign In ▶

Need a HUD Exchange Account?

Register Now ▶

#### Questions

For technical issues with the tool, [contact the HUD Exchange team](#).

Requires a hudexchange account to use. Sign up is easy and free

## Step 3: Contact HUD Application Advisor

email [housing.counseling@hud.gov](mailto:housing.counseling@hud.gov) to schedule an appointment with an application advisor who will assist you.

- Use "Appointment with HUD housing counseling application advisor" in the subject line of your email.
- HUD application advisor will assist you with the application that you must submit for approval as a counseling agency

# Step 4: Complete Required Documents

- A. [Form HUD-9900 Application](#)
- B. Documentation of 501(c)3
- C. Eligibility documents for government entities (if applicable)
- D. Charter/By-Laws
- E. Community Base
- F. List of Staff, Board Members, and Management Staff with Home Address
- G. Narrative Addressing Each Application Question
- H. Resumes and Training Certificates

## Step 4: Complete Required Documents, Continued

- I. Maps with Target Area, Other Agencies in Area and Agency Location
- J. Facility Pictures
- K. Budget and Funding Sources
- L. Most Recent Audited Financial Statement
- M. Community Resources
- N. Disclosure Statement
- O. Housing Counseling Work Plan

# Step 4: Complete Required Documents, Continued

## Housing Counseling work plan

- Target Area – demographics and needs
- Housing Needs and Problems:

Where can an applicant find information?

- State and Local Municipality Consolidated Reports
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing
- Census Tract data
- Foreclosure Data Sources

# Step 4: Complete Required Documents, Continued

## Housing Counseling work plan

- Affirmatively furthering Fair Housing Outreach Plan
- Description of Housing Counseling Activities
- Outcomes
- Alternative Settings/Formats
- Client Follow-up
- Fee Schedule
- Limited English Proficiency

*\* Sample work plan is available at*

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Developing-Housing-Counseling-Work-Plan-HUD-Approval.pdf>

## Step 5: Submit your application

- Your application advisor will instruct you on how to submit your completed application to HUD.

## Step 6: Work with HUD Reviewer

**Once an application is received, HUD OHC reviewer will:**

- Contact you to let you know your application has been received
- Verify applicant meets eligibility requirements
- Issue deficiency letters when needed
- Review public records of agency staff and board for ineligible participants
- Order facility inspection(s)

## Step 7: Approval!

After internal processes are completed, the HUD reviewer will add your agency's profile to the housing counseling system (HCS) and send you a letter confirming your approval.

You will also be provided instructions on accessing HCS for validation and submission of quarterly reports.

## **Step 8: Work with assigned HUD Point of Contact**

You will be assigned a HUD Point of Contact. This point of contact will assist you with any questions on HUD requirements, or questions about HUD systems and quarterly activity reports (9902s).

# Common Application Deficiencies

- No authorization to perform housing counseling
- Work Plans Incomplete – especially description of housing counseling activity!
- Applicants checking off “Types of Housing Counseling Services” for more areas than qualified
- Supervisory monitoring and documentation for quality control plan compliance skipped or very weak
- Training missing for specific area of approval
- Disclosure to clients is incomplete

# Common Application Deficiencies

- Resumes not provided for all staff delivering housing counseling
- No information on experience with other HUD programs
- Funding sources not identified specifically for housing counseling
- Copy of current housing counseling budget missing
- Community resources do not include names AND addresses of organizations with established relationship

# Regulations and Information on Eligibility Requirements

## Introduction to Housing Counseling Online Training

<https://www.hudexchange.info/trainings/courses/introduction-to-housing-counseling/>

## 24 CFR 214.103 – Approval Criteria

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title24/24cfr214\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title24/24cfr214_main_02.tpl)

Review subpart B - § 214.103 Approval criteria.

## HUD Handbook 7610.1 Rev-5

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4905/housing-counseling-handbook/>

Review Paragraph 2-2, Approval Criteria

## HUD Website – Guides and Tools

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/agency-application/>

Eligibility tool and other valuable guides

