U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Distressed Cities Technical Assistance Program

The Distressed Cities Technical Assistance (DCTA) Program's main objective is to provide small **local governments** facing **long-term economic challenges** that were recently **impacted by a natural disaster** with accessible and comprehensive technical assistance. The program helps local governments adopt effective, efficient, and sustainable financial management practices that improve fiscal health and enable local governments to more successfully complete other projects.

DCTA Basics

- Local governments work with a technical assistance (TA) provider to identify opportunities for improvement in financial management practices and financial performance. This is the foundation of the Distressed Cities Technical Assistance Program.

- Based on the local government's interests, other subsequent focus areas of technical assistance may include – economic stabilization and recovery planning, affordable housing financing, utilizing federal development programs, or financing economic development projects.

- Based on the local government's needs, specific processes that may be improved through this program include – gathering and analyzing data, implementing and tracking implementation of planning documents, building cross-sector partnerships, and establishing community engagement processes.

- DCTA is **community-specific** rather than HUD-program specific. Local governments selected to receive TA do not have to be HUD grantees.

- **Sustainability** (long-term impact) of TA efforts is central to selecting recipients, directing engagements, and determining appropriate deliverables.

- Local government leaders, managers and staff are expected to be engaged in the TA.

Terminology

- **Distressed** - Refers to communities with at least one of the following characteristics:

    o An annual average unemployment rate of 9 percent or more over the last three ACS 5-Year surveys

    o A poverty rate of 20 percent or more among individuals not enrolled in higher education, as of the most recent 5-year ACS survey

    o A population decline of 5 percent or more between 2010 and the most recent 5-year ACS survey

- **Cities** – In this program, cities broadly mean local governments.

- **Communities** – Word used in most DCTA materials to refer to the community that the UGLG serves.

- **Natural Disaster** – The community is in a county with a Presidentially Declared Disaster in 2015 or any year thereafter.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Local governments must meet the following to be eligible:

- Units of General Local Government (UGLGs) – e.g. counties, cities, villages, towns, townships, boroughs, etc.

    o Tribal governments are eligible for consideration

    o U.S. territory equivalents to UGLGs are eligible for consideration

- Distressed (poverty rate, unemployment rate OR population decline)

Local governments that meet the following will be prioritized:

- Serve a small population size (between 8,000 and 40,000)

- Located in a county with a declared disaster (2015 or later)

- Can demonstrate stable city management and leadership

Technical Assistance

- Examples of eligible activities under this program include capacity needs assessments, developing financial management tools, and participating in individualized training on establishing and maintaining a healthy budget. Please note, this TA cannot be used to hire or fund staffing positions at local governments.

- **There is no deadline for application or timeline for the TA.** Some local governments may only need a little assistance, while others need more robust assistance. The DCTA team does not envision any one local government being assisted through this program for more than one calendar year. Most engagements will be six to ten months.

Want to learn more?

Visit the Distressed Cities HUD Exchange website. The website includes more information, such as frequently asked questions and instructions for requesting assistance under this program!

https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/distressed-cities/