

## FY 2019 Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program NOFA

### Frequently Asked Questions – Part 2

#### Applicant Eligibility

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##### **Question (1)**

Are non-HUD approved housing counseling agencies eligible to apply for funding under the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program NOFA?

##### **Answer (1)**

No. Housing Counseling agencies that have not received HUD approval but meet the Housing Counseling Program eligibility criteria set forth at 24 C.F.R. Part 214 are encouraged to affiliate with a HUD-approved Intermediary or SHFA. Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to apply for or receive awards made under the Comprehensive Housing Counseling NOFA.

##### **Question (2)**

My organization doesn't currently administer a HUD housing counseling grant. However, we are interested in submitting a grant application. Is this NOFA open to new applicants or specifically for current grantees?

##### **Answer (2)**

Yes, the NOFA is open to new applicants and current grantees who meet the eligibility requirements of the NOFA, along with all applicable HUD requirements.

##### **Question (3)**

Must our agency's housing counselors be certified?

##### **Answer (3)**

At the time of the NOFA application the agency's housing counselors do not have to be certified. If the grant applicant is selected for the award, all Housing counselors participating in the Housing Counseling Program must be certified by August 1, 2020. Agencies that already have at least one certified counselor should indicate that on the NOFA application. Applicants should be aware that the housing counselors' training, testing, and certification expenses are eligible expenses under this NOFA.

## General Questions

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### Question (4)

Can NOFA applications under the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Program be submitted by Applicants in the form of a paper copy, or must the application be submitted through the [Grants.Gov](#) online process?

### Answer (4)

An electronic copy of the Application Package and Application Instructions for this NOFA can be downloaded from [Grants.gov](#), [here](#). All applications must be submitted electronically via [Grants.gov](#). An applicant demonstrating good cause may request a waiver from the requirement for electronic submission (for example, a lack of available Internet access in the geographic area in which the applicant's business offices are located). Applicants that cannot submit their applications electronically must submit a waiver request so that the request is received by HUD at least 15 days before the application deadline. If HUD waives the requirement, HUD must receive your paper application before the deadline of this NOFA. To request a waiver and receive a paper copy of the application materials, you should contact: [housing.counseling@hud.gov](mailto:housing.counseling@hud.gov).

### Question (5)

How are the grant funds allocated?

### Answer (5)

Please see *Section II (Award Information)* and *Section V (Application Review Information)* of the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program NOFA for information on how funds are allocated.

### Question (6)

Will the Office of Housing Counseling offer a general training on the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program NOFA?

### Answer (6)

Yes, the Office of Housing Counseling will provide a Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program NOFA Webinar training, and it will be [archived on HUD Exchange](#) for those that miss the live webinar. The archive will provide the audio, PowerPoint presentation, and transcript of the training.

### Question (7)

Does the use of grant funds cover all aspects of counseling (pre-purchase, post-purchase, foreclosure prevention)?

### Answer (7)

Grantees and subgrantees will be reimbursed only for the eligible activities outlined in *Section IV.F Eligible Activities* of the FY 2019 NOFA, and applicable grant agreement.

**Question (8)**

My organization was recently approved by HUD and this is our first time applying for grant funding under the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program NOFA. Are there any requirements unique to our situation?

**Answer (8)**

Yes. Applicants that received approval as a HUD housing counseling agency after September 30, 2018 would not have submitted a HUD-9902 Form covering the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018. As such, these newly-approved applicants must include a HUD-9902 for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 with their NOFA application package. Applicants that were previously required to submit a HUD-9902 will be evaluated based on the data in HUD's Housing Counseling System. Please assure that you have also registered for a DUNS number. Applicants cannot file an application in [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) without an active DUNS number.

**Question (9)**

When will the grant funds be awarded and made available?

**Answer (9)**

Award dates are currently unavailable. However, we can provide the following information regarding use of grant funds: HUD will notify applicants of their status for funding. Applicants selected for the award will be asked to execute a grant agreement with HUD. Grantees will receive funding on a cost reimbursement basis for eligible housing counseling services. The initial period of performance for grants awarded under the NOFA will be for a period of up to eighteen months. For planning purposes, applicants should assume that the period of performance is October 1, 2018 through March 31, 2020.

**Question (10)**

Is there any way for an applicant to estimate their potential score for each of the Rating Factors?

**Answer (10)**

Applicants should review *Section V.A. Application Review Information* for a detailed listing of all Rating Factors, and the available points for each.

Please note that for a period of at least 120 days, beginning 30 days after the awards are publicly announced, HUD will provide to a requesting Applicant a debriefing related to its application. A request for a debriefing must be made in writing or by email by the authorized official whose signature appears on the SF-424 or by his or her successor in office, and be submitted to [housing.counseling@hud.gov](mailto:housing.counseling@hud.gov).

**Question (11)**

Must subgrantees be selected through a Request for Proposals process?

**Answer (11)**

No. Applicants may use a variety of methods for selecting members of their network. However, the awardee must ensure that subgrantees comply with the standards described in the NOFA and OHC Regulations (24 CFR 214).

### Question (12)

I am having an issue with the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) system. Who can I contact for assistance?

### Answer (12)

[Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) offers customer support 24 hours a day, seven days per week, except on Federal holidays. Applicants may call 1-800-518-GRANTS (toll-free) or send an email to [Support@Grants.gov](mailto:Support@Grants.gov). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who have speech disabilities, may contact customer support through the Federal Relay Service's teletype service at 1-800-877-8339.

## Forms

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### Question (13)

On the SF-424, which box should I check for Question 2 where it asks about the Type of Application?

### Answer (13)

Applicants should check "new" on Question 2 for "Type of Application" on the SF-424.

### Question (14)

Is the form HUD-2880 Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report applicable to the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Comprehensive grant?

### Answer (14)

Yes, it is required for entities applying for all HUD funding. Please see instructions for completing the form HUD-2880 [here](#).

### Question (15)

Which box should I check: "Initial Report" or "Update Report" on the form HUD-2880 Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report?

### Answer (15)

When applying for HUD assistance, check the box "Initial Report" on the form HUD-2880 Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report for HUD funding. After you receive the funds and if applicable, you check the box "Update Report" (filed by "Recipients" of HUD Funding). All recipients of covered assistance must submit update reports to the Department to reflect substantial changes to the initial applicant disclosure reports.

### Question (16)

There are several questions on the SF-424 and HUD-2880 that ask for a dollar amount. Can you please provide guidance on the dollar amounts that should be entered on these required forms?

**Answer (16)**

On the SF-424, line 18a Applicants should enter a response of \$1.00. Applicants may also indicate, but are not required to, the maximum grant request on Chart A1 or A2. This amount, if provided, will also be considered in the funding methodology as a cap in establishing the maximum grant amount for that Applicant.

On Form HUD-2880 Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report, line 4 “Amount of HUD Assistance Requested/Received,” Applicants may enter \$1.00. The amount entered on this line will not be used by HUD as a cap in establishing the maximum grant amount for the Applicant. Applicants should not enter the amount received from HUD in prior grants on this line, as this is an “initial report” and not an “update report.”

On the HUD-2880, please note that regardless of the amount listed in line 4, Applicants that have received, or expect to receive HUD assistance for housing counseling in excess of \$200,000 during FY 2019 must select “yes” under question two in “Part I Threshold Determinations,” and complete the remainder of the form.

**Question (17)**

On the SF-424, is the Applicant Identifier (line 4) the same number as the Agency ID number on the HCS? Where can I find the Federal Entity Identifier (line 5a)? Is the Federal Award Identifier (line 5b) our grant number?

**Answer (17)**

On the SF-424, Applicants may leave lines 4, 5a, and 5b blank.

**Question (18)**

Will Intermediaries that are funded through the NOFA be able to make changes to their subgrantee list?

**Answer (18)**

Yes, Intermediaries will be able to make changes to their subgrantee list after awards are made by submitting a written request and detailed justification to HUD. In these cases, requests for amendments are required and are subject to HUD approval. HUD reserves the right to adjust the award amount granted through this year's NOFA or a second-year funding run should the number of a grantee's network of subgrantees and funded branches change significantly from that proposed in the grant application. For an Intermediary, SHFA, or MSO, a significant change might include, but is not limited to, a 25 percent or greater decrease in the number of their subgrantees and funded branches from that stated in their grant application.