

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

MISSION:

*Create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality, affordable homes for all*

# HUD

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

### 2016-2020

NOVEMBER 2016 | DRAFT VERSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT



HUD.GOV



## MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY CASTRO

At HUD, we understand that a safe and stable home lays the foundation for a family's happiness and future success. We also know that where people live shapes how they live: from jobs they can find, to the schools their children attend, to the health of their entire families.

Every American deserves the chance to live in a neighborhood of promise. Yet, too often, families of modest means and communities of color are forced to live in distressed areas that can harm their health, and limit their potential. They raise their children in the shadows of landfills and power plants, or in homes that contain hazards like lead, carbon monoxide, and mold. These surroundings can lead to higher rates of diseases like cancer and chronic conditions like asthma. And they may cause many Americans to spend their time in a doctor's office, instead of the classroom or the workplace.

President Obama is determined to build a safer and healthier nation for all Americans, and HUD is proud to help fulfill his mission. In 2011, HUD joined 17 other federal agencies in signing the Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice and Executive Order 12898—a bold pledge to work together to improve the quality of life in underserved communities.

As part of HUD's ongoing commitment to environmental justice, I am honored to introduce our Environmental Justice Strategy 2016-2020. This strategy details the progress we have made thus far, and lays out our path forward for achieving environmental justice. In the last five years, HUD has made great strides in areas such as controlling lead and other hazards in low-income households, improving housing on tribal lands, and helping communities adapt to the challenges posed by natural disasters and climate change. In the years ahead, we will continue to join forces with local leaders across the country to help expand opportunity for low-income and disadvantaged Americans.

We are constantly pushing to improve the way HUD does business and hope that you will read our strategy, and provide us with your input on how we can do better. The United States can only achieve an inclusive and sustainable future if every American has the opportunity to reside in an environment that helps them to live, learn, and thrive. We look forward to working with all our partners to make this vision a reality for every family we serve.

Julián Castro  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW..... 4

HUD’S 2016-2020 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY..... 9

GOAL A: IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS DISPROPORTIONATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN HEALTH IMPACTS FACED BY LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR..... 10

GOAL B: EXPAND ACCESS TO RESOURCES, INFORMATION, AND BEST PRACTICES FOR HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS FROM HUD PROGRAMS – WITH A FOCUS ON BENEFITS FOR LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY COMMUNITIES .....13

GOAL C: EXPAND COMMUNICATION ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE-RELATED ACTIVITIES AT HUD AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING.....17

APPENDIX.....19

# OVERVIEW

The mission of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities. Included also in that mission are the goals of consumer protection, nondiscrimination, and improving the quality of life. These goals are intrinsic to the concept of *environmental justice* (“EJ”).

When Congress established HUD in 1965, the authorizing legislation contained a declaration of purpose based on certain legislative findings, including:

- Achieving the best administration of the nation’s principal housing and community development programs;
- Maximizing the coordination of federal activities that have a major effect on urban, suburban, and metropolitan development;
- Encouraging the solution of housing, urban development, and transportation problems through government action at all levels and through private action; and
- Considering the needs and interests of the nation’s communities and of the people who live and work in them.

During the past five decades, HUD has addressed issues such as: affordable rental housing, equitable community development, homelessness, living conditions and economic opportunity (particularly for tribes and Indian housing residents), healthy homes, and disaster preparedness and resilience. HUD’s efforts on all these issues benefit from and are supported by efforts to promote environmental justice.

For HUD, EJ entails the achievement of HUD’s statutory purposes by providing decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing vital to communities in a manner that does not impose disproportionate adverse environmental or health effects on minority and low-income communities. HUD’s application of EJ includes the following concepts:

- Prevention of adverse environmental and health effects on minority and low-income populations by HUD actions;
- Engagement of minority, low-income, and indigenous populations in the communities where a HUD action is proposed;
- Recognition of areas of local and cultural significance where a HUD action is proposed; and
- Integration of environmental justice practices and concepts (such as sustainability and equal opportunity) in project planning.

These concepts overlap with several of the core goals in HUD’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and builds upon the Department’s 2012-2015 EJ Strategy. HUD developed the 2012-2015 EJ Strategy in response to Executive Order (E.O.) 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations* (February 11, 1994), which required that:

*“...each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations...”*

The E.O. set out specific requirements, as well as options, for public participation and access to information, including translation of crucial documents and the availability of public meetings. HUD recognizes that over the past two decades, the concept of EJ has expanded from a focus on mitigating environmental harms to also increasing equitable access to environmental and health benefits. Given the broad scope of issues embraced and discussed by EJ stakeholders in recent years, it is a challenge to isolate EJ-focused activities from HUD's broader work supporting access to opportunity for low- and moderate-income households and promoting inclusive communities. In truth, many of the components of HUD's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, such as those that promote economic prosperity, green and healthy homes, and disaster resilience, reflect topics that stakeholders have prioritized in discussions with HUD around EJ. Therefore, this Strategy focuses primarily on actions, programs, initiatives and resources that more closely pertain to direct environmental and health related matters.

HUD values public input and welcomes public comment on all elements of this Strategy. HUD is seeking public comments on the goals and actions laid out within the Strategy, to the inclusion or exclusion of specific topics and the organization of the strategy itself.

## HUD'S PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGIES

HUD's original EJ Strategy, developed in 1995, focused on four program areas: empowerment zones/enterprise communities; childhood lead poisoning; brownfields redevelopment; and farmworkers and colonias. HUD has made significant progress since its inaugural strategy was published, perhaps most notably in the area of environmental health with the success of lead poisoning prevention under the leadership of the Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control (OHHLHC). Through targeted efforts, HUD programs have contributed to a reduction in childhood lead poisoning cases by 70% between 1992 and 2010, with over 335,000 housing units made lead-safe over the past 15 years.

The reduction in the number of children with elevated blood lead levels over the last 40 years is one of the great public health success stories of the last century. HUD's involvement in the creation of guidelines to identify and control lead hazards, and the Department's support for lead hazard control in the federal housing stock ensured that this success also benefited the nation's most vulnerable children. In addition, HUD has broadened the focus of environmental interventions in homes to address other non-lead poisoning concerns such as pediatric asthma and radon exposure. As the recent failure of the water distribution system in Flint, Michigan illustrates, work remains to be done to ensure that housing and infrastructure supports the health of children and families, rather than threatens it. While HUD was not responsible for the creation of the problem, the Department has been working with its federal, state, local, and non-governmental partners to help address it.

HUD published its [2012-2015 EJ Strategy](#) in April 2012, following the execution of an August 2011 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between 17 federal agencies which recommitted each agency to E.O. 12898. The MOU also committed each agency to publish EJ Strategy updates along with annual implementation reports. In HUD's 2012-2015 EJ Strategy, the Department focused on integration of EJ into agency-wide initiatives, program operations, and interagency efforts. Comments received by HUD staff at regional listening sessions organized by the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG), input from HUD staff and stakeholders, and discussions with EJ IWG representatives informed the development of that strategy.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM HUD'S 2012-2015 EJ STRATEGY

In its 2012-2015 EJ Strategy, HUD committed to addressing disproportionate adverse health and environmental impacts faced by minority, low-income, and tribal populations through a number of different Departmental initiatives, program operations, and interagency efforts. One of HUD's achievements highlighted in the 2012-2015 EJ Strategy Implementation Report<sup>1</sup> was the clarification of EJ in the environmental review requirements required by entities receiving HUD funding. In 2015 HUD's Office of Environment and Energy administered EJ training for environmental review practitioners via the on-demand system ("WISER") for basic environmental review compliance, which incorporates EJ concerns as a regular part of the environmental compliance training.

That report also noted strides made by the Office of Housing in addressing EJ concerns. In FY 2013, through coordinated efforts with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (as chair of the Federal Radon Action Plan Work Group), HUD amended its Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) Guide through the Multifamily Radon Policy to require radon testing and mitigation in Federal Housing Administration (FHA)-insured multifamily housing. This change in the MAP Guide requirements resulted in new testing of approximately 100,000 units annually for radon gas (and mitigating as necessary) as part of mortgage transactions. Over 21,000 lung cancer deaths can be attributed annually to residential radon exposure, and radon gas is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers. HUD's Multifamily Radon Policy<sup>2</sup> takes considerable steps toward eliminating radon exposure in FHA-insured multifamily housing.

Program offices at HUD have accomplished several of the goals established in the 2012-2015 EJ Strategy, perhaps most notably the goal of supporting the public-private partnership known as the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI). This program performs healthy and green retrofits to low-income housing units by bringing together federal, state and local government, and philanthropic funding streams. In FY 2014, participating jurisdictions in the GHHI performed healthy and green retrofits to hundreds of housing units in 15 different cities. HUD continued to support these efforts through resources provided under grant programs for lead hazard and healthy homes remediation. Each of the cities that participated in the initiative committed to coordinating their efforts through the execution of compacts and the adoption of common assessment tools. In addition to unit retrofits, the GHHI also coordinated training of workers in multiple sites. The trainings focused on teaching tangible skills in multiple housing and energy efficiency disciplines to ex-offenders, low-wage workers, and unemployed individuals.

One of the Department's more recent accomplishments from the previous strategy was updating HUD's policy for tribal consultation. HUD published a final Tribal Government-to-Government Consultation Policy on June 23, 2016, in response to President Obama's Executive Memorandum on Tribal Consultation directing all Executive Departments and Agencies to engage in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials of federally recognized tribes when developing federal policies that have tribal implications, signed on November 5, 2009. The Tribal Government-to-Government Consultation Policy sets forth fundamental principles to guide HUD's formulation and implementation of programs and policies that have substantial direct effects on Federally recognized tribal governments, in compliance with Executive Order 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments" (E.O. 13175), signed on November 6, 2000 by former President Clinton. Previously, HUD had adopted an American

---

<sup>1</sup> The full 2012-2015 Environmental Justice Strategy Implementation Report can be found here:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=2013HUDEJProgRep\\_FINAL.pdf](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=2013HUDEJProgRep_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> For more information on HUD's Multifamily Radon Policy: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=13-07ml.pdf>

Indian and Alaska Native Policy Statement in 1994, and had issued a more comprehensive Tribal Government-to-Government Consultation Policy that comported with the enhanced consultation and coordination requirements expressed in E.O. 13175 on September 28, 2001.

In addition to working through HUD programs to address the concerns of EJ communities, HUD also recognizes the importance for the federal government to have a more strategic approach when supporting tribal communities. The federal government's commitment to a more collaborative and concentrated approach around tribal issues led to the creation of the Federal Infrastructure Task Force to Improve Access to Safe Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation in Tribal Communities in 2007. This interagency task force is charged with improving interagency coordination for the planning and funding of tribal infrastructure projects. An MOU to effectuate this approach was fully executed March 28, 2013 among HUD, the Department of Health and Human Services' Indian Health Service (IHS), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). As a result of the MOU, the taskforce has been working on streamlining interagency project planning for tribal grantees through creating tools such as a recommended best practice for the development of Preliminary Engineering Reports. Preliminary Engineering Reports are used by grantees to support applications for development of drinking water, waste water, stormwater and solid waste systems.<sup>3</sup>

As part of another interagency workgroup, HUD leads an effort to streamline environmental review for housing and housing-related infrastructure projects in Indian country in order to facilitate a simpler, more efficient and less costly environmental review process. The Coordinated Environmental Review Process Workgroup published a Final Report in December, 2015, and continues to meet to implement the recommendations of that report.<sup>4</sup> Finally, HUD has also worked toward achieving EJ outcomes through its interagency involvement in the EJ IWG, Healthy Homes Working Group and the Partnership for Sustainable Communities<sup>5</sup>, among other efforts.

## **ADDITIONAL PROGRESS TOWARD ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

In addition to the work outlined in HUD's 2012-2015 EJ Strategy, the Department has also made progress on significant healthy housing and climate change-related efforts. This information is included because of the disparate impact of lead poisoning in low-income and minority populations, and because the EJ IWG has identified climate change as a key focus area since 2011. Healthy housing is housing free of hazards from lead in paint, dust or soil. HUD has been implementing its Lead Safe Housing Rule, which covers assisted housing that may, because of its age, have lead-based paint,<sup>6</sup> and focuses on low-income populations and communities of color, which have disproportionately high rates of children under age six

---

<sup>3</sup> More information on the Federal Infrastructure Task Force to Improve Access to Safe Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation in Tribal Communities is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/tribal/federal-infrastructure-task-force-improve-access-safe-drinking-water-and-basic-sanitation>.

<sup>4</sup> The Coordinated Environmental Review Process: Final Report is available here: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=CoorEnvirReview.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> For more information about the DOT, EPA and HUD Partnership for Sustainable Communities visit the site here: <https://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/>

<sup>6</sup> HUD. Requirements for Notification, Evaluation and Reduction of Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Federally Owned Residential Property and Housing Receiving Federal Assistance. 24 CFR 35, subparts B – R. [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/healthy\\_homes/enforcement/lshr/](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/enforcement/lshr/)

with elevated blood lead levels.<sup>7</sup> In 2016, in order to enhance its efforts in this area, HUD issued a comprehensive action plan -- the "Lead-Safe Housing, Lead-Free Kids Toolkit"<sup>8</sup> -- to guide HUD's commitment to ensuring that all HUD housing is lead-safe for families and children and has begun implementing the plan.

HUD is breaking new ground in the area of climate change and energy efficiency, working to build more resilient communities that are better able to respond to and recover from climate hazards. HUD's grant competition, the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC), reimagined conventional disaster recovery by challenging applicants to work closely with their most vulnerable populations to identify future risks and vulnerabilities in the event of a disaster. The competition encouraged resilient recovery strategies that maximize preparedness, save lives, and bring benefits to the community long after their recovery projects are complete. In 2016 the NDRC awarded \$1 billion in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG DR) funding to 13 states and communities to resiliently recover from disasters that occurred between 2011 and 2013.

Additionally, energy efficient and healthy housing is one of three agency priority goals and is a key element in HUD's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. HUD has made significant progress in increasing the energy efficiency of HUD-assisted housing, ensuring that low- and moderate-income households are not left out of the benefits from green energy. HUD has been able to advance this goal through a combination of paid-from-savings energy and water retrofits, where participants use the utility savings they have accrued from the retrofits to pay off the upfront financing for the project, and new construction using HUD-encouraged green building standards. Between 2010 and 2015, HUD made green improvements to the HUD housing stock through the completion of energy-efficient, water-efficient, or healthy construction and retrofits of more than 500,000 housing units. The vast majority of these retrofits improve comfort and welfare of low-income residents.

---

<sup>7</sup> Wheeler W and Brown MJ. Blood Lead Levels in Children Aged 1–5 Years — United States, 1999–2010. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. April 5, 2013 / 62(13);245-248.

[www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6213a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6213a3\\_e](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6213a3.htm?s_cid=mm6213a3_e)

<sup>8</sup> The toolkit is available here: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDLeadToolkitFACTSHEET.pdf>

# HUD'S 2016-2020 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

HUD's 2016-2020 EJ Strategy Update is an effort greatly influenced by the previous strategy and by comments and input received during public engagement in 2015. As a part of the process for updating the EJ Strategy, HUD staff have been reviewing relevant, previously submitted stakeholder comments, as well as informal comments and suggestions received at various EJ-focused listening sessions, community meetings, conferences and events.

After the first draft of the 2012-2015 EJ Strategy was published, HUD solicited public comments through the Federal Register. In addition, HUD participated in EJ listening sessions organized by the EJ IWG from 2011 to 2014. HUD gathered additional comments at those listening sessions, as well as through the public comment site *Switchboard* and from two stakeholder phone calls to help inform HUD's first EJ Strategy Update. A similar effort will be employed for HUD's 2016-2020 Strategy. The public comment period for the Draft Strategy will begin in September 2016.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE 2016-2020 STRATEGY

HUD's draft 2016-2020 EJ Strategy includes three goals that will provide further integration of EJ into the Department's housing and community development programs. These goals integrate ideas from multiple stakeholders and HUD beneficiaries, ensuring that the initiatives and priorities identified in the Strategy are appropriate. HUD continues to seek public input in order to improve the Department's EJ-related programs and efforts. The three goals outlined in this Strategy are:

**Goal A** – Identify and address disproportionate environmental and human health impacts faced by low-income populations and communities of color.

**Goal B** – Expand access to resources, information, and best practices for health and environmental benefits from HUD programs – with a focus on benefits for low-income and minority communities.

**Goal C** – Expand opportunities for meaningful involvement of minority and low-income populations in HUD's policies and input on proposed uses of HUD funding.

Strategy goals have been further subdivided into two sections outlining HUD's short term commitments as well as ongoing programs and existing resources relevant to EJ stakeholders. Program initiatives in these sections are briefly described and, when available, a link to electronic information is provided. Based on past public engagement efforts HUD has determined that EJ stakeholders also have an interest in what HUD is doing in the areas of neighborhood revitalization, access to opportunity, and disaster recovery. For this reason, the EJ Strategy also includes an Appendix highlighting additional resources and information. Unless otherwise stated, all actions are assumed to occur in fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

## GOAL A: IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS DISPROPORTIONATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN HEALTH IMPACTS FACED BY LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Advances in data collection and availability, geospatial technology, and other information technology, paired with evolving open data policies, have increased the ability of the general public, advocates and federal agencies to analyze conditions that may have an adverse effect on minority and low-income communities. As a result, user-friendly tools and resources are increasingly available to communities so that they can make more informed decisions. Actions, initiatives, programs, and resources listed under this goal relate to new information and tools that HUD and its partners can use to better identify and address EJ concerns.

### SHORT TERM ACTIONS SUPPORTING GOAL A

#### *A.1. Leverage the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule to assist, to identify, and address environmental health and other disparities in access to opportunity*

Environmental injustices can often be tied to the history of segregation in American communities. In 2015, HUD published its final AFFH rule<sup>9</sup>, which sets out a framework for local governments, States, and public housing agencies (PHAs) to take meaningful actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination. The rule is designed to help program participants in certain HUD programs, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, plan for and ultimately take meaningful actions to overcome fair housing issues – segregation, racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, disparities in access to opportunity, and disproportionate housing needs – and the factors that contribute to them. These actions will work toward replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

As part of the implementation of the AFFH rule, HUD is providing open data to grantees and the public on patterns of integration and segregation, racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, disproportionate housing needs, and disparities in access to opportunity. Noting the relationship between disparities in the access to opportunity and exposure to environmental conditions, HUD is including national geospatial data on environmental health in addition to data on access to transportation and employment.<sup>10</sup> In order to enhance communities' understanding of the connections between AFFH and EJ, HUD will:

- (1) Work with EPA to refine its environmental health data.
- (2) Work with EPA to provide guidance to program participants on how they might supplement HUD's environmental health data through the use of EPA tools such as EJ SCREEN.

---

<sup>9</sup> More information on AFFH and the Final Rule can be found here: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/affht\\_pt.html#final-rule](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/affht_pt.html#final-rule)

<sup>10</sup> More information on AFFH and the Assessment Tool can be found here: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/affht\\_pt.html](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/affht_pt.html)

- (3) Engage with federal and external stakeholders through the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) and the EJ IWG to broaden awareness about the AFFH rule and its implementation.

In committing to the above actions, HUD and its program participants will have better tools and resources to identify and address EJ issues through fair housing planning.

### *A.2. Lower the Lead Safe Housing Rule (LSHR) Threshold for Action*

Lead exposures in children present a significant public health risk with potential impacts on child development. There are 37 million homes in the U.S. that contain lead-based paint, many of which are older, deteriorated homes in underserved communities, elevating the potential for lead exposure to millions of children. In particular, 23 million homes have hazards from lead in their paint, dust, or soil. To address these concerns, HUD enacted the Lead-Safe Housing Rule (LSHR) in 1999 that sets forth the Department's rules for identifying and eliminating risks of lead exposure in housing owned by the federal government or in properties that receive federal assistance. Most of the requirements under the LSHR are in the realm of primary prevention – taking action to make HUD-assisted housing lead safe without waiting until a child has an elevated blood lead level.

National surveys have shown that low-income families living in housing receiving government assistance are less likely to be exposed to lead-based paint hazards than are low-income families living in unassisted housing and even middle-class families.<sup>11</sup> For the relatively rare situation where a child does have a blood lead level at or above the current LSHR threshold for environmental intervention, 20 µg of lead per deciliter (dl) of blood, the rule has specific requirements for prompt evaluation and control of lead-based paint hazards in the child's home. As an enhancement, the OLHCHH has drafted an amendment to the LSHR that would adopt a reference level that mirrors the level recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### *A.3. Identify Climate-Vulnerable Physical Assets and Assess Impacts*

As Hurricane Katrina, Superstorm Sandy, and other extreme weather events have shown, it is often low-income households, health-compromised individuals, and some communities of color that are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. Not only are the homes of these populations often located in low-lying, low-value areas which increases their exposure, they are often least able to rebound financially or emotionally from the strain and expense that such a disruption can cause. The Department has committed to identify their most climate-vulnerable physical assets in an effort that will allow HUD to make better informed policy decisions and target resources where they are needed most. This effort is one of several included in HUD's Climate Adaptation Plan<sup>12</sup> in response to E.O.s 13514<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Dewalt FG, Cox DC, O'Haver R, Salatino B, Holmes D, Ashley PJ, Pinzer EA, Friedman W, Marker D, Viet SM, Fraser A. Prevalence of Lead Hazards and Soil Arsenic in U.S. Housing. *Journal of Environmental Health*. 78(5); 22-29. December 2015; [www.neha.org/node/6429](http://www.neha.org/node/6429). Jacobs DE, Clickner RP, Zhou JY, Viet SM, Marker DA, Rogers JW, Zeldin DC, Broene P, Friedman W. The Prevalence of Lead-Based Paint Hazards in U.S. Housing. *Environmental Health Perspectives* 110(10): A 599 – A 606, October 2002; [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1241046/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1241046/)

<sup>12</sup> HUD's Climate Adaptation Plan can be found here:

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUD2014CCAdaptPlan.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Executive Order- Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade is located here:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/03/19/executive-order-planning-federal-sustainability-next-decade>

and 13653<sup>14</sup>. Under these E.O.s, HUD and other federal agencies are required to evaluate risks related to climate change that threaten their mission, programs, or operations.

#### *A.4. Work with the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) to ensure that HUD-assisted housing and other HUD-assisted facilities are considered in transportation policy and programmatic decisions*

Thoughtful transportation planning can provide much-needed connections between the location of transportation infrastructure to households and essential services, employment opportunities, and amenities. At the same time, poor transportation planning and implementation can lead to adverse health and environmental outcomes for residents as well as hardships in accessing better opportunities. Building on its successful work with the USDOT to align housing and transportation planning, HUD will work with DOT to better consider HUD-assisted housing in their EJ and other related training materials, policies, and programs.

#### *A.5. Develop guidance for complaint investigation, compliance reviews, and enforcement of the Fair Housing Act and other civil rights authorities when implications for environmental justice exist*

While current investigation guidance does not specifically address environmental justice, the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) is in the process of revising guidance for investigators to encompass EJ complaints, compliance reviews, voluntary compliance and enforcement actions dealing with EJ issues.

#### *A.6. Incorporate health and safety standards into HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) inspections of HUD-assisted housing*

In coordination with OLHCHH, the Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) Real Estate Assessment Center (PIH-REAC) is incorporating health and safety components into the new Uniform Physical Condition Standard for Vouchers (UPCS-V) inspection protocol. This new inspection process is expected to be used in Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) units, and will provide information on the presence of multiple health and safety hazards, including lead, mold, water damage, excess heat/cold, fire safety, and conditions that could result in unintentional injuries (e.g. lack of handrail on stairs contributing to falls). Once collected, HUD will have an improved understanding of the prevalence of these hazards and be in a position to target available resources to the families and properties most in need of assistance. The data will also help provide a clearer understanding of the scope of various environmental health hazards in HUD-assisted housing throughout the country and inform future policy decisions.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, PIH-REAC is working with the Office of Housing examining health and safety components in the long standing UPCS inspection protocol. Under consideration is designating mold, bedbugs, and missing lead disclosure forms and lead inspection reports as health and safety deficiencies and requiring the same remediation/abatement as is required for Exigent Health and Safety (life threatening) deficiencies.

---

<sup>14</sup> Executive Order- Preparing the United for the Impacts of Climate Change is located here:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/11/01/executive-order-preparing-united-states-impacts-climate-change>

<sup>15</sup> More information on UPCS-V is available at:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/react/oedv](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/react/oedv)

### *A.7. Leverage HUD, HHS and Census data to better identify environmental and health issues affecting HUD-assisted housing and residents.*

Improving HUD's understanding of health disparities among its assisted households is a key step to address health-related EJ concerns. Until a recent research effort initiated by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), data have not been available to provide nationally representative estimates of health indicators and health disparities among HUD-assisted households. CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), and HUD matched 13 years of HUD data with data from two national health surveys – the National Health Interview Survey and the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. NCHS and PD&R recently announced the availability of this nationally linked dataset. This data allows HUD researchers and policymakers to move beyond assumptions toward understanding the socio-demographic and health characteristics of HUD assisted tenants on a national scale.

### ONGOING PROGRAMS AND EXISTING RESOURCES ADVANCING GOAL A

There are many existing and ongoing HUD resources available to support Goal A. This section highlights one tool that is particularly relevant to the activities listed above. Visit [HUD Exchange](#) and [HUD User](#) for complete access to all of HUD's tools and resources.

#### *Healthy Communities Assessment Tool (HCAT)*

OLHCHH has led the development of an evidence-based Healthy Communities Assessment Tool (HCAT) that will allow cities to evaluate individual neighborhoods using 42 evidence-based indicators that comprise the physical, social, and economic roots of community health. The HCAT operates on a free and publicly available software framework that utilizes local data obtained from public sources and uploaded and installed by the end user. The HCAT's geographical scale is at a neighborhood-level resolution, offering communities a more granular perspective than comparing at a city- or county-level. Since all of the indicators were selected because of their relation to health, the HCAT is particularly well-suited for examining equity and EJ issues within a jurisdiction. The HCAT is publicly available on the HUDUser website.<sup>16</sup>

### **GOAL B: EXPAND ACCESS TO RESOURCES, INFORMATION, AND BEST PRACTICES FOR HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS FROM HUD PROGRAMS – WITH A FOCUS ON BENEFITS FOR LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

It is well-documented that not all income levels and demographic groups are equally affected by health and environmental stressors, such as poor air quality. In order to reduce disproportionate exposure in these communities, programs and policies should be designed to bring benefits to these same communities. HUD is cognizant of this need and the information below highlights a few of the Department's efforts intended to help impacted communities and improve the quality of life for all.

---

<sup>16</sup> The HCAT can be found at: <https://www.huduser.gov/healthycommunities/>

## SHORT TERM ACTIONS ADVANCING GOAL B

### *B.1. Smoke-Free Rule*

Active smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke are primary contributors to elevated rates of disease, particularly in children. In multifamily buildings, passive smoke from units occupied by smokers has been shown to infiltrate adjacent units, increasing occupant exposure to contaminants. Within HUD, OLHCHH and PIH have been the primary offices developing and promoting smoke-free multifamily housing policies. Since 2009, HUD has encouraged PHAs to adopt smoke-free policies in their buildings and common areas and the results have been significant, as more than 650 PHAs and tribally-designated housing entities, including nearly a quarter of all public housing units in the US – more than 228,000 public housing units across the country – have adopted smoke-free policies.

In 2015, HUD proposed a rule that would expand the policy to include more than 900,000 public housing units. This rule will expand access to healthier homes and improve indoor air quality for the low-income occupants of public housing. The proposed smoke-free rule, if made final, will also help reduce damage and maintenance costs associated with smoking. Over 100,000 fires each year can be attributed to in-residence smoking, and it is the leading cause of fire-related deaths in multifamily buildings, resulting in 500 deaths annually. Furthermore, smoking results in close to half a billion dollars in direct property damage. A study issued in 2014 by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimated that prohibiting smoking in public housing would yield an annual cost savings of \$153 million, including \$94 million in secondhand smoke-related health care, \$43 million in renovation of smoking-permitted units, and \$16 million in smoking-related fire losses.

### *B.2. Advancing Healthy Housing: A Strategy for Action*

HUD's OLHCHH currently oversees a comprehensive portfolio of lead hazard control and healthy homes initiatives that are directed at improving public health and quality of life, while helping to reduce health disparities in communities. Housing-related health issues are a major social determinant of health, one that HUD has long recognized. The economic burden in the U.S. resulting from health and safety issues in the home reaches billions of dollars annually and continues to rise every year.

OLHCHH, along with the federal Healthy Homes Work Group, authored a healthy homes strategy and action plan, entitled *Advancing Healthy Housing: A Strategy for Action*<sup>17</sup>. Current priority actions under the Strategy include working with the Indian Health Service to integrate healthy homes principles into tribal housing programs, and promoting the institutionalization of weatherization concepts and models as an intervention approach for vulnerable populations.

### *B.3. Regional Summits on Pediatric Asthma Home Interventions*

Asthma rates remain high in the U.S., particularly in poorer communities and among certain ethnic groups and children. In order to highlight the value of residential interventions for pediatric asthma, HUD and its federal partners, including EPA and HHS, have worked with local partners to hold a series of meetings on this issue. The asthma summits have been held regionally across the country during the last several years, with several more scheduled through 2017. Through these convenings, HUD and its federal partners have

---

<sup>17</sup> *Advancing Healthy Housing: A Strategy for Action* can be found here:  
[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/healthy\\_homes/advhh](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/advhh)

been able to work with local organizations to advance initiatives, such as community health worker certification programs, that move the field closer to adopting more proactive and preventative policies for reducing asthma rates among susceptible and vulnerable populations.

#### *B.4. Extend Federal Clean Energy Programs to Low and Moderate-Income Households*

Clean energy is inherently connected to EJ due to the disparate impacts caused by carbon dioxide emissions and other sources of pollution. The most vulnerable citizens, including children, older adults, people with health challenges, and people living in poverty are most at risk to the health-related impacts of climate change. HUD is taking an active role in encouraging the switch to renewable energy because the transition to cleaner sources of energy will reduce the exposure of all Americans to harmful air pollution, as well as conserve natural and financial resources.

HUD is ensuring that low- and moderate-income households have access to the new clean energy economy with several initiatives listed below.

##### *B.4.1. Continue to Promote and Advance the Renew300 Initiative<sup>18</sup>*

President Obama's Climate Action Plan called for a target of 100 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity of renewable energy on-site at federally subsidized housing by 2020. In July of 2015, HUD and Department of Energy (DOE) announced a plan to triple that goal to a target of 300 MW of renewable energy for low-and-moderate income housing by 2020, and broadening the goal to include community and shared solar installations.

Federally assisted housing includes HUD's rental housing portfolio (Public Housing, Multifamily Assisted) and USDA's Rural Development Multifamily Programs, as well as rental housing supported through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

The 300 MW target aims to make use of millions of federally-subsidized roofs with on-site generation potential. Due to the nature of the target, solar photovoltaic generation will be the primary renewable energy source utilized under this initiative. However, other types of renewable energy, including wind, geothermal, biomass, combined heat and power, and small-hydro projects are also included.

##### *B.4.2 Increase Awareness and Enrollment in the Better Buildings Challenge*

The Better Buildings Challenge<sup>19</sup> is a voluntary leadership program wherein building owners pledge to reduce the energy and water use of their portfolio by 20% within 10 years. The Challenge has recently been expanded to the multifamily residential sector, and HUD is working with the DOE to recruit and provide technical assistance to HUD's Multifamily and Public Housing portfolios. The Challenge has a positive EJ component because HUD's focus on recruiting subsidized housing owners and the portfolio-wide requirement ensures that low-income families and communities will see benefits of lower utility bills and increased comfort from energy efficiency improvements.

---

<sup>18</sup> Information on Renew300 can be found here: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/renewable-energy/>

<sup>19</sup> For a complete explanation of the Better Buildings Challenge program and resources visit the website here: <http://betterbuildingssolutioncenter.energy.gov/>

### *B.4.3. Expand Utility Benchmarking in Residential Buildings*

Building utility benchmarking (tracking utility costs) is used to target energy- and water-savings opportunities, and can provide useful information to manage assets.<sup>20</sup> Gaining utility efficiency requires collecting data, then ranking individual buildings, leading to the improved overall financial performance of properties.

HUD has an agency-wide benchmarking strategy and has developed whole-building energy and [water consumption](#) benchmarking tools that are applicable for all multifamily residential buildings throughout the entire U.S. Utility benchmarking can lead to improved energy conservation and better asset-management, which can lead to more stable properties and comfortable living environments for residents.

### *B.5. Advance Lessons from the National Disaster Resilience Competition*

The NDRC used a two-phase grant application process to competitively award nearly \$1 billion in CDBG DR funds to help communities recover from prior disasters and improve their ability to withstand and recover quickly from future disasters, hazards, and shocks. This competition encouraged applicants to consider not only the infrastructure needed to become resilient, but also the social and economic characteristics that allow communities to quickly bounce back after a disruption. The NDRC had a focus on the most vulnerable and impacted communities and at multiple points throughout the application process required consideration of traditionally marginalized populations through rigorous public engagement. This competition challenged participants to think more broadly about how federal dollars are spent, breaking away from financing conventional gray infrastructure projects to projects that provide multiple benefits beyond disaster mitigation. HUD will follow implementation of the grants and will develop a suite of best practices and case studies to be shared through HUD Exchange.<sup>21</sup>

## ONGOING PROGRAMS AND EXISTING RESOURCES ADVANCING GOAL B

There are many existing and ongoing HUD resources available to support Goal B. This section highlights several ongoing programs that are particularly pertinent to the goal. Visit [HUD Exchange](#) and [HUD User](#) for complete access to all of HUD's programs.

### *B.6. Indian Community Development Block Grant Mold Remediation and Prevention Program*

HUD's Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) program provides eligible grantees with direct grants for use in developing Indian and Alaska Native Communities to include decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities, primarily for low- and moderate-income persons. The ICDBG program provides funding for grantees to carry out community development and housing activities, including housing rehabilitation, mold remediation, and land acquisition to support new housing construction. Communities may also use funds for infrastructure construction (such as roads, water and sewer facilities) or for single or multipurpose community buildings.

---

<sup>20</sup> [3] For more information and resources on utility benchmarking look here:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/phecc/ubenchtool](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/phecc/ubenchtool)

<sup>21</sup> For information regarding the NDRC, please see: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-dr/resilient-recovery/>

In FY15, HUD's Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) announced that funds would be available specifically for mold remediation and prevention through the ICDBG program. Following a competitive process, in 2016, ONAP announced the final award of approximately \$12,400,000 for mold remediation and prevention in and on housing units owned or operated by tribes and tribally designated housing entities or previously supported with HUD funding. Assisting tribes with mold-related housing rehabilitation has improved housing in Indian Country and ensured that homes were made healthier.

### *B.7. Lead Hazard Control Grant Programs*

Sources of lead exposure in the home, and the adverse, often irreversible, health effects of exposure to lead are all well-documented. Children face the greatest risk, with exposure potentially causing permanent neurological damage. Families living in older homes, particularly in more distressed areas where housing may be in greater disrepair, are particularly at risk. The OLHCHH maintains a strong grant program focused on controlling lead-based paint hazards. The OLHCHH annually awards competitive grants through its Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control and Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration grant programs to identify and control lead-based paint hazards in eligible privately owned housing for low-income rental or owner-occupants. These Lead Hazard Control grant programs are the nation's largest program in terms of dollar amount and number of grants, providing nearly \$100 million annually for these awards. Through its lead grant programs, HUD helps to fund the reduction of lead hazards in thousands of homes annually.

### *B.8. Healthy Homes Grant Programs*

HUD supports research on improving cost effective methods to identify and control lead-based paint and other housing-related health and safety hazards with a particular emphasis on children's health and other vulnerable populations. The overall program objective is to gain knowledge to improve the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of methods for the evaluation and control of housing-related health and safety hazards, particularly in low-income housing. Research is primarily supported through grants that are competitively awarded through an annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for [Healthy Homes Technical Studies](#) and, when funds are available, the similar [Lead Technical Studies Program](#).

## **GOAL C: EXPAND COMMUNICATION ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE-RELATED ACTIVITIES AT HUD AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING**

Many of HUD's programs support low- and moderate-income households; therefore, they have a clear nexus with EJ matters. As the Department continues to expand the breadth of its portfolio, the importance of communicating those issues to the public increases. This goal signals the Department's commitment to increase awareness on EJ issues by HUD staff, stakeholders and the general public. This section also explores how HUD continues to grow relationships with federal partners to advance EJ work within the federal family.

## SHORT TERM ACTIONS ADVANCING GOAL C

### *C.1. Develop and deliver training on key environmental justice-related topics to HUD staff and program participants*

The Web-based Instructional System for Environmental Review (WISER) is an on-demand learning management system designed to teach the basics of HUD environmental reviews. WISER is organized into modules that address compliance with the various laws and authorities required for HUD-assisted projects. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act are among the variety of laws, E.O.s (including E.O. 12898 on Environmental Justice), and regulations that establish the framework for HUD's environmental review responsibilities. WISER is available to HUD staff, grantees, and consultants. Its use will be encouraged by making completion the prerequisite for more advanced training and as the core curriculum of a certificate program. This system allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how a project's environmental impact can affect communities, giving grantees and consultants the tools to better assess their projects and mitigate harms before issues arise.

## ONGOING PROGRAMS AND EXISTING RESOURCES ADVANCING GOAL C

### *C.2. Leverage HUD's EJ IWG membership to broaden the reach of HUD's communications efforts*

The EJ IWG is a consortium of 17 federal agencies which have committed to updating and tracking their EJ Strategies. In addition to strategy updates, members of this group also sit on subcommittees that work to address a variety of relevant issues in the EJ space. HUD takes on a leadership role in this working group by serving as the co-chair for two of these subcommittees.

By being an active member of the EJ IWG, HUD is able to access a broader network of stakeholders and other federal partners through EPA's Office of Environmental Justice listserve and blog, as well as by attending the group's regularly scheduled meetings. This larger network assists HUD in identifying opportunities for public engagement and thereby improving the Agency's implementation of its EJ responsibilities.

# APPENDIX

HUD has intentionally chosen to narrow its focus in the 2016-2018 EJ Strategy on environmental and health-related efforts that are addressing EJ needs. However, based on previous public engagement HUD is aware of the EJ community's interest in other related topics. To that end, listed in this Appendix are HUD initiatives and resources in the areas of neighborhood revitalization, access to opportunity, disaster preparedness and recovery, and agency requirements for public engagement.

## NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

### *Choice Neighborhoods<sup>22</sup>*

Choice Neighborhoods is one of HUD's signature place-based initiatives and is a central element of the Obama Administration's Promise Zones Initiative. Choice Neighborhoods enables communities to revitalize struggling neighborhoods with distressed public housing or HUD-assisted housing. Through these competitive grants, available to PHAs and communities, local leaders, residents, and other community stakeholders are replacing distressed housing with vibrant, mixed-income communities, catalyzing new retail and businesses, turning around failing schools, strengthening early education, preventing crime, improving transportation, ensuring basic neighborhood assets, and increasing access to jobs. The Choice Neighborhoods programs is creating opportunity for low-income and minority communities by helping to revitalize underserved neighborhoods.

### *Promise Zones*

President Obama established the Promise Zones initiative<sup>23</sup> in 2014 to create economic opportunity, engage stakeholders on local issues and solutions, and coordinate private sector partnerships in tribal and rural areas. Through the collaboration of local and state governments, the private sector, and non-profit organizations, the initiative intends to create jobs, leverage private investment, increase economic activity, expand educational opportunities, and reduce violent crime. USDA is leading this effort in close collaboration with HUD and 10 federal Promise Zones partner agencies.

The current 22 communities across the country that have been designated as Promise Zones receive an opportunity to engage with AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers on their work, a federal liaison assigned to help them navigate federal programs, preferences for certain federal grant programs and technical assistance, and special tax incentives.

### *Rental Assistance Demonstration Program<sup>24</sup>*

Under the FY 2012 Appropriations Act, PIH initiated the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program that permits PHAs and owners of other HUD-assisted properties to convert units from their original sources of HUD financing to project-based Section 8 contracts. The primary benefit of RAD is that properties that convert under this process are no longer restricted from securing private sources of capital

---

<sup>22</sup> For more information on Choice Neighborhoods, please see:

[https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/cn](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn)

<sup>23</sup> For more information on the Promise Zones designees and their work, please see:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz)

<sup>24</sup> For more information on the RAD program go here: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/RAD>

financing, offering owners opportunities to address the \$26 billion backlog of deferred maintenance issues that have caused public housing and other HUD rental stock to deteriorate nationwide. By reducing the number of units lost from disrepair, RAD helps ensure that more low-income residents will be able to secure an affordable and safe home.

Furthermore, the RAD conversion program requires a Physical Component Assessment as well as an energy consumption audit, both of which offer residents potential improvements to their living environment as upgrades (e.g. green vs. standard) and ensure repairs are made. Additionally, RAD conversions require environmental reviews, which include EJ review.

### *Environmental Review Responsibilities*

HUD's Office of Environment and Energy (OEE) manages the environmental review process<sup>25</sup> for HUD. During an environmental review, a project is evaluated for potential environmental impacts to determine whether it meets federal, state, and local environmental standards. The environmental review process is required for all HUD-assisted projects to ensure that the proposed project does not negatively impact the surrounding environment and that the property site itself will not have an adverse environmental or health effect on residents and the surrounding community. Staff are trained on the requirements under the environmental review procedure. Every project must be in compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and other related federal and state environmental laws. The NEPA review includes an analysis of environmental justice. HUD is using an online process, HUD Environmental Review Online System (HEROS), to develop, document, and manage environmental reviews. HEROS increases transparency by posting completed environmental reviews on HUD's website during the public comment period to allow for more meaningful and transparent engagement with all stakeholders.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, HUD will be able use the data collected by HEROS to identify and analyze the types of environmental impacts that affect HUD projects and the vulnerable populations served through HUD programs. For instance, HUD will be able to understand and share information such as the number of housing units located in vulnerable areas such as a floodplains or on formerly contaminated sites.

## ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

### *Compliance with Section 3 in Local Communities*

Section 3<sup>27</sup> of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 imposes an obligation to ensure that employment, job training, contracting, and other economic opportunities generated by certain HUD assistance be directed, to the greatest extent feasible, to low- and very low-income persons, particularly public housing residents and others who receive HUD housing assistance. HUD invests billions of dollars each year in communities through formula funding and competitive grants. Section 3 compliance is overseen by FHEO, but funding is distributed to recipients through other program offices, including PIH, Community Planning and Development (CPD), and OLHCHH. Under Section 3, PHAs and recipients of many other HUD housing and community development funds are to provide, to the greatest extent feasible, job

---

<sup>25</sup> More information about HUD's Environmental Review process can be found here:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/environmental-review/environmental-assessments/>

<sup>26</sup> Environmental reviews completed in HEROS are available here <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/environmental-review/environmental-review-records/>

<sup>27</sup> For more information on Section 3, please see:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/section3/section3](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/section3/section3)

training, employment, contracting, and other economic opportunities for public housing residents and other low-income residents.

### *ConnectHome*

In 2015, HUD launched ConnectHome,<sup>28</sup> a pilot initiative that will accelerate broadband adoption by children and families living in HUD-assisted housing across the nation. The initiative intends to make broadband internet more adoptable by partnering with companies like Google to provide broadband infrastructure and to offer residents free or discounted service. Residents in 27 cities and one tribal nation will be provided localized, free, and culturally sensitive training in essential digital literacy skills to facilitate more widespread adoption of high speed internet use.

Since 2009, the private and public sectors have invested over \$260 billion into new broadband infrastructure, and three in four Americans now use broadband at home. Despite this significant progress, many of the one in four American families that do not have access the internet at home are lower-income families with children. While nearly two-thirds of America's lowest-income households own a computer, less than half have a home internet subscription. HUD's ConnectHome initiative strives to ensure that students can access the same level of high-speed Internet at home that they possess in their classrooms.

The Housing Authority of the City of Austin, for example, has created a transformational series of public-private-partnerships to narrow the digital divide in its communities, and will serve as a mentor city for all 28 ConnectHome communities.

### *Jobs Plus*

The Jobs Plus NOFA offered \$48 million in FY 2014 and FY 2015 for PHAs to develop locally-based approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes for public housing residents through work readiness, employer linkages, job placement, educational advancement, technology skills, and financial literacy for residents of public housing. The place-based Jobs Plus Pilot program addresses poverty among public housing residents by incentivizing and enabling employment for families and providing a set of services designed to support program participants in all aspects of their employment.

### *Moving to Work*

Moving to Work (MTW)<sup>29</sup> is a demonstration program for PHAs that provides them with the opportunity to design and test innovative, locally-designed strategies that use federal dollars more efficiently, help residents find employment and become self-sufficient, and increase housing choices for low-income families. MTW gives PHAs exemptions from many existing public housing and voucher rules and more flexibility with how they use their federal funds. MTW PHAs are expected to use the opportunities presented by the program to inform HUD about ways to better address local community needs.

HUD's FY 2016 Appropriations bill signed into law in December 2015 authorizes HUD to expand the MTW demonstration by an additional 100 PHAs over seven years. Agencies selected as part of the program

---

<sup>28</sup> For more on ConnectHome visit: <http://connecthome.hud.gov/>

<sup>29</sup> For more information about the Moving to Work initiative go here:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/mtw](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/mtw)

expansion must be high performers, meet certain site selection requirements, and represent geographic diversity across the country.

### *Resident Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (ROSS)<sup>30</sup>*

The ROSS-Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program is a HUD program that enables qualifying families to increase their earned income and reduce their dependency on welfare assistance and rental subsidies. PHAs assisted through the Housing Choice Voucher program, Public Housing residents, and residents of Indian Housing assisted under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act work in collaboration with a program coordinating committee to secure public and private resources to aid in the operation of the FSS program.

## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RECOVERY TOOLKITS

HUD has created a number of resources to assist communities with disaster preparedness and recovery. These toolkits pull from a variety of perspectives and provide a range of ideas on preparedness and recovery; a few of these toolkits are described below.

### *Accessing Programs Immediately After a Disaster*

FHEO has a responsibility to ensure that everyone has equitable access to safe, sanitary, decent, and accessible housing in the face of a disaster. The FHEO Toolkit<sup>31</sup> is meant to assist fair housing advocates and professionals to begin the dialogue on emergency preparedness within their agencies and to use this toolkit to ensure that fair housing becomes an essential component of state and local disaster plans nationwide.

The goal of this toolkit is to provide all communities with strategies, processes, and tools that will help facilitate coordinated fair housing emergency management planning and response. The toolkit intends to provide guidance and serve as a template for strategic and effective community planning.

### *Disaster Recovery Toolkit that Serves as a Clearinghouse of Resources*

HUD's Office of Policy Development & Research maintains a Disaster Recovery Toolkit webpage<sup>32</sup> that includes free downloadable resources on Flood Recovery, Wind Recovery, Earthquake Recovery, Disaster Videos, and Additional Resources. Many of the resources are focused on technical guidance or specifications related to building structure. Some materials are available as hard copies as well. Materials are available for HUD, its stakeholders, and the public.

---

<sup>30</sup> More information about the Family Self Sufficiency program qualifications and resources can be found here: [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/ross](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/ross)

<sup>31</sup> More information on the FHEO toolkit and how to use it is available here:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/library/FHEO-DisasterToolkit.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> The toolkit is available here: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sandy.html>

## *OLHCHH Disaster Recovery Materials*

HUD's OLHCHH is leading development of guidance material for multiple end users mitigating unsafe and unhealthy conditions in a home during disaster recovery.<sup>33</sup> Numerous products, including a Rebuild Healthy Homes Toolkit, videos, guidance materials for homeowners and renters, and a Rebuild Healthy Homes App, have been developed and distributed for internal and external use. OLHCHH recently collaborated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the distribution of guidance materials in areas impacted by severe flooding. OLHCHH also chaired an interagency team that developed a set of brochures for homeowners and contractors on controlling major indoor environmental pollutants (asbestos, lead, mold, and radon) after a disaster.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR HUD FUNDED ENTITIES

HUD programs historically value vigorous public participation. HUD has seen the tangible impact public engagement can have on a program's implementation and its success. The Department is seeking to institutionalize the practice of public participation into the core of its major programs because HUD understands that in order to serve communities well they must be given a voice. Listed below are few examples of how HUD requires public participation.

### *Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Rule Implementation*

The AFFH rule requires community participation, consultation, and coordination. While high-quality data and rigorous analysis are a central part of the new tool and rule, there are also many facets of a community that simply are not captured in data, no matter how fine-grained. Consequently, HUD recognizes the value of community participation, local data, and local knowledge, for informing the development of a successful Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH).

"For the purposes of the rule, "community participation" means a solicitation of views and recommendations from members of the community and other interested parties, a consideration of the views and recommendations received, and a process for incorporating such views and recommendations into decisions and outcomes. 24 C.F.R. § 5.152"

### *Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)*

HUD sets out specific guidelines around the citizen participation regulations that grantees must follow when developing their Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) for the Consolidated Plans that are required to receive CDBG funds. The CPP sets forth the grantee's policies and procedures for citizen participation throughout the Consolidated Planning process. The CPP must facilitate citizen participation throughout the Consolidated Plan's initial development, substantial amendment process, and annual performance report. CPP regulations require grantees to actively encourage widespread citizen participation, with a special emphasis on efforts to encourage participation from the following populations:

- Low- and moderate-income persons
- Residents of slums, blighted areas, and predominately low- and moderate-income areas

---

<sup>33</sup> Disaster recovery products are available through HUD's website at:  
[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/healthy\\_homes/disasterrecovery](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/disasterrecovery)

- Non-English speaking persons
- Persons with disabilities
- Public housing residents and other low-income residents of targeted revitalization areas

The Citizen Participation Plan is a pathway for all citizens to exercise their voice and influence decisions that affect their communities, neighborhoods, and way of life.

### *Public Housing Grievance Process*

Public housing grievance procedures<sup>34</sup> ensure adequate due process regarding adverse actions against public housing tenants. HUD lays out strict guidelines PHAs must abide by when handling a tenant complaint. Each PHA must adopt a grievance procedure affording each tenant an opportunity for a hearing on a grievance, and this process must be made known to all tenants in the lease for the dwelling. All grievance hearings must be scheduled promptly for a time and place reasonably convenient to both the complainant and the PHA and must be held before a hearing officer.

DRAFT

---

<sup>34</sup> For more information about grievance procedures, please see the public housing guidebook located here: <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=957c93993038e5072664a25cc1201d73&mc=true&node=sp24.4.966.b&rgn=div6>