Getting Started Checklist

HUGS RECIPIENT PORTAL

Purpose

Use this checklist to prepare your organization for submission in the HUGS Recipient Portal before onboarding and account access begin.

Ready for Portal Access?

Before onboarding begins, your organization should be able to answer yes to the following general questions. See the step-by-step guide below for more detail about each step in the process.

- ☐ Have we determined whether our award is included?
- ☐ Do we know what expenditures require supporting documentation?
- ☐ Have we identified staff roles and responsibilities for the HUGS Recipient Portal?
- ☐ Do we know where our documentation is stored?
- ☐ Is our documentation organized by award and quarter?
- ☐ Are our privacy and recordkeeping practices ready?
- ☐ Do we understand submission timelines?
- ☐ Do we know where to get help?

Can't Check Every Box Yet?

If you are unable to answer "yes" to one or more of the questions above after reviewing the steps below, consider seeking technical assistance or additional support via Ask-A-Question by selecting HUGS. Resolving gaps before onboarding begins can help your organization prepare for HUGS Recipient Portal requirements.

Step 1. Determine Whether Your Award is Included

- ☐ Determine which of your HUD program(s) are covered in the current implementation scope by:
    - Reviewing HUGS Recipient Portal: Requirement Applicability List; or
    - Locating and reviewing your executed grant agreement, award letter, or other award documents to check if the award contains applicable HUGS Recipient Portal language or similar documentation requirements.

- ☐ If you are unsure whether your award is covered, compile your award documents now so they are available for review and discussion with HUD or technical assistance provider.
    - Ask-A-Question by selecting HUGS for additional support regarding HUGS Recipient Portal requirements.

Step 2. Understand What Expenditures Will Need Documentation

- ☐ Identify the expenditures for which you will voucher/have vouchered during the quarter you will be providing documentation for.
- ☐ Review your organization's spending categories, including:
    - Vendor and contractor payments
    - Payroll and personnel costs
    - Subrecipient expenditures
    - Shared or allocated costs
    - Operating and administrative costs
- ☐ Ensure that documentation is sufficient to show:
    - What was paid for
    - Who was paid
    - When the cost occurred
    - How much was charged
    - How the expenditure relates to the HUD award
- ☐ Identify any expenditures that require supporting contracts, subawards, cost allocation methodologies, or other contextual documentation to explain the cost.

Determining What Documentation to Include	
Do Not Upload	**Submit Instead**
• Beneficiary or participant case files • FSS Contracts of Participation or Individual Training and Services Plans • Participant pay stubs or personal financial records • Social Security numbers, dates of birth, or personal bank information • Other beneficiary or participant PII that is not necessary to substantiate the expenditure	• Payroll or personnel cost documentation • Applicable time and effort or allocation support • Contractor or subrecipient invoices • Expenditure summaries or cost schedules • Contracts, subawards, or statements of work when needed to explain the cost • Documentation connecting the expenditure to the applicable award, disbursement, or voucher

Step 3. Identify Internal Roles and Responsibilities

- ☐ Designate a HUGS Recipient Portal lead or coordinator.
    - Review user access in other HUD systems to ensure your HUGS Recipient Portal users are current and accurate.
- ☐ Identify who will:
    - Gather documentation
    - Review documentation
    - Approve submissions
    - Monitor deadlines
    - Maintain credentials once available
- ☐ Determine which departments maintain relevant records, such as:
    - Finance
    - Grants management
    - Program operations
    - Procurement
    - Human resources/payroll
    - Legal
    - Executive leadership
- ☐ Establish communication procedures among all contributors to ensure documentation can be collected on time.

Step 4. Organize Documentation Before Uploading Begins

- ☐ Create an electronic folder structure for each potentially covered award.
- ☐ Organize files by Federal fiscal year quarter.
- ☐ Develop a process for saving supporting records as expenditures occur rather than waiting until submission deadlines.
    - If you keep hard copy records, scan as you go and organize so that uploading at the end is easier
- ☐ Ensure documentation is legible, complete, and easy to locate.
- ☐ Confirm that records can be connected to the relevant award, disbursement, voucher, project, or activity.

Step 5. Review Recordkeeping and Privacy Practices

- ☐ Continue maintaining records in accordance with existing program and Federal record retention requirements. HUGS Recipient Portal submissions do not replace existing recordkeeping responsibilities.
- ☐ Review internal procedures for retaining:
    - Invoices
    - Receipts
    - Proofs of payment
    - Contracts and subawards
    - Payroll records
    - Allocation methodologies
    - Subrecipient documentation
- ☐ Ensure staff understand that beneficiary records, case files, Social Security numbers, medical records, and other unnecessary participant information should not be submitted.

Step 6. Understand Key Submission Milestones

- ☐ Review the Federal fiscal year quarter schedule below.
- ☐ Identify the first applicable submission period for your award. You can do this by:
    - Reviewing HUGS Recipient Portal: Requirement Applicability List; or
    - Locating and reviewing your executed grant agreement, award letter, or other award documents check if the award contains applicable HUGS Recipient Portal language or similar documentation requirements.
- ☐ Identify staff responsible for monitoring submission deadlines.
- ☐ Develop internal timelines, based on the example quarterly submission schedule example below, that allow sufficient time to gather documentation from vendors, contractors, and subrecipients before submission deadlines.

Example Quarterly Submission Schedule	
Disbursement/Voucher Occurs During	**Documentation Due By**
Q1 (October 1– December 31)	January 30
Q2 (January 1 – March 31)	April 30
Q3 (April 1 – June 30)	July 30
Q4 (July 1 – September 30)	October 30

Step 7. Become Familiar with Available Resources

- ☐ Review HUGS Recipient Portal: Frequently Asked Questions and implementation materials.
- ☐ Visit HUD Exchange HUGS Recipient Portal Landing Page for updates and guidance.
- ☐ Sign up for the HUGS Mailing List for HUGS Recipient Portal communications and updates when available.
- ☐ Attend readiness, requirements, and documentation training sessions, which will be announced soon.
- ☐ Use technical assistance, office hours, and Ask-A-Question by selecting HUGS for additional support.

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