

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT

### U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control

#### Application for Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control Grant Programs and Quality Assurance Plans

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and of each regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

Grants are used by the HUD Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control (OHHLHC) to accomplish the public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by Federal statutes (Section 1011 of Title X of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992; attached). The Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement Act of 1968 was passed for the purpose of establishing coordinated administration of Federal assistance programs. As a result, the Office of Management and Budget required Federal agencies to adopt a common rule dealing with the administrative requirements for grants to State and local governments (HUD's implementing regulations are found at 24 CFR 85). Administrative requirements for other organizations are found at 24 CFR 84. The documents prescribe the standard forms and procedures for award and administration of assistance instruments. Assistance instruments awarded by HUD follow these requirements in their entirety.

The OHHLHC requires information from some of its grantees and contractors on project-specific actions that will be taken to ensure the quality and validity of data that they collect and analyze. The OHHLHC specifically requires this from grantees conducting research or significant evaluation activities. This includes grantees funded under the Office's Healthy Homes Initiative (i.e., Healthy Homes Demonstration and Healthy Homes Technical Studies Programs), its Lead Technical Studies grant program, and its contractors conducting research and evaluation activities under the Office's direction.

Requiring grantees and contractors to use quality assurance plan (QAP) templates to summarize their quality assurance activities helps to ensure that the activities are sufficiently thorough and well-integrated into project activities. It also standardizes the presentation of these activities, which facilitates more efficient review by OHHLHC staff.

Because HUD may disseminate findings from grant- and contract-supported research and evaluation projects, the QAP requirement helps the OHHLHC to ensure adherence with the Department's Information Quality Guidelines (67 *Federal Register* 69642-69651, November 18, 2002). The Information Quality Guidelines fulfill the requirements of Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, which requires federal agencies to issue implementing guidelines for ensuring and

maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information they disseminate.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

Applicants for grants must respond to the Notice of Funding Availability published in the Federal Register in order to receive a grant award. They must complete the following submissions:

- Form-SF 424 (OMB Approval 4040-0004)
- Form-SF 424 Suppl.(OMB Approval 1890-0014)
- HUD Form-424CBW (OMB Approval 2501-0017)
- HUD Form-27061 Race and Ethnic Data (OMB Approval 2535-0113)
- HUD Form-27300 America's affordable Communities Initiative (OMB Approval 2535-0120)
- HUD Form-2880 Disclosure and Update Report (OMB Approval 2501-0011)
- HUD Form-2990 Certification of Consistency with the EZ/EC Strategic Plan
- HUD Form-2991 Certification of Consistency with the Consolidated Plan (OMB Approval 2506-0112)
- HUD Form-2993 Acknowledgment of Application Receipt
- HUD Form-2994 A Client Comments and Suggestions (completion of this form is optional) (OMB Approval 2535-0116)
- HUD Form-96008 Benchmark Standards (36 Months) (OMB Approval 2539-0015)
- HUD Form-96010 Logic Model (OMB Approval 2535-0114)
- HUD Form-96011 Third Party Documentation (OMB Approval 2535-0118)
- Form SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Required (OMB Approval 0348-0046)
- HUD Form-96012 Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Organizational Experience (OMB Approval 2539-0015)
- HUD Form-96013 Needs/Extent of the Problem (OMB Approval pending)
- HUD Form-96014 Soundness of Approach (OMB Approval 2539-0015)
- HUD Form-96015 Leveraging Resources (OMB Approval 2539-0015)
- Narrative response to the rating factors which describe the need, proposed approach, and capabilities. These rating factors are described in the Notice of Funding Availability

The information listed above submitted by the applicants will be evaluated by the application review panel as part of the selection process for grant award.

Applicants selected for grant award are required to prepare and submit the following forms to establish the grant program:

- Revised budget documents (HUD Form-424 CBW) (OMB Approval 2501-0017)
- Standard Form 1199A, Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form (OMB Approval 1510-007)
- HUD Form 27054, LOCCS Voice Response System Access Authorization (OMB Approval 2535-0102)

The Quality Assurance Plan reporting requirement applies to Healthy Homes Demonstration, Healthy Homes Technical Studies, and Lead Technical Studies grantees, and contractors that are conducting research or formal project evaluations. The submitted information is reviewed by OHHLHC staff to ensure that the implementing organizations have incorporated appropriate and sufficient quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) procedures into their projects. This requirement helps HUD ensure the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of the information that is generated by these sponsored projects.

- 3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

Since 2005, applicants can submit their applications packages through Grants.gov, an electronic submission process. The progress reports may also be submitted via the internet. All of the forms are fillable and can be completed using the widely available, free Adobe Acrobat portable document file software, or the widely available Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software used in the Department's electronic grants submission process. The Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control has made many of the required forms available as spreadsheets or as word processing documents for the use of applicants.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2, above.**

The Notices of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Programs are issued on an annual basis. There are no programs in the Department (or elsewhere in the Federal Government) for similar programs. Since the application and reporting requirements are program- and project-specific, there is no duplication. Collection of information through the QAP templates for the applicants' proposed projects does not duplicate any other effort and will not cause any information duplication.

- 5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

Potential applicants to several healthy homes and lead hazard programs may include not-for-profit institutions and for-profit firms located in the U.S. The NOFA includes comprehensive guidance, electronic forms, and ready-to-fill tables to facilitate responding to the NOFA.

If a small business is awarded a grant or contract to conduct research or formal project evaluations, it is required to submit a QAP. Burden reduction is reflected in the formats of the two QAP templates. The OHHLHC created the templates by streamlining existing QAP formats used by other federal agencies in order to reduce the burden on grantees

and contractors, including small businesses. The Office also created separate QAP templates for Technical Studies and Healthy Homes Demonstration grantees in order to reflect the different quality assurance requirements for the two types of grant programs (i.e., more information from grantees under the Technical Studies Programs because they are conducting research, which has more stringent quality requirements regarding newly discovered types of knowledge, and less information from grantees under the Healthy Homes Demonstration Program because they are conducting program evaluation). This appropriately reduces the burden on the small businesses and other organizations that are recipients of Healthy Homes Demonstration grants.

**6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

If the solicitation for grant applications is not conducted (or is conducted less frequently), the funds appropriated for healthy homes and lead hazard grants would not be available to state and local governments, and the private sector. Under HUD's appropriations in recent years (e.g., P.L. 110-5; Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007), non-competitive grant awards are not permitted. Under Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, the Department has implemented Information Quality Guidelines, which require the Quality Assurance Plan information being collected by research and program evaluation grantees and contractors.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a specific manner.**

The requirements for application are such that there are no conditions that would require applicants to conform to any specific method of information collection.

**8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, as required by 5 CFR 1320.8(3), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and actions by the agency.**

Our notice appeared on page 62668 in the Federal Register (Vol. 72, on November 6, 2007, that solicited public comment regarding this request to OMB to revise its approval concerning the Notices of Funding Availability for Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Programs. Comments were due by January 7, 2008. No comments were received.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

There will be no payment or gift to respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulations, or agency policy.**

All HUD staff members assigned to evaluate applications are subject to Section 103 of the HUD Reform Act. That section, entitled “Prohibitions Against Advance Disclosures of Funding Decisions,” imposes civil and other sanctions on employees found to have improperly disclosed covered information. Applicants and grantees may identify specific sections of their applications that they claim to be protected as confidential or proprietary. Applications for grant assistance submitted to HUD will be subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements. “Trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential” are specifically exempted from release under FOIA pursuant to 5 USC 552(b) (4). Certain aspects of a recipient’s reports may not be released if they are determined to possess confidential or proprietary information. Applications not otherwise protected may be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked during either the application or post-award process.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

Applications: Historically, an average of 250 applications are received for all Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Programs. The costs estimated below are based on an estimated labor rate of \$40 (GS-13 equivalent).

Application Preparation: It takes each applicant approximately 80 labor hours to prepare an application.

250 applications \* 80 hours/application = 20,000 labor hours  
20,000 labor hours \* \$ 40 per hour = \$800,000

Finalizing the Grant Award: Following award, each grant recipient would spend approximately 16 labor hours to finalize the grant award.

80 grant recipients \* 16 hours/recipient = 1,280 labor hours  
1,280 labor hours \* \$40 per hour = \$51,200

Quality Assurance Plans: For the approximately 20 awards to Healthy Homes Demonstration, Healthy Homes Technical Studies, and Lead Technical Studies grants, and to contractors conducting research and evaluation activities, preparation of the QAP takes an average of 24 hours.

20 responses \* 24 hours/response = 480 labor hours  
480 labor hours \* 40 per hour = \$19,200

The total application and start-up cost including application preparation and, for certain grantee, QAP response, based on 21,760 labor hours is \$870,4000 per year). This application preparation and QAP response burden (hours per application) is an increase from the earlier OMB PRA approval. The increase from 21,280 to 21,760 labor hours is a result of adding burden hours required for QAP response.

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.**

No start up or operations and maintenance costs are anticipated.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

Approximately 250 applications are received each year. Each application is reviewed by two people (GS 13, \$40 per hour). Each application requires the individual reviewers approximately three (3) labor hours to process and review. The cost to the Federal government is:

$$\begin{aligned} 250 \text{ applications} * 3 \text{ hours/application} * 2 \text{ readers} &= 1,500 \text{ labor hours} \\ 1,500 \text{ labor hours} * \$40 \text{ per hour} &= \$60,000 \end{aligned}$$

Negotiation and finalizing the grant awards is expected to require 4 labor hours per grant recipient.

Finalizing the grant:

$$\begin{aligned} 70 \text{ grantees} * 4 \text{ hours/grantee} &= 280 \text{ labor hours} \\ 280 \text{ labor hours} * \$40 \text{ per hour} &= \$11,200 \end{aligned}$$

Approximately 16 grantees and four contractors Quality Assurance Plan will be reviewed each year. Responses are reviewed by a qualified Governmental Technical Representative (GTR) or a Governmental Technical Monitor (GTM) (GS-13/14 grade level at approximately \$44 per hour). Each review requires approximately 4 hours.

$$\begin{aligned} 20 \text{ respondents} * 4 \text{ hrs per respondent} &= 80 \text{ labor hours} \\ 80 \text{ labor hours} * 44 \text{ per hour} &= \$ 3,520 \end{aligned}$$

The total cost to the Federal government is 1,860 labor hours (\$74,720).

The Federal cost has increased because of the addition of quality assurance plan and the increase in the hourly wages.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 and 14 on the OMB Form 83-I.**

The estimates for Items 13 increased as a result of the addition of quality assurance plan.

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publications.**

The results of the information collection will not be published.

- 17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

The Department is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date on the information collection documents.

- 18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I, Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I, Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission.