

## Appendix R: Study Team's Recruitment Letter to Counseling Agencies

### HUD's Pre-Purchase Homeownership Counseling Demonstration and Impact Evaluation

*[Letter will be on HUD letterhead]*

Dear [Agency Executive Director]:

I am writing to request the participation of your agency in a study of pre-purchase homeownership counseling. The study was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to understand the impact of pre-purchase counseling on a range of outcomes for low-to-moderate income, first-time homebuyers. The Pre-purchase Homeownership Counseling Demonstration and Impact Evaluation will examine the impact that different types of pre-purchase counseling have on mortgage preparedness, homeowner outcomes, and loan performance for prospective low-to moderate income, first-time homebuyers. Specifically, this evaluation will determine the impact of two different pre-purchase education and counseling interventions through a randomized experimental design.

This study will enroll 7,000 low-to-moderate income, first-time homebuyers in 20 jurisdictions across the United States. Study participants will be randomly assigned to one of three research groups: two treatment groups, in which study participants will either receive in-person group education and one-on-one counseling or online education and telephone counseling, and a control group that will not receive any pre-purchase counseling services.

**Your agency has been selected by NeighborWorks and the study team to participate in this important study to provide in-person pre-purchase education and counseling services to study participants within your jurisdiction.**

Your participation in the study would entail the following:

- Your agency's staff providing pre-purchase group education and one-on-one counseling to study participants. *Education and counseling services provided to study participants should not differ in any way from the normal services you provide your clients.*
- Your agency's staff contacting study participants to remind and encourage them to complete pre-purchase education and counseling. *The study team will work with you to design a specific outreach plan for your staff based on their feedback and availability.*
- Your agency's staff providing detailed information on the education and counseling services provided to study participants. *The study team will provide you with a list of the requested information and can discuss data transfer options.*

For your agency's efforts, your agency will receive an initial stipend of \$2,000 to participate. Additionally, your agency will receive \$100 for each client that completes counseling for participating in the study. These incentives are intended to help offset the time associated with study-related activities. They do not prevent you from also receiving funding for the counseling services provided (e.g. per-client remuneration from lenders or other funders).

The study is also designed, should funds become available, to conduct two follow-up telephone surveys of study participants approximately 12 and 18 months following their enrollment in the study to gather further information on the outcomes realized. The follow-up telephone surveys would require no additional work on the part of your agency.

The findings from the study will be publicly reported only at the aggregate level; individual clients will not be identified in the study reports. The surveys and questionnaires used in the study have been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 [OMB Control # XXX, expiration date XXX].

[Recruiter] of [Firm] will contact you by telephone in the next few days to discuss the study further with you and answer any questions you may have. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact the Abt Associates Project Director, Dr. Jonathan Spader at 301-347-5789. Dr. Marina Myhre of our Office of Policy Development and Research is managing this research effort for HUD. She can also be contacted with questions about the study at 202- 402-5705.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

[HUD Contact]