

EVALUATION OF THE EVICTION PROTECTION GRANT PROGRAM

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS | CONTRACT #: 86614922C00007

Round 1 Semi-Structured Interviews - Grantees and Subrecipients

PRA Burden Statement: Public Reporting Burden for this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes, including the time to administer informed consent. The collection is designed to gather information from grantees and subrecipients regarding the implementation of the Eviction Protection Grant Program.

Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions to reduce this burden, to Anna P. Guido, Reports Management Officer, REE, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Room 8210, Washington, DC 20410-5000. When providing comments, please refer to OMB Control No. 2528-XXXX. HUD may not conduct and sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB Control Number.

INTRODUCTION

INTERVIEWER: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____, and I am a researcher with 2M Research (2M), the policy research firm contracted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for this study.

I will start by briefly introducing the study, obtaining your consent, and making sure we cover any questions you might have before we begin the interview.

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how *<grantee/subrecipient name>* is implementing the HUD Eviction Protection Grant Program. We are speaking with all grantees, selected grant subrecipients, and program participants to:

- Understand successful approaches grantees use to provide services to clients.
- Understand the challenges grantees faced during program implementation and their subsequent solutions to address these challenges.
- Learn more about the characteristics of grantees and other stakeholders, such as service providers.
- Document the services offered and client take-up, types of clients served, and program outcomes.

This information will be used to understand how the Eviction Protection Grant Program is being implemented.

PERMISSION TO RECORD

Before we begin, we would like to have your permission to record the audio and video of our discussion to ensure our notes are accurate and complete. The recordings will be deleted once the project is complete.

Can we record this conversation?

- Yes
- No

- **If interviewee(s) agree(s) to be recorded:**
 - Thanks. Now, we are going to turn on the recorder (**TURN ON RECORDER**).
- **If interviewee(s) decline(s):**
 - Okay, that is not a problem.

INFORMED CONSENT

During this interview, we will be asking you questions about your perspectives on the rollout of the grant that *<grantee/subrecipient name>* received through the Eviction Protection Grant Program, the services provided, and any lessons learned at this stage of implementation. Our discussion should last approximately **60 minutes**. There are no right or wrong answers. You can refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer.

This study includes a second round of data collection that we will conduct toward the end of the grant period for *<grantee/subrecipient name>*. We may contact you again for the **second phase of data collection**, which will focus on the **overall experience** of grantees, subrecipients, and program participants.

Everything you tell us is confidential and will be kept private. The information collected by the study team will be mostly aggregated for reporting purposes to HUD. Interesting quotes, however, may be included in the report mainly to illustrate a point. These quotes will be untraceable to the speaker. Instead, we will use pseudonyms to represent speakers. All analyses will be conducted using a de-identified anonymous data file, which means the identity of individual staff members will not be shared, and shared comments will not be linked to individuals.

For subrecipients: Because *<grantee name>* may have recommended you for this interview, however, it is possible that some of the staff there may be able to identify your experiences from the research report.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may stop at any time. We will only use your responses for research purposes, and they will NOT be used for compliance monitoring.

Would you still like to participate in the study? <Ask for a verbal consent>

Do you have any questions before we begin?

If you have questions about the study after this interview, please email Dr. Hiren Nisar, the study's project manager, at hnisar@2mresearch.com.

Interviewee List <Internal for the study team>

Interviewee	Role	Organization

Respondent Background

We would like to start by learning more about you and your role in implementing the grant received from HUD through the Eviction Protection Grant Program.

1) Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your role at <grantee/subrecipient name>?

Probe (as needed):

- How long have you been working in this role?
- Were you involved with planning your HUD grant program?
 - If yes, what was your role?
- What is your role in implementing your HUD grant program?

Context of Geographic Target Service Area

Now, we would like to learn more about the contextual factors that influenced the design of your HUD Eviction Protection Grant Program.

2) From your experience, what were the greatest eviction-related concerns and/or needs within your target service area prior to the HUD grant award?

Probe (as needed):

What were the needs and/or concerns related to ____?

- *eviction rates*
 - *Do you have any information or guesses about the approximate number (an estimate is fine) of eviction filings in your service area annually, prior to the HUD grant award? How many of these were contested where both parties show up in court?*
 - *What was the default judgement rate annually prior to the HUD grant award?*
 - *What percentage of these cases were contested prior to the HUD grant award?*
 - *How does your organization estimate the number of tenants “at risk” of eviction in your area?*
 - *How many (an estimate is fine) repeat clients seeking assistance with a housing matter did your organization receive prior to the HUD grant award?*
 - *How often were landlords who were serial evictors involved in eviction filings prior to the HUD grant award? Do you keep a list of landlords who are serial eviction filers? If so, how many landlords do you have on the list? Can you share the list with us?*
- *access to legal services for individuals/families facing eviction*
- *eviction moratoriums*
- *access to non-legal services (e.g., support services) for individuals/families facing eviction*
- *access to rental assistance (e.g., tenants having trouble paying rent quickly enough when states/locals had trouble administering the ERAP program)*
- *tenants knowing their rights*
 - *Were there specific government agencies and/or non-governmental organizations helping tenants to understand their rights prior to the HUD grant award?*

- *local rental markets or landlord practices (e.g., soaring rents, flipping units, illegal evictions, etc.)*

3) What are some of the unique legal, demographic, or geographic characteristics of your target service area (that is, the community you serve)?

Probe:

- Are the local laws more favorable to landlords or tenants?
- What are the demographics of your target service area?
- To what extent do you target urban versus rural areas?
- To what extent do these legal, demographic, or geographic characteristics contribute to the level of evictions/eviction filings?
- How have those characteristics impacted how you designed your grant activities?
- Prior to this grant, what eviction-prevention services were available in your target area?
- How did the grant change the services you were providing to your clients?

4) Prior to this grant, can you describe if there were any opportunities to pair legal assistance with other services (e.g., rental assistance) provided by local housing authorities or other funding sources?

Grant Planning

Next, we would like to ask you about what you considered when planning the grant, including management and how you selected activities. Planning includes your initial planning period and any capacity issues identified following the grant award.

5) Can you describe the process that <grantee/subrecipient name> used to develop its HUD-funded Eviction Protection Grant Program?

Probe (as needed):

- How did you select activities or services to offer for your grant program?
- Who was involved in planning the program activities?
- Who was not involved in the planning that should have been?

6) What were the challenges <grantee/subrecipient name> faced when initially planning HUD-funded grant activities?

Probe (as needed):

- Were there any challenges related to ____?
 - *funding or resources*
 - *buy-in from staff and/or partners*
 - *implementation of the program*

7a) What factors have affected your capacity to manage this grant since the award?

Probe (as needed):

- Were there any challenges related to ____ ?

- o timing of the planning process*
- o resources for planning*
- o outreach and participant engagement*
- o staff availability and turnover (e.g., number of staff hired and average tenure of staff)*
- o lag between receipt of grant funds and provision of services*

7b) With regards to financial management, what were the successes and challenges that you as a <grantee/subrecipient> experienced while administering the grant?

Probe (as needed):

- How is your organization spending the money?
- What are some of the factors that affect the capacity of grantee organizations to manage the grant?

Execution

Next, we'd like to learn more about the planned activities and the intended outcomes of your grant program, why these may have changed, and the challenges and successes to implementing your program that you are experiencing.

8) Can you provide an overview of how funding is allocated for your grant activities/services?

Probe (as needed):

- What proportion of the grant was allocated to the various activities (estimates are fine)?
- Did the funding meet the budget requirements for each activity?

9) What strategies do you use to identify and market your program to new clients?

- What types of clients are the targets for these outreach efforts?

10) How do you sign up new clients into your program?

Probe (as needed):

- How accessible is your program to clients who seek out or need your services?
- Is the enrollment process under the HUD-funded grant program different from grant programs funded by other government agencies (e.g., the Legal Services Corporation and state governments)? If so, please elaborate.

11) Does your program target specific groups (e.g., people of color, LGBTQ+, people with limited English proficiency, persons with disabilities) for assistance? If so, which group(s), and why?

12) How do you decide who gets which services?

13) At this stage of your grant implementation, which activities/services are the most critical for achieving your grant objectives? Why?

- What needs do these activities/services meet?

14) How do your HUD-funded grant activities/services interact or complement other services provided by your organization?

- How do HUD-funded grant activities/services interact or complement services provided by your partners or services available in your area?
- How are HUD-funded grant activities/services different or similar to activities/services funded by other government agencies (e.g., the Legal Services Corporation and state governments)?
- Now that the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program has ended, what additional rental assistance support (if any) does your organization provide?

15) Does your organization have any experience with landlord/tenant mediation services? If so, please describe your experience.

- How helpful or not helpful are mediation services for tenants? Please explain.
- Do you facilitate landlord/tenant mediation that involves the judge serving as the mediator? If so, please describe how it works.

16) Which program activities/services have been the most challenging to implement as part of your HUD grant?

Probe (as needed):

- What types of challenges have you encountered with ____?
 - o program management and oversight*
 - o client marketing*
 - o client intake*
 - o provision of legal services*
 - o provision or referral to non-legal services (e.g., social services)*
 - o education/outreach services*
 - o any other challenges*
 - o collaborating with courts, judges, or others*
- How have you addressed/are you planning to address these challenges?

17) What about the Eviction Protection Grant Program requirements has caused additional challenges or presented a barrier to your organization or its client base?

18) Have any of the major planned program activities changed? If so, why, and how have they changed?

19) What planned activities have you been unable to conduct to date, if any? Why?

Probe: When would they start, or do you plan to scrap that activity?

20) Please describe your program’s process for collecting and tracking program performance data.

Probe (as needed):

- What systems/tools do you use to support these efforts?
- How do you track data on repeat clients?
- How are the data reporting requirements under the HUD-funded grant different from those funded by other government agencies (e.g., the Legal Services Corporation and state governments)?
- What challenges have you faced in collecting/reporting program data?
- How have you addressed these challenges?

Partnerships

In the next set of questions, we would like to ask you about the partners involved in your HUD-funded grant program and their roles.

21) What partnerships are being used to offer grant services? What activities/services do they support/provide?

Probe (as needed):

- How are partners supporting your grant program?
- Can you describe the process of how you refer clients to _____?
 - housing providers
 - legal service providers
 - other social service providers
- Were these partnerships in place prior to the grant? If not, what helped to bring <grantee/subrecipient name> together with these new partners?

22) Have you been able to engage landlords in the implementation of your program?

- If so, how have you engaged them?
- If not, why?

23) How have partnerships impacted your ability to implement your grant activities/services?

- What are some activities/services being offered that would not be possible without the support of partners?
- Do these partners provide tenants with services not offered through your organization?

24) What are any challenges you experienced with partners when implementing your grant program?

Probe (as needed): What challenges have you experienced with regards to ____?

- engagement of partners on grant activities
- subcontracting processes and procedures
- billing/reimbursement processes for contracts

25) Do you have a process of identifying “serial evictors”? If so, how do you identify them?

Probe (as needed): We define an evicting party as a serial evictor if the same evicting party has filed against the same client more than two times or against multiple clients (more than three).

26) What activities do you undertake to defend your clients against ‘serial evictor’ landlords or public housing authorities?

27) What else would you like to share about your experience in rolling out the HUD grant that you haven’t had a chance to talk about or that I did not ask about?

Closing

Those are all the questions we have for you today. Now we would like to give you an opportunity to share anything else that you think would be helpful for us to know about your grant program.

We’d like to thank you for taking the time to speak with us. Should you have any additional thoughts that you would like to share, please feel free to contact us.