



ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-7000

10 April 2020

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** All Fiscal Year 2020 and 2019 CDBG and CDBG-CV Grantees and All CPD Field Office Directors

**FROM:** John Gibbs, Acting Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development

**SUBJECT:** CARES Act Flexibilities for CDBG Funds Used to Support Coronavirus Response and plan amendment waiver

*The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)* (Public Law , makes available \$5 billion in supplemental Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for grants to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus (CDBG-CV grants). Additionally, the CARES Act provides CDBG grantees with flexibilities that make it easier to use CDBG-CV grants and fiscal years 2019 and 2020 CDBG Grants for coronavirus response and authorizes HUD to grant waivers and alternative requirements.

The Department has announced the allocations of the first \$2 billion in CARES Act funding for CDBG grantees, as well as \$1 billion for Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and \$53.7 million for Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA). You can find the allocations at [www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/budget/fy20/](http://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/budget/fy20/).

This memorandum transmits the attached *CARES Act Flexibilities for CDBG Funds Used to Support Coronavirus Response* Guide (Guide). The Guide describes the immediate availability of a 5-day public comment period for amendments and new plan submissions, uncaps the percentage of CDBG funding for public services to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, as well as other flexibilities. Please note that these new provisions are not only applicable to the \$5 billion in CDBG funding from the CARES Act but many of the new provisions are also applicable to FY2019 and FY2020 CDBG funding. This broad applicability provides grantees with flexibility to help address the challenges facing our nation.

Grantees are advised to amend or prepare their plans as soon as possible and not to wait for the pending Federal Register notice, which may provide additional waivers and alternative requirements. Similarly, grantees should not wait for HUD to allocate the remaining nearly \$3 billion of the \$5 billion provided by the CARES Act for the CDBG program. Upon publication of the Federal Register notice and subsequent allocations, grantees receiving allocations will then amend plans accordingly.

Grantees should proceed with all amendments and plans under these new provisions by adding the CDBG-CV allocation in their plans as an available resource for the year. The CARES Act permits HUD to waive, or specify alternative requirements for, any provision of any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers in connection with the CDBG-CV funds, FY2019 and FY2020 CDBG funds (except for requirements related to fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards, and the environment), upon a finding by the Secretary that any such waivers or

alternative requirements are necessary to expedite or facilitate the use of such amounts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

To expedite grantees' use of CDBG-CV funds, HUD is waiving the requirements at 42 U.S.C. 12705(a)(2) to the extent it requires updates to the housing and homeless needs assessment, housing market analysis, and strategic plan and 24 CFR 91.220 and 91.320 to the extent the action plan is limited to a specific program year to permit grantees to prepare substantial amendments to their most recent annual action plan, including their 2019 annual action plan. Grantees must identify the proposed use of all funds and how the funds will be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

The Department is also waiving 24 CFR 91.505 to facilitate the use of the CDBG-CV funds to the extent necessary to require submission of the substantial amendment to HUD for review in accordance with 24 CFR 91.500. To receive a CDBG-CV grant, a grantee must also submit a SF-424, SF-424D and the certifications at 24 CFR 91.225(a) and (b) or 24 CFR 91.325(a) and (b).

The Guide addresses many of the Field's initial questions. Email inquiries to [CPDQuestionsAnswered@hud.gov](mailto:CPDQuestionsAnswered@hud.gov) will continue to receive individual replies and guidance. HUD will also be batching questions and responses and periodically making them available as FAQs. Additional resources will continue to be posted to [www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/disease/](http://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/disease/).

Thank you for the work you and your staff do with our communities in the fight against the coronavirus.