



A stronger Illinois begins at home

# Presenter

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**HOW TO BECOME A  
HUD - APPROVED  
HOUSING COUNSELING AGENCY**

# Who We Are?

Housing Action Illinois is a statewide coalition formed to protect and expand the availability of quality, affordable and accessible housing in Illinois for low- and moderate - income households.

We do this through:

- Public Policy Advocacy
- Public Education and Organizing
- Capacity Strengthening Training & Technical Assistance

# Agenda

- Understand the HUD Requirements and the Application Process
- HUD Application
- How and Why become a HUD Approved Housing Counseling Agency
- Working with Housing Action Illinois

# Preparing to Submit Application

- Process requires numerous details.
- Workload should be divided into two sections:
  - I. Applicant Information**
  - II. Housing Counseling Work Plan**
- Requirements are provided in the [HUD Handbook 7610.1 and 24 CFR Part 214](#)

# **BENEFITS OF BECOMING HUD APPROVED**

# Benefits

- ✓ Eligible to apply for HUD Housing Counseling Grants
- ✓ Eligible for Community Development Block Grants through local government entities
- ✓ Larger exposure through HUD's website and toll-free number
- ✓ Form partnerships with other housing industry members

# What is a HUD Approved Housing Counseling Agency?

Housing counseling agencies approved by HUD **maintain standards and procedures and are trained** to provide tools to current and prospective homeowners and renters, so that they can make responsible choices to address their housing needs in light of their financial situations.

**WHY CONSIDER BECOME A  
HUD APPROVED COUNSELING  
AGENCY?**

# **I. APPROVAL CRITERIA - REQUIREMENTS AND DOCUMENTATION**

# Nonprofit Status

- ✓ Organization can demonstrate non profit status by including their IRS Tax Exempt Certification in the application. 501 (c3)
- ✓ Encourage applicant to become familiar with forms:
  - [HUD-9900: Application for Approval](#)
  - [HUD-9902: Activity Report](#)

# Criteria – Charter

## ✓ Charter

- Must provide Articles of Incorporation and/or Bylaws.
- [Articles of Incorporation – sample](#)
- [Bylaws – sample](#)
- [Board of Resolution – sample](#)

# Criteria – Community Base

## ✓ **Community Base**

- Demonstrate experience in the community
- Record achievement providing housing counseling
- Summary of activities and services
- Insert the housing needs in the community

# Criteria – Counseling Resources

## ✓ Counseling Resources

### ▪ *Staff*

- Must include resumes
- Job Descriptions
- List of trainings and certifications acquired
- Disclosure of any inherent conflict of interest
- Language Skills
- Quality Control Plan

# Criteria – Counseling Resources

## ✓ Counseling Resources

### ▪ *Facilities*

- Proof of ownership or lease
- Explain operating hours
- Accessibility for clients with special needs
- Location is close to public transportation
- Describe record-keeping system
- Required photographs of your counseling space in your application

# Criteria – Counseling Resources

## ✓ Counseling Resources

### ▪ *Funding*

- Sources of funding
- Copy of Annual Budget
- Schedule of fees
- Disclosure of any fees for services received from lenders
- Cash on hand

# **II. HOUSING COUNSELING WORK PLAN - REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

# **Housing Counseling Work Plan**

**HUD wants to know “specifics” about your community, neighborhood and understand the socioeconomic characteristics.**

**Think strategic targets and benchmarks that your organization can achieve and have tangible results.**

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Target Areas

- *Description of the target area*
  - Size of population
  - Socio – economic factors
  - Racial and ethnic make up
  - Age and condition of the housing stock
- *Selection*
  - Reasons for selecting area
  - Consider how your organization will serve target area
- *Map*
  - Provide map of the location and zip codes
  - Identify, if any, other HUD-approved agencies

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

✓ **Where I can find data about my area of services?**

- **United States Census Bureau**

The United States Census Bureau is a principal agency of the U.S. Federal Statistical System responsible for producing data about the American people and economy.

<http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

- **City-Data**

City-Data is a private Illinois-based social networking and information website that presents data and information relevant to U.S. cities.

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Illinois.html>

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Housing Needs and Problems

- *What are the special needs and/or barriers in your community?*
- *Is there any readily-available data that can be used to support your claim?*
- *What specific population is being affected by such barriers?*

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

- ✓ **Fair Housing**

**Fair housing** is the right to choose **housing** free from unlawful discrimination.

- ✓ **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing**

**Affirmatively furthering fair housing** are the purposes and policies of the **Fair Housing Act**, which is Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Equal Housing Opportunity Statement:

*We are pledged to the letter and spirit of U.S. policy for the achievement of equal housing opportunity throughout the Nation. We encourage and support an affirmative advertising and marketing program in which there are no barriers to obtaining housing because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.*



# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Description of Services

- *Describe in detail the housing counseling activities that your agency provides and will provide as HUD-approved.*
- *Elaborate on the specific activities for each service.*
- ***Your services and activities should correlate with the definition of each housing counseling service set forth in the HUD Handbook 7610.1 (Chapter 3)***

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Outcomes

- *Describe the anticipated results (outcomes) to be achieved within the initial period of approval.*
- *Provide a projected number of households your agency will serve during the initial 12-month period of HUD Approval or program participation.*

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Alternative Formats

- *If applicable, disclose alternative settings or formats your agency will utilize to provide housing counseling services in your target area(s) as a result of either mutual agreement with the client or the inaccessibility of your facilities.*
- *I.e. Skype, internet, telephone*

# Housing Counseling Work Plan

## ✓ Client Follow-Up

- *Must explain the follow up process that will be implemented so it is in compliance with HUD regulations.*

## ✓ Fee Schedule

- *If your agency is planning to charge for counseling, a fee schedule must be submitted along with the application so it can be in compliance with HUD's requirements.*

**WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU  
SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION  
TO HUD?**

# Your Agency Got Approved

## ✓ Notice of Approval

- *If application package meets all requirements, HUD has the ability to approve an agency for a period **up to three years**.*
- *HUD will advise the agency of its approval in the form of an approval letter to the agency's main office.*

# Housing Action IL can HELP YOU!

- ✓ We cater to your needs and assist in creating an action plan to determine the feasibility.
- ✓ We can help in developing a comprehensive housing counseling plan which includes:
  - Type of services provided
  - Experience
  - Staff
  - Facilities
  - Budget
  - Target Area

# Housing Action IL can HELP YOU!

- ✓ We can identify adequate resources needed to run a successful Housing Counseling Program
- ✓ We can walk you through and explain the process to diminish any concerns or doubts
- ✓ Help you prepare the submission and all necessary documentation to become HUD approved.

# Technical Assistance Contacts:

- ✓ **Julio Soriano** at [julio@housingactionil.org](mailto:julio@housingactionil.org)
- ✓ **Bibian Guevara** at [bibian@housingactionil.org](mailto:bibian@housingactionil.org)

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