

# SFH Direct Loan and Grant Programs

March 20, 2020

## Single Family Housing Direct Programs Continuity of Operations

At USDA Rural Development, we are taking steps to continue to serve our customers and stakeholders. Rural Development staff who administer Single Family Housing Direct Loan & Grant Programs are providing this guidance to reassure the public as well as our self-help grantees, approved intermediaries, packagers, funding partners, real estate professionals, and other interested stakeholders of our continued business operations in this evolving environment.

Excellent customer service and the safety of our customers and staff remain our highest priorities. To help mitigate potential program delivery concerns during this time of uncertainty, we offer the following guidance, flexibility and information to our customers:

- Site assessments of existing homes and new construction sites by RD staff may be waived to protect the safety of our staff and our most vulnerable customers.
- Appraisal orders through our vendors are continuing with minimal disruption.
- For eligible applicants who have been issued a Certificate of Eligibility and impacted by COVID-19, an extension of eligibility is available. For approved applicants with a pending loan closing, please contact USDA staff so that we can work with your closing agent and other parties to potentially coordinate the closing via mail or email.
- Pre-construction conferences and reviews of work in progress can occur by phone or through qualified third parties.
- Applicants must remain eligible for assistance at the time of approval and closing. If an adverse change to applicant income or credit has occurred prior to closing, additional payment assistance subsidy may be available.
- Self-Help Grantee organizations are encouraged to limit workers to immediate family members or small groups of 10 or less at worksites. This alternative method of construction may take some additional coordination and scheduling but will enable families to continue working on new homes. Volunteer labor outside of immediate households is discouraged and especially for higher risk populations. We understand that this can cause time delays, so requests for grant amendments and time extensions should be submitted in accordance with RD Instruction 1944-I, 1944.420 as early as practical. Please contact Rural Development and Regional Technical and Management Assistance contractor staffs so that we may offer additional assistance.
- Foreclosures on borrowers with USDA Single Family Housing Direct (SFHD) loans are suspended for a period of 60 days. Similarly, evictions of persons from properties secured by SFHD loans are also suspended for a period of 60 days.

### **Quick Links**

- Visit the USDA Disaster page on coronavirus at: <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus>
- Rural Development offices at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/browse-state>
- Loan servicing questions at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/loan-servicing>