

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

This program has been reviewed under the agency's environmental regulations. It has been determined that the provision of financial assistance for these types of grants are properly designated as categorical exclusions, which require no further documentation. This is based upon the finding that the purposes of these grants do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect upon the human environment. Therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

Definitions for RCDI Purposes

Agency—the Rural Housing Service (RHS) or its successor.

Beneficiary—home-based health care cooperatives that receive benefits from assistance provided by the recipient.

Capacity—the ability of a recipient organization to provide pre-development planning services, manage revolving loan funds, or provide technical assistance towards establishing home-based health care cooperatives.

Cooperative—incorporated associations, at least 51 percent of whose members are rural residents having one vote each, that conduct such operations as producing, purchasing, marketing, processing, or other activities aimed at improving the income of their members as producers or their purchasing power as consumers.

Federally recognized tribes—tribal entities recognized and eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, based on the notice in the **Federal Register** published on March 13, 2000, volume 65, number 49, page 13298.

Financial assistance—funds used by the recipient to pay for the start-up cost of the home-based health care cooperative. Funds that the recipient lends to the beneficiary home-based health care cooperative for eligible home-based health care cooperative demonstration project purposes.

Fund—the Home-Based Health Care Demonstration Program grant.

Intermediary—a qualified private nonprofit or public (including tribal) organization recipient for the revolving loan grant that provides technical assistance to the pre-planning grant recipient. The intermediary will also provide financial and technical assistance to the home-based health care cooperative(s) formed through this program.

Matching Funds—cash or confirmed funding commitments. Matching funds

must be at least equal to the grant amount. These funds can only be used for eligible home-based health care cooperative demonstration grant purposes. In-kind contributions cannot be used as matching funds. Matching funds must be committed prior to release of RCDI Rural Cooperative Home-Based Health Care grant funds to the revolving loan grant recipient.

Nonprofit organization—a private, community-based development entity with a valid letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) designating their tax exempt status.

Recipient—a public or community development based nonprofit organization receiving pre-development grant funds or a public or private nonprofit intermediary organization receiving revolving loan grant funds for the establishment of a home-based health care cooperative.

Revolved funds—the cash portion of a revolving loan fund that is not composed of Agency revolving loan grant funds, including funds that are repayments of loans to the home-based health care cooperatives from the revolving loan grant funds, including fees and interest collected on such loans. Revolved funds shall not be considered Federal funds.

Revolving fund—a group of assets obtained through, or related to, an Agency revolving loan grant and recorded by the recipient in a bookkeeping account, or set of accounts, and accounted for, along with related liabilities, revenues, and expenses, as an entity or enterprise separate from the recipient's other assets or financial activities.

Rural and rural area—a city, town, or unincorporated area that has a population of 50,000 inhabitants or less, other than urbanized areas immediately adjacent to a city, town, or unincorporated area that has a population in excess of 50,000 inhabitants. Urbanized area data will be based on the 2000 census.

Technical assistance—skilled help in improving the beneficiary's abilities in the areas of establishment and operation of a cooperative and home-based health care service. The Agency will determine whether a specific activity qualifies as technical assistance.

Eligibility Requirements

1. The recipient for the pre-planning grant and the beneficiary cooperative, but not the revolving loan grant recipient, must be located in an eligible rural area. The applicable Rural Development State Office can assist in determining the eligibility of an area. A

listing of Rural Development State Offices is included in this notice.

2. The recipient for the pre-development grants must be a nonprofit community development based organization, or qualified public bodies. The recipient for the revolving loan grant funds must be nonprofit organizations or public bodies, including federally recognized tribes, based on the RCDI definitions of these groups.

3. Documentation must be submitted to verify recipient eligibility. Acceptable documentation varies depending on the type of recipient. A letter from the IRS verifying tax exempt status, or valid evidence that the entity is a public body, is required for nonprofit recipients. For federally recognized tribes, the Agency requires the page listing their name from the current **Federal Register** list of tribal entities recognized and eligible for funding services (see the definition of federally recognized tribes for details on this list).

4. Individuals cannot be recipients.

5. The revolving loan grant recipient must provide a program of technical assistance to the pre-planning grant recipient and financial and technical assistance to the beneficiary cooperative.

6. The intermediary must provide matching funds at least equal to the amount of the grant.

7. The revolving loan grant recipient organization must have at least 3 years prior experience working with cooperatives.

8. Proposals must be structured to utilize the grant funds within 1 year from the date of the award (this time requirement can be extended with the concurrence of the agency).

9. The recipient for the pre-development grant cannot be the same as the recipient for the revolving loan grant. Pre-development grants must be made to local public bodies or nonprofit groups located in the community to be served by the home-based health care cooperative. Revolving loan grants can be made to nonprofit or public bodies that are not located in the community where the cooperative is located, but who have the capacity to provide the required financial and technical services locally.

10. A nonprofit entity must already have a determination of tax-exempt status letter from the IRS when the recipient applies for the RCDI Rural Cooperative Home-Based Health Care Demonstration Program grant. Organizations with pending requests for this designation are not considered eligible.