

**Meeting Agenda**  
**State College Borough**  
**CDBG Citizens' Advisory Committee**  
**July 7, 2020**  
**Virtual Meeting / Noon**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Approval of Minutes**
- IV. Chair Report**
- V. Public Hour - Hearing of Citizens**
- VI. Draft Policy and Procedures for CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Program of State College**
- VII. Upcoming Meeting(s)**
- VIII. Adjournment**

*Documents:*

*[Complete CDBG Citizens Advisory Committee Agenda - July 7, 2020.pdf](#)*

**Meeting Agenda  
State College Borough  
CDBG/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)  
July 7, 2020  
Virtual Meeting / Noon**

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Roll Call**

Selden Smith, Chair  
David Gaines, Vice-Chair  
Ian Boswell  
Alexis Burke  
Jason Olcese  
Marcia Patterson  
Bruce Quigley

**III. Approval of Minutes – May 21, 2020**

**IV. Chair Report**

**V. Public Hour - Hearing of Citizens**

**VI. Draft Policy and Procedures for CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Program of State College**

CDBG, CDBG-CV and HOME funds from FY 2019 and 2020 are budgeted to provide financial assistance and mediation to prevent homelessness for residents of State College Borough who experienced a significant loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The attached guidelines were drafted to guide distribution of these federal grant funds to those in need. The attached draft policy and procedures were distributed for comment to the network of housing service providers on June 22. Comments were due by June 28, 2020. The CDBG/CAC is asked to provide input on the attached draft.

**Attached:** Draft Policy and Procedures for CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Program of State College

**CAC Action Needed:** Committee action is needed on a motion to approve use of the proposed policy and procedures, pending incorporation of committee comments.

**VII. Upcoming Meeting**

Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at Noon

**VIII. Adjournment**

**Meeting Minutes  
State College Borough  
CDBG/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)  
May 21, 2020  
Virtual Meeting**

The State College Borough Community Development Block Grant/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CDBG/CAC) virtual meeting was called to order via the Zoom system by Selden Smith, Chair on Thursday, May 21, 2020 at 12:02 p.m.

**Members Present**

Selden Smith, Chair; Ian Boswell; Alexis Burke; Marcia Patterson; and Bruce Quigley

**Members Absent**

David Gaines and Jason Olcese

**Others Present**

Maureen H. Safko, Senior Planner; Ed LeClear, Planning Director; Elizabeth S. Eirmann, Planner-Housing Specialist; Isabel Storey, Planner; Denise L. Rhoads, Administrative Assistant; and Douglas Shontz, Assistant to the Borough Manager

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Ms. Burke and seconded by Ms. Patterson to approve the May 5, 2020 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimously in favor.

**Chair Report**

Selden Smith, Chair, did not present a report. He thanked those members of the community who participated in the last meeting and those who were attending this meeting.

**Public Hour**

No one from the public wanted to discuss items not on the agenda.

**Review and Recommendation of Amendment to the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and the FY2019 and FY2020 Annual Action Plans including CDBG-CV funds**

Ms. Safko's overview included:

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, made available to the Borough \$305,713 in Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to prepare for, prevent and respond to the impacts of the growing impacts of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.
- FY2019 and FY2020 CDBG and HOME funds may also be re-allocated for this purpose. Public input on pandemic related community needs was received during the virtual public hearing held on May 5, 2020.
- Eight individuals provided input during the hearing and seven written project proposals were subsequently received. A summary of these 7 requests was presented for consideration for funding.

- Ms. Safko presented a chronological recap of the process for the Amendment:
  - April 2 – CARES Act CDBG-CV Award Letter dated.
  - April 21 – Public notice published for Citizen Participation Plan Amendment.
  - May 5 – Public Hearing Community Needs at CDBG Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting and Citizen Participation Plan Amendment review.
  - May 17 – Public notice published announcing public hearing #2.
  - May 18 – Council approved Citizen Participation Plan Amendment.
  - May 21 – CDBG Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting to discuss allocations.
  - May 25 – Public notice with Consolidated Plans and Action Plans.
  - May 26 – June 1 Public comment period of no less than five days.
  - June 1 – Public hearing #2 at 7:00 p.m. followed by Council's action pending public input.

#### Public Comments

- Morgan Wasikonis from Housing Transitions, Inc. (HTI) had two questions:
  - She noted HTI was planning to apply for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) in cooperation with Centre County by June 1, 2020 because of non-congregate shelter needs and homeless prevention.
  - When would funds be available? HTI had previously requested reimbursement from the Borough for non-congregate stay, hotel room expenditures made in March and April and had not yet received confirmation that the Borough could reimburse these expenses. Ms. Safko replied that she and Mr. LeClear had discussed the request with the Borough Manager and were waiting for a reply.
- Phil Jones, Director of House of Care (HOC) noted funds would be greatly appreciated to cover additional staffing, food, etc. for both HOC and Out of the Cold programs.

#### Community Needs Proposals with Staffs' Recommendations

- Centre County COVID 19 Community Response (4CRP) – Rent Relief (\$100,000+ to be delivered collectively with Item #6)
- Centre County COVID 19 Community Response (4CRP) – Spanish Interpreter Position (\$0.00) – While the need for this service is recognized, there is a need to build relationships through community outreach to learn more about the languages with which assistance is needed and what community resources exist to provide the services. Ms. Safko also mentioned that other funding sources might be more appropriate than CDBG, CDBG-CV and HOME.
- Centre Safe – Non-congregate shelter, staffing, etc. – (\$30,000) estimated for 3 months
- House of Care – Additional shelter staff – (\$12,000)
- Out of the Cold – Expenses to prevent spread of virus i.e. hotel or apartment fees, food, staff, transportation, PPE, etc. – (\$45,000) – estimated for 3 months
- English as a Second Language Teachers in Support of Students and Families – Rent and utilities for about 25 families for three months – (\$100,000+ to be delivered collectively with Item #1) – administered by Borough Staff
- Centre for Volunteers in Medicine – 10% of expenses for telemedicine, and PPE for volunteers and testing for Borough resident patients (estimated) – (\$10,000)
- Total recommended: \$197,000+

Funds Available for COVID Response – Staff identified projects with schedules that could be shifted or postponed.

	Total for COVID Response	Total for Projects	Total Admin/Operations for COVID response activities
CDBG-CV	\$305,713	\$244,571	\$61,142
FY20 HOME	\$288,313	\$187,403.43	\$100,909.57
FY20 CDBG	\$211,713.52	\$211,713.52	\$0
FY19 CDBG	\$155,870.89	\$155,870.89	\$0
	\$961,610.41	\$799,558.84	\$162,051.57
IH	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,611,610.41</b>	<b>\$1,449,558.84</b>	<b>\$162,051.57</b>

Ms. Safko noted staff removed the usual First-time Homebuyer projects to be able to provide funds needed to meet COVID-19 related community needs.

She noted \$650,000 would be distributed equally between both Community and Housing Development Organizations (CHDO's) for the purpose of replacing HOME and CDBG funds that were budgeted for Acquisition/Rehabilitation First Time Home Buyer Program.

Several groups stated it is very difficult to estimate what they actually need since there is little demand from the community now while the eviction and foreclosure moratorium is in effect.

Funds Available for COVID Response from FY19 CDBG, FY20 CDBG and FY20 HOME

House of Care	\$12,000	FY20 CDBG
Centre Safe	\$30,000	FY20 CDBG
Out of the Cold	\$45,000	FY20 CDBG
Centre for Volunteers in Medicine	\$10,000	FY20 CDBG
Homelessness Prevention Program	\$400,441.89	CDBG-CV, FY19 CDBG
Food and Shelter Services	\$114,713.52	FY20 CDBG
Tenant Based Rental Assistance	\$187,403.43	FY20 HOME
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$799,558.84</b>	

Funds Available for COVID Response – 2020 CDBG-CV activities

Ms. Safko stated the actual allocations for this category were: 1) administration/planning (20%) - \$61,142; and 2) housing/homelessness prevention program - \$244,857 for a total of \$305,713.00.

Funds Available for COVID Response – 2020 HOME activities

Ms. Safko stated the actual allocations for this category were: 1) administration/planning (25% increase) - \$72,078.25; 2) both State College Community Land Trust program FTHB program had been restored with the help of inclusionary housing (IH) funds; 3) \$187,403.25 in HOME funds were budgeted for a new Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program; and 4) both CHDO's received \$14,415.66 in CHDO Operating funds.

She also noted there was more of a need for administrative support for these programs than is involved in delivery of typical CDBG and HOME funded activities..

### CAC comments

- Mr. Smith asked where Inclusionary Housing funding came from. Ms. Safko stated these were fees paid to the Borough by developers that chose not to include affordable housing units onsite.
- Mr. Boswell asked if the HSP had a redundancy with other programs. Mr. Smith stated the organizations worked closely together to be able to understand each other's programs. Mr. LeClear stated it was staff to staff coordination and our staff had been in contact with the Housing Authority of Centre County.

### Public comments

- Ms. Wasikonis asked how the homelessness prevention program would be administered. Ms. Safko stated it would be a referral program administered by borough staff and that staff was looking to HUD for program requirements and to model programs from around the country for best practices. Mr. LeClear stated staff did not anticipate seeing funding for this until summertime.

Ms. Safko noted 2016 – 2018 funds were not covered by the CARES ACT. But, an amendment was needed to shift those funds where they came from. She noted 2015 was an exception and this was being put towards the only infrastructure project for this year, the East Fairmount Park Project.

Ms. Safko stated that was a one-time opportunity for the CHDOs to use IH funds for Acquisition/Rehabilitation FTHB projects without the \$92,000 limitation and that they could keep the proceeds which would help with operation funds to help sustain both CHDO's through this time of lower than usual donations..

Mr. LeClear stated Ms. Safko worked very hard to put this together.

Ms. Ritter and Mr. Jones noted a big thank you to Ms. Safko and staff.

Amy Rumbel, Centre Safe, asked if the human service agencies should attend the Council meeting on June 1. Ms. Safko stated attendance would be beneficial and not required.

Mr. Smith asked if the CAC members should attend the Council meeting on June 1 and Ms. Safko stated yes, if available and Mr. Shontz stated it would be beneficial to attend.

A motion was made to approve this amendment by Ms. Burke and seconded by Ms. Patterson. The vote was unanimously in favor.

### **Upcoming Meeting**

Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at Noon (virtual)

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, Ms. Patterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:54 p.m. and Ms. Burke seconded it. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise L. Rhoads  
Administrative Assistant

# CARES ACT EMERGENCY HOUSING RETENTION PROGRAM OF STATE COLLEGE

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Including:

CDBG-CV Funded  
Homelessness Prevention Program

and

HOME Funded  
Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program  
(TBRA)

Prepared By:  
Planning and Community Development Department

Draft: July 1, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE NUMBER

The following table of contents will be completed pending further edits based on receipt of comments.

A. CDBG and HOME COVID EMERGENCY RESPONSE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	
1. STATEMENT OF PROGRAM PURPOSE	1
2. AUTHORIZING ACT and BUDGET	2
3. ANTICIPATED PROGRAM IMPACT	2
4. COVID EMERGENCY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM FLOW CHART	3
5. MARKETING	3
6. NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT	4
7. UTILIZATION OF HUD WAIVERS UNDER THE CDBG PROGRAM	4
8. CDBG & HOME TERMS OF ASSISTANCE	5
B. CDBG FUNDED COVID EMERGENCY RESPONSE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	
C. HOME FUNDED TENANT BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	
D. CDBG & HOME FUNDED CASE HANDLING PROCEDURES	

LIST OF APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

APPENDIX A – HUD WAIVER NOTIFICATIONS

APPENDIX B - INCOME GUIDELINES (effective July 1, 2020)

APPENDIX C –COMPLAINT POLICY

APPENDIX D –CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

FORMS – (under development)

- Pre-screening form
- Application form
- Income Eligibility Self-certification form
- Conflict of interest form
- Landlord/Mortgage Lender certification form
- Tenant – Landlord Mediation referral form
- Information release form for income and duplication of benefits
- Three party-agreement
- VAWA Lease addendum, if not already in lease

## CARES ACT EMERGENCY HOUSING RETENTION PROGRAM OF STATE COLLEGE

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

#### **A. CDBG and HOME FUNDED CARES ACT EMERGENCY HOUSING RETENTION PROGRAM DESIGN INFORMATION**

##### **A.1. STATEMENT OF PROGRAM PURPOSE**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread need for financial assistance among individuals and families. Employees from all sectors of the economy simultaneously experienced unemployment and reduced or lost wages at levels not seen since the Great Depression due to social distancing practices required during the state and federal states of emergency and Stay At Home orders that are necessary to slow the spread of the virus. Until a vaccine is widely available waves of the virus are expected to surge periodically creating additional periods of intense financial need over the coming year or two.

The purpose of the COVID Emergency Response Homelessness Prevention Program is to:

- minimize the number of people who experience homelessness as a result of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic
- prevent the homelessness service provider network of State College Borough and Centre County from being overwhelmed
- prevent the spread of disease by keeping State College Borough residents safely sheltered
- prevent the long lasting, adverse impacts of evictions, and maximize the benefit of grant expenditures, through Tenant-Landlord Mediation
- preserve the condition of rental housing stock in State College Borough by supporting rental property owners
- conduct COVID Emergency Response efforts in a manner that advances long-term housing security and affordability goals through building housing related partnerships and growing the resiliency of the affordable housing service provider infrastructure of State College Borough

##### **A.2. AUTHORIZING ACT and BUDGET**

Through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, State College Borough received \$305,713 in Supplementary CDBG-CV funds to prepare for, prevent and respond to the impacts of the Pandemic. HUD also authorized that FY 2019 and FY 2020 CDBG and HOME Entitlement funds could be reallocated for COVID related eligible activities.

On June 1, 2020, after an extensive public involvement process, State College Borough Council voted to approve Consolidated Plan and Action Plan amendments that made \$187,403.45 in FY

2020 HOME funds available for an emergency Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program and that reallocated various prior year CDBG budgets to make a total of \$515,155.41 in CDBG funds available for a homelessness prevention project, including \$155,870.89 from FY 2019 CDBG, \$114,713.52 from FY 2020 CDBG and \$244,571.00 in CDBG-CV funding.

### **A.3. ANTICIPATED PROGRAM IMPACT**

It is anticipated that the proposed CDBG project funded with \$515,870.89 will prevent homelessness for at least:

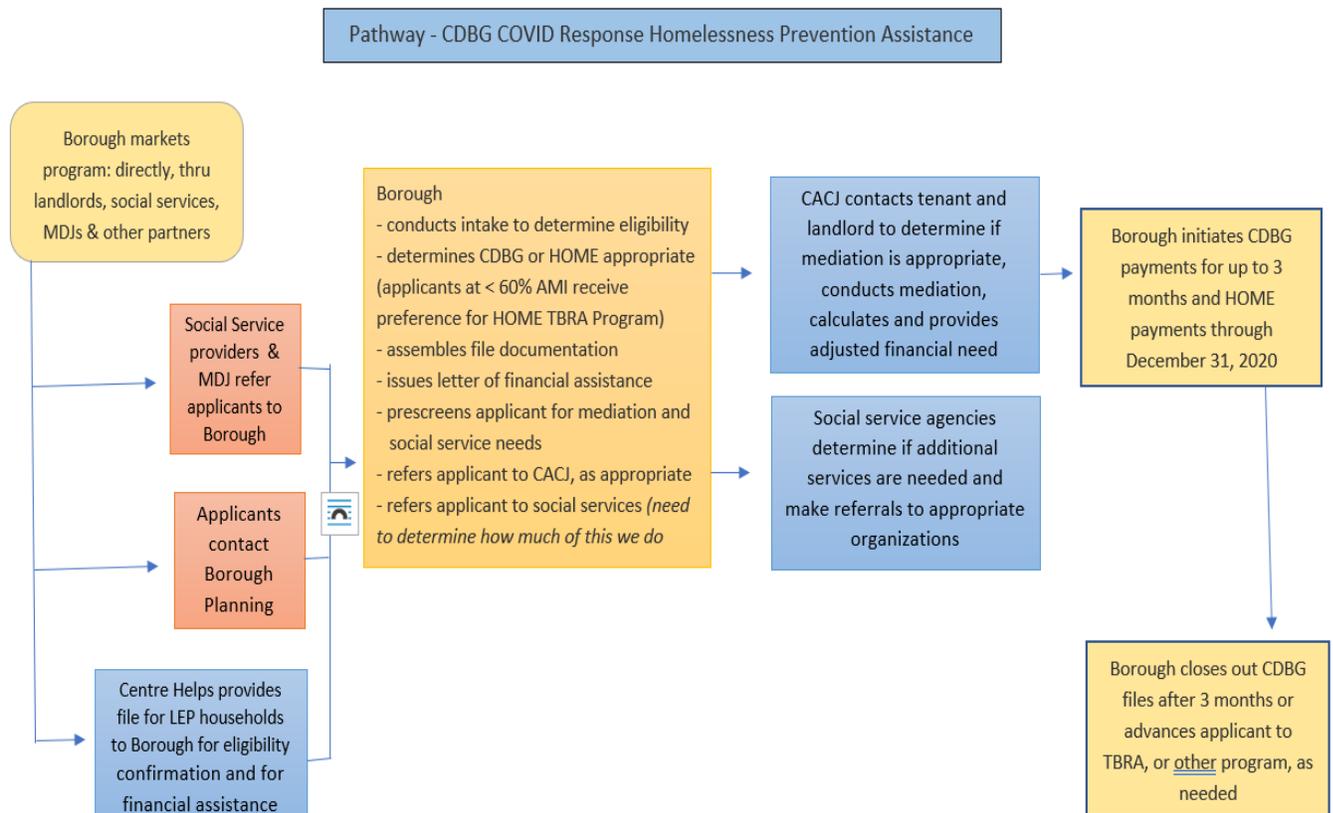
- 80 tenant households by providing up to a maximum of \$1,200 per month for 3 consecutive months (\$288,000)
- 30 homeowner households by providing up to a maximum of \$2,000 per month for 3 consecutive months (\$180,000)
- Tenant-Landlord Mediation for 100 rental households (\$30,000)
- While not currently budgeted to be paid for by CDBG funds, the project will result in referral to other agencies for case management and budget counseling for an estimated 300 households.

The proposed budget outlined above leaves a balance of \$17,870.89, which may be utilized for adjustments in program design and varying levels of assistance as moratoriums on evictions and foreclosures are lifted and as the need for homelessness prevention becomes more clearly understood.

The proposed HOME TBRA Project funded with \$187,403.45 will prevent homelessness for at least 15 tenant households by providing up to a maximum of \$1,200 per month for as many as 10 months beginning with March of 2020 and concluding prior to December 31, 2020. Rental Mediation for TBRA Program participants will be funded through the CDBG Program.

### **A.4 CARES ACT EMERGENCY HOUSING RETENTION PROGRAM FLOW CHART**

The process outlined below illustrates coordination between the Borough and some of its partners in housing service providers and the court system.



Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic and related needs and resources, it is anticipated that additional partnerships, policies and practices may develop as the CDBG and HOME programs are implemented and as other potential funding sources, needs, community partners, deadline extensions and HUD waivers emerge.

#### **A.5. MARKETING**

State College Borough Planning Department staff will work with Borough Administration staff to design a marketing effort targeted to reach those at most risk of homelessness due to the impacts of the COVID crisis. In the design of the marketing effort staff will consider the need to limit the risk of virus transmission through the passing of printed advertising materials.

HUD has clarified to staff that for the purposes of Fair Housing compliance it is necessary that the programs be widely publicized to the public, adding that it is not permitted for the programs to be available to residents solely through referral from social service agencies.

Active marketing efforts will begin on or about July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and will be routed through the following partners:

- Social service agencies serving State College Borough and Centre County
- Magisterial District Justice
- Landlords and property management companies
- State College Area School District

- Direct marketing to property owners
- Churches, and civic and social non-profit organizations
- Employers and small businesses
- State College Borough Council; Administration; Authorities, Boards and Committees; Community Outreach Staff and other staff of State College Borough

Some of the tools considered for the distribution of program information are as follows:

- State College Borough website and social media
- C-Net
- Radio advertisements
- Direct mail of postcards to residential property owners within State College Borough
- A flyer designed to be distributed widely electronically by email and in printed form to community stakeholders particularly to those most vulnerable and disproportionately impacted segments of the population

All advertisements will include HUD's equal opportunity logo. Income limits and other eligibility criteria will be publicized.

#### **A.6. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

No person will be excluded from participation in the CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Programs, or otherwise discriminated against, on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, age, ancestry, color, national origin, religion, sex, place of birth, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, source of income, disability or handicap, presence of a service animal or support animal, pregnancy, birth of a child or marital or familial status.

Program design of the CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Programs will address the disproportionate needs identified in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and the 2020-2024 Fair Housing Analysis Update as well as those experiencing disproportionate adverse impacts from the COVID health, and economic, crisis as identified through national and statewide studies.

Per the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan of the Municipality of State College, "A disproportionately greater need exists when the members of racial or ethnic group at a given income level experience housing problems at a greater rate (10% or more) than the income level as a whole.

With regard to the four housing problems (lacks complete kitchen facilities; lacks complete plumbing facilities; more than one person per room; and cost burden greater than 30%), a disproportionate need has been identified, with: 90% (35) of American Indian, Alaska Native households and 89% (85) of Hispanic households with an income 0%-30% AMI; 100% (100) of Black/African American households and 100% (275) of Asian households with an income 30-50% AMI; and 100% (15) of American Indian, Alaska Native households with an income 50%-80% AMI.

A disproportionate need was also identified for 67% (30 households) of the Black/African American households with an income 80%-100% AMI. However, this income group is not eligible for CDBG or HOME funded assistance programs.

With regard to severe housing problems (lacks complete kitchen facilities; lacks complete plumbing facilities; more than 1.5 persons per room; and cost burden greater than 50%), a disproportionate need has been identified, with: 90% (35) of American Indian, Alaska native households with an income 0%-30% AMI; 84% (80) of Black/African American households and 85% (105) of Hispanic households with an income 30%-50% AMI.

#### **A.7. UTILIZATION OF HUD WAIVERS**

The CARES Act provided authorization for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to waive numerous CDBG and HOME statutory and programmatic requirements to expedite delivery of housing retention activities to prepare for, prevent and respond to the growing health and economic crisis related to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. State College Borough notified HUD of the intent to utilize waivers related to an expedited citizen participation process.

Additionally, the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program will utilize the HUD waivers that are available through December 31, 2020. For this reason, it is the intent of the Borough to expend FY 2020 HOME funding for this TBRA Program through the end of 2020. See the Appendix A for the TBRA related HUD waivers.

#### **A.8. CDBG & HOME TERMS OF ASSISTANCE**

Housing retention assistance will be provided in the form of a grant and is not subject to recapture or repayment to the Borough. No amount of the assistance must be returned, EXCEPT in the case of fraud or the intentional misrepresentation of any eligibility determining factor.

Payments will be made directly to the mortgage holders, landlords, property management companies and/or utility providers on behalf of program participants.

In order to be eligible to receive assistance tenant applicants shall be willing to engage in mediation services paid for by the CDBG funds. If the tenant applicant agrees to mediation, which is determined to be infeasible for some other reason, the applicant cannot be barred from participation on this basis.

### **B. CDBG FUNDED COVID EMERGENCY RESPONSE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM**

#### **B.1. PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY**

For the purpose of the CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Programs, minimum eligibility criteria for participation are as follows:

- For HOME TBRA Program - Income at less than 80% of AMI per income limits provided in Appendix B

- For CDBG Homelessness Prevention Program - Income at less than 60% of AMI per income limits provided in Appendix B
- Documentation of need for housing and utility assistance due to pandemic related decrease in income ~~of at least 30%~~
- Resident of State College Borough on January 1, 2020
- Lease, or mortgage, for primary place of residence located within State College Borough
- Statement of rent or mortgage delinquency from landlord or lender
- Documentation from landlord or lender that assistance will prevent homelessness
- Documentation of no duplication of benefits
- Documentation that participant will be current on rent after receiving CDBG, HOME and other identified assistance

In anticipation of receiving applications for more CDBG and HOME funding than is available, the following household types will be prioritized to receive assistance. Staff will endeavor to achieve a level of participation of approximately 10% for each of the classes identified below for the overall program and will take steps each week to achieve this goal for each class identified below.

- Households with children under the age of 19 living in the assisted dwelling at the time of application
- English as a Second Language Student Family
- Household with person of a population more vulnerable to the health impacts of the COVID-19 virus as identified by the CDC website on July 1, 2020 (racial and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, people with developmental and behavioral disorders, pregnant people)
- Racial and ethnic minority populations identified as disproportionately impacted by the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Populations identified as having disproportionate housing needs according to the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan as outlined on page \_\_ Section \_\_
- Those households that can document having lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic and having become re-employed in a new job (either as supplemental income or new primary employment) that still pays less than their previous employment
  1. Household with children under the age of 19 living in the assisted dwelling at the time of application
  2. English as a Second Language Student Family
  3. Population identified as housing cost burdened by the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and Fair Housing Analysis Update
  4. Household with racial and ethnic minorities identified by national sources as disproportionately impacted by economic impacts of COVID-19 virus
  5. Household with person of a population more vulnerable to COVID-19 virus as identified on the CDC website on July 1, 2020 (racial and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, people with developmental and behavioral disorders, pregnant people)

## **B.2. LIMITATIONS OF ASSISTANCE**

Expenses eligible under the CDBG funded Homelessness Assistance Program are the amounts listed below, for three consecutive months.

- For tenants, rent and utility payments shall be limited to a total of \$1,200 per month.
- For homeowners, mortgage and utility payments shall be limited to a total of \$2,000 per month.

Utilities are limited to: electricity, natural gas, propane, heating oil, water, sewer, and refuse, and internet (pending HUD approval). There is the potential that an eligible applicant may receive less than the full amount of funding that they are eligible to receive if insufficient CDBG and HOME funding remains available.

Utility, mortgage and rental arrearages may be paid from as early as March 13, 2020.

## **C. HOME FUNDED TENANT BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE**

### **C.1. Purpose of the Rental Assistance Program**

The purpose of the HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program is to provide rental assistance to eligible low-income rental households that have reduced, or lost, wages and that face eviction but for the HOME funded assistance.

This program is funded by a federal grant with income and property eligibility requirements. This is a grant program. Eligible, and approved, program participants, will not be required to pay back any money that is awarded to them, except in the case of fraudulent claims. This is a short-term assistance program, lasting up to a maximum of ten months, that may assist with a portion of a household's current rent and overdue rent for up to \$1,200/month per household not to exceed \$12,000 per household.

The term of assistance will be from March 13, 2020 to December 31, 2020. Requests for payments must be submitted to the Borough for payment no later than December 10, 2020. Expenses submitted for payment after December 10, 2020 are ineligible. For clarification, rent for the full month of December through December 31, 2020 can be paid with HOME funds. However, the request for those funds must be received by the Borough no later than December 10, 2020. Requests for payment received on or after December 11, 2020 will not be accepted at the discretion of Borough staff.

### **C.2. HOME Funded TBRA Eligibility Requirements**

- a. Funds are reserved for households who are unable to pay rent due to a COVID-19 virus related issue resulting in loss of income. Eligible applicants must be:

- 1) current resident of Municipality of State College as documented by a lease dated on or before January 1, 2020.
- 2) working before March 13, 2020, and as a result of COVID-19 virus, has:
  - a) lost employment or monthly income has been reduced
  - b) applied for unemployment benefits
  - c) current on rent as of March 1, 2020
  - d) owing utility bills not more than 30 days past due as of March 13, 2020
  - e) total gross annual household income is under the following income limits, set at 60% of Area Median Income as determined by HUD.

Household Size	Maximum Household Income Limit 2020 Limits
1	\$37,260 (\$716/week)
2	\$42,600 (\$819/week)
3	\$47,940 (\$921/week)
4	\$53,220 (\$1,023/week)
5	\$57,480 (\$1,105/week)
6	\$61,740 (\$1,187/week)
7	\$66,000 (\$1,296/week)
8	\$70,260 (\$1,351/week)

Household Income includes current wages, unemployment compensation, child support, military benefits, social security and disability benefits. **CARES Act payments received one time (such as the \$1,200 per person payments and similar COVID related one time government subsidies that are not applied for by the household and are sporadic) are not included in total annual gross household income calculation.** All income coming into the household is required to be reported.

## 2. Administration

- a. TBRA Hard Costs
  - 1) Housing Quality Standards and Lead Hazard Inspections
    - a) Lead Visual Assessment – If the rental unit was built prior to 1978 and will be occupied by a child under age 6 then tenants must submit documentation of the condition of painted surfaces inside the home with a camera, phone or other device. Photo documentation shall be provided to Borough staff, who will conduct a remote visual assessment of paint conditions. Property owners shall be responsible for utilizing interim control measures to address visually identifiable lead hazards. This expense shall be the sole responsibility of the property owner. Rental assistance will be provided only after Lead hazards have been addressed to the satisfaction of Borough staff.

- b) Inspections for Housing Quality Standards have been waived by HUD until 12/31/2020.
- c) Code inspection documentation will be used in determination of safe condition of housing
- 2) Activities directly associated with TBRA
- 3) Rental Subsidy
- 4) Utility Subsidy
- b. Borough Staff will administer the TBRA Program. Program applicants will be referred to partnering social service agencies for a comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to continued housing stability.
  - 1) Beneficiary (tenant household) Agreement - §92.2 – Required to commit funds to specific address.
    - a) As a condition of assistance, a three-party agreement will be entered into by the Owner, Tenant and Borough.
      1. Combine Tenant (§92.504(c)(5)(iii)) with §92.209 & 92.504 (c)(2)(x))
    - b) As a condition of assistance, a Violations Against Women Act addendum to Lease must be signed by the landlord and tenant if it is not already part of the existing lease.
- c. IDIS set up, funding, vouchers and beneficiary data will be entered and maintained by Borough housing staff. Draws will be prepared by the Senior Planner and approved by the Housing Specialist with guidance from the Borough Finance Office.

## D. CDBG & HOME FUNDED CASE HANDLING PROCEDURES

CDBG AND HOME Funded CARES Act Emergency Housing Retention Program case handling shall follow the flow chart provided in Section A.4. above, which may be edited from time to time to reflect new resources and new opportunities for coordination and enhanced levels of service as adjusted for changing conditions. Specifically, efforts are underway to coordinate with the PHFA funded Rent Relief Program to be administered by the Centre County Adult Services Office.

### **D.1. Application Intake & Selection Process**

Potential Tenant and Homeowner applicants will be identified through the program awareness campaign outlined in the Marketing Plan in Section A.5. above.

Applicants may learn of the COVID Emergency Response Homelessness Prevention Program through any number of avenues. In addition to applicants contacting the Borough directly, outreach has been made to strategic partners to refer applicants to the Borough. For example:

- Coordination has taken place with Magisterial District Justice to ask that he refer those facing eviction proceedings to the Borough's rental

assistance program. This targeted assistance may prevent the downward spiral of events that can follow an evicted household into the future.

- The State College Community Land Trust has been asked to shepherd any land trust property owners facing foreclosure to contact the Borough to apply for foreclosure prevention assistance. This targeted assistance will help to keep permanently affordable housing investments available for future LMI homebuyers. The Temporary Housing Foundation agreed to also notify First Time Home Buyers who purchased HOME funded houses of the availability of financial assistance.
- Centre Helps, the social service needs information and referral agency, will continue to assist Limited English Proficiency households and will conduct housing retention program intake for this population in cooperation with English as a Second Language Teachers from the State College Area School District. Center Helps will provide completed applications to Borough staff for review.
- The English as a Second Language teachers of State College Area School District, who have supported the families of their students, who are among those disproportionately displaced from their jobs due to the coronavirus pandemic, will inform this population of the CARES Act housing retention funding availability so that student families avoid eviction and stay connected to their school community and stay in school, which might not be possible if they become evicted.
- Social service agencies will be asked to refer those who may have mental health issues, situations of domestic violence, or other crises arising due to the stress of facing eviction to Borough rental/mortgage assistance.
- The Community Outreach staff will be asked to distribute information among members of the Cultural Diversity Group, the LGBTQ Committee, to various churches within the Borough and to other civic organizations that can help to reach those populations protected by the anti-discrimination ordinances of the Municipality of State College.
- In compliance with Fair Housing regulations, universally available advertising, through those avenues most utilized by low income individuals and families, will assist in identifying a wide variety of potential applicants that are not otherwise referred.

### **Overarching Objectives of the Selection Process**

- 1) Selection process – Confirm that all eligibility factors are considered  
Staging receipt of applications
  - a. Receive requests by phone
  - b. Stage calls weekly on Monday creating pool of applicants from first variable number of calls received at 7:00 a.m. and at 7:00 p.m.
  - c. All calls go the answering machine which identifies time of call
  - d. Limit the number of callers accepted into the pool of applicants each week to a manageable number that extends the opportunity to participate

1. Return Calls
2. Pre-application to determine if caller is eligible
- 2) The process will be equitable and fair
- 3) Reasonable efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality during the Duplication of Benefits verification process
- 4) Verify validity of all documentation of eligibility criteria
- 5) Remove ineligible households from the list
- 6) Safeguards – Be sure everything is being done correctly and everyone is being treated with equity and fairness
- 7) Conduct each screening/application with clarity, transparency and consistency

#### Objectives

- 1) Open, equitable, convenient application access
- 2) Replenish wait list of households
- 3) Minimize disruption to owners and households
- 4) Serve greatest need
- 5) Provide determination of need
- 6) Provide fair wait list management

#### **Pre-Screening** -

A simplified checklist of eligibility requirements will be made available to marketing partners to provide to potential applicants to see if they might be eligible. Borough staff will also use this checklist style screening tool to quickly determine the potential for eligibility.

#### **Initial Contact with Applicants** –

Beginning in mid-to late-August, on Monday of each week, at 7:00 a.m. and at 7:00 p.m. an answering machine will be available to take calls from the public to request rental/mortgage assistance. This will be the only route through which applicants will be received with the exception of those Limited English Proficient households with applications processed through Centre Helps. (Approximately 10% of the applications accepted each Monday will come from the applications completed by Centre Helps.)

On each day that calls are accepted, the Borough will limit the number of applicants that can be assisted to not more than 20. The number of caller applications to be processed each week will be communicated in writing to the municipality's Administrative Office each week, prior to receiving calls on Monday to retain the integrity of the program. This number may be adjusted up or down depending on the quantity of calls expected, the capacity to process those applications and the limitations of funds available. It is the intention that within staff capacity and within reason, all callers who leave messages will be contacted within the week for pre-screening and to be advised to try again next

week pending the outcome of the pre-screening and the number of applications taken that week.

Prioritization and Applicant Selection -

If there are more callers than the maximum number of applications that will be processed that week, those who pass the pre-screening will be ranked based on time of call. A first-come, first served numbering system will be assigned to the calls, which will be entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Staff will contact the first set of earliest callers from 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and conduct pre-screening by phone until it is apparent that there are sufficient applicants to fill the available “slots” for that week. Based on pre-screening forms, applicants will be further prioritized based on the strategically targeted populations, such as those identified in sections B.1. and C.1. above.

For example, if there are 12 slots available for one week, 6 slots will be reserved for populations with the priority concerns outlined below. As a call is received in first come first served order, each priority slot will be filled. Once all priority slots are filled, we will go back to the start of the first come first served slots to fill the rest of the slots available for that week. If there are no persons in the set of those pre-screened from the call que then staff will pre-screen additional callers in a reasonable effort to fill the priority slots. If priority slots remain unfilled, then staff will fill unfilled slots from the call que on a first come – first served method.

Priority slots will be reserved for households that include the following:

1. Households with children under the age of 19 living in the assisted dwelling at the time of application
2. English as a Second Language Student Family
3. Household that can document having lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic and having become re-employed in a new job (either as supplemental income or new primary employment)
4. Household with person of a population more vulnerable to the health impacts of the COVID-19 virus as identified by the CDC website on July 1, 2020 (racial and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, people with developmental and behavioral disorders, pregnant people)
5. Household of a racial or ethnic minority that is nationally identified as disproportionately impacted by the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
6. Household identified as having disproportionate housing needs according to the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan as outlined on page \_\_ Section \_\_

The first eligible caller to have at least one priority characteristic will be selected for participation. After all 6 priority slots are filled, then eligible applicants will

be taken in the order in which they called until the designated number of applicants for the week is selected.

For example, on one Monday there may be a total of 40 calls received. All 40 callers will receive a return call to be prescreened for potential eligibility. Perhaps 30 of them will be potentially eligible applicants, but only 20 callers will be selected for assistance that week in order to stretch the funding out for a longer period of time. All 30 pre-screened callers that were determined to be eligible will be placed in the order that they called. The first of the 30 to meet a prioritized population will be selected for participation. Staff will go through the 30 applications filling one slot for each priority population. It may be possible that there is no eligible caller to fit a priority population. After an attempt is made to identify one participant in each priority population, then the remaining applicants will be selected on a first come first served method based on the time that their call was received until the 20 available slots for the week are filled.

Applicants that are eligible, but not selected will be notified. Applications not selected will be held over until the next week when it will go through the same selection process.

#### Applications –

The selected applicants for the week (in the example above – 20) will be given a link to an online application that they can fill out electronically. Those lacking the resources to complete the online application have options. Paper copies will be available in the lobby of the Municipal Building. They may also come to the lobby of the State College Borough Municipal Building where computer tablets are available. Staff assistance is available, if needed, to complete the necessary on-line forms in the lobby of the Municipal Building. Staff may also be able to work with applicants over the phone to complete on-line applications for those who have no other feasible options to do so.

Documentation in support of the application can be submitted electronically, or can be mailed, or brought to the lobby of the Municipal Building where copies can be made by staff if necessary.

A complete application for either the CDBG funded, or HOME funded, Program shall include at a minimum the following forms and documentation:

- Pre-screening form
- Application form
- Self-certification form - *tenant certifies income in lieu of 2-months source documentation - Certification must indicate loss or reduction of income & include all benefits except: Stimulus payment (\$1,200) and Federal Pandemic Unemployment (\$600/week) do not count as income*
- Conflict of interest form
- Landlord/Mortgage Lender certification form

- Tenant – Landlord Mediation referral form
- Information release form for income and duplication of benefits
- Three party-agreement
- VAWA Lease addendum, if not already in lease
- Copy of driver’s license and social security card
- Unemployment determination letter, if unemployed or furloughed
- Employer loss of income statement
- Lease executed by tenant and landlord
- Photographs of interior housing condition (for TBRA only)
- Lead Based Paint hazard form (for TBRA only)

### Participant Income Eligibility

#### Eligibility Determination Process

#### Complete Income Self-Certification

- 1) Determine Household Size
- 2) Document Current Income
- 3) Annualize Income
  - a) Types of Deductions
    1. All households
      - i. Dependents
      - ii. Child Care
      - iii. Disability
    2. Deductions permitted ONLY for household where head, spouse, co-head is elderly OR disabled
      - i. Elderly/Disabled family
      - ii. Medical
  - b) Further evaluate case handling for “zero” income households, which will include referring such applicants to employment agencies, food banks, and social service agencies to be added to the waiting list for various forms of assistance including a housing voucher from the Centre County Housing Authority.
- 4) Provide all program applicants to other social service agencies to assist with essential care concerns, such as housing, food and employment security.

### Ineligible Applications -

If Not eligible – Notify household of the following, in writing within 7 days of application completion.

- a. Reason(s) for determination
- b. Family’s right to request an informal review
- c. Informal review process request form

### Tenant Advocate and Tenant – Landlord Mediation Services –

All eligible households will be evaluated for the feasibility of receiving Tenant-Landlord Mediation services through a professionally trained mediator, such as from the Center for Alternatives in Community Justice (CACJ). Mediation services would be provided through the CDBG Program and at no cost to

program participants. Mediation services must be procured through the Request for Qualifications process.

Mediation services will be conducted usually within one week to two weeks of determination of applicant eligibility, if possible, to achieve the maximum benefit from funds provided. Mediation service providers will work in coordination with the Magisterial District Justice and staff of Mid-Penn Legal Services, who may refer those facing eviction for mediation services provided through the CDBG Funded Homelessness Prevention Program. Tenant Advocate services may also be provided through an agency partnering with the CACJ.

These services may be conducted electronically to minimize the spread of the virus. The amount of rent payments to be made will be determined through the mediation process. It is possible that an otherwise eligible tenant household will become ineligible if it is determined that the investment of grant funds is not sufficient to prevent eviction.

It is a goal of the mediation process that landlords accept rental assistance available in lieu of proceeding with the eviction process. Program participants that face eviction will be referred to housing service providers for assistance.

It is a goal of the program to involve a Tenant Advocate in this process if it is determined to be beneficial and otherwise feasible financially and from a capacity perspective. The purpose of the Tenant-Advocate would be to advise the tenant of the limits and extent of their rights and responsibilities. Tenant Advocate services would be provided to the tenant prior to, rather than during, mediation sessions.

#### Environmental Clearance

The CDBG funded homelessness prevention program and the HOME funded TBRA program Categorically Excluded – subject to 24 CFR Part § 58.5. A screening sheet for each individual property will be completed and retained in the project file for each participating property.

#### Distribution of monthly subsidy payments to landlords

##### Payment to Landlords

- 1) The Finance Department will issue checks weekly that will be mailed directly to landlords or Property Management companies
- 2) Efforts will be made through mediation services for late fees to be forgiven. CDBG and HOME funds will only be used to pay late fees as a last resort in order to prevent eviction.
- 3) Prior to issuing payment to the landlord, the tenant must identify the source of funds, if any are needed, in order for the assistance to bring the tenant current on the rent. This is the means by which the Borough will work to ensure that the tenant's portion of the rent is paid and that the funding

made available will prevent homelessness at this time.

**Policy for termination of assistance**

Follow up with household on a monthly basis to determine if self-sufficiency has been achieved or if continued assistance is needed.

Examples of reasons to terminate assistance

- 1) Household achieved self-sufficiency
- 2) Fraud or the intent to commit fraud
- 3) Housing unit fails inspection
- 4) Landlord refuses to fix lead paint concerns or other housing quality issues
- 5) Household moved out of unit
- 6) Household voluntarily withdraws from assistance

3. **Policy for handling complaints**

Complaints will be handled using the process outlined in the previously approved Borough of State College Community Development and Housing Policies and Procedures Manual Community Development Block Grant Home Investment Partnership Program Other Federal Funding.

4. **Conflict of Interest Policy**

The Borough's Conflict of Interest Policy will be utilized.

## LIST OF APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

### **APPENDIX- A – HUD WAIVER NOTIFICATIONS**

### **APPENDIX B - INCOME GUIDELINES (effective July 1, 2020)**

### **APPENDIX C – BOROUGH COMPLAINT POLICY**

### **APPENDIX D – BOROUGH CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

### **FORMS – (under development)**

- Pre-screening form
- Application form
- Income Eligibility Self-certification form
- Conflict of interest form
- Landlord/Mortgage Lender certification form
- Tenant – Landlord Mediation referral form
- Information release form for income and duplication of benefits
- Three party-agreement
- VAWA Lease addendum, if not already in lease

## ACRONYMS

AMI-Area Median Income

CACJ – Center for Alternatives in Community Justice

CDBG – Community Development Block Grant

FMR-Fair Market Rent

FY – Fiscal Year

HOME-Home Investments Partnership

HUD-United States Office of Housing and Urban Development

DRAFT

APPENDIX A

**SAMPLE—COVID-19 HOME Program Waiver Notification**

Please submit request notifications to [CPD\\_COVID-19WaiverPHI@hud.gov](mailto:CPD_COVID-19WaiverPHI@hud.gov), [HOMECOVID19@hud.gov](mailto:HOMECOVID19@hud.gov), and copy your CPD HUD Representative.

<b>COVID-19 HOME Program Waiver - Required Information</b>	
Participating Jurisdiction:	State College Borough
Date Waiver Notification Submitted:	May 29, 2020
Requestor's Name:	Maureen Safko
Requestor's Title:	Senior Planner
Requestor's Phone Number:	(814)234-1709
Requestor's Email:	<a href="mailto:msafko@statecollegepa.us">msafko@statecollegepa.us</a>
Declared Disaster Area(s) where waiver will be used:	COVID-19, Pennsylvania

**Check the Waivers below that you will be implementing.**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Item to be Waived (per HOME Waivers, effective April 10, 2020)</b>	<b>Check if yes</b>
HOME	10% Administration and Planning Cap	<b>X</b>
HOME	CHDO Set-aside Requirement	<b>X</b>
HOME	Limits and Conditions on CHDO Operating Expense Assistance	<b>X</b>
HOME	Matching Contribution Requirements	<b>X</b>
HOME	Citizen Participation Reasonable Notice and Opportunity to Comment	<b>X</b>
HOME	Income Documentation	<b>X</b>
HOME	On-site Inspections of HOME-assisted Rental Housing	<b>X</b>
HOME	Four-Year Project Completion Requirement	<b>X</b>
HOME	Nine-Month Deadline for Sale of Homebuyer Units	<b>X</b>
HOME	Use of HOME Funds for Troubled Project Operating Reserves	<b>X</b>
HOME	Timeframe for a PJ's Response to Findings of Noncompliance	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Consolidated Plan – HOME Certification, Analysis of Local Market Conditions, and Citizen Participation	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Tenant Selection and Targeted Assistance	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Rent Reasonableness	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Eligible TBRA Costs and Maximum TBRA Assistance	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Term of Rental Assistance Contract	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Tenant Protections – Prohibited Lease Terms	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Housing Quality Standards Initial Inspections	<b>X</b>
HOME (TBRA)	Annual Inspections of TBRA Units	<b>X</b>

**Provisions that are not specifically suspended or waived remain in full effect.**

APPENDIX B

BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE INCOME LIMITS 2020 CDBG & HOME (Effective 7/1/2020)				
<< Bellaire Court Apartments >>				
<< Kemmerer Road Apartments >>				
<< BORO Rehab Program >>				
<< FTHB - Low/Moderate >>				
<< Inclusionary Housing >>				
Size	30% AMI HOME / CDBG	50% AMI (Very Low)	60% AMI	80% AMI (Low)
1 Person	\$18,650	\$31,050	\$37,260	\$49,700
2 Person	\$21,300	\$35,500	\$42,600	\$56,800
3 Person	\$23,950	\$39,950	\$47,940	\$63,900
4 Person	\$26,600	\$44,350	\$53,220	\$70,950
5 Person	\$28,750	\$47,900	\$57,480	\$76,650
6 Person	\$30,900	\$51,450	\$61,740	\$82,350
7 Person	\$33,000	\$55,000	\$66,000	\$88,000
8 Person	\$35,150	\$58,550	\$70,260	\$93,700



APPENDIX C  
Complaint Handling Procedure  
To be inserted

DRAFT

**APPENDIX D**  
**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**  
To be inserted

DRAFT

FORMS  
To be inserted

DRAFT