

CHAPTER 3. INFORMATION SYSTEMS POLICIES

3-1. Policies.

- a. Management controls within the systems life cycle will document the requirements that each major information system is intended to serve. The periodic review of those requirements over the life of the system will assist in determining whether the requirements continue to exist and the system continues to meet the purposes for which it was developed.
- b. Information systems will be acquired or developed in a manner that facilitates compatibility and interconnectivity.
- c. Information systems will be managed so that they operate efficiently, effectively, and accurately. In this regard, the Department will systematically inventory its major information systems and periodically review its IRM activities.
- d. A level of security will be established for all HUD information systems commensurate with the sensitivity of the information and the risk and magnitude of loss or harm that could result from improper access or operation of the information systems.
- e. Only authorized personnel will have access to information systems, and such access will be limited based on system sensitivity.
- f. Information systems will be designed to permit change, expansion, and integration; the need for independent development of limited purpose systems will be reduced to the extent practicable (i.e., when the benefits justify the cost).
- g. Off-the-shelf software will be acquired from commercial sources unless the cost-effectiveness of developing custom software is clear and documented.

- h. Existing and planned major information systems will not unnecessarily duplicate each other or information systems available from other agencies or from the private sector.

- i. HUD information system requirements will not unduly restrict the prerogatives of the Chief Executive Officer of State or local government units.
- j. The Department will use Federal Information Processing and Telecommunications standards except where it can be demonstrated that the cost of using a standard exceeds the benefits or the standard will impede the accomplishment of HUD's mission.
- k. The official whose program an information system supports is responsible and accountable for the products of that system and for the timeliness, security, and quality of data in the system.
- l. The Department will be responsible for the conduct of and accountable for any acquisitions made pursuant to a delegation of authority.
- m. Departmental information systems represent a valuable resource and require adequate protection as follows:
 - (1) ADP systems supporting Departmental programs and activities will be developed so that recovery from technical errors or catastrophic events can be accomplished in a timely and effective manner.
 - (2) ADP systems will utilize optimal storage mechanisms and will be structured to permit efficient access with due regard to security considerations.
 - (3) ADP systems will provide maximum protection for the integrity of HUD information.
 - (4) ADP systems which contain financial information will be protected in accordance with the additional safeguards required by

the General Accounting Office, and related HUD Handbook 1905.1, Accounting Principles and Standards.

- (5) All HUD ADP systems, new or modified, will be documented before they are declared operational. Mainframe systems must be documented in accordance with Handbook

2400.15 , HUD ADP Documentation Standards.
Microcomputer applications must be
documented in accordance with Handbook
2400.13, Word Processing and Microcomputer
Technology Policies and Procedures.

- n. Training will be provided to users of HUD's automated systems and to users of off-the-shelf software which IPS has approved as a Departmental standard.
- o. The standardization of Departmental nomenclature, data elements, data element definitions and codes is essential to the Department's control of information resources.
- p. For major systems development projects, progress toward attaining key events and target dates in the systems life cycle will be tracked and reported quarterly to the IRM Planning Board.