

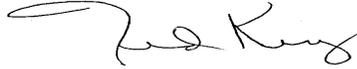


No. 2006 -01
February 1, 2006

PROGRAM GUIDANCE

PROGRAM: Programs Covered by Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 SuperNOFA

FOR: Tribal Government Leaders and Tribally Designated Housing Entities

 **for**

FROM: Rodger J. Boyd, Deputy Assistant Secretary, PN

TOPIC: Electronic Submission of Grant Applications

Purpose: This Guidance transmits three recently published documents related to Electronic Submission of Grant Applications for HUD funding. The first is a Notice of Opportunity to Register Early for Electronic Submission of Grant Applications for HUD Funding Opportunities; Early Registration With Grants.gov; Notice dated December 9, 2005. The second document is a brochure entitled STEP BY STEP – Your Guide to Registering for Grant Opportunities. The third document is Electronic Submission of Applications for Grants and Other HUD Financial Assistance; Final Rule dated December 29, 2005.

Background: Applicants who apply for funding under any of HUD's programs identified in the SuperNOFA are required to submit their application electronically through Grants.gov. Before an applicant can apply for a grant opportunity, they must first register with Grants.gov.

Early Registration: The attached Early Registration Notice encourages prospective applicants to register early for FY 2006 grant opportunities. Registering early may eliminate many of the registration problems that applicants experienced in FY 2005 by giving both the applicant and Grants.gov sufficient time to address any questions or issues that may arise related to the registration process. HUD anticipates that it will post its SuperNOFA in early 2006. Although applicants can register at any time before an application is submitted to HUD, the registration process can take approximately 10 days or more. Prospective applicants can register early at <http://www.grants.gov>. A copy of the early registration Notice is also on HUD's website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>.

STEP BY STEP Brochure: This brochure will walk you through the process of registering for and managing the Grants.gov registration process. You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can apply for grants online. HUD has also posted the brochure on HUD's website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>.

Mandatory Electronic Submission: HUD published a proposed rule on November 23, 2004. After consideration of comments received, HUD has published the Final Rule without substantive changes. This final rule establishes the requirement for applicants for HUD grants or certain other financial assistance to submit their applications to HUD electronically. This requirement applies to any application that HUD has placed on the www.grants.gov/Apply Web site. The rule does provide that this requirement may be waived for good cause in response to a request for a waiver. Specific instructions for requesting a waiver can be found in the FY 2006 SuperNOFA General Section published in the Federal Register on January 20, 2006.

Technical Assistance With Registration Issues: Technical assistance with registration issues can be requested directly from Grants.gov or from the Grants Management staff in the Area Office of Native American Programs.

Attachments



Federal Register

**Friday,
December 9, 2005**

Part II

Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Notice of Opportunity To Register Early
for Electronic Submission of Grant
Applications for HUD Funding
Opportunities; Early Registration With
Grants.gov; Notice**

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-5027-N-01]

Notice of Opportunity To Register Early for Electronic Submission of Grant Applications for HUD Funding Opportunities; Early Registration With Grants.gov

AGENCY: Office of Assistant Secretary for Administration, HUD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As part of the ongoing implementation of Electronic Government (E-Government), a key component of the President's Management Agenda, HUD is continuing with its transition to a total electronic grant application system. This system requires applicants to submit applications for Federal grants electronically through Grants.gov, the governmentwide portal for electronic grant applications. To protect the applicant and the applicant's information, and to assure Federal agencies that they are interacting with officials authorized to submit applications on behalf of applicant entities, an applicant must register with Grants.gov to submit an application for funding.

To facilitate the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Federal grant application process, this notice encourages prospective applicants for HUD funding to register early for the FY2006 funding cycle. Registering now, in advance of agencies posting their FY2006 grant opportunities, may eliminate many of the registration issues that HUD applicants faced in FY2005 of not meeting registration requirements in time to meet grant application deadlines. Early registration provides HUD, Grants.gov, and the applicant sufficient time to address any questions regarding the registration process, as well as allow applicants to focus on completing application requirements, since registration will be completed.

HUD anticipates that it will post its funding opportunities in early 2006. Prospective applicants for FY2006 HUD grants are encouraged to register at <http://www.grants.gov> with the publication of this Notice. Although applicants can register at any time before an application is submitted to HUD, the registration process can take approximately 10 days or more. The process relies upon an exchange of data across three different databases and an organization's E-Business Point of Contact (E-Business POC) to complete the authorization process. With busy schedules, an organization seeking to

submit a grant application would not want a scenario where a key individual serving as the E-Business POC is not available to complete the process in time to meet an application deadline. Early registration helps applicants avoid possible delays with the timely submission of applications or finding out right before the submission deadline that all the steps in the registration process are not complete.

This notice describes the steps that HUD applicants must take to register successfully at <http://www.grants.gov>.

DATES: Early registration commences with the issuance of this notice and ends January 31, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The NOFA Information Center, at telephone number 800 HUD-8929. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at 800 HUD-2209. The NOFA Information Center is open between the hours of 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

I. Grants.gov

Early in his administration, President Bush set expanding electronic government as a goal for the Federal government. Among other things, expanding electronic government would result in the public receiving high-quality services from the Federal government. Expanding electronic government would also improve the Federal government's efficiency in the delivery of its services by reducing the cost of delivering those services.

As part of this initiative, the Federal government launched Grants.gov. Grants.gov is a simple, unified access point for interactions between grant applicants and the Federal agencies that manage grant funds. There are 26 Federal grant-making agencies and over 900 individual grant programs that award over \$350 billion in grants each year. Through Grants.gov, the grant community, including state; local and tribal governments; academia and research institutions; public housing agencies; not-for-profit and for-profit organizations; and other organizations need only visit one Web site to access, find, and apply for grant funds available from the Federal government.

In FY2005, a record number of grant applicants registered with Grants.gov resulting in over 15,000 electronic grant applications submitted to Federal agencies. This accomplishment signals the adoption of a major change in the way the Federal government does business, moving from a paper-based

grants management process to an electronic process. In FY2006, Federal agency grant programs will continue to move toward implementing a completely electronic application process. As a result, Federal agencies, including HUD, strongly encourage the grant community to prepare as early as possible for the electronic application process using Grants.gov.

II. The Need To Register With Grants.gov

Before an applicant can apply for a grant opportunity, the applicant must first register with Grants.gov to obtain certain identifying information. However, it should be noted that registration is a multi-step process and all of the steps do not occur directly at Grants.gov. Registration protects both the applicant and the applicable Federal agencies. Registration confirms that the applicant has designated a certain individual or entity to submit an application on behalf of the applicant and assures the Federal agency that it is interacting with the designated representative of the applicant.

III. What Is Involved in Registration?

- Use of DUNS Numbers. In 2004, the Federal government adopted a policy that applicants must obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in order to receive funding. DUNS numbers are issued by Dun and Bradstreet, a company that provides business information credit, marketing and purchasing decisions for more than 70 million businesses worldwide. Its data universal numbering system issues unique 9-digit numbers that are used by businesses and the Federal government to track funding and business related information and relationships. Large organizations can set up what is known as DUNS + 4 to track the flow of funding and disbursements within the parent organizations and any number of sub-agencies or departments within the organization. States and universities frequently identify their sub-organizations through the use of DUNS + 4 numbering.

- Registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). The CCR is the primary vendor database for the Federal government. The CCR was established to primarily assist Federal government agency acquisitions and procurements. The CCR collects, validates, stores and disseminates data in support of agency acquisitions. Registration in CCR was extended from the procurement and acquisition area to grants. For grants, CCR stores an applicant's information, allowing Grants.gov to verify an applicant's

identity and identify key business contacts for the organization. When an applicant registers with CCR it will be required to designate an E-Business Point of Contact (EPOC). The E-Business POC is the sole authority within an organization who can approve or revoke approval of an individual to submit grant applications on behalf of their organization via Grants.gov.

- Registration with a Credential Provider. The Credential Provider is the organization that validates the electronic identity of an individual through electronic credentials, personal identification numbers (PINs), passwords or other identifying information for Grants.gov. In order to safeguard information, Grants.gov uses E-Authentication, the Federal program that ensures secure transactions. E-Authentication defines the level of trust or trustworthiness of the parties involved in a transaction through the use of credential providers. This is the process of determining, with a high degree of certainty, that someone is really who they claim to be. When an applicant registers with a Credential Provider they receive a USER ID and Password.

- Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) Registration. An AOR is the person(s) named by an agency to submit an application for funding consideration on behalf of the

agency. By authorizing the person to submit on behalf of the organization, the organization is stating that the AOR is authorized to make a legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization. Designated AORs must register with the Credential Provider to obtain a USER ID and Password and register in Grants.gov to be identified as their organizations AOR. The organization's E-Business POC will be sent an email from Grants.gov, which tells the EPOC that someone from the E-Business POC's organization has registered with Grants.gov as an AOR. The E-Business POC must go into Grants.gov and approve the AOR status to allow the nominated person to submit an application via Grants.gov. When an AOR has been designated and approved to submit the application the registration is completed for that person to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization.

IV. Time Allotted for Registration

Generally, registration with Grants.gov, which must be completed *prior* to any grant application submission, takes approximately 10 business days. The length of time depends on when the steps in the registration process are completed; the volume of traffic on the various sites involved in the registration process; and the ability of the applicant to determine

who will be the person responsible for submitting the grant application, and having that person authorized through the registration process as the AOR. Registering early should allow the applicant sufficient time to focus on these items, and will help an applicant become familiar with the requirements for electronic application submission through Grants.gov.

V. The Registration Process

Many Federal grant-making agencies provide funding to organizational entities and some agencies are permitted to fund individuals; however, HUD only provides funding to organizations. This notice, therefore, is directed to HUD applicants, that are organizational entities.

Appendix A, which follows, provides a step-by-step guide to the registration process before an applicant may submit a grant application electronically. Appendix B lists resources that Grants.gov makes available to prospective applicants to help them through the process. All organizational entities must complete steps 1 to 5 to be fully registered with Grants.gov.

Dated: November 22, 2005.

Keith A. Nelson,

Assistant Secretary for Administration.

BILLING CODE 4210-01-P

Appendix A

Overview of the Step-by-Step Registration Process All Five Steps Must be Completed to Register

Step One: Obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number

- **Need for a DUNS Number.** In order to submit an electronic application via Grants.gov, your organization will need a DUNS number. The DUNS number stands for Data Universal Numbering System.
- **Use of DUNS + 4.** Large organizations can use the DUNS number plus 4 additional digits to identify specific units within a large entity.
- **DUNS Number Good for the Entire Process.** You will use the same DUNS number throughout the registration and application process.
- **Do you Already Have a DUNS Number?** Prior to requesting a DUNS number investigate if your organization already has a DUNS number by contacting your chief financial officer or grant administrator.
- **If No DUNS Number, Just Call to Get One.** If your organization does not have a DUNS number you can immediately receive one by calling 866-705-5711. For persons with hearing impairments, the phone number is 866-814-7818. **It takes approximately ten minutes to get a DUNS number and there is no charge.**

Proceed to Step Two

Step Two: Register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)

Applicants Registering for the First Time.

Your organization must register with CCR to establish roles and IDs for representatives that will use Grants.gov to submit electronic applications. Your organization's DUNS number is required to register with the CCR.

- **CCR Assistance Center Available To Assist You.** If you need assistance with the registration process, you can contact the **CCR Assistance Center** 24 hours, 7 days a week at 888-227-2423 or 269-961-5757 or online at www.ccr.gov. Persons with hearing impairments may contact the CCR by using the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.
- **CCR Helpful Tool.** In addition, a CCR Handbook is available by clicking on the "CCR Handbook" tab at the top of the page at www.ccr.gov.
- **Complete a Trading Partner Profile (TPP) and receive a Temporary Confirmation Number.** To start the registration process, go to www.ccr.gov. The CCR registration process consists of completing a Trading Partner Profile (TPP). On the left side of the screen, click on "Start New Registration". Enter your DUNS number at the next screen, "New Registration". At the next screen, the CCR will assign a temporary confirmation number that allows you to save your registration as a work in progress.
- **Start, Save, and, Complete your TPP at a Later Time.** Your temporary confirmation number, along with your DUNS number, will let you access CCR to complete your TPP at a later date. To access your TPP at a later date, at www.ccr.gov, select "Finish Saved Registration Using Confirmation Number". At the next screen, enter your DUNS number and temporary confirmation number. Follow the instructions on the next screens until you complete the TPP.
- **Replacement of Temporary Confirmation Number by Trading Partner Identification Number (TPIN).** A Trading Partner Identification Number (TPIN),

which is assigned by CCR, will replace the temporary confirmation number when your registration is approved and becomes active. The TPIN is also your confidential password that confirms that you successfully registered in CCR and allows you to change your CCR information.

- **Prepare to Select an E-Business Point of Contact and an Authorized Organization Representative.** While completing the TPP, you will need to identify an E-Business Point of Contact (E-Business POC) and an alternate, who will be responsible for identifying and naming individuals as Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR). The AOR must be someone authorized to enter into a legally binding commitment for the organization. The AOR will submit applications through Grants.gov for your organization. The person that completes the TTP can be the E-Business POC and the AOR or they can be different people.
- **Create a Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN).** The final step of the TPP requires you to create a Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN). The MPIN is a self-defined nine-character password that the E-Business POC will need to access Grants.gov to authorize the AOR to submit a grant application.
- **Two Notifications of Successful CCR Registration.** After you complete the TPP, you will receive two notices if your registration was submitted successfully. The first notice, which you will receive **within 24 hours** after submitting your registration, welcomes you to CCR and will include a copy of your registration. The second notice, which you will receive **within approximately 48 hours** after submitting your registration, provides you with a Web link/address where you can enter your DUNS number and temporary confirmation number to obtain your confidential TPIN.

Current Registrants without a MPIN. If you currently have an active registration in CCR and you do not have a MPIN you will need to:

- Access your CCR registration by clicking on “Update or Renew Registration using TPIN”.
- Enter your DUNS number and TPIN.
- Click on the tab named “Points of Contact”, complete all fields for the E-Business POC and the alternate E-Business POC. Scroll down to the bottom of the “Points of Contact” page and create your own MPIN. Click on the “Validate/Save” button.

Your registration will take approximately 48 hours to update.

Annual Renewal of your CCR Registration. Applicants are required to renew/update their information in CCR on an annual basis. If you do not renew your registration it will expire and result in your Grants.gov application being rejected.

- To renew your registration, go to www.ccr.gov, and click on “Update or Renew Registrations Using TPIN”.
- Enter your DUNS number and TPIN, and click “Submit”.
- If there are no changes to the registration, click the “Validate/Save” button for the information to register in the system, then click “Submit”.
- If there are changes, enter the changes, and then click “Submit”.
- **Your registration will take approximately 48 hours to update.**

NOTE: You must click on the “Validate/Save” or the “Renew Profile” button in “Registration Tools”.

Don't Know Your TPIN? If you are registered in CCR, but do not know your TPIN, go to www.ccr.gov.

- Click on "Update or Renew Registrations Using TPIN".
- At the next screen click on "Don't Know Your TPIN? Click Here for a TPIN Letter request".
- On the next screen enter your DUNS number and click on "Send TPIN Letter".
- A confidential TPIN letter will be mailed to the CCR Point of Contact (POC) identified in the TPP. If you do not know your organization's POC, call 888-227-2423 for assistance.

Verify Status of Your Registration. You can verify the status of your registration online at www.ccr.gov.

- Click on "Search CCR".
- When prompted, enter your DUNS number and click "Search". The registration status is located at the top of the page or you can also call the CCR Assistance Center for the status of your registration.
- You should check the [ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) website for any additional information that may be implemented.

Proceed to Step Three

Step Three: Register with the Credential Provider

- **Need for Credential Provider to Safeguard Information.** In order to safeguard the security of your electronic information, Grants.gov utilizes a Credential Provider to determine with certainty that someone is really who they claim to be.

- **AOR Must Register with the Credential Provider.** An assigned AOR must register with the Grants.gov Credential Provider to create a username and password, which are needed to submit an application package through Grants.gov. To register: Go to:
<http://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister>. Scroll down the page and enter your DUNS number and click on “Register”. At the next screen scroll down and select “Get Your Credentials”. Complete and submit all information on the E-Authentication User Information screen.
- **Create User Name and Password.** On the next screen you will confirm your information, create your own “User Name” and “Password”, and click on “Submit”. If all information has been entered correctly, you will receive a notice of Registration Success.
- **Same Day Registration.** User names and passwords are validated on the same day that you register.

Proceed to Step Four

Step Four: Register with Grants.gov

- **AOR Required to Register with Grants.gov.** The AOR must register with Grants.gov in order to submit an application for an organization. You can register with Grants.gov *on the same day*.
- To register with Grants.gov: Click the “Applicants” link at the top of any screen at www.grants.gov. At the next screen scroll down and select “Register with Grants.gov”. Enter your Username and Password supplied by the Credential Provider and click on “Register”. Complete all information on the “Authorized Organization Representative User Profile” screen and click “Submit”.

- Upon following all steps correctly, you will receive a notice that you successfully registered with Grants.gov. The E-Business POC will receive a notice stating that someone has registered to submit grant applications on behalf of your organization.

Proceed to Step Five

Step Five: Authorize an AOR to submit a Grant Application

- **Notification to E-Business POC that AOR has Registered.** This is a **final and very critical step** in the registration process. Once a potential AOR registers with a Credential Provider and Grants.gov, the E-Business POC will receive an email stating that someone has signed up to become an AOR for their organization.
- **E-Business POC must Authorize AOR to Submit Applications.** The E-Business POC will need to authorize the AOR as the Authorized Applicant that is approved to submit applications on behalf of the organization, before that person can submit an application.

Note: If an AOR has not been authorized by their E-Business POC, the submitted application will be rejected.

- **Authorizing an AOR.** To authorize an AOR to submit applications on behalf of the organization: Click the Ebiz link at the top of any screen at www.grants.gov. At the next screen, click on "Login Here". Enter your DUNS and MPIN and click on "Login". The next screen welcomes you to the "E-Business Points of Contact" section where you will be able to add and revoke AOR privileges. On the left side of the screen, select "Manage Applicants". Click on the box(es) next to the name of the AOR(s) that you are assigning rights. Click on "Reassign Roles". At the next screen, use the arrows to move the roles from one box to the other. To provide authorization, the "Current Roles" should indicate "Authorized

Applicant”. Click on “Continue”. You will receive a notice that the role has been successfully reassigned. Click on “Continue”. Repeat the steps if you are assigning rights to multiple AORs.

- **Notification of Approval of AOR.** The AOR will receive an email advising that the E-Business POC has provided them authorization to submit applications on behalf of their organization.
- **Check your AOR Status.** An AOR can check their status by clicking the “Applicants” link at the top of any screen. At the next screen, click on “Login Here”. Enter your Username and Password supplied by the Credential Provider, click on “Login”. On the left side of the screen, select “Manage Applicant Profile”. Your status will be either – “Approved” or “AOR Request Sent”. If the status is “Approved” you are authorized to submit grant applications on behalf of your organization. If the status is “AOR Request Sent” you have not been approved and you should contact your E-Business POC and have them authorize you as an AOR with Grants.gov.

For additional assistance

Registration checklists that guide you through the entire process for submitting electronic grant applications are available at the “Get Started” link on Grants.gov. If you have questions or need additional information, call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 800-518-GRANTS (4726) or email support@grants.gov. The Contact Center hours of operation are Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Appendix B

The following is a list of resources on the Grants.gov website that are designed to help you through the Find and Apply Process electronic process.

Frequently Asked Questions

Training Demonstration

Tutorial

User Guide

Quick Reference

Glossary

Technical Library

Tips and Tools



LEARN HOW TO REGISTER
WITH GRANTS.GOV

STEP BY STEP: **Your Guide to Registering for Grant Opportunities**

Information for Applicants and Grantees

This brochure will walk you through the process of registering for and managing the Grants.gov registration process. You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can apply for grants online.



Register Early!



REGISTERING FOR ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Step One: Obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number

In order to submit an electronic application via Grants.gov, your organization will need a DUNS number. You will use the *same DUNS number throughout the registration and application process.*

Prior to requesting a DUNS number, find out if your organization already has a DUNS number by contacting your chief financial officer or grant administrator. If your organization does not have a DUNS number you can immediately receive one by calling 866-705-5711. *It takes approximately ten minutes to get a DUNS number and there is no charge.*

Note: Your registration is not finished until Steps Two through Five are completed.

Step Two: Register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)

Applicants Registering for the First Time. Your organization must register with CCR to establish roles and IDs for representatives that will use Grants.gov to submit electronic applications. If you need assistance with the registration process, you can contact the CCR Assistance Center 24 hours, 7 days a week at 888-227-2423 or 269-961-5757 or online at www.ccr.gov. In addition, a CCR Handbook is available by clicking on the "CCR Handbook" tab at the top of the page at www.ccr.gov.

To start the registration process, go to www.ccr.gov. The CCR registration process consists of completing a Trading Partner Profile

(TPP). On the left side of the screen, click on "Start New Registration". Enter your DUNS number at the next screen, "New Registration". At the next screen, the CCR will assign a temporary confirmation number that allows you to save your registration as a work in progress. Your temporary confirmation number, along with your DUNS number, will let you access CCR to complete your application at a later date. To access your application at a later date, at www.ccr.gov, select "Finish Saved Registration Using Confirmation Number". At the next screen, enter your DUNS number and temporary confirmation number. Follow the instructions on the next screens until you complete the TPP.

Note: A Trading Partner Identification Number (TPIN), which is assigned by CCR, will replace the temporary confirmation number when your registration is approved and becomes active. The TPIN is also your confidential password that confirms that you successfully registered in CCR and allows you to change your CCR information.

Note: While completing the TPP, you will need to identify an E-Business Point of Contact (E-Business POC) and an alternate, who will be responsible for identifying and naming individuals as Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR). The AOR should be someone that has the right to enter into a legally binding commitment for the organization. The AOR will submit applications through Grants.gov for your organization. The person that completes the TPP can be the E-Business POC and the AOR or they can be different people.

The final step of the TPP requires you to create a Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN). The MPIN is a self-defined nine character password that the E-Business POC will need to access Grants.gov to authorize the AOR to submit a grant application.

After you complete the TPP, you will receive two notices if your registration was submitted successfully. The first notice, which you will receive within 24 hours after submitting your registration, welcomes you to CCR and will include a copy of your registration. The second notice, which you will receive within approximately 48 hours after submitting your registration, provides you with a Web link/address where you can enter your DUNS number and temporary confirmation number to obtain your confidential TPIN.

SUBMIT EARLY!



Current Registrants without a MPIN. If you currently have an active registration in CCR and you do not have a MPIN you will need to:

- Access your CCR registration by clicking on "Update or Renew Registration using TPIN".
- Enter your DUNS number and TPIN.
- Click on the tab named "Points of Contact", complete all fields for the E-Business POC and the alternate E-Business POC.
- Scroll down to the bottom of the "Points of Contact" page and create your own MPIN.
- Click on the "Validate/Save" button. Your registration will take approximately 48 hours to update.

Renewing your CCR Registration. *Applicants are required to renew/update their information in CCR on an annual basis.* If you do not renew your registration it will expire and result in your Grants.gov application being rejected. To renew your registration, go to www.ccr.gov, and click on "Update or Renew Registrations Using TPIN". Enter your DUNS number and TPIN, and click "Submit". If there are no changes to the registration, click the "Validate/Save" button for the information to register in the system, then click "Submit". If there are changes, enter the changes, and then click "Submit". Your registration will take approximately 48 hours to update.

Note: You must click on the "Validate/Save" or the "Renew Profile" button in "Registration Tools".

Don't Know Your TPIN? If you are registered in CCR, but do not know your TPIN, go to www.ccr.gov. Click on "Update or Renew Registrations Using TPIN". At the next screen click on "Don't Know Your TPIN? Click Here for a TPIN Letter request". On the next screen enter your DUNS number and click on "Send TPIN Letter". A confidential TPIN letter will be mailed to the CCR Point of Contact (POC) identified in the TPP. If you do not know your organization's POC, call 888-227-2423 for assistance.

Verify Status of Your Registration. You can verify the status of your registration online at www.ccr.gov by clicking on "Search CCR". When prompted, enter your DUNS number and click "Search". The registration status is located at the

top of the page. You can also call the CCR Assistance Center for the status of your registration.

You should check the ccr.gov website for any additional information that may be implemented.

Note: Your registration is not finished until Steps Three through Five are completed.

Step Three: Register with the Credential Provider

In order to safeguard the security of your electronic information, Grants.gov utilizes a Credential Provider to determine with certainty that someone is really who they claim to be. An assigned AOR must register with the Grants.gov Credential Provider to receive a username and password, which are needed to submit an application package through Grants.gov. To register:

- Go to: <http://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister>.
- Scroll down the page and enter your DUNS number and click on "Register".
- At the next screen scroll down and select "Get Your Credentials".
- Complete and submit all information on the eAuthentication User Information screen.
- On the next screen you will confirm your information, create your own "User Name" and "Password", and click on "Submit".

If all information has been entered correctly, you will receive a notice of Registration Success. User names and passwords are validated on the same day that you register.

Note: Your registration is not finished until Steps Four and Five are completed.

Step Four: Register with Grants.gov

The AOR must register with Grants.gov in order to submit an application for an organization. You can register with Grants.gov on the same day. To register with Grants.gov:

- Click the "Applicants" link at the top of any screen at www.grants.gov.

- At the next screen scroll down and select “Register with Grants.gov”.
- Enter your Username and Password supplied by the Credential Provider and click on “Register”. Complete all information on the “Authorized Organization Representative User Profile” screen and click “Submit”.

Upon following all steps correctly, you will receive a notice that you successfully registered with Grants.gov. The E-Business POC will receive a notice stating that someone has registered to submit grant applications on behalf of your organization.

Note: Your registration is not finished until Step Five is completed.

Step Five: Authorize an AOR to submit a Grant Application

This is a final and very critical step in the registration process. Once a potential AOR registers with a Credential Provider and Grants.gov, the E-Business POC will receive an email stating that someone has signed up to become an AOR for their organization. *The E-Business POC will need to authorize the AOR as the Authorized Applicant that is approved to submit applications on behalf of the organization, before that person can submit an application.*

Note: If an AOR has not been authorized by their E-Business POC, the submitted application will be rejected.

To authorize an AOR to submit applications on behalf of the organization:

- Click the Ebiz link at the top of any screen at www.grants.gov.
- At the next screen, click on “Login Here”.
- Enter your DUNS and MPIN and click on “Login”. The next screen welcomes you to the “E-Business Points of Contact” section where you will be able to add and revoke AOR privileges.
- On the left side of the screen, select “Manage Applicants”.
- Click on the box(es) next to the name of the AOR(s) that you are assigning rights.

- Click on “Reassign Roles”.
- At the next screen, use the arrows to move the roles from one box to the other. To provide authorization, the “Current Roles” should indicate “Authorized Applicant”.
- Click on “Continue”. You will receive a notice that the role has been successfully reassigned.
- Click on “Continue”. Repeat the steps if you are assigning rights to multiple AORs.

The AOR will receive an email advising that the E-Business POC has provided them authorization to submit applications on behalf of their organization.

Check your AOR Status. An AOR can check their status by clicking the “Applicants” link at the top of any screen. At the next screen, click on “Login Here”. Enter your Username and Password supplied by the Credential Provider, click on “Login”. On the left side of the screen, select “Manage Applicant Profile”. Your status will be either – “Approved” or “AOR Request Sent”. If the status is “Approved” you are authorized to submit grant applications on behalf of your organization. If the status is “AOR Request Sent” you have not been approved and you should contact your E-Business POC and have them authorize you as an AOR with Grants.gov.

For additional assistance

Registration checklists that guide you through the entire process for submitting electronic grant applications are available at the “Get Started” link on Grants.gov.

If you have questions or need additional information, call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 800-518-GRANTS (4726) or email support@grants.gov.

The Contact Center hours of operation are Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. eastern standard time. If you are a hearing or speech-impaired person, you may reach any of the telephone numbers in this guide by calling the toll-free Federal Information Relay Service at 800-877-8339.



November 2005



Federal Register

**Thursday,
December 29, 2005**

Part III

Department of Housing and Urban Development

24 CFR Part 5

**Electronic Submission of Applications for
Grants and Other HUD Financial
Assistance; Final Rule**

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**24 CFR Part 5**

[Docket No. FR-4875-F-02]

RIN 2501-AD02

Electronic Submission of Applications for Grants and Other HUD Financial Assistance

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, HUD.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule establishes the requirement for applicants for HUD grants or certain other financial assistance to submit their applications to HUD electronically. This final rule follows publication of a proposed rule on November 23, 2004. HUD received four comments in response to the proposed rule's invitation for public comment. After careful consideration of the comments, this rule makes final without substantive changes the proposed rule published on November 23, 2004.

DATES: *Effective Date:* January 30, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Barbara Dorf, Director, Office of Departmental Grants Management and Oversight, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW., Room 3156, Washington, DC 20410-3000, telephone (202) 708-0667 (this is not a toll-free number). Hearing- or speech-impaired individuals may access this number through TTY by calling the toll-free Federal Information Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background—HUD's November 23, 2004, Proposed Rule**

On November 23, 2004, HUD published a proposed rule (69 FR 68218) that would add a new section to 24 CFR part 5 (§ 5.1005). The new section would require applicants for HUD grants or certain other financial assistance to submit their applications to HUD electronically through the federal government grant portal, *Grants.gov*, or its successor Web site. Applications subject to this requirement would include submissions from applicants for HUD grants, cooperative agreements, capital advances, vouchers, and other financial assistance awards, including programs that are classified by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as mandatory, as well as formula grant programs that HUD has placed an electronic application on *Grants.gov/Apply* or its successor Web site. HUD refers readers to the preamble of the November 23, 2004, proposed

rule for a more detailed discussion of the legal authorities and policy objectives on which the rule is based.

HUD noted in the proposed rule that electronic grant application submission will standardize, simplify, and improve the integrity of HUD's grant-making process. For the applicant, electronic submission of applications will result in saving time and resources in preparing, mailing, and delivering paper copies of applications to HUD Headquarters, field offices, or multiple locations.

The proposed rule concluded that the requirement for electronic submission will apply to all program applications or plan submissions placed by HUD at *www.grants.gov/Apply* for electronic submission through the *Grants.gov* portal. The requirement is consistent with the President's goals for electronic government set forth in the President's Management Agenda for Fiscal Year 2002. The proposed rule also indicated that the requirement was responsive to a 2002 OMB policy directive to federal agencies to use the *Grants.gov* Web site to post opportunities with respect to federal financial assistance programs. Additionally, the rule noted that the requirement for electronic submission will not take effect for individual program applications until HUD makes available the electronic application on the *www.grants.gov/Apply* Web site. Finally, to address the concerns of applicants with limited or no access to the Internet, the proposed rule provided that the HUD Assistant Secretary with authority over the program may waive the electronic submission requirement.

II. This Final Rule

This final rule follows publication of the November 23, 2004, proposed rule, and takes into consideration the four public comments received on the proposed rule. The four comments received were from four housing authorities. The Department has carefully considered each of the four comments, and its experience in receiving electronic application submissions for competitive programs using *Grants.gov*, and has determined to adopt the proposed regulation without substantive change. In the interest of clarity, the rule now includes language to specify that a waiver of the requirement for electronic submission will be made in writing. The rule substitutes language for the phrase "or the equivalent HUD official" to identify more particularly the officials who, in addition to the Assistant Secretary, are authorized to grant waivers. The rule would now allow a waiver to be granted by the Assistant Secretary, the General Deputy Assistant Secretary or the

responsible official authorized to perform the duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary or General Deputy Assistant Secretary.

The process for seeking and granting waivers of the requirement to submit an electronic grant application, as provided in this final rule, while similar to HUD's process for waiver of regulations in 24 CFR 5.110, is not the same as the regulatory waiver process. The process for seeking and granting waivers of regulations is governed by section 106 of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989 (HUD Reform Act) (42 U.S.C. 3535(a)). Section 106 requires that waivers of a HUD regulation must be in writing and must specify the grounds for approving the waiver, and HUD must notify the public of waivers granted through a **Federal Register** notice, published each calendar quarter, that provides a summary of the waivers granted in the preceding quarter. While this final rule patterns the waiver process for the electronic grant application requirement largely on the regulatory waiver process, it does not provide for quarterly reporting of waivers granted of the electronic grant application submission requirement. HUD is not adopting that feature of the regulatory waiver process because section 103 of the HUD Reform Act prohibits disclosure of the identity of any applicant before the deadline for submission of the application. However, section 102 of the HUD Reform Act, which establishes the elements of HUD's funding competitions, also requires that each application and all related documentation be available for public inspection at the end of the competition process. In accordance with section 102(a)(4)(E) of the HUD Reform Act, and HUD's implementing regulation at 24 CFR 4.5, all applications and related documentation, including an applicant's request for a waiver from the requirement to file its application electronically and HUD's action on such request, will be available for public inspection commencing 30 days after the award of grants is made and these files must remain available for public inspection for a period of at least five years. Therefore, the transparency required by the HUD Reform Act in the granting of regulatory waivers is also present in the granting of waivers of the electronic grant application requirement.

III. Discussion of Public Comments Received on the November 23, 2004, Proposed Rule

Comment: The rule will require applicants to have yet another password to satisfy the electronic filing

requirement. The commenter questioned the claimed efficiency of the electronic filing process. The commenter wrote that it would be inefficient and confusing to require housing authorities to use different log-ins and passwords for various HUD programs. The commenter observed that because each housing authority already has a unique ID, there should be no reason for a separate ID for use in each program. The commenter expressed a preference for one password that could be used with all government software programs.

HUD Response: HUD acknowledges that the maintenance and use of separate passwords adds to the administrative effort required of housing authorities to participate in the affected programs. However, the *Grants.gov* electronic submission requirement will eliminate that burden. By registering with *Grants.gov* for electronic application submission, an applicant for federal funding, regardless of the agency to which the applicant is applying, will need to use only one password and ID to submit applications for funding posted by all federal agencies through *Grants.gov*. In addition to providing information on funding available from the federal government, *Grants.gov* has posted application packages for funding opportunities in the State of Minnesota and the District of Columbia.

Comment: The commenter supports the rule with qualifications. This housing authority voiced support for the rule, but cautioned that, until the system ensures participation of all potential applicants and is bug-free, an alternative system must be available. This commenter recommended staggering the application process over a 12-month period, thus allowing for level user demand. The commenter further recommended that the electronic filing system should permit the uploading of files and not include a "bumping off" or "timing out" feature. The commenter also wrote that the system should have a process for verifying the receipt of applications and that HUD should provide adequate funding for housing authorities to purchase systems and browsers that are compatible with HUD's system.

HUD Response: As indicated in the proposed rule, consistent with the OMB directive, all applicants for HUD grants will be required to submit applications electronically, unless a waiver is granted. Access to *Grants.gov* requires only a computer with an Internet browser. In addition, the *Grants.gov* site does not require applicants to work online. Applicants download their application packages, work off-line, and

then upload the application and submit their applications via *Grants.gov*. This eliminates the time-out issues of concern to the commenter, as HUD is aware that development of an application for funding can take time. *Grants.gov* provides the applicant with a receipt and tracking number through the application submission process. Applicants receive notification when the application has been successfully submitted, received by *Grants.gov*, and validated by *Grants.gov*. HUD does not believe that staggering the application due dates, as recommended by the commenter, is necessary. HUD will provide *Grants.gov* with an estimated utilization rate so that adequate server and storage capacity is available at all times, especially anticipated application filing dates. Based upon HUD and other federal agency utilization in FY2005, *Grants.gov* has made a number of system upgrades, including increasing the number of servers, and installing a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) Accelerator and high capacity Storage Area Network (SAN) device to better handle traffic and increased storage volumes. In addition, the *Grants.gov* site has been segmented across various servers to ensure adequate capacity is available for submissions, downloads, and status checking. *Grants.gov* has also instituted several ways to track site utilization, patterns, and volumes on an hourly basis to provide early alert to increased needs. Therefore, HUD believes that the system is sized to accommodate a high volume of application submissions from a variety of federal and other agencies on a given date.

Comment: Application forms are not user-friendly and cannot be saved. The commenter wrote that her extensive experience in completing and being awarded various HUD grants would be jeopardized because she does not believe the system is ready for implementation.

HUD Response: Based on user surveys, *Grants.gov* has found that users of *Grants.gov* have found the Web site easy to use and navigate. A number of features facilitate the use of *Grants.gov*. At the present time, the *Grants.gov* application features some electronic forms developed in eXtensible Mark-Up Language (XML) using PureEdge™ software. The forms are designed to be user-friendly and incorporate embedded help tips to help applicants meet submission requirements. HUD has been working with *Grants.gov* to increase the number of HUD application forms available with this technology. Until all forms are created in XML, HUD will continue to make all forms, including those currently available in XML,

available in Adobe™ Portable Document Format (PDF). Application forms in PDF, in addition to those in Microsoft Word™ or Microsoft Excel™ format, can be saved and uploaded as part of an application submission to *Grants.gov*. HUD has provided users several ways to submit electronic files as part of their electronic application submission. In FY2005, the majority of HUD applicants found the PureEdge forms easy to use, save, and submit.

Comment: This housing authority applauds HUD's effort to centralize and streamline the application process. The commenter, however, urged HUD to establish an alternative plan and to put precautions in place to ensure that the system is not overwhelmed, thereby reducing its efficiency. The commenter further recommended that there should be separate submission paths for agencies previously screened by HUD. The commenter also requested more guidance on using the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and *Grants.gov*.

HUD Response: As noted herein, *Grants.gov* is designed to provide for large numbers of users with large application submissions. The federal agencies are working with *Grants.gov* to ensure that the *Grants.gov* server capability can handle the number and size of applications expected for each application period. Given *Grants.gov's* record of accomplishment to date of having received over 15,000 applications electronically, HUD believes that the system will function as designed. In addition, the system upgrades described in this notice will prevent the system from being overwhelmed by the number of users or the number of separate applications posted by the federal agencies. The purpose of *Grants.gov* is to provide one portal, with similar requirements and consistent format for all users of federal financial assistance programs.

With regard to the other concerns raised by the commenter, HUD believes that adequate information is currently available on-line and through the *Grants.gov* Web site and its support help desk to assist applicants through the registration process. Applicants can go to www.Grants.gov/GetStarted and follow the step-by-step instructions on how to find and apply for funding opportunities, including instructions on how to obtain a DUNS number, register with the CCR, and register with an E-Authentication provider. *Grants.gov* Support offers customers assistance by calling 800-518-GRANTS or by sending an email to Support@Grants.gov. In addition, HUD has placed informational brochures and checklists on HUD's

Internet Grants page at <http://www.hud.gov/grants/index.cfm>, issued a notice in the **Federal Register** on December 9, 2005 (70 FR 273332), and published a brochure describing the steps in the registration process to assist applicants through the five-step registration process.

IV. Findings and Certifications

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) establishes requirements for federal agencies to assess the effects of their regulatory actions on state, local, and tribal governments, and the private sector. This final rule does not impose any federal mandate on any state, local, or tribal government, or the private sector within the meaning of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995.

Executive Order 13132, Federalism

Executive Order 13132 (entitled “Federalism”) prohibits an agency from publishing any rule that has federalism implications, if the rule imposes either substantial direct compliance costs on state and local governments and is not required by statute, or the rule preempts state law, unless the agency meets the consultation and funding requirements of Section 6 of the order. This final rule does not have federalism implications and does not impose substantial direct compliance costs on state and local governments or preempt state law within the meaning of the order.

Impact on Small Entities

The Secretary, in accordance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 605(b)), has reviewed and approved this final rule and in so doing, certifies that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Providing for electronic submission of grant applications will simplify and lessen the burden on applicants’ resources because they will no longer need to duplicate and submit paper applications.

Environmental Impact

In accordance with 24 CFR 50.19(c)(1), this final rule does not direct, provide for assistance or loan and mortgage insurance for, or otherwise govern or regulate, real property acquisition, disposition, leasing, rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, or new construction, or establish, revise, or provide for standards for construction or construction materials, manufactured housing, or occupancy. Therefore, this final rule is categorically excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*).

List of Subjects in 24 CFR Part 5

Administrative practice and procedure, Aged, Claims, Crime, Government contracts, Grant programs—housing and community development, Individuals with disabilities, Intergovernmental relations, Loan programs—housing and community development, Low and

moderate-income housing, Mortgage insurance, Penalties, Pets, Public housing, Rent subsidies, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Social security, Unemployment.

■ Accordingly, for the reasons described in the preamble, HUD amends 24 CFR part 5 as follows:

PART 5—GENERAL HUD PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS; WAIVERS

■ 1. The authority citation for 24 CFR part 5 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 3535(d).

■ 2. Add § 5.1005 to Subpart K to read as follows:

§ 5.1005 Electronic submission of applications for grants and other financial assistance.

Applicants described under 24 CFR 5.1001 are required to submit electronic applications or plans for grants and other financial assistance in response to any application that HUD has placed on the www.grants.gov/Apply Web site or its successor. The HUD Assistant Secretary, General Deputy Assistant Secretary or, the individual authorized to perform duties and responsibilities of these positions, with authority over the specific program for which the waiver is sought, may in writing, waive the electronic submission requirement for an applicant on the basis of good cause.

Dated: December 21, 2005.

Roy A. Bernardi,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 05–24576 Filed 12–28–05; 8:45 am]

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