

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Citizen Participation Plan and Consultation for the Consolidated Plan, Amendments, and Performance Report

I. General

May 2021

As part of the regulations to administer HUD's federal programs (24CFR Section 91.115), states are required to adopt a citizen participation plan that sets forth the State's policies and procedures for citizen participation for the required Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, Amendments to the Plans, and Performance Report. The Consolidated Plan consolidates the applications of several federal programs to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These programs include; the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Community Development Block Grant Disaster Program (CDBG-DR), Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), and the National Housing Trust Fund (HTF) programs. The Consolidated Plan also contains information on fair housing impediments and the Commonwealth's activities to affirmatively further fair housing. The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has primary responsibility for preparing the Consolidated Plan and related documents for all the covered programs.

The Commonwealth will provide opportunities for and encourage citizen participation in the development of its Consolidated Plan, Action plans, Amendments, and Performance Report. Because the Commonwealth's Consolidated Plan outlines very broad goals for the state, rather than very specific activities or projects tailored to Pennsylvania's many unique communities, participation in the development process has come primarily from grantees, local governments, non-profit organizations, housing and redevelopment authorities, financial institutions, and related advocacy organizations. These groups are more aware of and interested in the impact of the Consolidated Plan because of their familiarity with housing and community development programs. The Commonwealth will continue to encourage citizens to participate in the process, but acknowledge that the grantees, local governments, and organizations interested in housing and community development are likely to constitute the largest number of contributors to the process.

The Commonwealth recognizes the importance of citizen participation and is committed to continual improvement of its public participation process. To obtain broad public participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan, the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) relies on a variety of advisory groups. DCED also is committed to expanding citizen participation by:

- Communicating information about the development and availability of draft documents with statewide organizations and associations through a public participation mailing list (NOTE: The term "documents" hereafter refers to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, amendments to either Plan and Performance Reports);
- Soliciting written comments on housing and community development needs and programs from citizens annually; and
- Evaluating the citizen participation process on a yearly basis.

II. Opportunities for Citizen and Public Participation

A. Regional Housing Advisory Committees (RHACs) and the Pennsylvania Housing Advisory Committee (PHAC)

To gather information on all matters of community development especially in terms of housing, DCED seeks advice of regional and statewide housing advisory committees. Act 172 of 1992, known as the Pennsylvania Affordable Housing Act, mandated the creation of five Regional Housing Advisory Committees (RHACs)(Northwest, Southwest, Central, Northeast, and Southeast) to advise DCED on the housing needs and problems of each region in Pennsylvania and how priorities should be addressed. In 2015, a sixth region was added in the Leigh Valley Region. The Act also established the Pennsylvania Housing Advisory Committee (PHAC) whose members would be selected from across the state, including the chairperson(s) from each of the six RHACs.

Members of the six RHACs are appointed by the Secretary of DCED. Membership consists of DCED's regional director, representatives from local governments (both participating and nonparticipating jurisdictions under the HOME Program), representatives of county governments, the chairs of the Continuum of Care boards, for-profit and nonprofit developers of low income housing, representatives of the financial community, representatives of the housing and redevelopment authorities, representative of fair housing advocacy groups, representatives of organized labor, providers of technical assistance, and social services providers. (Please refer to the Appendices for the current membership of each regional RHAC).

Meetings of the six RHACs are held at least once a year and are open to the public. Members provide information and suggestions at these meetings which DCED uses to develop the sections of the Consolidated Plan. The RHAC meetings are the beginning of the citizen participation process for the Consolidated Plan. Information from these meetings is reported on by the committee's chair at the PHAC meeting in the fall. DCED goes over the previous year's Consolidated Plan Annual Performance Report (CAPER) with the committee and takes recommendations for changes to the federal programs including the Method of Distribution, needs, reporting, and public participation.

The Governor appoints the PHAC members. Representatives from the same categories as the RHACs must be appointed to the PHAC. These appointments are usually high-level officials of state agencies and associations that have a vested interest in housing throughout the Commonwealth. The PHAC, chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development, also includes the Secretaries of Banking, Aging, Health, Public Welfare, Labor and Industry, members of the state House of Representatives and state Senate, and the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA). These representatives of state departments and the legislature have the capacity to develop policy affecting the community development and housing issues in the Commonwealth. In addition, each RHAC is represented by the chair(s) of their committee and the chairs of the two Balance of State Continuum of Care are also included in the membership. Their representation on the committee is one of providing awareness and information about the community development and housing needs across the state.

The PHAC meets twice a year and meetings are open to the public. These meetings provide an opportunity to synthesize information received from the regional advisory committees. The PHAC also gathers suggestions on how to link housing and community development programs among agencies. DCED uses the PHAC's advice and comments to develop the Consolidated Plan and annual action plan. The committee is briefed on and approves the acceptance of the previous year's CAPER at its meeting

in October. Depending on when the Federal Budget is approved the submission of the Action Plan for that year is also made by the committee.

B. Community Development Advisory Resources

In addition to the RHACs and PHAC assistance to determine the Commonwealth's community development needs, DCED gathers information from all local governments which receive the CDBG funds from DCED. All entities who receive an annual allocation of CDBG funds from DCED must prepare a Three-Year Plan which indicates the needs they intend to fund using the CDBG funds over the current application year as well as planning for the following two years. Since Pennsylvania's program allocates funds to all counties not included in federal entitlement program for CDBG, all areas of the state which are eligible for DCED's CDBG funds are covered by a Three-Year Plan. All totaled, 197 counties, cities, boroughs, and townships will be consulted on community development needs through their Three-Year Plan.

Additionally, DCED meets with the Community Development and Housing Practitioners Advisory Committee at least four times a year to seek additional advice on the community development and housing needs and problems in the Commonwealth. This committee is composed of grantee representatives appointed by the Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Authorities and DCED. An equal representation of all the regions of the state that fall under the state's CDBG program is also attempted with the membership.

C. HIV/AIDS Planning Council

Department of Health (DOH) which administers the HOPWA program meets with the HIV (AIDS) Planning Council to discuss the Consolidated Plan as it pertains to their program. The Council is composed of local coalitions which administer state and federal HIV/AIDS funds, including the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) Program.

Additionally, the RHACs have members that serve the HIV/AIDS population.

D. Continuum of Care and the Homeless Population

DCED serves as the Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead for the two BoS Continuum of Care (CoC), so the department is actively coordinating efforts with the CoCs in the needs of the homeless. The Eastern and Western CoC boards are canvassed for their input into the use of federally funding especially the Emergency Solutions Grant. In addition, the chairmen are members of the respective RHACs and are also represented in the PHAC membership.

E. Statewide Community Needs Survey

DCED will conduct a general statewide survey to determine residents' thoughts on the needs of their communities once every five years in coordination with the development of the Consolidated Plan. Requests to participate will be e-mailed to the listserv of DCED's Center for Local Government Services, along with all the contact lists maintained by DCED Center for Community and Housing Development for citizen participation (see Section F). Additional participation will be requested of all who received the survey by passing the notice along to other residents who may wish to respond.

Results from this survey impact the goal-setting of the Consolidated Plan by keeping the method of distribution as flexible as possible to encompass all the needs of the regions of the state.

F. Consolidated Plan Contact Listings

DCED uses electronic contact lists to disseminate information to citizens through the numerous organizations and groups interested in the Consolidated Plan. The Con Plan Contact Lists includes:

Grantees:

- CDBG
- CDBG-DR
- ESG
- HOME
- NSP
- HOPWA – through the administrator
- HTF – the administrator

Advisory Committees:

- CD&H Advisory Committee
- RHACs (SE, SW, NE, NW, Central, Lehigh Valley)
- HPC
- PHAC

CoCs:

- Eastern
- Western
- RHABs

Associations:

- Pennsylvania Housing & Redevelopment Agencies
- Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities
- Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
- Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners
- Pennsylvania Association of Township Supervisors
- County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania

Others:

- PA Housing Alliance
- County Commissioners
- DCED Regional Directors
- District Libraries
- Interested Parties
- CAP agencies
- Fair Housing Stakeholders Listing

DCED asks these organizations to disseminate information to their membership about the public meetings, hearings, and the availability of draft documents.

G. Citizen Comments

DCED provides for and encourages citizens' participation by soliciting written comments on housing and community development needs prior to preparation of a draft Consolidated Plan or Annual Plan. These

citizen comments are used to make appropriate changes and additions to the consolidated Plan. Citizen comments are requested at every public hearing and/or meeting. Notification is also placed in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* to gather comments on the needs of the citizens prior to the writing of the draft.

Once the draft document is placed on the website and advertised in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, a 30-day citizen comment period commences, and citizens are once again encouraged to comment on the document. For the CAPER this period is 15 days. Notices are once again sent to the Con Plan Contact lists (Please refer to Section F).

In all notices, information is given on how to submit written comments to DCED both hardcopy and electronically, including whom they should be directed to, the land address and electronic address. DCED maintains a mailbox for all citizen comments. RA-DCEDcdbghomequestions@pa.gov. The comments are retrieved from the mailbox and placed in a folder on the DCED – Center Community and Housing Development shared drive for response and inclusion in the appropriate plan. Each comment or suggestion is responded to by the Chief, Small Communities Division. This response is also placed in the plan as part of the citizen participation process.

H. Public Meetings and Public Hearings

DCED conducts public meetings and public hearings to allow any individual, group, or organization to provide comments about the Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan prior to its submission to HUD for funding. DCED holds at least one public hearing before the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan is printed and made available for public comment. DCED also conducts at least one public hearing during the 30-day public comment period on the draft Consolidated Plan or the draft Annual Plan. In addition, DCED accepts written comments in lieu of oral testimony after any meeting or hearing. Notice of this is placed in all advertisements for the meetings or hearings along with the contact information for DCED. These meetings and hearings are generally held electronically, either via webinar and conference call to allow for the most accessible method of reaching all the areas of the state. The RHAC and PHAC meetings are open to the public with conference call availability. Recordings of the public hearings are available for the public if requested.

All of these meetings are also posted according to the Sunshine Law for public meetings and hearings.

Public hearings and meetings will always be held in physically accessible locations. Anyone with a hearing impairment or other disability who wants to attend a public hearing or meeting is asked to notify DCED, so an accommodation can be made. When non-English speaking residents are expected to participate in either a public hearing or a public meeting, the Commonwealth will accommodate these residents as well. Notice of this is placed in all advertisements for the meetings or hearings along with the contact information for DCED.

III. Availability of Documents

A. Draft Documents

DCED publishes notices in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* alerting citizens of the availability of all draft documents. Additionally, DCED sends out a CD & H Alert to its Con Plan Contact Lists (Please see Section II, F) regarding the availability of the draft Consolidated Plan, draft Annual Plan, CAPER, and all public meetings and hearings.

DCED has completed its Language Access Plan for the Department in 2017. From the Four Factor Analysis and removing the municipalities that receive HUD funds directly, there are no populations that meet the

threshold of requiring documents to be translated. DCED has decided to identify four populations that may meet the thresholds if one is to look at municipal census information. DCED has identified in their Language Access Plan (LAP) that PA Dutch, Spanish, Korean, and Chinese are populations that state grantees may encounter and where translation of vital documents may be warranted. DCED will have some of its vital documents, in administering the programs, translated for the use by grantees, but will only have the plans and notices translated in Spanish. These documents are placed on DCED's website at <http://dced.pa.gov/library> /Documentos en Español. Other populations may request a document to be translated by following the directions provided with each notice.

Accessibility of the documents for those with disabilities is again achieved through the website. The public may open any document off the website using electronic assistance devices. If the public still needs assistance, information is given on every notice on how to contact DCED and request a hardcopy of the document.

B. Comments on Draft Documents

Please refer to Section I-G above for the details of gathering citizen comments.

Considering the comments received, the Commonwealth may make changes to draft documents. A summary of the comments received, and a description of the changes made to draft documents are included in Section AP-12 of the Action Plan. There is also an Appendix for Public Comment in all plans and the CAPER in the final version of all documents that are submitted to HUD for approval. If changes are not made as a result of public comments, this is discussed in Section AP-12 also.

C. Comment Period

The public comment period for the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan and any substantial amendment to the plans is 30 days unless waived by HUD. Performance reports (CAPER) are available for public comment for at least 15 days before submission to HUD. If an amendment is required of the plan, no citizen participation is required but notice is made in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* and sent to all on the Con Plan Contact Lists.

Exception to 30-day Citizen Comment Period:

DCED will allow for an expedited public notice process of 7 days (instead of the required 30-day notice) for federally declared disaster notices to allow for the use of HUD funds to address a disaster impacted area or need, if so directed by the regulations of the funding.

D. Final Documents

Once the final Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, CAPER, substantial amendments, and amended versions are submitted to HUD via the E-Con Planning suite and approved, DCED places the copies on DCED's website at: <http://dced.pa.gov/library> /Action Plans. These documents will be maintained there for the full course of the Consolidated Plan (5 years). After that the documents will be archived on the website and maintained on DCED's shared drive on the computer for reference.

The translated copies of the documents will also remain on the website in the same location as the drafts for the length of the Consolidated Plan period they represent. After that, the documents will be archived on the website and maintained on DCED's shared drive on the computer

E. Public Locations of Documents

Draft and final copies of the documents are available for public inspection at the following locations:

County Commissioners: A notice of document availability will be provided to the office of each of the Commonwealth's 67 County Board of Commissioners. The County Commissioners may allow residents to view the document in their offices or print a copy of the document for any resident.

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Regional Offices: A notice of document availability will be provided to the office of each of the six DCED regional Offices. The Regional Director may allow residents to view the document in their offices or print a copy of the document for any resident.

Southeast Regional Office – Philadelphia
Northeast Regional Office – Scranton
Central Regional Office – Harrisburg
Southwest Regional Office – Pittsburgh
Northwest Regional Office – Erie
Leigh Valley - Bethlehem

Pennsylvania's 28 District Libraries: A notice of document availability will be provided to each of the following district libraries. The library may allow residents to view the document in the library or print a copy of the document for any resident.

B.F. Jones Memorial Library, Aliquippa	Lancaster County Library, Lancaster
Allentown Public Library, Allentown	Monessen Public Library, Monessen
Altoona Area Public Library, Altoona	New Castle Public Library, New Castle
Centre County Library, Bellefonte	Montgomery Co.-Norristown Public Library, Norristown
Bethlehem Area Public Library, Bethlehem	Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh
Delaware Co. Library, Brookhaven	Pottsville Free Public Library, Pottsville
Conococheague Dist. Library, Chambersburg	Reading Public Library, Reading
Clarion District Library, Clarion	Scranton Public Library, Scranton
Bucks County Free Library, Doylestown	Warren Public Library, Warren
Easton Area Public Library, Easton	Citizen Library, Washington
Erie County Library, Erie	Osterhout Free Library, Wilkes-Barre
Chester County Library, Exton	James V. Brown Library, Williamsport
Dauphin County Library, Harrisburg	Martin Memorial Library, York
Cambria County Library, Johnstown	

CD Disks:

CD Disks of the plans are available upon request from DCED by calling (717) 787-5327.

IV. Public Meetings and Notices

A. Public Meetings

DCED conducts all RHAC meetings, PHAC meetings, public hearings, and public meetings in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

All meetings are held in locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities. Upon request and given 72 hours, DCED will make arrangements to meet the needs of non-English speaking participants and those with physical disabilities who identify those needs in advance.

B. Notices of Public Meetings

For all public meetings and hearings, DCED will publish a notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* with the notice of availability of the draft document prior to the meeting at least a week prior to the meeting. The notice contains the time, date, and location of the meeting as well as a contact name and phone number for additional information or to make arrangements for persons with disabilities.

C. Notices of the Availability of Documents

DCED publishes a notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* alerting citizens of the availability of all draft documents. The day after the publication of this notice, starts the citizen participation period for the document. Additionally, DCED sends out a CD & H Alert to its Con Plan Contact Lists (Please see Section II, F) regarding the availability of the draft Consolidated Plan, draft Annual Plan, CAPER, and all public meetings and hearings.

The notices for draft documents contain a summary and a list of specific locations where the documents may be obtained. The summary for the Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan will contain the amount of financial assistance the state expects to receive, the Commonwealth's priorities for allocating funds, changes in the method of distribution, citizen participation, beneficiaries, or other major changes in the guidelines of the various programs covered by the documents, a contact name, address and phone number for further information, and how the public may comment on the document if this notice is during the citizen comment period.

DCED provides one copy of these documents free of charge to any citizen who requests one. Information about requesting a copy is contained in the public notices. Also, information on how someone with a disability or limited English proficiency may receive a copy of the document is included in the notice.

Notice is also given once the document is finalized and submitted to HUD. All documents are retained on the DCED website <http://dced.pa.gov> for the period of applicability. The most current Con Plan, Action Plan, and CAPER may be found on the home page of the website. All previous copies may be found under the Action Plan tab in the library. Once the five-year period of the Consolidated Plan has passed, copies of all the documents will be archived on DCED's website and may also be found on the Center's shared drive at R: HOUSING/Consolidated Plan or /CAPER.

IV. Amendments

On occasion a revision, deletion, or addition needs to be made to the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, CAPER during the course of the funding year it represents. This change may warrant an amendment or a substantial amendment to the document. DCED has established perimeters that directs the agency what

will warrant a substantial amendment over an amendment, thus initiating the citizen participation requirements, as described in Section II above.

A. Substantial Amendments

When a Substantial Amendment is warranted over an amendment thus initiating the citizen participation process:

- To make a change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds in an amount greater than 10% of the original allocation for the program;
- To carry out an activity, using at least \$1,000,000 in funding from any program covered by the consolidated plan (including program income), not previously described in the action plan; or
- To change the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries (10% or more of the original) of a goal or objective of the program.

B. All Other Amendments

If the Consolidated Plan is amended in any other way, DCED will publish a notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* containing either the amendment or information about how to obtain a copy of the amendment. A notice will also be sent to all grantees affected by the change and the Con Plan Contact Lists for their information. The Notice will highlight the changes being made and how the public may make comments. No citizen participation or citizen comment period is required. The revised copy of the document being amended, should replace the document on DCED's website and be retained on the center's shared drive as the amendment, keeping all previous copies of the document.

V. Local Government Requirements for Citizen Participation

The importance of citizen participation extends to DCED's grantees as well. Citizens must be provided with information in a timely manner and afforded a reasonable opportunity to participate in the planning and evaluation process of all federal programs administered by the state. DCED requires its grantees to have a written citizen participation plan that mirrors the requirements of each of the program in terms of citizen participation.

CDBG:

Some elements of the required CDBG Citizen Participation Plan of the grantees include:

1. Follow procedures which inform and encourage citizens to participate in the **CDBG** planning and evaluation process. Special emphasis shall be placed on procedures which emphasize the participation of low and moderate income, minority and disabled persons who reside in slum and blight areas, and in other areas where **CDBG** funds are proposed for expenditure or are being expended.
2. Provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information and records relating to proposals for the use of funds being applied for as well as the actual prior use of **CDBG** funds. Applicants/grantees must take steps to ensure that pertinent application/program information and records are accessible to the public, and that the public has been made aware of when and where material is available for inspection.

3. Hold public hearings to obtain citizen views and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the program, including at least the development of needs, the review of proposed activities, and the review of program performance. The public hearings shall be held after adequate notice, at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries and with accommodation for the disabled and those with limited English proficiency. The public hearings will be held in connection with each entitlement allocation. Municipalities must hold a public hearing for citizen participation in the development of needs and conduct another public hearing after a plan for use of the funds is published and prior to application approval by the governing body. (Please refer to the Grantee Citizen Participation Guidelines for further details)
4. Provide technical assistance, upon request, to groups of persons of low and moderate income, or their representatives, when such assistance is needed in developing proposals for use of **CDBG** funds. The level and type of assistance is to be determined by each applicant/grantee but must also provide for assistance to those disabled and/or limited English proficiency.
5. Provide a timely written response to written complaints and grievances. A timely response is one which is made within fifteen (15) working days from receipt of the written complaint/grievance.
6. Identify if and when it may be necessary to meet the needs of non-English speaking citizens through the use of the Four Factor Analysis and/or the municipalities Language Access Plan. When such needs are identified, applicants/grantees must meet these needs as part of the advertising and public hearing requirements.
7. Maintain citizen participation files which contain documentation that demonstrates compliance with all requirements contained in the Citizen Participation Plan for the municipality.

Appendix A of this citizen participation plan contains the Citizen Participation Plan requirements for the CDBG grantees.

HOME

Local government applicants for HOME funds must hold a public meeting on the proposed use of the funds and allow affected residents an opportunity to comment on the application. The notice must be placed in a general circulation newspaper but not in the legal section. Applicants must pass a resolution endorsing the application for funding. These resolutions must be adopted in an open public meeting that is subject to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

Local government applicants for Emergency Solutions Grant funds must hold a public meeting on the proposed use of the funds and allow affected residents an opportunity to comment on the application. The notice must be placed in a general circulation newspaper but not in the legal section. Applicants must pass a resolution endorsing the application for funding. These resolutions must be adopted in an open public meeting that is subject to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

Other Special Projects Grant

In the event that other federal special programs are awarded to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or if an emergency declaration is made that affects the administration of the existing federal programs, that are authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, Cranston-Gonzales National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, as amended, and/or McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act 1987, as

amended, and administered by DCED, the citizen participation requirements will be followed in accordance with either the statute or regulations set forth in the program. If HUD may allow for or provides opportunities to request waivers to specific elements of the citizen participation process DCED will determine whether a waiver is necessary and seek use of the waiver authority in accordance with information provided by HUD. Once the waiver is granted by HUD to the Commonwealth, the special conditions will be passed to its grantees, if necessary, to streamline the citizen participation process in accordance with the regulations in place.

In order to take advantage of the granted waiver authority, the grantee must amend their Citizen Participation Plan to meet the minimum standards included in the waiver if the required action is not already covered in their Citizen Participation Plan.

Amendment – 4-2020 - CARES ACT Authorization:

Emergency Declaration Citizen Participation and Expedited Modification Process:

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) allows for a grantee to adopt and use expedited procedures to prepare, propose, modify, or amend its statement of activities to the FY 2019 and FY 2020 grant and new CARES funding related to the use of funding to address emerging COVID-19 response.

As long as national or local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons, Grantees do not need to hold in-person public hearings but “shall provide citizens with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 calendar days. A grantee may create virtual public hearings to fulfill applicable hearing requirements for all grants from funds made available under this law”. Any virtual hearing “shall provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the grantee’s certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses”.

Amendment—5-2021—Recovery Housing Program

Federal Register 6225-N-01: Notice of FY2020 Allocations, Waivers, and Alternative Requirements for the Pilot Recovery Housing Program, allows the Citizen Participation Plan to be updated to provide no less than 15 calendar days for public comment of the Recovery Housing Program Action Plan. DCED will be following this requirement in accordance with this waiver.

VI. Access to Information and Complaints

A. Public Access to Information

Citizens who wish to review information obtained by DCED for the development of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, or the Performance Report may do so by contacting the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records and file a Right to Know (RTK) request. The website for further information is www.openrecords.pa.gov

Hearings and meetings held to develop or discuss the documents are open to the public pursuant to the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act. A recording of the meeting is placed on the DCED website at <http://dced.pa.gov/library> /Action Plans.

B. Complaints

Citizens who would like to file a complaint about the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan or the Performance Report, either how the document was produced, information that was gathered, or that requirements of this citizen participation plan were not followed, should submit their complaint in writing to:

Department of Community and Economic Development
Director of the Center for Community and Housing Development
Keystone Community Building
400 North 4th Street, Fourth Floor -West
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225.

DCED will respond to all written complaints within 15 business days. In that response DCED will either provide assistance to the citizen in resolving the issue, explain why that assistance cannot be provided and provide any further avenues to resolve the issue, or provide the citizen with an estimated time they will have an answer to their complaint.

APPENDIX A

**CDBG GRANTEE GUIDE
TO CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**