



## ADAMS COUNTY OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Sherri Clayton-Williams, AICP, Director

DATE: May 8, 2020  
TO: Adams County Municipal Officials, Community Nonprofits, and Other Organizations  
FROM: Rebecca Moreland, Grants Program Coordinator  
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)  
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR FY2020 CDBG & CDBG-CV (COVID-19)

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Like everything else, the process of applying for the Community Development Block Grant Program is going to be a little different this year!

On behalf of the Adams County Commissioners, I am pleased to invite applications from all County municipalities, community nonprofits, and other organizations serving residents of Adams County for TWO Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding allocations. The County has been allocated our normal annual grant of FY2020 Entitlement CDBG funds, which this year totals \$327,612. However, the County also requested additional CDBG funds from a portion of the Federal CARES Act funding allotted to Pennsylvania and has been awarded another \$166,152 in CDBG-CV assistance specifically for activities that respond to the conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applications can be made for any eligible activity (please see below). However, activities responding to COVID-19 will receive priority consideration, and organizations wishing to apply to respond to COVID-19 may apply to EITHER sets of funds. If your activity is eligible but is not a response to COVID-19, your activity can still be considered for funding but only under the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program.

**DUE DATE: Since there are two funding allocations, there will be TWO due dates this year!**

- For consideration for **CDBG-CV** assistance strictly for activities to respond to COVID-19, applications will be due to ACOPD by **Friday, June 26, 2020**. The Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) will make this set of funds available in an expedited timeframe.
- For consideration for funding from the **FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program** for any eligible activity, applications will be due to ACOPD by **Friday, August 14, 2020**.

Important: If you are considering applying for funding, please email me at [rmoreland@adamscounty.us](mailto:rmoreland@adamscounty.us) ASAP to discuss your project - ideally BEFORE preparing your submission.

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*Which deadline applies to me?*

- If you wish to request funds for a COVID-19 activity and you want to receive funding as quickly as possible, please apply by **June 26**.
- If your activity does not address COVID-19, or if you miss the first deadline to apply, you should apply by **August 14** for consideration for the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program.
- Note that if you submit your application by June 26 and your application is not selected for the smaller CDBG-CV program, it will automatically be placed under consideration for the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program. In other words, you do **not** need to apply twice.

**PROJECT FUNDABILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In order to meet CDBG program requirements, the County will have to prove that all projects meet one of the CDBG objectives for Adams County residents, whether the project responds to COVID-19 or not:

1. Benefits low to moderate income persons (this must be demonstrated with income data for each beneficiary, census data for the service area, or survey results for the service area – see below)
2. Removes slums or blight.
3. Meets an urgent community need, usually disaster-related.
4. Benefits specific populations, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, abused children, battered spouses, homeless persons, illiterate adults, persons living with HIV/AIDS, or migrant farm workers.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

All activities funded with CDBG funds, whether responding to COVID-19 or not, must also be determined to be eligible under the provisions of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, P.L. 93-383, as amended, as administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This means the activity must provide one or more of the following to Adams County residents:

1. Homebuyer Assistance /Tenant Assistance /Emergency Utility Payments
2. Affordable Housing Construction/ Housing Rehabilitation
3. Code Enforcement
4. Water/Sanitary Sewer/Storm Sewer System Improvements
5. Support for First Responders
6. Public Community Facilities
7. Recreation Facilities
8. Street/Road Improvements
9. New Public Services (Note that the 15% cap on funding for public services that respond to COVID-19 **has been temporarily lifted** for the County’s application to both CDBG-CV and FY2020 CDBG)
10. Business Assistance/Microenterprise Assistance
11. Job Training/ Job Creation

12. Architectural Barrier Removal

**EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE COVID-19 ACTIVITIES**

HUD has provided the following examples of some activities eligible for CDBG-CV funding. This is just a partial list and other activities may be eligible for CDBG-CV. Note that both brick and mortar and public service activities are eligible; however all CDBG-CV funds must be spent by September 30, 2022, so priority consideration will be given to activities that can be implemented and completed **in less than 12 months from the date the funds become available to be spent:**

- Health and/or mental health services to address the pandemic
- Acquisition of facilities and/or equipment for clinics or hospitals needed to address COVID-19
- Temporary housing to provide means for eligible residents to quarantine
- Support for homeless shelters and supportive housing providers in order to provide social distancing
- Food assistance to meet increased demand and rising costs due to the pandemic
- Services for seniors and other high-risk populations that cannot leave home, such as Meals on Wheels
- Temporary emergency rent or mortgage assistance for up to three months for households at risk of homelessness due to the pandemic
- Business loan or grant programs meant to prevent loss of jobs and businesses due to the pandemic
- Personal protective equipment for first responders
- Internet hotspots to provide access to broadband internet in low to moderate income communities

**ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FY2020 CDBG OR CDBG-CV**

While the need is great, not all activities are eligible for CDBG, even if they do support low to moderate income persons or respond to COVID-19. The following are unfortunately not eligible:

- Funding for operational costs, equipment, or construction/renovation expenses for the general conduct of government
- Operational grants or loans for nonprofits for the purpose of creating or retaining jobs by covering the costs of the organization's payroll (if the nonprofit is providing job training services, that could be an eligible expense, but operational support such as what is available for for-profit businesses is not available through CDBG for nonprofits)

**FIRST PUBLIC HEARING – JUNE 3, 2020**

An initial combined public hearing for the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program and CDBG-CV Program will be held on Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 9 a.m., before the Adams County Commissioners' Meeting. This public hearing will, like the Commissioners' Meeting, be held virtually due to social distancing requirements, and access will be available to all members of the public via a telephone conference call line at the following number:

Telephone Number: 1-415-655-0003

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PIN: 476-936-077#

The purpose of this public hearing is to give citizens an opportunity to make their comments known regarding what types of eligible activities Adams County should apply for under the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG program and/or the CDBG-CV Program, as well as to comment on past performance of the program. Note that formal applications from eligible organizations are not due until Friday, June 26, 2020 for CDBG-CV and not until Friday, August 14, 2020 for the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program.

Separate public meetings will be held in July for the CDBG-CV Program and in September-October for the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program to discuss the submitted applications and to approve the applications prior to submittal to the State. We invite you to provide your input at this initial public hearing, or to submit your written comments to us at [rmoreland@adamscounty.us](mailto:rmoreland@adamscounty.us). The full public participation notice for this hearing is available on the County's homepage at [www.adamscounty.us](http://www.adamscounty.us).

Please feel free to distribute this notice to interested residents and organizations.

### APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

If your municipality or agency decides to request either CDBG-CV or FY2020 Entitlement CDBG funds, your governing body will need to pass a Resolution requesting the County apply for CDBG funds on your behalf and write a letter requesting consideration for funding. This must be completed by the application deadline. Please contact ACOPD before finalizing your Resolution and letter so that we can discuss your project and the budget for your request. (Note: Signatures can be electronic, and any letter or resolution can be submitted electronically as a PDF. Paper versions can be mailed to ACOPD c/o Rebecca Moreland.)

If your project will be serving a specific geographic service area, rather than being limited to qualified beneficiaries who are screened for eligibility, to be eligible for CDBG funds over 51% of the residents of that area must meet the low to moderate income guidelines. Note that if census data is not available for your specific service area from the 2015 American Community Survey, a survey of households in the service area must be conducted and completed prior to August 14, 2020.

- **NOTE: Due to the shortened timeframe to apply, activities proposed for CDBG-CV funds that would require a service area income survey to demonstrate eligibility cannot be considered.**

Please contact me prior to initiating any income survey to ensure that it is conducted in accordance with HUD/DCED guidelines. The number of responses required are dependent upon the number of residents in the service area. Keep in mind that for infrastructure projects, such as water/sewer line replacements, the service area includes every customer connected to the system. Be advised that when percentages are calculated non-responses are considered to be above the income limits. In the case of funding laterals, sewer/water tapping fees, or homeowner rehab projects, the residents served will have to provide actual proof of income in order to qualify for assistance. Also, the use of CDBG funds will trigger Federal contracting provisions including Davis-Bacon Wage Rates if the project involves construction.

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It may be necessary to translate income survey information depending upon the number of people with Limited English Proficiency there are in the community. Our office will have the survey information translated and assist with the preparing the questionnaires and tabulating the responses, as well as providing other technical assistance.

## **APPLICATION COMPONENTS**

For those applying to the Adams County CDBG Program for the first time, and as a reminder for previous applicants, I have included the following checklist of items required in your application to the County (as applicable).

Please note that electronic submission of your application is always acceptable, and in fact preferred. But you can also submit via mail to ACOPD c/o Rebecca Moreland (see mailing address on first page of this memo). If you will be submitting any document by mail, please call or email though so we can be on the lookout for your materials, since all ACOPD staff are currently furloughed or working remotely.

### **For your application to either the CDBG-CV Program or the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program:**

- Please state whether your project addresses COVID-19 or its aftermath, or if it addresses another community need not related to COVID-19.
- Identify your project goals: Specify what the activity will accomplish for your municipality or agency. What community needs will the project address? How serious are the problems?
- Describe the project service area, and note the boundaries (streets, municipal boundaries, etc.). Please describe it in enough detail that I could draw it on a map.
- Who will the project serve, i.e. elderly, low to moderate income households, etc.?
  - Please provide an estimated number of beneficiaries.
- Provide a budget for the entire project (not just the part you wish to fund with a CDBG grant).
- Please indicate if other funding has been applied for or secured (some activities will require matching funds, please see below).
  - Please include written commitment from other funding sources for the balance of the project cost that won't be covered by CDBG.
- The budget must include a line item breakdown and a justification explaining how the costs were estimated.
  - Documentation (cost per participant, facility rental rates, quotes from a service provider, quotes for freight charges or piece of equipment, etc.) must be included.
- Provide a timeframe for project completion.
  - Note that FY2020 Entitlement CDBG funds will most likely be available to you in Fall 2021 and must be spent within 3 years from the contract start date (by approximately March 2024).
  - The County's proposal for the use of CDBG-CV funds will be submitted to the Commonwealth by July 31, 2020. The date that these funds will be available to you is dependent on the speed of the Commonwealth's review process but CDBG-CV funds must be

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spent by September 30, 2022. **If you are applying to CDBG-CV, projects with a completion timeframe of 12 months or less from the date funds become available will be given priority.**

- Note also that if your project will provide services county-wide, a local match of 11.8% is required. For example, this means that if you are requesting \$10,000 in CDBG funds for a project that could benefit qualifying participants residing anywhere in Adams County, the total project must cost at least \$11,338 and you must provide a commitment letter for the balance of the project cost (11.8% of the total - \$1,338) from another source.
- Will a survey be necessary to prove eligibility? Provide the survey results if one was conducted (if applicable). **Remember - activities proposed for CDBG-CV funds that would require a service area income survey to demonstrate income eligibility cannot be considered. Please apply for FY2020 Entitlement CDBG funds instead.**
- If you have photos documenting your need please submit them with your application if possible. (Note that our email system does not accept total attachments per email larger than 15MB, so if you need to submit large files, either send multiple emails or contact me for a link to upload via a file share service.)
- If any permits are necessary to complete your project, have they been applied for or issued?
- If you are providing a public service, explain how you will limit CDBG funds to cover services for qualifying beneficiaries only (Adams County residents who are low/moderate income, disabled, migrant workers, etc.)
- If you are providing a public service, please include a copy of your intake form and your beneficiary selection procedures.
- If you are providing a public service, note that the CDBG program only funds new public services projects or existing ones that will be able to demonstrate a quantifiable increase in the level of service over that which existed in the 12 months immediately prior to the submission of the application. A public services project is considered new if it is new to the community or if this is the first time CDBG funds are being used to support the activity (some exceptions apply). Please provide information on how your public services project meets these requirements (as applicable).
- If you would like to provide grants or loans to businesses or microenterprises: Please provide a template of your proposed application (the application that businesses would submit to YOU to be considered for funding), the template grant/loan agreement between your program and the business, your selection procedures, your post-award administrative procedures, your underwriting guidelines, and how you propose to qualify businesses for CDBG assistance (low to moderate income jobs created or retained, low to moderate income service area of the business, or urgent need).
- Other requirements: Depending on the nature of your project, additional information may be required to complete your application. Please contact ACOPD to discuss your project and receive a full list of requirements.
- Do you need help understanding what you need to submit?*** Please email [rmoreland@adamscounty.us](mailto:rmoreland@adamscounty.us) with your questions. (But don't wait until the deadline to contact me!)

**For non-COVID-19 activities only – please also address the following:**

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- Just because an activity doesn't address COVID-19 doesn't mean it isn't critical. Why should your activity be selected for funding this year rather than in a subsequent CDBG program year? What would the benefits be of funding your activity in FY2020? What would be the consequences of waiting to fund it until FY2021 or later?

**For COVID-19 activities only – please also address the following:**

- How does/will your activity respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath?
- How long will the need your activity addresses remain critical? We don't know when CDBG-CV funds will become accessible. While we hope the funding will become available sooner, if funds don't become available until 2021, would the need still exist?
  
- Can your activity qualify on the basis of serving low to moderate income residents? (If not, you can still submit a proposal – it may qualify in the category Urgent Need, but funds available under this category are limited so your activity is more likely to be funded if you can demonstrate that your beneficiaries will be 51% or more low to moderate income residents.)
- Will you be seeking reimbursement of purchases already made? If so, what is the earliest date that these purchases were made? Do you have receipts and/or other documentation for these purchases? (DCED has told us that reimbursement of pre-grant expenses may be eligible under CDBG-CV in certain cases. However, any activity including pre-grant expenses will have to be documented and cleared with DCED prior to your application being considered.)

**IN CONCLUSION**

I am happy to provide technical assistance to anyone considering applying for either CDBG-CV or the FY2020 Entitlement CDBG Program. Before preparing or submitting your application, it is always going to go more smoothly if you contact me by email at [rmoreland@adamscounty.us](mailto:rmoreland@adamscounty.us) first to discuss your project. Alternatively, you can contact me by phone between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at (717) 337-9824. Your message will be forwarded to me so that I may return your call. I look forward to hearing from you, and thank you for all of the positive contributions you are making to our County.

Kind regards,



Rebecca Moreland

Grants Program Coordinator

Cc: Sherri Clayton-Williams, Director, ACOPD

Adams County Commissioners

