News you can use…

IDIS LIVE

…for the Integrated Disbursement and Information System

EXTRA WEB390 & IDIS SUPPORT AVAILABLE!

Weekend Access to IDIS Thru Oct. 9

To assist grantees with their year end processing, IDIS will be up and running on weekends through October 9.

- On Saturdays, IDIS will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., EDT.

- On Sundays, IDIS will be available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. EDT.

- On Columbus Day, Monday, October 9, a Federal Holiday, IDIS will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., EDT

The TAU will not be available on any of these extra days to assist you. Additionally, batch runs -- such as drawdown requests -- resulting from weekend and holiday activity will not occur until the following Monday and Tuesday night respectively. ∎

New IDIS Reports Guide Now Available on the IDIS Web Page

A new Appendix E has been added to the IDIS Reference Manual. It contains samples of all IDIS reports. It also includes a detailed description of each report's output.

To view it, go to:
http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/refman/ref_man.html

Quick Response Team Available for Web390 Support from October 2-13

With Internet access to IDIS now a reality, CPD has expanded the hours of the Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EDT weekdays from October 2 to October 13. Additional representatives -- who have been specially trained in setting up Internet access to IDIS -- will be available to answer any questions you may have. Of course, we hope you will find the answers to your Internet and IDIS problems in one of our many helpful web-based guides. But if you do need "live" assistance, do not hesitate to call the TAU at 1-800-273-2573.

On October 16, TAU hours will return to the regular hours of 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EDT. ∎

FOUR STEPS NEEDED TO ENSURE ACCESS TO IDIS VIA THE INTERNET

STEP 1

You must have Netscape Navigator version 4.05 or a higher browser installed on your PC.

- For step-by-step instructions on downloading and installing Netscape Navigator, go to http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/toolbox/navigatorguide.pdf

- To download the latest browser, go to Netscape's web site, http://www.netscape.com/computing/download/index.html

STEP 2

You must have the Web390 plug-in for the Netscape Navigator browser installed on your PC.

- Get the Web390 plug in at http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/toolbox/np3270.exe

- Step-by-step guide on downloading and installing the Web390 plug-in, http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/toolbox/web390pluginguide.pdf

STEP 3

You must have the reports batch file.

- Step-by-step guide on downloading and installing the reports batch file, http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/toolbox/reportbatchguide.pdf

- Get the ftpzip batch file at http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/toolbox/ftpzip.exe

STEP 4

If you are connected to the Internet through a LAN with a firewall, you may need to have your LAN administrator open a port to allow secure traffic back and forth to IDIS. This site contains information on opening ports in your LAN firewall, http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/techinfo/openports.html

NOW, YOU'RE READY TO ACCESS IDIS VIA THE INTERNET!!

- Step-by-step guide to logging on to IDIS via the Internet, http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/toolbox/idislogon.pdf

WHEN YOUR REGION IS BUSY, CLICK ON A DIFFERENT REGION FOR QUICK IDIS ACCESS

The US map on the "Logon To IDIS" screen, http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/idis.html, provides Internet access from 10 incoming ports, assigned geographically to regions across the US and its territories.

Clicking on the region of the US map where you reside is the recommended way to access IDIS over the Internet.

However, when traffic gets too heavy on your region you may not be able to connect to IDIS or response time may be very slow. Try clicking on one of these less-used regions:

- Missouri/Kansas/Nebraska/Iowa

- Colorado/Utah/Wyoming/Montana/South Dakota/North Dakota

- Washington/Oregon/Idaho/Alaska

Note: If you connect to the Internet via a LAN, clicking on a different region will provide access only if your network administrator has opened all ports on the network firewall: 21450-21459. ■

A State's Experience with the WEB 390 Link to IDIS

The following article was written by Wendy Cairns, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's coordinator for IDIS. Wendy is responsible for assuring that Pennsylvania's 250 state recipients use IDIS efficiently and accurately.

As I am writing this, HUD and its associates are celebrating the conversion of the last of the places to go live on IDIS. I congratulate their efforts and accomplishments. Those associated with the task of bringing Pennsylvania and our 250 subgrantees (with 353 IDIS users and more to come) should have their cake!

We have been on IDIS since April 21, 2000. By and large the majority of our localities use the Internet to access IDIS, except for our subgrantee IDIS users who were authorized by a Federal entitlement. In the beginning, before HUD added 10 more servers, it was very time consuming to complete our "set-up" work on IDIS, especially moving hundreds of HOME activities from the converted project to a project designated for each local program. The work went significantly faster when the improved equipment was in place. Even paging down through our hundreds of subgrants was quicker!

Actually, at the time of planning for our live date early this year, we made a decision to encourage people to use Internet access rather than SprintLink. There were several reasons for this. First of all, we heard rumors that SprintLink wouldn't be supported for very long. It would be a disservice to Pennsylvania's subgrantees to have them use SprintLink for only a short time then switch to the Internet. In addition, we did have some experience trying to get our 250 subgrantees to use SprintLink in 1998 during HUD's first attempt to bring in all the states. I found that providing assistance to our subgrantees to load and use SprintLink was very difficult; in some cases, SprintLink never did work for certain people.

Finally, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development wants to encourage and promote e-commerce and use of the Internet in every facet of the workplace. The use of the Internet to access IDIS and the state's decision to require each subgrantee to be on IDIS furthered that goal.

This is not to say that the Internet doesn't have its own quirks. I have had my Netscape program go bad on me. Fortunately, it was about 10 days before I was scheduled to receive a new CPU with Windows 2000. However, the problem does come up periodically and is solved by reinstalling Netscape. On occasion, the Internet connection appears to be less stable than on other days. When this happens, it is just best to exit IDIS, using the F12 key if necessary, close Netscape, and reopen it again. Generally, this corrects the problem.

For those of you who will be using the Internet to access IDIS, have no fear. TAU's personnel can walk you through the rough parts. Also, there are excellent instructions available from TONYA, Inc. and from the IDIS listserv for downloading the standard reports and the data downloads.

Good luck to those of you who will just now be using the Internet to access IDIS. Now that it has been stabilized, HUD can get on with the other tasks on our collective wish list. ∎

THE HOPWA PAGE

The HOPWA Page spotlights issues pertinent to the HOPWA program. Rusty Bennett, PMI/CPD Specialist for the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing, is available at (202) 708-1934 Ext. 4619 or at Russell_L._Bennett@hud.gov to answer your questions.

▽ HOPWA IDIS Data Cleanup Preparations Near Completion

As mentioned in earlier issues of *IDIS Live,* the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing is the next entitlement program to engage in the IDIS data clean-up effort. During the month of October a pilot group of grantees will receive spreadsheets containing IDIS HOPWA activity data. These grantees will be asked to review and correct the data to ensure that updates to the matrix codes, activity status, accomplishment screens, etc. have been made. The TAU and other staff will be available to answer any questions the grantees may have.

Results of the pilot effort will be discussed at the upcoming HOPWA Grantees' Meeting to be held in Washington, DC in November. Feedback and suggestions from the pilot participants and grantees attending the meeting will be used to create the final spreadsheets for the remaining HOPWA grantees. We are confident that the collaborative efforts of the grantees and HUD staff will produce the quality data that we seek.

▽ Help Available for HOPWA IDIS Users!

The IDIS Technical Assistance Unit is available weekdays 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. eastern time. You may reach the IDIS TAU by telephone at 1-800-273-2573 or e-mail idis_help@hud.gov

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▽ 2000 National HOPWA Formula Grantees' Meeting in Washington, DC

Plans for the 2000 National HOPWA Formula Grantees' Meeting are almost complete. AIDS Housing of Washington (AHW) and the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing have been working diligently to arrange a meeting that will provide grantees with resources that will be useful when they return to their communities. We anticipate that this year's annual meeting on November 1st through 3rd will exceed this goal. The meeting will focus on strengthening existing programs, strategizing new directions for programs and policy, and integrating program outcomes into the HOPWA program goal. The meeting format will be composed of a series of workshops, presentations, and roundtable discussions that will be facilitated by both peers and outside presenters.

Last year's meeting in Baltimore included hands-on IDIS training. That approach was such an overwhelming success that it will be included in this year's meeting as well. IDIS trainers will be available to assist grantees with program and system-related questions in addition to providing IDIS technical assistance.

The meeting will again allow grantees to network with other grantees from around the country. This aspect of the meeting makes it the success that it has become. The chance to discuss similar issues and concerns, and to gain insight from others with like experiences is invaluable.

The meeting will be held at the Hotel Washington (515 15th Street, NW in Washington, DC). Please feel free to contact Elisabeth Davis of AHW for any questions on the meeting, registration and accommodations. Her telephone number is 206-448-5242. She may also be reached by email at elisabeth@aidshousing.org.

We are certain this meeting will be the most successful one to date. We hope to see you there! ■

GRANTEE INPUT NEEDED BY DGMS TEAM

The DGMS Team would like to survey IDIS users as to how an enterprise-wide system would affect their business practice with HUD.

Hello to all. As you know the Department is in the process of streamlining and consolidating the technical systems that support grants into one Departmental Grants Management System (DGMS).

The DGMS team is gathering information from grantees on how one enterprise-wide system would affect their business practice with HUD. Please look over the five questions, below. If you have any insights that you wish to share with the DGMS team, please respond via e-mail to Terry_Nicolosi@hud.gov

To address the impacts on grantees, a survey was prepared with the following questions:

1. What HUD system(s) do you interface with? Which system(s) do you use for which HUD grant programs?

2. How many total staff hours do you invest to operate and "feed"/use each of these systems plus a total for all HUD grant systems?

3. If HUD combines its different grant systems (IDIS, MTCS, LOCCS, etc.) into one system, what would be the effect on your business practices:

   a. Savings in staff <u>hours</u> by function:
      1) Application preparation
      2) Grant program performance reporting
      3) Disbursement Processing
      4) Security/access control processing
      5) Grant program administration

   b. <u>Cost</u> savings from reduced personnel hours

   c. Personnel impact -- what can your staff do with operating efficiencies resulting from a single grant application -- assume consistent and standardized reporting to and from the system.

   d. Reduced hardware costs

   e. Reduced software costs

4. What, in your experience with HUD, are the important facts to consider in development of one system that would affect the way you do business.

5. What other Federal Agencies have grant control systems that you interface with that you would recommend we look at?

C2020 SOFTWARE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH WINDOWS 2000

The current version of HUD's mapping software, Community 2020 Version 2, which grantees use for preparing their Consolidated Plans, is compatible with Windows NT and with Windows 98 and earlier versions of the Windows platform. It is **not** compatible with Windows 2000, the latest version of the Windows platform.

Those Grantees who wish to move to the Windows 2000 platform and keep using C2020 for their Consolidated Plan work will need to keep a copy of their old Windows platform available. Any grantees who upgrade to Windows 2000 without providing for continued use of C2020 will have the option to use the data entry screens contained in the IDIS system to create their projects table.

Planning for Version 3 of Community 2020 is well underway. HUD no longer has a contract with Caliper Corporation, the developer of current Community 2020 Version 2 software. The new version of Community 2020 will be built on the Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc.'s (ESRI) Arc IMS product. It will be web-based, with full functionality, and will work off of HUD's and the Census Bureau's up-to-date databases. The Department is planning for a release in the Spring of 2001 which will be made available free to the public. It will have the same "look and feel" of the existing Community 2020, but be more dynamic because it will be working off of our databases which will be updated more frequently.

The Consolidated Plan Grantee version of Community 2020 will be replaced with the HUD Departmental Grants Management System (DGMS) currently under development. Creation of a Consolidated Plan will be integrated with the other operations of DGMS. In the short-term, CPD grantees who wish to continue using the data entry screens contained in the Grantee Version of the Community 2020 software, should ensure that it is installed on a compatible Windows platform, or they may use the project data entry screens contained in IDIS.

RECEIPT PROCESSING CLARIFICATION

Under the recent Phase 2 Receipt changes, if an activity is funded from a single program, grantees no longer need to manually fund an activity with PI, RL, or SF funds after creating a receipt and before requesting a drawdown. IDIS now automatically corrects/adjusts/creates the "Funding" record for an activity based on the PI, RL, or SF-funded draw.

As part of this automatic process, IDIS is supposed to increment the non-receipt funding source, for example the EN grant, by the amount of the PI, RL, or SF draw. This isn't occurring. As a result, these funds are tied up and not available to fund other activities.

This glitch will not occur if you continue to use the old *Phase I* method of manually funding an activity after creating a PI, RL, or SF receipt.

CPD and IT are working to correct this oversight as soon as possible. In the meantime, if you use the new, automatic funding method, be forewarned that IDIS will not increase the "Amount Available for Funding." You will need to call the TAU at 1-800-273-2573 or e-mail idis_help@hud.gov to have the amount corrected. Please note the date of the PI, RL, or SF draw, the amount of money in question, and the fund type, for example EN or SU, that needs to be increased.

We will post an announcement to the IDIS Web Page and to IDIS News when this problem has been corrected. ∎

IDIS RELEASE NOTES FOR VERSION 5.9

The following IDIS items will be released to production as IDIS Version 5.9 and available for use on Friday morning, September 29, 2000.

CORRECTIONS

A number of system programs were modified to properly process three-level subgranting, necessary for states. This includes updates to the PR56, CDBG Timeliness Report and to data downloads of Grant and Draw Transactions.

The CDBG Timeliness Report (C04PR56) now properly calculates the Letter of Credit Balance. Additionally, the Parameter Screen for this report now displays a more descriptive message when an invalid Grantee ID is entered.

The CDBG Financial Summary (C04PR26) now properly accounts for Prior Year draws. In addition, the report calculations now take into account RL (revolving loan) and SF (CDBG state revolving fund) receipts.

Field Offices can now modify a grantee's ending dates for the current and previous year on the C04MU57 Program Year Start and End Dates screen. Grantees can use this screen to view the report period dates.

An additional system change enhances the performance of report and data downloads. ∎

NEW TRAINING SESSIONS ADDED FOR STATES, ENTITLEMENT TRAINING CONTINUES

CPD has added two new IDIS training sessions specifically for State grantees. One new session covers CDBG and HOME for States; the other session covers HOPWA and ESG for States.

CPD's workshops are primarily designed to help new users or less experienced users build the basic skills necessary to successfully navigate the IDIS system.

Entitlement grantees receiving only CDBG program funds should register for the one-day session, Workshop 'A.'

Entitlement grantees receiving HOME funds (in addition to other program funds) should register for Workshop 'B,' the multi-funded, two-day session.

State grantees receiving HOPWA or ESG program funds should register for the one-day session, Workshop 'C'.

State grantees receiving CDBG or HOME funds should register for the two-day Workshop 'D'.

The sessions will be facilitated by the IDIS experts from TONYA, Inc. and will be held in Washington, DC. For more information or to register, go to the IDIS web page www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/idisweb.html and click on the "Calendar" topic.

Or, contact Karen Harper at 202-289-8100. ∎

IDIS TRAINING IN WASHINGTON, DC AND DALLAS, TX THIS FALL

Location	Deadlines	Workshop 'A' (CDBG only)	Workshop 'B' (Multi-Funded)	Workshop 'C' (HOPWA/ ESG for States)	Workshop 'D' (CDBG/ HOME for States)
Washington, DC *October 24 - 27, 2000* Four Points Sheraton Hotel 1201 K Street, NW Washington, DC 20005 202-289-7600	Registration Deadline: *October 6, 2000* Hotel Reservation Deadline: *October 6, 2000* *Sleeping room rate: $118.00 per night + tax*	Oct. 24 or Oct. 25	Oct. 24-25 or Oct. 26-27	Oct. 26	Oct. 26-27
Dallas, TX *December 5-8* All four IDIS Workshops are planned. Watch for details about the location and registration deadlines in the next issue of IDIS Live.					

TAU TOTALS FOR AUGUST

A total of 1,244 calls were received by the TAU during the month of August 2000. Slightly less than four percent of the calls (45) concerned the HOME C/MI System, the HOPE 3 program, or other non-IDIS calls, while over 96 percent of the calls (1,199) were associated with IDIS. All calls received by the TAU were answered by CSC customer service representatives, resulting in no voice mail for the month. ∎

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Your IDIS contacts are:

Vivian Baldwin   202-708-0614, x4693
            e-mail: Vivian_C._Baldwin@hud.gov
Shanda Wyckoff   202-708-0614,x4567
            e-mail: Shanda_Wyckoff@hud.gov

Mail: HUD/CPD
                   Systems Development and Evaluation Division
                   451 Seventh St., S.W., Room 7226
                   Washington, DC 20410

For technical information, contact your field office or the CPD Technical Assistance Unit at 1-800-273-2573.

To have your IDIS ID and password reset, call HUD Security at 202-708-3300.

For IDIS training, contact TONYA, Inc. at 202-289-8100.

For Web390 ID and password information, contact your local HUD field office or the TAU at 1-800-273-2573. ∎

"TURNING OFF" THE LISTSERV WHEN YOU'RE AWAY

Our thanks to Dave Robinson, administrator of the IDIS listserv, for providing these directions.

To set your subscription to temporarily not receive mail, send an e-mail to the following e-mail address, which is DIFFERENT from the normal IDIS-USERS address:

mailto:listserv@home.ease.lsoft.com

In that e-mail, write: "set idis-users nomail"

Then, when you get back to the office, send another e-mail to the same address: mailto:listserv@home.ease.lsoft.com saying "set idis-users mail".

Make a note of the difference between idis-users@home.ease.lsoft.com and listserv@home.ease.lsoft.com. ∎

THE TAU WILL BE UNAVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING FEDERAL HOLIDAY:

October 9   Columbus Day

IDIS AND THE TAU WILL BE UNAVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING FEDERAL HOLIDAYS:

November 10   Veterans Day

November 23   Thanksgiving

December 25   Christmas Day

The next edition of *IDIS Live* will be published on November 1, 2000.