

The HUD Experience HUD Region VI News Brief









Spring/Summer 2020 – The HUD Experience, HUD's Region VI-News Brief provides you with a snapshot of what's new in the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Southwest Region. You will find periodic updates on HUD activities in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

Message from the Regional Administrator

First of all, let me state that I am honored to be named as Region VI's new Regional Administrator by Secretary Carson.

Having spent four years working for Texas Governor Greg Abbott, including time in the state's Office of Economic Development, my family and I are thrilled to get back to our roots in Region VI. It was truly an honor serving in our nation's capital the last three years, but I am excited to join the dedicated staff across Region VI in our mission to serve communities.

Prior to my appointment as the Regional Administrator, I served in the White House as Deputy Assistant to the Preside nt and Deputy Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel.



Michael Burley, Regional Administrator

Before joining the White House in May 2018, I had multiple roles under Secretary Carson, first as Advisor for Intergovernmental Relations and subsequently as the White House Liaison. My time in headquarters allowed me to learn HUD programs and see their implementation from a unique perspective. I very much look forward to learning even more from our many subject matter experts across the region. I am blessed I get to be a part of an expert and talented team.

This quarter's newsletter focuses on the critical issue of COVID-19. Despite the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, HUD's response was swift. Since the CARES Act was passed in late March, HUD has allocated more than \$811 million in grants to our region's states, cities, housing authorities, tribal nations, and other partners. The allocation of these funds will help our partners prepare, prevent and respond to the pandemic.

In addition, the Federal Housing Administration placed a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions for homeowners with FHA-insured single family and reverse mortgages. To further assist those impacted, our Office of Multifamily Programs has an eviction moratorium for those living in apartment complexes with FHA-insured mortgages and/or with Housing Assistance Payment Contracts.

You will find detailed information about these grants in the newsletter, including links to our national HUD COVID-19 web page, which is constantly updated. I urge you to contact my office or your local field office with any questions regarding CARES Act funding as we work together to overcome the pandemic.

I also want to highlight the great work our grantees and partners are doing to provide critically needed supplies and services to people in their communities during this difficult time. A couple of bright spots during this time are two EnVision Center openings and a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant that will transform a neighborhood in Fort Worth, Texas.

Again, it is an honor to join the Region VI team, and I look forward to being a resource to all of you across our dynamic and diverse five state region. As we continue to administer vital CARES Act funding and promote Secretarial initiatives, I look forward to meeting you all personally (or virtually) in the coming months. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office directly with your comments, concerns, or ideas.

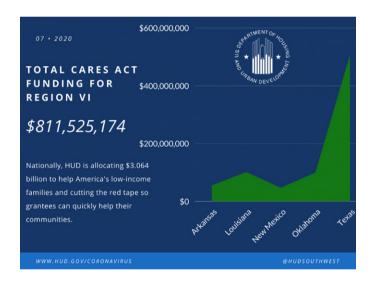
Sincerely,

Michael

Region VI News

COVID - 19

HUD Allocates \$811 Million in CARES Act Funds to Region VI to Help Prevent, Prepare for, and Respond to COVID-19



In response to our nation's COVID crisis, HUD is providing billions of dollars to help cities, public housing authorities and other HUD grantees prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 under the Federal CARES Act. This comprehensive funding touches every major HUD program area.

Region VI's five states of Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Louisiana have received a total of \$811,525,174 in HUD CARES Act funding to date.

"President Trump has said repeatedly that combating coronavirus will take a whole government response, so we are glad to see Congress come together and join in our efforts to provide relief for the American people," said Regional Director Michael Burley. "During this national emergency, HUD has taken quick action to help our country's most vulnerable citizens and this additional support from Congress will help us continue to fulfill that mission."

The first wave of national funding was released on April 1 and provided more than \$3 billion nationally for the Community Development Block Grant, Emergency Shelter Grant and Housing Opportunities for People with Aids Programs. See press release here.

On April 3, HUD provided \$200 million under the Indian Housing Block Grant Program to assist Tribal Nations. See press release here.

On April 13, HUD issued a moratorium on evictions in apartment complexes with FHA insured mortgages and HUD Housing Assistance Payments contracts. See press release here.

At the beginning of May, HUD provided \$685 million in CARES Act funding to public housing authorities nationwide. See press release here.

On May 11, an additional \$1 billion in CARES Act funding under the Community Development Block Grant program was announced. See press release here.

The fourth wave of Cares Act funding was released on May 18: a total of \$75 million to public housing authorities for Section 811 Mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers for the disabled. See press release here.

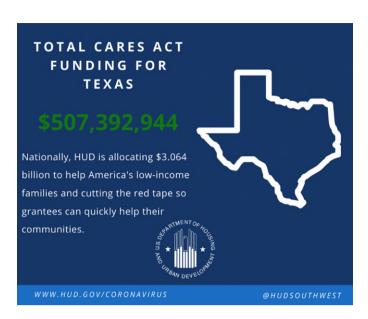
On June 9, an additional \$3 billion in Emergency Shelter Grant Program funds were announced to assist cities in addressing COVID in homeless populations. See press release here.

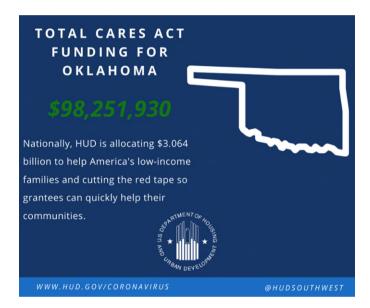
HUD announced another \$1 million in CARES Act Funding to state and local fair housing organizations on June 24. See press release here.

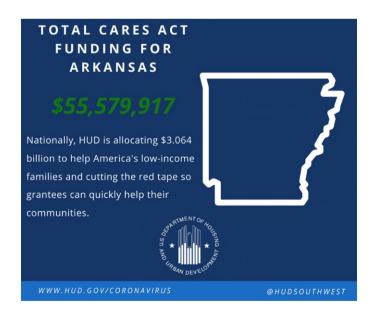
Then on July 2, HUD awarded \$15 million to Native American Tribes to support COVID-19 recovery efforts. See press release here.

Finally, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) announced a two-month extension or its original foreclosure and eviction moratorium to August 31, 2020, for homeowners with FHA-insured Single Family mortgages and Home Equity Conversion mortgages. See press release here.

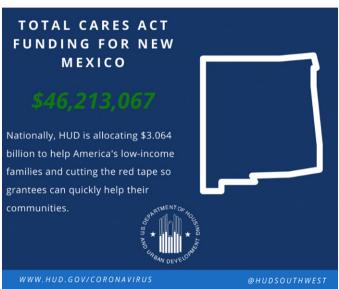
To find out specifics about your state or city's CARES Act funding, please contact the Fort Worth Regional Office or appropriate field office. Contact information can be found at the end of the newsletter.











Brownsville EnVision Center Supporting the Arts in the Age of COVID-19.



EnVision Center, a collaborative partnership

Photo: Kids of the Brownsville Housing Authority received instruments to participate in remote video lessons through the Brownsville EC. During the mandated county-wide shelter in place to protect Cameron County residents from significant threats of COVID-19, the Brownsville partnership between the City of Brownsville,

Revival of

Cultural Arts

(ROCA), and the Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville (HACB) remains committed to serving the families of the Brownsville community. Revival of Cultural Arts (ROCA) continues to support three of the four pillars of opportunity, Educational Advancement, Health and Wellness, and Character and Leadership in its programming. Prior to local and state shelter-in-place mandates, instruction for the dance, music, and art programs were conducted in-person with highly qualified instructors at the Brownsville Performing Arts Academy and the Carlotta K. Petrina Cultural Center. In an effort to provide the utmost safety and well-being of these programs' participants, the Brownsville EnVision Center has shifted instructional learning to virtual platforms that

assist in continuing to connect and serve youth through unique opportunities and experiences during these unprecedented times.

HACB residents and children from the Envision Center surrounding community have received instruments and supplies that allow them to participate in virtual instructional videos and teleconferences thereby continuing their learning at home. This helps foster support of the EnVision center pillars in a unique way that provides the joy of dance and music and structured activities for youth while maintaining their safety and health.

San Antonio EnVision Center Helps Community Cope with COVID-19

The East Side
Education and
Training Center
(EETC), a HUD
EnVision Center in
San Antonio, and the
WestCare Foundation
held a community
event to assist
residents respond to
COVID-19. The drive
thru event included
the distribution of
personal protective



equipment, such as masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, anti-bacterial soap, books for children, and USDA Grab & Go Meals for children who were present. They also provided access to a Digital Resource Hub where individuals and families could apply for COVID-19 relief online and print and scan documents. In total there were more than 1,400 children's meals, 700 children's books, 800 sets of PPE, 120 bottles of disinfectant, and 500 antibacterial bars of soap distributed. The Grab and Go Meal Distribution and Online Resource Center will continue every Wednesday until further notice, in response to the pandemic.

The event was done in collaboration with more than 20 other community organizations and EnVision Center allies. It is essential to have community organizations like this to improve the quality of life for residents of communities like San Antonio's Eastside, which is home to a HUD Envision Center, HUD Promise Zone, and considered one of the most disadvantaged and atrisk populations in the country. It makes HUD proud to work with such an outstanding network of community collaborators with relentless dedication to serve their community.

"When we work and live in communities with limited resources, it is vital - literally and figuratively - that we come together and pull all resources to meet the needs of our neighbors," said EETC Off-Site Coordinator and EnVision Center Lead Contact Delicia Herrera. "Our organizations are anchors in our community and must continue to be the resource our community so desperately needs."

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Many of our HUD employees, grantees and partners have been working to assist those in those in their communities with supplies, meals and other necessities to get them through this difficult time. The following stories highlight just some of their outstanding work.

Albuquerque, New Mexico – Patsy Gomez in HUD's Albuquerque Field Office has been assisting her community in Albuquerque and across state lines in El Paso, Texas throughout the coronavirus pandemic. She coordinated a drive thru food distribution that served over 1,000 families in need and holds a bi-weekly food pantry that serves 100 families. Every Saturday, she also distributes food and essential supplies to people who are homebound due to a disability, elderly residents and veterans. On Easter, she helped deliver over 200 Easter baskets to children who are living in shelters or experiencing home insecurity. She has also been working with local funeral directors in El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico to provide free or very low-cost funeral services to assist families affected by the loss of a loved one due to COVID-19. *Read the full story from El Paso* Times.



Photo courtesy of Patsy Gomez

Harrison, **Arkansas** – In an effort to care for its most vulnerable community members, the Harrison Housing Authority partnered with Ozarks Share and Care food bank and community members to prepare and deliver more than 700 lunches, 1200 grocery bags of food, 800 rolls of toilet paper and other toiletries to more than 600 families. Given that Harrison is a city of less than 20,000 residents, this was a tremendous achievement. "As we were all knee deep in the unknown and trying to plan and navigate how to operate virtually on a limited budget, we decided that if we could keep the families we serve inside, as well as others in the community, it could help stop the spread of COVID-19," said Harrison HA Executive Director Chonda Tapley. "I am so grateful to my staff, friends, family, City of Harrison Public Works employees and the other volunteers, because without their labor to prepare the bags, drivers and vehicles to deliver the food, and monetary donations, we couldn't have done this.' The Harrison Housing Authority hopes this small deed will encourage families to stay in and practice social distancing, and they plan to repeat their community effort in the future.



Photo courtesy of the Harrison Housing Authority

<u>Corrigan, Texas</u> – The Corrigan Housing Authority (CHA) recognized that action was needed to assist their elderly, disabled, and lowincome tenants struggling during the coronavirus pandemic. The CHA and the Corrigan Fire Department (CFD) helped rally the city to feed these vulnerable residents, securing funding for food from local employers Georgia Pacific and Roy O Martin, with Brookshire Brothers supplying donated milk. The CFD was able to deliver groceries to 56 CHA residents. It was a welcome surprise to public housing tenants, who also received guidance identifying emergency food resources for the elderly and high-risk residents of Polk County. Of their effort, CHA Executive Director Johnna Gibson said, "This was the community coming together to help those who are most vulnerable. We are so proud of the city and local partners for making a difference in this moment of extreme need."



Photo courtesy of the Corrigan Housing Authority

Albuquerque, New Mexico — Keeping families safe during the coronavirus pandemic is the top priority, but the Albuquerque Housing Authority (AHA) also wants to help make sure their children have activities do while abiding by stay-at-home orders. AHA staff spent hours assembling and delivering 200 arts and crafts supply kits to homes of Public Housing and Section 8 residents. Furthermore, they worked with local retail outlets for donations to the cause - Target,

Costco, Wemagination, Wal-Mart, and Albertson's made the project possible. The community effort organized by the AHA and their hard-working staff was a complete success in support of AHA families, helping bring fun with arts and crafts into each household. Linda Bridge, Executive Director of the AHA, said "This is a challenging time for everyone, but working with our community partners helped bring some joy to residents of the AHA, and that helped bring joy to the effort and everyone involved. I want to say thank you to all who made this project a great success."



Photo courtesy of the Albuquerque Housing Authority

Around the Region

25 Years Later: Remembering Oklahoma City

By: Secretary Carson

Twenty-five years ago, on April 19, 1995, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City (OKC) was attacked and 168 people, including 35 HUD employees, lost their lives. HUD suffered the most deaths of any agency in the building. On that terrible day, amazing lives were cut short by a senseless act of terrorism, and we at HUD will never forget them.

Twenty-five years later, nine OKC employees who survived the bombing are still working at HUD and serving the American people. Their commitment to HUD and to improving our nation's communities is as strong as ever, and it is a testament to their dedication to public service and to our nation's resilient character. They are an inspiration to us all.

On this 25th Anniversary of the bombing, we honor our lost HUD co-workers with a poem written by HUD survivor, Robert Reddy. It references the OKC National Memorial, where near a reflecting pool, chairs have been placed on the grass, one for each person who lost their life that day.

Our Place in Time

By broken walls I touch your chair.

Near tree and pool I lift my prayer.

At gates of time, try as they may,
the days fly through and find their way.
As seasons pass and years increase,
The call of life brings measured peace.
Unlike before and not as clear,
But on this path, I know you're near.
For there's a place I hear you still.
And there I know I always will.
Though ages pass they cannot part
The place you hold within my heart.



Photo: Graphic includes the names of every HUD employee we lost in the Oklahoma City bombing.

Fort Worth Housing Solutions Receives \$35 Million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant to Revitalize Cavile Place/Stop Six Neighborhood



Photo: Concept drawing of mixed income housing included in Fort Worth Housing Solution's Stop Six Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Transformation

On April 23, 2020, HUD announced that the City of Fort Worth and Fort Worth Housing Solutions will receive a \$35 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant to redevelop the Cavile Place public housing complex and the surrounding Stop Six neighborhood.

The Stop Six Transformation Plan will replace 300 existing public housing units at Cavile Place with 990 mixed-income rental units that will be built in six phases of housing development. It will also support the construction of a Neighborhood Hub with recreation, education, health and safety services and case management, education, health and economic mobility support services for Cavile residents. The CNI grant will leverage \$345 million dollars in additional funds from the city and partners for the transformation.

"HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant to Fort Worth will provide a transformational investment in Stop Six," said HUD SW Deputy Regional Administrator Leslie Bradley. "Even during the Coronavirus outbreak, HUD is continuing to direct support to those communities that need it most."

"Today's award would not have been possible without the hard work and contributions of the residents, the community, and our more than 40 public and private sector partners," added Mary-Margaret Lemons, FWHS President. "These funds will further our collective vision to transform Stop Six into a mixed-income, mixed use, sustainable neighborhood that will provide quality affordable housing for all income levels."

HUD's Choice Neighborhood Initiative is a landmark program that promotes a comprehensive approach that supports local strategies for neighborhood revitalization. The program helps communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing severely distressed public housing and acting as a catalyst for making critical improvements in their neighborhoods housing, economic development, schools, healthcare, and more.

Stop Six got its name because it was the 6th stop on the Interurban rail line coming from downtown Fort Worth to Dallas.

Brownsville Residents Prepare for a "Buena Vida" With Opening of City's New EnVision Center

Residents of Brownsville, Texas, can find help in reaching their life goals with the recent dedication of the Buena Vida Choice Neighborhood EnVision Center in February.

Brownsville was the third city in Texas at the time of the opening to receive an EnVision Center designation. EnVision Centers are part of HUD Secretary Carson's initiative to offer a more holistic housing approach by connecting HUD-assisted and low-income families with the tools that can lead to

self-sufficiency. The principle partners for the Brownsville EC are the Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville (HACB), the City of Brownsville and the Revival of Cultural Arts Center.

EnVision Center Program Manager Unabyrd Wadhams came from Washington, D.C., to present the official designation certificate. "Secretary Carson believes that public-private partnerships are the way we as a country can lead low-income families to life success," she said. "EnVision Centers are the perfect example of that partnership, and Mayor Martinez and the city, HACB and the Cultural Arts Center are to be commended for both their foresight and their hard work in making today's opening a reality."

The Buena Vida Choice Neighborhood EC will provide a wide range of programs to area residents, including youth leadership and internship programs; ESL, STEM and financial literacy classes; health classes; Family Self Sufficiency counseling; and small business development.

With the addition of the Arlington EC in March, Region VI now has a total of five ECs: Brownsville, Arlington, Fort Worth, San Antonio and the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma.



Photo: Unabyrd Wadhams, FPM EnVision Center Program Manager, holds the designation certificate she presented to Brownsville city and housing authority officials at the Buena Vida Choice EC Opening. She was joined by Region VI DRA Leslie Bradley, to her left. The Brownsville EC is the fourth in Texas and the fifth in Region VI.



Catherine Mair of the San Antonio HUD Office staffs HUD table at the Promise Zone Mini Expo.

Promoting HUD/FHA Programs in the San Antonio Promise Zone

Catherine Mair, Program Analyst represented HUD at the Affordable Home Repair Mini Expo sponsored by San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE) and Frost Bank in the San Antonio Promise Zone at Claude Black Community Center on Saturday, February 29, 2020. The mission of the HUD sponsored Eastside Promise Zone is to reduce poverty and improve overall quality of life on the Eastside of San Antonio. Goals include increasing economic activity, job creation and training, improving education, leveraging private investment, reducing serious and violent crime, reducing poverty and increasing affordable housing.

The event focused on home improvement and homeownership. Along with HUD, partner tables included The Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG), the American Red Cross, City of San Antonio (COSA)-Code Compliance, COSA-Neighborhood and Housing Services, COSA-Office of Historic Preservation, COSA-Office of Historic Preservation; CPS Energy, LISC, San Antonio 2020, SAGE, San Antonio Fire Department, San Antonio Fighting Back, San Antonio Water Systems and Shafer Services.

There were approximately 50 of the participants that visited the HUD/FHA table. They received information on successful homeownership, FHA and FHA home improvement products, Healthy Homes, Housing Counseling and how to protect from loan fraud. The Event included hands-on classes in Weatherizing Your Home; Caulking Around Doors, Windows and Flooring; Repairing Drywall; and Detecting Water Leaks. There were presentations on Home Improvement Loans, Frost Bank; How to Choose a Reputable Contractor, GPS Consulting; HVAC/Plumbing Tips, Shafer Services; Weatherization Programs from AACOG; and Home Safety from the San Antonio Police Department. Guest Speakers at the event were Bexar County Commissioner Tommy Calvert and City Council Woman Jada Andrews-Sullivan, District 2 along with spokespersons from Frost Bank, and AACOG.



Youth Leader Andres Guerra of Brownsville, TX

Buena Vida Choice EVC Youth Volunteer Wins Award; gives back to the community.

Long before the Buena Vida Choice Envision Center received its designation, community work has defined Buena Vida's commitment to the city of Brownsville. This work has been made possible thanks to countless people and community partners that have volunteered throughout the years. Andres Guerra, a high school senior and EnVision Center volunteer, has dedicated his time and helped further the spirit of volunteerism by setting the example from a young age. He has focused on connecting residents and the community to resources they needed, has expanded Buena Vida's use of Facebook and other social media accounts, and has helped in special projects.

The EnVision Center received its designation on February 12th of this year and since then, Andres has continued to work but as the Public Relations and Marketing Coordinator at the Housing Authority City of Brownsville. "Having the opportunity to be involved and engaged with the EnVision Center has been a remarkable experience, unlike any other. We are fortunate to have a centralized hub in our community that is geared towards empowering individuals through four pillars. Although operations are currently virtual, I cannot wait to witness the wonderful programs and experiences that will come out of the building, specifically ones that will empower other young people to become agents of change for their community," Andres said.

Andres recently won a grant through the Rep My City Challenge that came from a partnership between Pop-Tarts, Kellogg Company, and United Way Worldwide. He entered the competition with his idea, a city-wide day of giving, providing necessities to anyone who needed them and secured a \$5,000 grant. Brownsville was the only city in Texas to receive this award. On May 7, 2020, Andres with the help of community partners such as the Brownsville Wellness Coalition, the City of Brownsville, and H-E-B, along with volunteers, provided groceries, fresh produce, and supplies to over 1,000 residents in need at a drive-thru distribution event in the Southmost area of the city. The event was able to help individuals who were experiencing homelessness and those of low socioeconomic status. Through his hard work and dedication to his community, Andres raised awareness about food insecurity and food deserts while addressing the immediate challenges the community faces today.

Homeownership Virtual Workshop in Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City continued its annual celebration of June as National Homeownership Month but with a twist this time. Because of the health pandemic, the City's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) Homeownership Workshop had to be a virtual event on June 2, 2020. City Councilmember Nikki Nice and HUD Field Office Director Sharon Gordon-Ribeiro made presentations and underscored that the American Dream of homeownership is still possible even during these unsettled and unsettling times in our nation. Over 28 people attended on-line.

SNI HOMEOWNERSHIP VIRTUAL





The Workshop was an overview of the whole homeownership journey as presented by local community experts. Topics included: HUD-certified housing counselors and down payment assistance; homeowners' insurance; predatory lending practices; and new affordable housing available in the city. Families that were unable to attend the live Workshop online or by telephone can still view the content by going to: https://www.okc.gov/departments/planning/programs/strong-neighborhoods-initiative.

The event was also a great opportunity to roll-out the City's Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security (CARES Act) Program. That program is managed by a partner organization, the Community Action Agency of OKC, which has recently applied to become a HUD-designated EnVision Center. Local residents with mortgage, rent, or utility bill crises related to the pandemic can seek assistance by calling 405-232-0199, or going online at:

https://www.caaofokc.org/coronavirus-aid-relief-application/.

"Shannon Entz, Jennifer Sylvester and others in the OKC Planning Department did a fantastic job bringing everything together. The Homeownership Workshop was a great example of effective collaboration between HUD and local partners for the benefit of local citizens," said Gordon-Ribero.

National News from Washington

(CTRL + Click to follow)

HUD Announces New Grants for Foster
Youth to Independence Program,
Bringing Total to Over 600 Vouchers
Since Inception

Secretary Ben Carson Releases New Summer Reading Video with Special Guest

HUD Updates Equal Access Rule, Returns Decision Making to Local Shelter Providers

HUD and Census Bureau Release Findings of Rental Housing Finance Survey

HUD Introduces "A Solid Foundation"
Podcast Series for the Class of 2020

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You May Also Call

For Public Housing: 1-800-955-2232

For Housing Counseling: 1-800-569-4287

For Housing Discrimination: 1-800-669-9777

(or 1-800-927-9275 for TTY)

For Multifamily Complaints: 1-800-MULTI-70

(1-800-685-8470)

Internet/E-Mail Resources:

Email HUD Customer Service at:

TXWebmanager@hud.gov (Texas),

ARWebmanager@hud.gov (Arkansas),

LAWebmanager@hud.gov (Louisiana),

NMWebmanager@hud.gov (New Mexico),

OKWebmanager@hud.gov (Oklahoma)

At www.hud.gov, you can find information on most of our programs, including HUD information and resources related to coronavirus/COVID-19 at www.hud.gov/coronavirus

If your mortgage is insured by FHA: 1-800-Call-FHA (1-800-225-5342) or Email: Answers@hud.gov

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers the most up-to-date information on COVID-19. For updates from CDC, please visit www.coronavirus.gov.

Quick Links (CTRL + Click to follow)

The Federal Register: Housing and Urban

Development Significant & Recently Published

Documents

GRANTS.GOVSM Opportunities with the Department of Housing and Urban Development

The HUD Experience - Region VI e-News Brief

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