

IDIS LIVE

...for the Integrated Disbursement and Information System

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Office of Community Planning and Development

SAYING GOODBYE TO THE VOICE RESPONSE SYSTEM

VRS Not An Option for CPD State Grantees After May 31. After May 31, CPD grantees will no longer be able to use VRS (the LOCCS Voice Response System) to draw funds from CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG entitlement and formula grants. Effective June 1, the only vehicle for drawing those funds will be IDIS.

Entitlement grantees and states already using IDIS won't notice the CPD/VRS disconnection, but how does it affect the states not currently live in IDIS? It means that you can't continue to wait for DGMS to become available without converting to IDIS and continue to draw your CPD formula funds.

You must schedule a date between now and May 15 for data conversion and for on-site IDIS training. (Training typically takes place two weeks before going live.) Your field office should have already contacted you about setting up a training/conversion date.

If you haven't already set a date, the sooner you decide and tell your field office representative, the more likely that CPD can accommodate your choice. If you have any questions regarding hardware or software, call the IDIS Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) at 1-800-273-2573. If you need assistance in scheduling your training, please contact Ron Allen, TONYA, Inc. at (202) 289-8100.■

SPRINTLINK FUNDS MAY RUN OUT BY APRIL UNLESS CURRENT USAGE DECLINES

Most grantees do not realize that HUD pays for SprintLink "800" access to IDIS on a per call basis. The cost of providing this access far exceeds the fixed costs of maintaining the Web390 internet server. At the current rate of usage, the IDIS budget for SprintLink access could run out by the end of this March.

CPD recognizes that connecting to IDIS via the internet is problematic for a limited number of grantees. To use the internet, grantees must either contract with an internet service provider (ISP) or connect to the web via a LAN. Additionally, IDIS Web390 access works only with Netscape Navigator, not with Internet Explorer.

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If you can, please use the Web390 connection. Doing so will hone skills you'll need for DGMS (which is to be available only on the net) and will keep SprintLink open for grantees who don't currently have another option for accessing IDIS.

If you have an IDIS user ID, CPD has already assigned you a Web390 user ID. If you don't know

your Web390 ID, your field office representative will be able to provide it.

Web390 requires a special piece of software, called a plug-in, to operate. Go to the url: http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/web390_help.html for more information on downloading and installing the plug-in.■

SEPARATION OF FUNCTIONS IN IDIS – YOU HAVE THE POWER

The following article was written by guest columnist John Mayer, IDIS HQ System Administrator. Grantees who have security and access questions should contact their local field office representative or John_Mayer@hud.gov

IDIS is very flexible in what it will allow people to do. In a multi-person office, IDIS can be set up so that one person sets up activities, another person requests drawdowns, a third person approves drawdowns, and a fourth person gets reports. In a one-person office, IDIS can be set up so that one person can do everything.

Until October 1999, there was a curious anomaly in IDIS: a person could approve drawdowns only if that person also had the power to request them. A person could request drawdowns without having the power to approve them, however. The logic of IDIS before October 1999 was that for a person to do anything with funds, that person had to have the power to request drawdowns. This has changed.

Since October 1999, it is possible for the Grantee Local Administrator to separate the function of approving drawdowns and requesting drawdowns on the C04MU02 User Information screen. One person

can just approve drawdowns -- by giving them access to the Approve Drawdown function -- without having the power to request them. A person can still request drawdowns -- by giving them access to the Request Drawdown function -- without having the power to approve them. And IDIS will still let one person do both by giving them access to both the Request Drawdown function and the Approve Drawdown function. IDIS still allows one-person offices to operate.

This is especially good news for those grantees who want the assurance that no one person will mistakenly, or wrongly, set up an activity, request a draw and approve that draw. The Local Administrator for that grantee can change the "profile" for the people there so that no one person can perform all functions, and in particular can change the profile for staff who should ONLY approve draws so that is all they can do, instead of having the power to request draws, too.

If you are a one-person office and want to allow one person to have all functions in IDIS, you can do so. However, these duties can and should be separated whenever possible.■

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Your IDIS contacts are Tracey Peterson and Vivian Baldwin at CPD. Mail:
You may contact them via the following:
Telephone: 202-708-0614, ext. 4859 (Tracey)
202-708-0614, ext. 4693 (Vivian)
Internet: Tracey_R_Peterson@hud.gov
Vivian_C_Baldwin@hud.gov

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. **For SprintLink ID and password information**, contact your local HUD field office. **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.

PROGRAM INCOME MUST BE DRAWN BEFORE EN FUNDS

The program rule that you must draw PI funds, if available, before EN funds has not changed. What has changed is that you **MUST** fund an activity with any available PI and draw all PI before drawing any EN funds. CPD reminds grantees that CPD program staff

at headquarters and in the field offices continually monitor the timeliness in which grantees draw their PI funds. Grantees who do not draw PI funds before EN funds will be subject to penalty. ■

314 HOME PJs KNOW ACCURATE DATA MATTERS

Most Participating Jurisdictions laud the benefits the new era of performance-based management gives back to their communities. A case in point is the IDIS HOME data clean-up. Most PJs understand that their extra efforts help to assure that their IDIS HOME data presents the complete picture of their program efforts and is vital to continued Federal support as Congress considers the FY 2001 budget.

Over the past six months, personnel from HUD headquarters and the 48 field offices, as well as representatives from 314 jurisdictions have devoted a significant amount of time and resources to reviewing and correcting their HOME program data in IDIS. The goal of the Office of Affordable Housing Programs (OAHP) is to have all 542 HOME PJs compliant by Feb. 29, 2000. We can meet this goal!

Our thanks to all PJs for understanding that correct and timely data assists them in providing the critical

information necessary for local management of their HOME projects and activities. CPD initiated this massive data clean-up effort for the sole purpose of improving the reliability of the HOME program information contained in IDIS.

We hope the remaining 228 HOME Participating Jurisdictions understand the purpose and benefits of completing the HOME data clean-up as requested. These PJs will want to begin this important task before HOME program performance reports are published.

If you have any questions concerning the HOME data clean-up effort, please feel free to call Louise Thompson of the OAHP program office at 202-708-0614 x4594, the Technical Assistance Unit at 1-800-273-2573, or e-mail us at IDIS_Data_Cleanup@hud.gov. ■

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

**IDIS AND THE TAU WILL BE
UNAVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING
FEDERAL HOLIDAY:**

February 21 President's Day

ENTITLEMENT GRANTEE TRAINING CONTINUES, DON'T MISS OUT!

CPD is again offering IDIS training to entitlement grantees during the months of April and June, 2000. These workshops are designed to help users build on the IDIS skills they already possess. They include hands-on exercises in setting up and revising activities, reporting accomplishments, creating and maintaining drawdowns, creating and using subgrants, and generating and formatting reports.

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

The sessions will be facilitated by the IDIS experts from TONYA, Inc. and will be held in the Washington, DC area. For more information or to register, please contact Carmen Barnes at 202-289-8100. ■

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Deadlines</u> | <u>Workshop 'A' (CDBG only)</u> | <u>Workshop 'B' (Multi-Funded)</u> |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Washington, DC April 18 - 21, 2000 Hotel Washington 515 15th Street, NW Washington, DC 20004 202-638-5900 (800) 424-9540 | Registration Deadline: April 3, 2000 Hotel Reservation Deadline March 27, 2000 Sleeping room rate: \$115.00 per night + tax | April 18 or April 19 | April 18-19 or April 20-21 |
| Washington, DC June 6 - 9, 2000 Hotel Washington 515 15th Street, NW Washington, DC 20004 202-638-5900 (800) 424-9540 | Registration Deadline: May 22, 2000 Hotel Reservation Deadline: May 15, 2000 Sleeping room rate: \$115.00 per night + tax | June 6 or June 7 | June 6-7 or June 8-9 |

TAU TOP 10 FOR 1999

In 1999, the Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) responded to 8,089 calls for assistance. By comparison, in 1998 there were 9,700 calls for assistance and in 1997, 10,000 calls.

Over 5,500 calls (68%) were requests for assistance on IDIS, while 2575 of the callers (32%) needed technical assistance on the HOME C/MI System, the HOPE 3 System, or with other non-IDIS problems.

The chart below compares the number of calls received in 1999 and 1998 for the top 10 categories that the TAU tracks:

| Category | Calls Received 1999 | Calls Received 1998 |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Reports | 716 | 597 |
| Drawdowns | 650 | 1379 |
| SprintLink | 550 | 605 |
| Activity Funding | 536 | 596 |
| Passwords | 466 | 644 |
| Web 390 | 393 | na |
| System Errors | 311 | na |
| Subgranting | 269 | 335 |
| Activity Set-up/Revise | 254 | 360 |
| IDIS - Other | 252 | na |

Not surprisingly, Reports and Drawdowns topped the list of calls, followed by calls regarding SprintLink and Activity Funding. While many users called about year-end reports or advice on which report to run, an equally large number of calls were the result of caller confusion following the 4.8 Release of IDIS. (The new functionality used a new keystroke sequence.) Most callers inquiring about drawdowns needed assistance in creating drawdowns, tracking funds that their banks had not yet received, or moving drawdowns from one activity to another.

Callers with SprintLink problems most often needed a new SprintLink ID or needed to change their PC setup to work with SprintLink. (With the introduction of Web390 access in October, 1999, SprintLink calls declined significantly while calls for Web390 spiked.)

The Activity Funding category had over 500 calls. The majority of the questions focused on selecting the correct funding source and increasing or decreasing funding for activities. Following the 4.8 Release in October, callers requested details on how to fund activities with Program Income, a feature not formerly available.

Far fewer users called with Password problems in 1999 than in 1998. We suspect users heeded CPD's almost-constant advice to contact the User Assistance Branch to have their passwords reset or to contact their field offices for new IDIS IDs, new SprintLink IDs and passwords, or new Web390 IDs.

In 1999, the TAU began to track calls about system-related problems in a new category, *System Errors*. System errors, other than when a user's PC froze, usually involved the intervention of the CPD system analysts and/or IT programmers before they could be resolved.

Starting this month, *IDIS Live* will publish question and answer *tips* for the most frequently asked questions in these categories. Be sure to see the article later in this issue. ■

LIVE UPDATE

We are happy to announce the addition of the
State of South Dakota
to the list of state grantees that have gone "live" in IDIS
and
Dane County, WI
Rio Grande, PR
Canovanas, PR
to the list of entitlement grantees that have gone "live" in
IDIS.
Welcome! We look forward to working with you.

IDIS MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Ever wonder which questions about using IDIS grantees ask most? This month, we present the most frequently asked questions in the categories of Reports, Drawdowns, Web390, and System Errors. Watch for more tips in future issues of IDIS Live.

Reports

Q. When attempting to run a report, I keep getting the message, “No report(s) submitted.”

A. Effective with Release 4.8, you need to select the desired report, press <Enter>, then press F9 to submit the report(s).

Q. Which report should I select to view all activity funding?

A. Request the “List of Activities” report to view all funded activities.

Q. When I reviewed the GPR report, I discovered that the amount of funds disbursed on activities is incorrect.

A. The GPR report contains two columns for total disbursements. One column shows all disbursements through this program year. The other column reflects only the draws created during this program year. Any draws you created outside the program year aren't shown.

Q. I don't think the Status of Home Activities report is showing all my activities.

A. The report shows only those activities that are budgeted, underway, or that have been closed or canceled within the last year. (This is the calendar year prior to the day you are running the report.)

Q. I downloaded the Summary of Accomplishment report (or the Summary of Activities report) for the 1998 program year and don't see all the accomplishments.

A. If you never entered accomplishments for the program year you requested, they won't be on the report. Check to see if you entered accomplishments.

Select Option B (Revise Activity) from the Main Menu and press F2 (Project Query). Next, place an “X” before the appropriate activity and press <Enter>. Advance through the screens until you get to the MA04 screen. Verify which years have accomplishment data entered, and, if necessary, enter new accomplishment data for the missing year(s) and run the report again.

Drawdowns

Q. While attempting to create a drawdown for a CHDO, I received the message: “Grantee has not funded activity.”

A. This message occurs when you pick the incorrect entity during the Drawdown Authorization process. Go back to Option D-01 and authorize the appropriate CHDO, then proceed to create the drawdown.

Q. While attempting to create a drawdown for a CHDO, I received the message: “Grantee not authorized for drawdown.”

A. This message occurs when the activity is not set up properly for the CHDO that you authorized in the Drawdown Authorization Process. To set up the activity for the CHDO, select Option B (Revise Activity) from the Main Menu. At the MA09 screen, enter the activity number and press <Enter>. On the MA03 screen answer the question, “Will activity be carried out by an entity other than the grantee?” with a “Y” for Yes and press <Enter>. Finally, on the ML03 (CHDO/Subrecipient List) screen, select the correct entity with an “X.”

Q. How can I check the status of a voucher once I create and approve it in IDIS?

A. Select Option D-01 (Drawdown Authorization) from the Main Menu and authorize the correct grantee. Select Option 5 (Maintain Drawdown/Voucher) from the Drawdown Menu. Then, on the MD53 screen, enter the HUD activity number and select the correct voucher by typing an “X” before it. On screen C04MD58, view the LOCCS Status on the bottom half of the screen. The Status will show as

“Completed” once LOCCS has forwarded the draw request to the Department of Treasury for payment.

Q. I'm trying to create a drawdown but keep getting the message, “No draw amount edited.”

A. This message occurs when you forget to press <Enter> on the Create Voucher screen (C04MD11) to save your edits before pressing <F20> to create the voucher.

Q. How do I create a voucher for a negative amount?

A. Select Option D-01 (Drawdown Authorization) from the Main Menu and authorize the correct grantee. Select Option 5 (Maintain Drawdown/Voucher) from the Drawdown Menu. Then, on the MD53 screen, enter the HUD activity number and select the correct voucher by typing an “R” before it. On the bottom of the MD08 screen, enter the HUD activity number for which the funds were originally drawn and the new dollar amount, preceded by a minus sign. You may also need to lower the estimated funded amount by selecting Main Menu Option B (Revise Activity), advancing to the C04MA08 “Money” screen, and entering the new estimated amount.

Q. How can I locate all drawdowns for an activity?

A. Select Option D-01 (Drawdown Authorization) from the Main Menu and authorize the correct grantee. Select Option D-05 (Maintain Drawdowns) and enter the activity number. All drawdowns for the activity will appear on the screen.

Q. How do I revise a drawdown to a different activity?

A. Before we give the directions, remember that IDIS will let you revise a drawdown to a different activity only if the new activity is for the same program (e.g., HOME) and same fund type (e.g., EN). If you need to revise a draw from one program to another program, or from one source of funding to another source of funding, send or fax a written request to the TAU who will forward the request to the programmers for resolution.

To revise a draw amount for an activity, select Option D-01 (Drawdown Authorization) from the Main Menu and authorize the correct grantee. Select Option 5 (Maintain Drawdown/Voucher) from the Drawdown Menu. Then, on the MD53 screen, enter the HUD activity number and select the correct voucher by

typing an “R” before it. On the bottom of the MD08 screen, enter the revised amount and activity number.

Q. I created a drawdown with an incorrect voucher submission date and never received funds at my bank. How do I correct the date so I can receive the funds?

A. This is a two-step process: you need first to revoke approval on the original voucher, then cancel-reapprove the voucher with the correct submission date. To do this, go to Option D-01 (Drawdown Authorization) from the Main Menu and authorize the correct grantee. Select Option D-06 (Approve Drawdown/Vouchers) from the Drawdown Menu. At the MD12 screen, select the voucher to revoke approval by typing a “K” in the select column, and pressing <Enter>. Then, select Option D-06 (Approve Drawdown/Vouchers) again. At the MD12 screen, select the voucher to approve by typing an “A” in the select column, and pressing <Enter>. On the MD13 screen, be sure to type over the incorrect voucher submission date before approving the voucher.

Web390

Q. Will Web390 software work with Internet Explorer?

A. Web 390 software will only work with very old versions of Internet Explorer (version 2.0 or earlier) which are not available for purchase or download. Web390 software will not work with any newer version of IE due to the way IE handles security. A number of users have asked whether they can have both IE and Netscape installed on the same PC. If you currently use IE as your default browser, you can download the stand alone version of Netscape Navigator (not Communicator) from Netscape. When installing Navigator, don't select the option to install it as your default browser. Both browsers can then be used on the same PC.

Q. When I type the Web390 url into Netscape, I get the message “3270 not connected.”

A. Web390 requires a special piece of software, called a plug-in, to operate. Go to the url: http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/web390_help.html for more information on downloading and installing the plug-in.

Q. How do I log into IDIS using Web390 software?

A. Each grantee with an active IDIS user ID has already been assigned a Web390 ID. If you do not know your Web390 ID, call your field office who representative who will provide it. To log in to Web 390, go to the url: <http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/idis.html>. For "User Name," enter the Web 390 "wi" ID you were assigned and your password. It is important that the "wi" be lower-case. Your password is the first letter of your first name, the first letter of your last name, both in lower-case, and the last four digits of your Social Security Number. Neither the Web ID nor the password ever have to be changed. If you get an error message saying "authorization failed," notify John_Mayer@hud.gov or call the IDIS hotline at 1-800-273-2573.

Q. How do I download and install the software that allows me to download reports using Web390?

A. Go to the url: www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/idis.html (the IDIS Internet Logon screen). Click on the "Installation Module for IDIS Reports on the Internet" link. You will see a dialog box prompting for a location to save the installer file (FTPZIP.EXE) on your hard drive. Note this location. Using My Computer or Explorer, go to the folder where you downloaded and saved the FTPZIP.EXE file. Double click on the file name. When the dialog box appears, make sure that the "Extract To" box says c:\, and that no sub directory is specified. Click on the Extract button. The installer will create the directory \IDISDOWN with files used by the download process and the directory \IDISDATA, where downloaded data will be stored. (If the \IDISDATA directory already exists, its contents will not be erased.)

Q. How do I download reports using Web390 software?

A. Be sure you have downloaded and extracted IDISDOWN software (see the previous question). Then, at the IDIS Report Status screen, type D next to the first report with a Ready status that you want to download and press <Enter>. After the status changes from Wait to Ready -- you will have to press <Enter> to get the screen to refresh -- wait roughly 10 minutes before proceeding to the next step. Press <Alt-Tab> to toggle to the Windows desktop. From the Start Menu, select Run, then type the following command in ALL CAPS: C:\IDISDOWN\RPTDOWN P USERID (USERID is your IDIS user ID and P represents

Production. (To download reports from pre production, substitute an R.)

Q. How do I access the pre production region of IDIS using Web390?

A. Go to the url: <http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/idis.html>. **Do not** click on the map! Instead, click on the link "Click Here To Practice in Pre-Production IDIS" directly above the map. This will connect you to the pseudo production region of IDIS.

Q. While using Web 390 access, I tried to print an IDIS screen but nothing printed.

A. Press the Resynchronize button located on the right side of the IDIS screen, then select File/Print from the Netscape menu (or click on the printer icon on the Netscape toolbar if the toolbar is visible). You may need to press Resynchronize before printing each screen.

Q. I'm having trouble connecting to the Web390 url.

First, remember that Web390 only works with Netscape Navigator Version 4.05 or higher. If you are running an older version, go to Netscape's web site and download the latest version. If you are running Netscape Navigator Version 4.05 or higher, follow these steps to help the TAU determine the source of the problem:

Open up an MS-DOS windows and at the C:\ prompt, type:

Tracert mf.hud.gov

Copy down the response and forward it to the help desk at IDIS_HELP@hud.gov. Be sure to include your full name, telephone number and locality.

The results from the trace route will help the TAU determine the path of the connection from your PC to HUD. For users who access the web via a LAN connection, make sure that your LAN administrator has opened ports 21400-21600.

System Errors

Q. I know that since the 4.8 Release I can't complete a HOME activity if all the setup and completion screens aren't complete. However, I've found a quirk: while attempting to complete a HOME activity, I discovered that IDIS is comparing the HOME-assisted units in the completion path (screen C04MH13) to the Estimated Units at Completion instead of Estimated

Home Assisted Units (screen C04MH02) from the setup path.

A. This problem has been reported to IT for resolution. The problem has been fixed and will be available with the next release of IDIS. If you need to complete the activity in the interim, change the count of HOME-assisted activities to match the estimated units at completion. Make a note that you did this so you can go back and fix the count after the next release.

Q. When I try to run a Drawdown Voucher Summary report, I get the message: "No Drawdown Voucher Summary for this grantee."

A. This problem only occurs when you enter no parameters on when you enter only a date. The problem has been fixed and will be available with the next release of IDIS. In the interim, delete all underscores on the C04MU59 Parameter screen then continue processing as usual. The report will then run correctly.

Q. My screen froze while I was working in IDIS.

A. Press CTRL+ALT+DEL and select END TASK when the dialog box appears to end either the SprintLink session or Web390 session. Then log on again. ■

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE IDIS LISTSERV?

IDIS users maintain a list service, or *listserv*, which enables them to e-mail messages that are automatically distributed to all members of the list. Members can read, post, and respond to a message.

To Subscribe

Send an e-mail message to LISTSERV@HOME.EASE.LSOFT.COM. In the body of the message, type SUBSCRIBE IDIS-USERS Pat Jones (substituting *your* first name and last name). Leave the subject line blank. You will receive a confirmation message once you have been added to the list of subscribers.

To Send a Message

Once you have subscribed to the mailing list, you can send a message to all other grantees on the list by sending e-mail to IDIS-USERS@HOME.EASE.LSOFT.COM. (You send mail to a single address and the listserv makes copies for all of the subscribers.)

To Unsubscribe

If you decide that you don't want to continue participating, send a message to LISTSERV@HOME.EASE.LSOFT.COM and type **SIGN-OFF** as the body of the message. Leave the subject line blank.

For more information about the listserv, see the url: <http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idis/faq/cosa02.html> ■