

**FY2019 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants NOFA  
Questions and Answers**

*Note: In accordance with the HUD Reform Act, HUD cannot provide a determination to questions that ask about a specific situation (e.g. whether something would be eligible or how it would be rated) outside of reviewing a submitted grant application during its formal review process. This Q&A is meant to provide general clarification to the NOFA language.*

- 1. Our neighborhood has a lot of distressed housing, but it is neither “public housing” or “assisted housing.” Can we still apply for a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant if our application meets the other eligibility criteria, but does not have “severely distressed public or HUD-assisted housing”?**

No, the “Eligible Target Housing” threshold requires that there be a severely distressed public or HUD-assisted housing project at the center of the planning process. Please see the Eligible Target Housing threshold on page 16 of the NOFA. The terms “assisted housing,” “public housing,” and “severely distressed housing” are defined in the Program Definitions section starting on page 7.

- 2. In the definition of what constitutes an eligible neighborhood, it specifies that neighborhoods cannot encompass more than one municipal jurisdiction. Does that exclude a neighborhood that encompass both within city limits outside the city in an unincorporated area?**

Yes. The entire neighborhood as drawn in the CN mapping tool must be located within a single municipal jurisdiction.

- 3. Regarding Opportunity Zones, does the entire target neighborhood need to be located within the designated area?**

No. The application may earn points the target housing site is located in a Census Tract that has been designated as an Opportunity Zone. The boundaries of the neighborhood and Opportunity Zone do not need to be identical, nor does the entire neighborhood need to fit within the designated area.

- 4. Our neighborhood is located within an Opportunity Zone. Can we earn the points under the “Alignment with Existing Efforts” rating factor in addition to the two points available for under the Preference Points section?**

No. An application may only earn the two points under the Preference Points section for Opportunity Zones.

- 5. We have completed a Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversion and the property now has a PBRA contract, which meets the NOFA’s definition of “assisted housing” for eligible target housing. However, the “Relation to RAD Applicants” threshold states that after the receipt of a RAD Conversion Commitment (RCC), units are ineligible to apply. Does this prohibition continue to apply to our RAD converted property that is now under a PBRA contract?**

Yes, units that have received the RAD RCC are not eligible to be included in an application for a Choice Neighborhoods grant. In addition, given the requirements of the RAD program to ensure stability of a project post-conversion, a unit that has undergone a RAD conversion would not meet the statutory definition of “severely distressed.”

- 6. On the Choice Neighborhoods website, there is a budget form for the Planning Grantees to use (HUD-53421). Is it necessary to submit this budget form in our grant application or can we submit our own budget spreadsheet?**

The NOFA does not require use of the Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Budget form (HUD-53421). Applicants should submit a Sources and Uses document in the format the meets the requirements identified in the NOFA.

- 7. Exhibit B Requirements (page 29) says to provide a narrative response to the Threshold Requirements in Section III.C. However, III.C is Cost Sharing or Matching. Do you actually mean Section III.D?**

Yes. Threshold requirements are listed in Section III.D.

- 8. We noticed the language regarding Outstanding Civil Rights matters moved from the statutory and regulatory requirements section to the thresholds section this year. This particular requirement in this section is not numbered like the other threshold requirements. Should we address this requirement in our narrative response submitted in Exhibit B?**

Applicants do not need to provide any specific statements about this threshold requirement. In reviewing the grant applications, the Choice Neighborhoods office will review the list of agencies with outstanding civil rights matters and work with the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity and/or Office of General Counsel to make any necessary determination about the grant application. An agency that has outstanding civil rights matters will not be eligible for a Choice Neighborhoods grant award. If your agency is currently on that list, we strongly suggest you work with the appropriate HUD offices to resolve such issues if you are interested in receiving a Choice Neighborhoods grant.

**9. In Grants.gov, there are not enough slots for us to upload all the exhibits and attachments listed in the Choice Neighborhoods NOFA. How am I supposed to submit the application?**

Grants.gov is a system used by the entire Federal government and its structure does not necessarily reflect the Choice Neighborhoods NOFA. Its attachment 1 does not explicitly mean the Choice Neighborhoods Attachment 1. Applicants should zip together the multiple attachment files (in one or more zip files, depending on the size) they have prepared in accordance with the Choice Neighborhoods NOFA and plug them into the slots provided by Grants.gov. Please be reminded that, as instructed in the NOFA, each narrative exhibit and attachment must be its own file. Do not simply create files that include multiple exhibits or attachments.