



# FAIR HOUSING & OUTREACH PLAN

## Background

HUD has required the State of Iowa to affirmatively further fair housing in its CDBG activities. In light of the substantial amount of funding provided by CDBG-DR, HUD has required the State to particularly address fair housing and outreach to protected classes in all of its 2020 CDBG-DR programs and activities.

Applicant subrecipients for all programs (cities, counties, tribes) will need to provide a Fair Housing and Outreach Plan when submitting applications. This **short plan** should address how the subrecipient local government will conduct outreach on the benefits of CDBG-DR programs to protected classes, and what mandatory and elective fair housing activities the subrecipient local government anticipates taking if awarded. Subrecipients should be careful to focus on benefits to all protected classes.

IEDA will monitor the subrecipient’s progress on the fair housing & outreach plan when conducting monitoring for 2020 CDBG-DR projects. This plan may be amended by the subrecipient after award with notification provided to IEDA.

## Protected Classes

Population	Type	Population	Type
Race	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class	Disability	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class
Color	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class	Sexual Orientation	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class
National Origin (including immigrants & refugees)	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class	Gender Identity	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class
Religion	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class	Citizenship	Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class
Sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity)	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class	Political Affiliation	Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class
Familial Status	FHA, Iowa Civil Rights Act Protected Class	Indigenous Populations	Action Plan-identified Vulnerable & Underserved Population

## Outline:

The Fair Housing & Outreach Plan should include the following elements:

- Performing outreach and engagement to understand the needs of impacted participants
- Creating a personalized recovery plan (during the application phase) that addresses the needs of the local community





- Coordinating with government agencies and developers
- Coordinating with local organizations to ensure that protected classes are aware of the assistance and can access it
- Coordinating with local nonprofit organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, and historically underserved populations to ensure the promotion of the program and help remove their barriers to access the assistance
- Completing a Language Access Plan and identifying language access needs for the community
- Steps to affirmatively further fair housing

### Part 1: Outreach & Engagement

The fair housing plan should describe what outreach and engagement has been done with protected classes, and what further outreach & engagement will be done.

For **housing programs**, this plan should include what outreach the subrecipient intends to conduct to protected classes to identify homeowners for rehabilitation, renters for new rental units, and prospective buyers of new single-family housing units (1-4 units on a parcel for the purposes of 2020 CDBG-DR).

For **infrastructure programs**, including the treeservation and generators for critical facilities programs, this plan should include what outreach & engagement the subrecipient has done on the need for the infrastructure project and how the subrecipient will prioritize locations to benefit protected classes and low to moderate income populations.

Outreach and engagement should also include contact information for the Iowa Civil Rights Commission and local departments to report violations of fair housing.

### Part 2: Personalized Recovery Plan

The fair housing plan should describe the disaster recovery needs of the community and how the project/s being applied for will benefit the community's recovery.

### Part 3: Coordination with Government Agencies and Developers

The fair housing plan should describe coordination with government agencies (federal, state, and/or local) and with developers on how to promote the benefits of the proposed project/s to protected classes.

For **housing programs** in rural areas (outside of Cedar Rapids, Robins, Hiawatha, Marion, and Marshalltown) this intended coordination should include coordinating with USDA Rural Development lending programs. See site eligibility here:

<https://statics.teams.cdn.office.net/evergreen-assets/safelinks/1/atp-safelinks.html>.





For **housing programs**, this intended coordination should include government agencies that assist low to moderate income persons and persons within protected classes with credit counseling, financial counseling, and homeownership assistance. The plan should also indicate encouraging potential homebuyers to seek down payment assistance from the Iowa Finance Authority.

#### **Part 4: Coordination with Local Organizations**

The fair housing plan should include a description of occurred or intended coordination with local organizations, including intended coordination, on outreach to protected classes and vulnerable populations on benefiting from the proposed project/s.

This should include nonprofit organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, and historically underserved populations. This outreach should help to reduce barriers to accessing the housing programs and benefiting from infrastructure projects. Applicant subrecipients are also encouraged to promote the assistance of organizations, such as the Iowa Finance Authority's homeless program & down payment assistance programs, Habitat for Humanity, and Iowa PATH, for immediate needs prior to the completion of 2020 CDBG-DR projects.

For **housing programs**, applicant subrecipients should describe how they intend to partner with nonprofits to assist low to moderate income persons and persons within protected classes with credit counseling, financial counseling, language interpretation and translation, and homeownership assistance.

#### **Part 5: Language Access Plan**

The fair housing plan should include a Language Access Plan for including Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population in disaster recovery. This plan will include a Four Factor Analysis which looks at the following:

1. Number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the applicant subrecipient
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals encounter the programs
3. Nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the programs to people's lives
4. Resources available to the applicant subrecipient and cost of LEP compliance

#### **Data Resources**

The American Community Survey (ACS) data table "Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over" is one resource to identify the top LEP populations in the city or county (lowest available geographic area for the applicant subrecipient).

#### **Safe Harbor**





HUD outlines “safe harbor” guidelines in 72 FR 2732. IEDA has adopted these guidelines to demonstrate strong evidence of compliance with HUD’s LEP guidance. See the table below for these safe harbors:

<b>1,000+ of the eligible population in the service area, or among current beneficiaries</b>	<b>Translate vital documents</b>
> 5% of the eligible population or beneficiaries, and 50+ in number	Translate vital documents
> 5% of the eligible population or beneficiaries, and 50 or less in number	Translate written notice of right to receive free oral interpretation of documents
5% or less of the eligible population or beneficiaries, and less than 1,000 in number	No written translation is required

Applicant subrecipients will be required to translate as needed based on their submitted Language Access Plan. For instance, IEDA will translate vital documents into Spanish as strong evidence of compliance because the LEP Spanish population is relatively large, especially in the MID areas of Marshall and Linn. Six languages (e.g., French, Vietnamese, Arabic) exceed the 1,000-person safe harbor threshold but are well below the 5% threshold; therefore, IEDA will not translate vital documents for these languages, but can provide “I Speak” cards and an on-demand language line to facilitate the request of services in all the languages listed above. See the Citizen Participation Plan on the 2020 Derecho CDBG-DR webpage for IEDA’s Language Access Plan: <https://www.iowaeda.com/disaster-recovery/cdbg-derecho/>.

### Part 6: Steps to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

Applicant subrecipients should also specify which mandatory and elective activities to affirmatively further fair housing that they intend to complete. Applicants must indicate how they will complete at least two of the mandatory activities, which are as follows:

Mandatory Activity	Description
1	Advertise, publicize, and pass an affirmative fair housing policy that will certify that the local government adheres to the requirements of the federal Fair Housing Act and the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965 (adoption and use of the Equal Housing Opportunity logo and the Equal Housing Opportunity statement)
2	Identify and publish the name and contact information of a Discrimination Complaint Officer within the agency or jurisdiction for any housing-related bias or discrimination complaint
3	Refer housing discrimination complaints and assist in filing complaints with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or a local civil rights commission

Applicants will also indicate which of the following elective activities that they will complete. The list of elective activities includes the following:



Elective Activity	Description
1	Advertise the availability of housing and related assistance to population groups that are the least likely to apply through various forms of media (i.e. radio stations, posters, flyers, newspapers, Facebook, city web page) in English and other languages spoken by eligible families within the project service area
2	Include a flyer about fair housing in a local utility or tax bill and send it to every household within the municipality
3	Have the Responsible Entity staff attend a fair housing training or conference
4	Organize a letter writing campaign to local legislators and/or local government staff about the need to fund and support fair housing programs
5	Sponsor trainings for realtors, bankers, landlords, homebuyers, tenants, public housing authority and other city/town employees to educate them on their fair housing rights and responsibilities. This activity MUST be done in collaboration with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission or a local civil rights commission
6	Provide training/educational programs about fair housing for financial, real estate, and property management professionals at local firms, including their obligations to comply with the federal Fair Housing Act and the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965 (this can be done by partnering with a bank, board of realtors association, or other local group and helping to sponsor a program taught by a qualified entity such as the Iowa Civil Rights Commission
7	Conduct meetings with advocacy groups for members of the protected classes on the availability of affordable and accessible housing and determine housing needs to plan future projects
8	Establish and/or fund fair housing organizations in areas where there are no such organizations
9	Conduct fair housing testing to ensure that local housing providers and/or lenders do not discriminate (fair housing testing must be conducted by a HUD-certified fair housing agency)
10	Assist Housing Choice Voucher program participants to help locate and secure housing outside of racially concentrated areas of poverty (RCAPs) or outside of areas nearby RCAPs
11	Conduct outreach to housing providers and housing developers to discuss affordable and accessible housing needs in RCAPs and near RCAPs
12	Evaluate the local zoning ordinance against fair housing benchmarks identified in this AI, using the Zoning Risk Assessment Tool. Evaluate the need for amendments to the zoning ordinance and make them.
13	Organize a tester recruitment event in collaboration with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission to help document instances of housing discrimination.

## Questions

Any questions may be submitted to Steven Stransky, Disaster Recovery Team Lead, at [Steven.Stransky@IowaEDA.com](mailto:Steven.Stransky@IowaEDA.com) or 515.348.6204.

