

Cook County CDBG Public Service / Planning and ESG Application Webinar
February 4, 2020
Questions and Answers – Updated 2/7/2020

The following questions were asked during the webinar on February 4.

Question: Can we include fringe benefits with salaries?

Answer: The Cook County Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has a current policy to not cover fringe benefits. If this policy is a barrier to your ability to implement a potential CDBG-funded program, please contact us to discuss your situation. Contact information is at the end of this document.

Question: Is there a housing survey that we have to fill out prior to submitting?

Answer: There is no housing survey that must be completed as part of the CDBG Public Service / Planning or ESG applications. (Note: A fair housing survey is a requirement for municipal applicants under the CDBG Capital Improvement / Demolition / Economic Development application.)

Question: Are we encouraged to collaborate with other groups? Sometimes there is a priority to collaborate.

Answer: Yes, applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other groups. In the CDBG Public Service / Planning application, scoring under the Collaboration and Innovation application criteria is impacted by an applicant's proposed collaborative efforts (see page 13 of the CDBG application guide). In the ESG application, participation with the suburban Cook County Continuum of Care (CoC) is required, and collaboration with other agencies and involvement in other CoC initiatives is rewarded (see pages 12-13 of the ESG application guide).

Question: On p. 16 of the application for CDBG, the Area Benefits (related to census tracts) isn't fillable. Should this be an addendum?

Answer: This issue with the CDBG Public Service / Planning application has been corrected. However, you are always welcome to use the Supplemental Attachment fields on the application submission page to submit additional attachments. If you find any issues with the Application PDF or the submission page, please contact us using the contact information below to let us know about the issue. Also, please note that most CDBG Service/Planning applicants will not need to provide census data because they will qualify their project in other ways (typically as Limited Clientele).

Question: The agency that I work for services individuals with developmental disabilities and is headquartered in Oak Lawn. While I understand that Oak Lawn is excluded from accessing the Cook County CDBG grant as it is an entitlement community, I wondered if we would be eligible to apply for our residential sites that are within the communities included for consideration.

Answer: An agency may be located/headquartered in one of the CDBG entitlement communities (see the list on page 4 of CDBG Application Guide) and still be eligible for Cook County CDBG funding if the agency serves beneficiaries in municipalities that are eligible under Cook County CDBG. A similar concept applies to ESG funding, but there are fewer communities that are not eligible for Cook County ESG funding (see the list on page 3 of the ESG Application Guide).

Question: Will the slides be available later?

Answer: The slides from the in-person workshop on January 30 are now available on our website, along with a link to the recording of the February 4 webinar. <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/content/grant-applicants-cdbg-esg>

Question: You mentioned needing a letter of good standing in the checklist. Where should the letter come from? The county?

Answer: The required Certificate of Good Standing comes from the Illinois Secretary of State. The certificate must be dated within 45 days of the application due date.

Question: If awarded, how is the award distributed?

Answer: If you are selected for funding, an award letter will be mailed to you in August. Your grant agreement will be executed near the end of 2020. Upon receipt of the fully executed agreement, you will be able to invoice for expenses back to 10/1/2020. Payments are made on a reimbursement basis. (Note: This timeline only applies to CDBG Public Service / Planning grants and ESG grants. It does not apply to CDBG Capital Improvement grants.)

Question: We are exploring a partnership with a school district in the south suburbs. Are we allowed to partner with a school district for the CDBG grant?

Answer: Yes, an eligible applicant can partner with a school district. One eligible partner should be the lead applicant.

Question: We were denied funding last year, but the letter didn't specify why. can we contact you to find out why our application was not funded?

Answer: Yes, if you would like to schedule a debrief on your 2019 CDBG or ESG application, please contact Dominic Tocci at dominic.tocci@cookcountyil.gov

Question: This may be covered in the language, but what percentage of the grant can be used for admin and salaries?

Answer: For CDBG, there is no cap on the amount of the grant that can be used for salaries or other operating costs. In fact, many of our CDBG grantees use 100% of their County funding to cover salaries. For ESG, no more than 50% of the total award can be used for staff salaries.

If you have further questions about applying for a CDBG or ESG grant, please contact:

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