

PART 2006 - MANAGEMENT

Subpart TT - Rural Development Enhancing Transparency of Federally Funded
Projects Through Use of Public Signage

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§ 2006.2251 Introduction.

(a) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance memorandum CA 23-06, issued on February 24, 2023, encourages Federal agencies to facilitate "clear and prominent signage" for projects funded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP); the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL); and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA).

(b) Consistent with OMB guidance, Rural Development will encourage awardees to display approved signage to inform taxpayers how Federal funds from these laws are being spent and advance the goals of accountability and transparency of Federal spending.

§ 2006.2252 Purpose.

The purpose of this Instruction is to provide guidance to RD staff on implementing USDA signage guidelines for projects funded by the ARP, BIL, IRA and other Federally funded projects as appropriate. It supplements the USDA's "Investing in America Signage Guidelines" [USDA Investing in America Signage Guidelines](#) or signs displayed at these project sites. This guidance pertains to signs for Federally funded projects that are not installed in the highway right-of-way.

§ 2006.2253 Applicability.

Any current or future projects funded through IRA, ARP, and BIL are covered by the guidance in this Instruction including, but not limited to:

(a) Projects funded through IRA:

- (1) Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP)
- (2) Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)
- (3) Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE)
- (4) New Empowering Rural America (New ERA)

(b) Projects funded through ARP:

- (1) Emergency Rural Health Care Grant Program (ERHC).
- (2) Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program.
- (3) Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP).
- (4) Indigenous Animals Harvesting and Meat Processing Grant Program (Indigenous Animals Grants (IAG)).

(c) Projects funded through BIL:

- (1) ReConnect Loan and Grant Program.
- (2) Rural Broadband Loans, Loan/Grant Combinations, and Loan Guarantee Program.

§ 2006.2254 Signage Requirements.

(a) Grant and Loan Recipients (Recipients) can find signage guidance from the Investing in America Signage Guidelines specific to their funding stream i.e. BIL or ARP at USDA's website: [USDA Investing in America Signage Guidelines.](#)

(b) When logos are included in signage, the placement should conform to the brand guidelines in § 2006.2255.

(c) Logos of contractors are not permitted on the signage.

(d) Style Guide: For further information, contact RD Office of External Affairs (OEA).

§ 2006.2255 Signage Policy Guidelines.

(a) Signage Costs.

(1) Cost of signage is an allowed eligible project cost.

(2) Costs associated with signage must be reasonable and limited with a maximum reimbursement of \$10,000 based on type of project and number of signs. Signs should not be produced or displayed if doing so results in unreasonable cost, expense, or Recipient/Agency burden.

(3) Rural Development (RD) will not produce or distribute signage. It is the responsibility of the participating recipients whose project(s) have been funded by Rural Development.

(4) Recipients are encouraged to use recycled or recovered materials when procuring signs if costs are reasonable.

(b) Signage Display.

(1) Recipients should be encouraged to display signage throughout the development or construction phase of the project in an easily visible location that can be directly linked to the project and be maintained in good condition. Optimal placement locations for signage include, for example, near the beginning of the project sight which is typically located in a populated area of a town, or on the side of a heavily travelled highway/road.

(2) Logos/signage graphics may also be placed on recipient websites for the funded project to increase transparency during the construction phase on a page dedicated to the project funding.

(3) Signage may be placed next to other project relevant signs such as those that detail the USDA program and contractors associated with the project.

§ 2006.2256 Points of Contact.

(a) Point of Contact for Recipients. General Field Representatives (GFRs) and State Field Representatives (SFRs), which are Program and/or Area Directors for Business or Community Programs, are the primary point of contact for the Recipients regarding signage, as follows:

(1) General Field Representatives (GFRs) will be the primary point of contact for programs administered by the RUS Electric and Telecommunications programs.

(2) The RBCS Office of the Deputy Administrator will be the primary point of contact for the HBIIP program.

(3) State Field Representatives (SFRs) which are Program and/or Area Directors for Business or Community Programs will be the primary point of contact for programs administered in the State Office for the Rural Business-Cooperative Service and the Rural Housing Service.

(4) Cooperators under agreement to work with RD to administer programs, such as the Indigenous Animals Harvesting and Meat Processing Grant Program (IAG) or the second round of Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP2), will be the primary point of contact for such programs.

(b) Points of Contact for RD Staff and Cooperators. The regional Management Operations Officers (MOO) in the State Operations Office (SOO) will serve as a central point of contact for the GFRs, SFRs, and Cooperators on signage and related reporting. Management Operations Officers can be reached at RD.SOO@USDA.GOV.

§ 2006.2257 Roles and Responsibilities.

(a) Recipients.

(1) Participation by Recipients is voluntary, and the offer letter or the letter of conditions will include the responsibilities of Recipients as follows:

(2) Recipients that choose to post signage are responsible for the procurement and placement of the signage for the identified eligible Federally funded project site(s).

(3) The Recipient must follow the USDA Style Guidance at <https://www.usda.gov/style-guide/signage-guidelines>.

(4) The Recipient must contact the GFR or SFR prior to procuring the signage to consult on its design and placement, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the "Investing in America" guide book which is available at the following USDA web site: [USDA Investing in America Signage Guidelines](#).

5) Recipient will provide signage reporting information using the method identified by the GFR/SFR.

(b) RD Agencies, Staff and Cooperators:

(1) RD Agencies and designated Cooperators will encourage participation by Recipients for such projects.

(2) RD Agencies will include information about the voluntary signage policy on the covered program website and provide a point of contact for questions.

(3) The GFRs/SFRs and designated Cooperators will serve as the primary point of contact for the Recipients.

(4) The GFRs/SFRs and designated Cooperators will track signage use, collect data and submit formal data reports on each Federally funded project under programs in § 2006.2259 of this Instruction.

(5) The State Operations Office (SOO), Management Operations Officers (MOOs) will serve as the central coordinator of signage activities and can be reached at RD.SOO@USDA.GOV. Responsibilities include:

(i) Handling or shepherding of inquiries from GFRs, SFRs and Cooperators regarding signage.

(ii) Coordinate with the Office of External Affairs and the Innovation Center as needed on signage policy or graphics requirements.

(iii) Aggregating signage data quarters for submission in required report to the Department.

§ 2006.2258 Notification to Recipients.

(a) For projects that have already been awarded, RD agencies and, for select programs, designated Cooperators will notify awardees via a notification letter that will include the information related to the voluntary signage policy.

(b) Future loan and grant applicants will be notified of the voluntary signage through announcement of the applicability in the publication of Notices of Funding Opportunity.

(c) RD Agencies and, for select programs, designated Cooperators will include information related to approved costs for signage in the initial offer letter or letter of conditions to potential awardees. The offer letter should include the amount available for signage, the number of approved signs and the USDA Style guidance website link: <https://www.usda.gov/style-guide/signage-guidelines>.

§ 2006.2259 Tracking and reporting.

Rural Development is responsible for tracking projects that have posted signage and reporting results to USDA on a quarterly basis.

(a) GFRs, SFRs and, for select programs, designated Cooperators will contact each recipient and determine the following information:

- (1) Was signage provided for the project.
- (2) Number of onsite signs.
- (3) Did RD reimburse for signage.
- (4) Primary location of signage by city/county/state.
- (5) Date signs identified.
- (6) If the Recipient declines to participate (opts out), that ends the responsibility of the field staff for further contact with that borrower on this issue.
- (7) Optional Comments

(b) The data will be entered into the automated tracking tool developed for the purpose of quarterly reporting. (Cooperators will be provided a tracking spreadsheet to enter signage information for submission to the agency.

(c) The SOO, Management Operations Officers will be responsible for submitting data to USDA on the last day of the month. USDA will compile monthly data and submit to the White House on a quarterly basis.

§ 2006.2260 Authorities and references.

The following materials may be found on the RD Special Initiative Signage Tracking SharePoint site

(https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/rd_ic/DAD1/CensusHub/SitePages/RD-Signage-Data.aspx):

(a) OMB Memorandum CA-23-06, Enhancing Transparency Through Use of the Investing in America Emblem on Signs.

(b) (USDA Signage Guide) [USDA Investing in America Signage Guidelines](#))

(c) [Final USDA guidance provided to Mission Areas and Agencies.](#)

§§ 2006.2261 - 2006.2200 [Reserved]

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