



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Info NOW

February 2007

Michael W. Aube, State Director

Beverly A. Stone, Public Affairs

A Publication of Rural Development's Multi-Family Housing Program

MINC ISSUES

There are still several management companies experiencing late charges on their project worksheets due to late tenant certification transmissions. Again, we would like to remind you of the importance of following up on your tenant certification transmissions through MINC. You may refer to the MINC training handbook located on the MINC Home Page for further guidance.

Once you have submitted the transmission, you should receive a File Transfer Confirmation Page. If you do not see this document, the file did not transmit to USDA. Once you have received this page, PRINT THIS DOCUMENT for your records. This will assist in tracing your file. After the transaction processes, the system will send an email listing showing the transmission was received and processed. REVIEW this email listing to verify that all tenant data was accepted. Finally, PREVIEW your project worksheet before the 10th of the month.

Know the Law – Energy Efficiency Disclosure

The state of Maine recently passed a law regarding energy efficiency standards for residential rental properties. Although this law affects rental units financed through the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program, Rural Development does not have a monitoring compliance requirement under this law at the present time. Please be sure you are aware of all laws regarding the complexes you manage and abide by those laws accordingly.

The Energy Efficiency Disclosure for Rental Units in Maine along with law and forms are available at the Maine State Housing Authority website at:

<http://www.mainehousing.org/>.

Replacement Reserve Requests

When you submit your replacement reserve requests on Form RD 3560-12, please be sure to complete all items in Part I. If you are requesting the withdrawal for any of the authorized items, please provide the proper invoices for payment. Reference: HB-2-3560, Chapter 4, Section 3.

Also - when requesting funds from the reserve account for any type of flooring, please indicate the number of bedrooms the unit has, as this needs to be tracked/posted in our system.

Handbook Revision

The Asset Management Handbook (HB-2-3560) has been revised to provide guidance on the requirements for annual financial statements, the agreed upon engagement procedures, and the performance standards. Included is the new Handbook Letter 209, "Letter of Engagement." These revisions/additions are available on our website <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/regs/>. Click on Procedure Notices, PN 401, and scroll down to: Insert RD HB-2-3560. THESE REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET WHEN SUBMITTING 2006 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

Social Security Benefits to Increase

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits will increase 3.3 percent in 2007. Each recipient of these benefits is provided with a letter from the Social Security Administration advising them of the amount of his/her monthly benefit. Be sure to use the GROSS amount of the benefit as income for calculating tenant's income for their Tenant Certification.

THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO GET A COPY OF YOUR TENANTS' AWARD LETTERS BEFORE THEY MISPLACE THEM.

Visit <http://socialsecurity.gov> for more information.

Medical Mileage Deduction Update

Costs of medically-related travel that are not reimbursed are an allowable medical expense deduction for elderly (disabled) households. The cost of the mileage is to be calculated using the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rate.

Beginning January 1, 2007, the mileage rate was 18 cents per mile driven for medical purposes. Visit www.irs.gov for more information.

Tenants Who Move Without Giving a 30-Day Notice

When a tenant moves out without giving a 30-day notice or vacates prior to the end of the 30-day notice, you cannot list the tenant on the Project Worksheet and claim Rental Assistance (RA) if the tenant is not “residing” in the unit on the first day of the month.

Example: A 30-day notice is given January 5. The tenant actually (physically) moves out January 26. The tenant is responsible for the rent until February 5. The tenant will not be listed on the February Project Worksheet. The tenant will be charged basic rent for the prorated number of days in February for which he/she is responsible. No RA will be granted for February.

Deceased Tenants

When a tenant dies, the tenant’s name will continue to be included on the Project Worksheet during the time period during which the family or estate is removing the tenant’s possessions. (This shows Rural Development that the apartment is not truly vacant and available to be re-rented.) RA cannot be collected for a deceased tenant for the month following his/her death and the estate is obligated to pay basic rent. Therefore, upon receipt of the notice that a tenant has passed away, you should transmit a “Tenant Subsidy” change removing the RA to be effective the first day of the next month. Upon notice that the family or estate has completed removal of the tenant’s possessions, you should send the “Vacate” notice.

Example: A tenant who received RA dies on January 7 and the heirs call you on January 10 to notify you of the death and to request 30 days to empty and clean the apartment. Upon receipt of this notice, you should send the Tenant Subsidy change effective February 1 canceling the RA. You will charge the estate a pro-rated portion of basic rent for February’s rent. On February 5, the heirs call you to notify you that the apartment is empty. You will send a “Vacate” notice effective February 5 to Rural Development.

Unauthorized Subsidy

Borrowers, managers, and Rural Development in Maine have made great strides toward identifying and arranging repayment of unauthorized subsidy. We thank each of you for your hard work toward this effort.

With the transition of functions from Maine’s Centralized Payment Center (CPC) to the Centralized Servicing Center (CSC) in St. Louis, your local contact point regarding Unauthorized Subsidy is now your respective Area Office.

When you identify that a tenant has received Unauthorized Subsidy, you should submit the following documentation to the Area Office for review and concurrence:

- Corrected Tenant Certification(s)
- Unauthorized Subsidy Guide
- Draft Payment Agreement (REMINDER: Generally, the term of the Payment Agreement should not exceed the term over which the Unauthorized Assistance was received)

Borrowers/managers have primary responsibility for attempting to recapture Unauthorized Assistance received by tenants for as long as the tenant continues to reside in that property. (Guidance can be found in HB-3-3560, Chapter 9.) You are encouraged to review this chapter thoroughly and contact your servicing official if you have any questions.

When a tenant who has received Unauthorized Assistance moves out of the property, Rural Development will assume primary servicing responsibilities PROVIDED that the borrower/manager notifies the servicing official of the tenant’s move and transfers all records related to the tenant’s Unauthorized Assistance to the servicing official within 30 days of the tenant’s move. At that point, Rural Development will pursue collection of the Unauthorized Assistance from the former tenant.

Management Certification (RD 3560-13)

If you completed a Management Certification last year that was effective for a 12-month period, you will need to submit a new form prior to the end of that period. It’s usually best to submit this form with your proposed budget when it needs to be renewed. If your Management Certification is effective for a 3-year period and your management fee changes during that period, a new Management Certification form must be submitted for approval with your budget.

2007 Proposed Budgets

For those who have not yet submitted a proposed 2007 budget, please submit it to the Area Office.

Grant Funds Available through the Maine Association of Realtors Foundation

We are attaching information, and an application form that we received from the Maine Association of Realtors Foundation. This organization awards grant funds to housing providers on a competitive basis.

Projects that have specific rehab or accessibility needs might apply for grant funds to address those needs. Other ideas may be to cover internet costs for the resident computer center.

We encourage all housing managers to work with **owners** and apply for funds, as needed. There are community and non-profit organizations that have people on staff whose job is grant writing. We suggest you check with your town office, local CAP (Community Action Program), local county planning office, or Eastern Maine Development Corporation for assistance in completing an application.

Applications must be received by 12 PM (noon) on Thursday, February 7, 2007.

While we realize you may not be in a position to apply under this year's deadline for applications, we encourage you to contact the Maine Association of Realtors Foundation and have your name added to their contact list in order to receive application information for future funding. Check them on the web at: www.marfoundation.org.

Regulatory Updates

Be sure to stay up to date on our regulatory updates and unnumbered letters that affect your rental property. For direct access to the unnumbered letters issued in January 2007 (including one on Student Income Eligibility Determination for Rural Rental Multi-Family Properties dated January 11, 2007), click here <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/regs/ul/uljanuary07.pdf>



New 8-unit Family Housing Complex Under Construction on Indian Island Nears Completion



On the Web!

Please note that all Rural Development Multi-Family InfoNow Newsletters can be found at:

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/me/newsletter.htm> for referencing past news items.

Have a Story to Tell?

Rural Development is always interested in hearing about upcoming events, including special celebrations such as a 100th birthday celebrations, special recognitions of your complex or residents, celebrations involving new additions or improvements made possible through Rural Development, or anything else you would like to brag about!

Please send items of interest to Emily Cannon, Public Affairs Specialist, at Emily.Cannon@me.usda.gov.

Contact Information

State Office Staff

967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4
P.O. Box 405
Bangor, ME 04402-0405

Michael W. Aube
State Director
M.Aube@me.usda.gov

Robert J. Nadeau
MFH Specialist
Robert.Nadeau@me.usda.gov

Rachel L. Henderson
Housing Programs Assistant
Rachel.Henderson@me.usda.gov

Herbert B. Gibson
Construction Analyst
Herb.Gibson@me.usda.gov
Car Phone: 949-4618

Phone: (207) 990-9110
Fax #: (207) 990-9119
TTD/TTY: (207) 942-7331

Dale D. Holmes
Housing Program Director
Dale.Holmes@me.usda.gov

Tammy L. Carter
MFH Technician
Tammy.Carter@me.usda.gov

Conrad McAllister
Construction Analyst
Conrad.McAllister@me.usda.gov
743-5789 ext. 106

Darrin S. Dyer
Construction Analyst
Darrin.Dyer@me.usda.gov
Car Phone: 557-9994

Presque Isle Area Staff

735 Main Street, Suite 1
Presque Isle, ME 04769-2285

Richard W. Ireland
Area Director
Richard.Ireland@me.usda.gov

Cathy S. Letarte
Area Specialist
Cathy.Letarte@me.usda.gov

Phone: (207) 764-4157, Ext. 4
Fax #: (207) 762-2246

Robert G. McCurry
Area Specialist
Robert.McCurry@me.usda.gov

Debbie J. Michaud
Area Assistant
Debra.Michaud@me.usda.gov

Bangor Area Staff

28 Gilman Plaza, Suite 3
Bangor, ME 04401-3550

Raymond S. Roberts III
Area Director
Raymond.Roberts@me.usda.gov

Beverly A. Stone
Area Specialist
Beverly.Stone@me.usda.gov

Cynthia A. Bowe
Area Technician
Cynthia.Bowe@me.usda.gov

Phone: (207) 990-3676, Ext. 5
Fax #: (207) 990-5092

Catherine A. Witham
Area Specialist
Cathy.Witham@me.usda.gov

Mary J. Zerrien
Area Specialist
Mary.Zerrien@me.usda.gov

Alice M. H. Kelley
Area Technician
Alice.Kelley@me.usda.gov

Lewiston Area Staff

P.O. Box 1938
Lewiston, ME 04240-1938

Janice M. Stroud-Bickes
Area Director
Janice.Stroud-Bickes@me.usda.gov

Joel Ann Oshansky
Area Specialist
Joel.Oshansky@me.usda.gov

Annette M. Beaudoin
Area Specialist
Annette.Beaudoin@me.usda.gov

Phone: (207) 753-9400, Ext. 226
Fax #: (207) 784-1335

Andrew A. Bear
Area Technician
Andrew.Bear@me.usda.gov

Scarborough Area Staff

306 US Route 1, Suite B1
Scarborough, ME 04074-9774

William F. Bailey, Jr.
Area Director
William.Bailey@me.usda.gov

Roderick R. Elliott, Jr.
Area Specialist
Rod.Elliott@me.usda.gov

Phone: (207) 883-0159
Fax #: (207) 883-2740

Robert J. Pelletier
Area Specialist
Robert.Pelletier@me.usda.gov

Maine USDA RD Web Site:
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/me/>

MINC Website:
<https://usdaminc.sc.egov.usda.gov>

For USDA RD Forms/Regulations/Admin. Notices:
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/regs/>

HUD Occupancy Handbook: <http://www.hudclips.org/> then click on [Search or Browse All HUD Handbooks and Guidebooks](#), click on "search," type "4350.3" in the document number box and click on search.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact Emily Cannon at Emily.Cannon@me.usda.gov





MAINE ASSOCIATION OF
REALTORS® FOUNDATION

JAN 4 2007

Affordable Housing Grant Funds Available!

January 3, 2007

Dear Housing Provider:

The Maine Association of REALTORS® Foundation is pleased to announce that up to \$75,000 in total grant money is available for distribution in April 2007. This level of funding will allow us to award grants to approximately 15 organizations to address housing needs across Maine.

The purpose of the REALTORS® Affordable Housing Fund is:

“To provide financial resources to groups and organizations for the purpose of funding activities, programs, and services which directly or indirectly expand, create, maintain or encourage the development of decent, suitable shelter and housing opportunities in Maine, including heating assistance, for individuals and families with low, very low, or no income.”

➤ Please note the following:

One application submission per legal entity: Applicants are limited to one application submission only. The Board of Directors of the Maine Association of REALTORS® Foundation encourages organizations to set priorities within their submission.

Change to the application format: Your responses to Sections II A through II D of the questionnaire must be enclosed in the spaces provided. **No additional pages of narrative are allowed**, except if necessary for the budget. A copy of the application is located on our website at <http://marfoundation.org> for downloading, or you can request one from Suzanne Guild at suzanne@mainerealtors.com.

Evidence of partnerships: Successful applications will show evidence of partnerships and broad-based support for the funding and implementation of the project/program.

Your submission must be received at the Maine Association of REALTORS® office at 19 Community Drive in Augusta prior to 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Wednesday, February 7, 2007. Please follow the format provided and limit your submission to the completed and signed application questionnaire and enclosures. You will receive confirmation of the receipt of your application via electronic mail.

Written notification of final grant award decisions will be mailed to all applicants by April 25, 2007. If you have any questions in the meantime, please call Suzanne Guild at 622-7501 or browse our website at <http://marfoundation.org>.

Thank you for your housing efforts,

Patty Eddy
Chairman

19 Community Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
T 207.622.7501
F 207.623.3590
www.marfoundation.org



Is a registered mark which identifies a professional in real estate who subscribes to a strict Code of Ethics as a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS.



Organization Name: _____

I. Total Funding Requested: _____ Project/Program Location: _____

II. Describe the housing project/program for which you are seeking a grant. Please provide your response in the spaces/boxes provided. No additional pages allowed, unless necessary for the budget.

A. NEED / POLICY ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED (check one):

_____ New construction of affordable ownership units _____ New construction of affordable rental units
_____ Repair programs for low-income homeowners _____ Repair of transitional or temporary housing
_____ Other housing program: Explain: _____

B. DESCRIBE YOUR PROJECT: (In your description also respond to these bullets.) (50 points)

- What makes this project/program unique?
- Describe your organization's housing experience.
- How much money will the program/project leverage?
- How many people will be affected by the project/program?
- What is your plan for long term affordability?
- Is this a new or existing initiative?
- What is the target population?

Organization Name: _____

C. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION: (25 Points)

- When will the project/program be operational?
- What internal resources will your organization contribute to this initiative?
- What are your plans for the future funding of this program?
- What organizations do you partner with for administration, fund-raising, or marketing?

D. PROGRAM BUDGET: (25 points)

Funding Sources (list all confirmed and potential sources – use additional page if necessary)	Amount	Funding Already Secured? (Y/N)	Commitment / Expected Commitment Date
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
TOTAL PROJECT / PROGRAM BUDGET:		-----	-----
	Amount		Planned Date for Completion
Funding Uses (How will the funds be used?)		-----	
1.		-----	
2.		-----	
3.		-----	
4.		-----	
5.		-----	
TOTAL PROJECT / PROGRAM BUDGET:			-----

Organization Name: _____

III. Please provide these required enclosures:

- If new multifamily construction or multifamily rehab, enclose construction and operating budgets
- Board of Directors list with affiliations and locations
- Most recent audited financial statements
- Copy of IRS ruling letter (non-profit)
- Proof of liability insurance, if available

IV. The 2007 grant program has the following policies. Please do not complete the application if you do not agree to these conditions:

- Grant funds must be expended within 12 months after payment is issued. Grantees must submit a status report 6 months after payment is issued and a completion report after funds are fully expended. The MAR Foundation will forward the one page reports as required.
- Any publicity surrounding the proposed project/program must make reference to the support provided by the Maine Association of REALTORS® Foundation.
- No part of the grant may be used for purposes not outlined in this application nor be sub-granted to a secondary grantee.
- The applicant does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, age, disability, or sexual orientation for the purpose of service, employment, membership, or leadership.
- The listing and/or sale of any real property within the scope of this grant application shall not exclude the use of a REALTOR® in the real estate transaction.

V. Signature

I certify that the information contained herein is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. This application shall remain the property of the Maine Association of REALTORS® Foundation.

Applicant Printed Name

Applicant Signature

Title

Date

(OVER)

Organization Name: _____

Applicant Information:

Legal Entity: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

Email: _____

Grant Administrator Information:

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

Email: _____

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION:

Applications must be received in the MAR Foundation office at 19 Community Drive in Augusta prior to 12:00 noon on Wednesday, February 7, 2007. Faxed applications will not be accepted. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis.