



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240



March 1, 2006

## Memorandum

To: Tribal Self-Governance Coordinators

From: Acting Director, Office of Self-Governance *Ken Reinfeld*

Subject: Guidance for HIP Data Collection and FY 2007 Fund Distribution

I am providing you with guidance which was provided from the Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) with regard to the Housing Improvement Program (HIP) data collection and FY 2007 fund distribution.

Please note the following identified time frames:

- (1) Tribes are to submit eligible applicant data to its BIA Regional Housing Office by August 1, 2006.
- (2) BIA Regional Housing Offices are to submit summary eligible applicant data to the BIA Central Office Housing Office by September 1, 2006.
- (3) The BIA Central Office is to notify Regions of funds available for distribution within the Region within 15 days of receiving the FY 2007 appropriation.
- (4) The BIA Regional Office is to notify the BIA Central Office of distribution amounts to tribes within the BIA Region within 30 days of receipt of funds available for distribution within the BIA Region.
- (5) The BIA Central Office of Indian Services is to notify the BIA Budget Office of amounts to be distributed to the BIA Regions and Office of Self-Governance within 15 days of being notified of distribution amounts from the BIA Region.

An exception has been made to past practices to allow the BIA Central Office to release the Tier I distribution of HIP funds before all BIA regions submit their workload data.

The guidance also allows the BIA Regional Offices to request a waiver of the \$35,000 Category B limit as defined in CFR Part 256.7. A waiver request may not exceed 20 percent of the \$35,000.

Already published FY 2006 Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines are provided for the implementation of the FY 2007 income criteria.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached by phone at (202) 208-5734 or fax at (202) 219-1404.



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
Washington, DC 20240



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
Housing Assistance  
MS-320-SIB

FEB 22 2006

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors  
Attention: Housing Officers, Coordinators, Specialists  
Director, Office of Self-Governance

From: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: Revision to August 17, 2004, Memorandum entitled "Procedures for Administration, Data Collection and Distribution of Funds Schedule for Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Housing Improvement Program (HIP)."

This memorandum provides guidance for the data collection and distribution of funds schedule to the Regional Offices (RO) for submission of HIP eligible applicant summary data to the Central Office (CO). The summary data will be used by CO to identify the amount of FY 2007 funds available for the RO's to distribute for the highest priority ranked applicants within each region. The submission of FY 2007 eligible applicant summary data is due to the CO by close of business Friday, September 1, 2006. This revision of memorandum dated August 17, 2004, will become effective immediately and will remain in effect until superceded or changed.

An exception will be made this year in the Tier I distribution of funds prior to regions submitting their work load data. In recent years, Central Office has not released the Tier I distribution of HIP funds until all Regions had submitted their workload data. This exception will allow regions to allocate funds earlier and aid the Bureau of Indian Affairs in meeting the HIP performance goals outlined in its strategic plan. Regional Offices are responsible for providing the Central Office with its FY 2006 Regional Work load data as soon as available. (See page 4, Item F of the original August 17, 2004, Memorandum).

In recognition of the rising cost of inflation for materials and fuels, Regional Offices may request to exceed the Category B cost limit defined in CFR Part 256.7 of \$35,000. A waiver request shall not exceed 20 per cent of the \$35,000.

The FY 2006 Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines as published in the Federal Register on January 24, 2006, are provided for the implementation of FY 2007 income criteria.

Should you or your staff have questions concerning this memorandum, please contact Les Jensen at (907) 586-7397. Tribes are invited to contact their local agency, regional or self-governance representative.

Attachments



Schedule for Housing Improvement Program Data Collection & Distribution of Funds:

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>
1. Eligible applicant data due to Regional Housing Office.	August 1
2. Summary eligible applicant data due to Central Office Housing Office.	September 1
3. Central Office Notice to Region of Funds available for distribution within Region.	within 15 days of receipt of appropriation
4. Regional Office Notice to Central Office of distribution amounts to tribes within Region.	within 30 days of receipt of funds available for distribution within Region
5. Central Office, Tribal Services Office, Notice to Budget Office of amounts to be distributed to Regions/Office of Self-Governance.	within 15 days of notice of distribution amounts from Region

FY 2006 TIER 1 DISTRIBUTION of HIP FUNDS to the REGIONS

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
		AMT AVAILABLE FOR DISTR. W/in REGION	# of Eligible Applicants	% of Applicants to Total	Cost Estimate of Need	% of Cost Estimate to Total	% Applicants + % Cost / 2
1							
2	ALASKA	4,679,361	1153	0.1622116	208,500,867	0.2590366	0.210624077
3	EASTERN OKLAHOMA	906,959	411	0.0578222	19,176,616	0.0238246	0.040823374
4	EASTERN	170,813	76	0.0106922	3,770,873	0.0046848	0.007688511
5	GREAT PLAINS	2,972,305	997	0.1402645	102,473,056	0.1273101	0.1337873
6	MIDWEST	727,364	242	0.0340461	25,300,752	0.0314331	0.032739601
7	NAVAJO	2,703,129	778	0.1094541	107,768,068	0.1338885	0.121671321
8	NORTHWEST	434,811	160	0.0225098	13,388,002	0.0166329	0.019571393
9	PACIFIC	2,541,129	702	0.0987620	104,635,753	0.1299970	0.114379475
10	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	1,592,809	653	0.0918683	41,469,256	0.0515204	0.071694372
11	SOUTHERN PLAINS	1,274,935	548	0.0770962	30,326,334	0.0376767	0.057386476
12	SOUTHWEST	1,159,690	396	0.0557119	39,188,147	0.0486864	0.052199152
13	WESTERN	3,053,344	992	0.1395611	108,911,305	0.1353088	0.137434948
14	TOTAL	22,216,649	7,108	100.00%	804,909,029	100.00%	100.00%
15	TOTAL AMOUNT AVAILABLE THIS FY:	22,216,649					
16	Available from BIA HIP:	18,326,535					
17	Available from BIA OSG:	3,890,114					

2/21/2006

2/16/2006

Attachment 1



# United States Department of the Interior

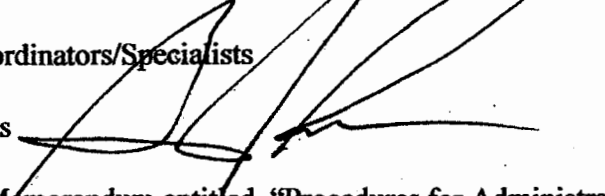
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
Housing Assistance  
MS-320-SIB

SEP 02 2004

## Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors  
Attention: Housing Officers/Coordinators/Specialists

From: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs 

Subject: Correction to August 17, 2004, Memorandum entitled, "Procedures for Administration, Data Collection and Distribution of Funds Schedule for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2005, Housing Improvement Program (HIP)

This is to notify you that the following corrections to the above referenced memorandum is effective as of this date.

Delete the last paragraph on page 6 which states, "Because of the burden . . . .  
Since 25 CFR 256.14 specifically requires statements from two sources rather than one, the last paragraph was incorrect.

In addition, the August 17, 2004 Memorandum required the submission of eligible applicant summary data be submitted by close of business (cob) September 1, of each year. However, because the memorandum was signed so late in the year this due date is extended until cob October 1, 2004, for this year only. Future years summary data will continue to be submitted by cob, September 1, each year.

The annual summary of accomplishments is not revised and is still required by cob October 31 of each year.

If you have any questions, contact Mr. Frank Joseph at (202) 513-7620.

cc: Office of Self-Governance

AUG 17 2004

Housing Assistance  
MS-320-SIB

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors  
Attention: Housing Officers/Coordinators/Specialists

From: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: Procedures for Administration, Data Collection and Distribution of Funds  
Schedule for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Housing Improvement Program (HIP)

SGD: BRIAN POGUE

This memorandum provides guidance for the administration, data collection and distribution of HIP funds. Due to a lack of consistency at the regional levels regarding the operation of HIP, which may be attributed to limited Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) housing support staff and funds, any deviation from these procedures must be submitted to the Deputy Bureau Director, Office of Tribal Services for approval. **This memorandum will become effective immediately and will remain in effect until superceded or changed.**

The distribution of HIP funds for program services to eligible applicants is a two-tier process. In the first tier, the Central Office, Office of Tribal Services determines the amount of funds that will be available for program services in each region based on eligible applicant summary data. This determination is made on the basis of two factors: 1) the percentage of eligible applicants in a region to the total number of eligible applicants in all regions; and, 2) the percentage of estimated costs for program category services in a region to the total estimated costs of program services in all regions. An annual updated table, **Tier I Distribution of HIP Funds to Regions**, (Attachment 1) will be the instrument used for identifying the annual amount of HIP funds available for each region.

In the second tier, each regional office is responsible for verifying and identifying those eligible HIP applicants with the highest priority ranking points for which HIP funds are available; and, consequently, the amount of funding, if any, that a tribe will receive for the purpose of providing program services in the program year. As a result, each respective regional housing office must compile a consolidated regional priority ranking list or Part I – Regional Work Plan & Eligible Applicant Listing.

The data collection and distribution of funds schedule for FY 2005 and future years, **Schedule for Housing Improvement Program Data Collection & Distribution of Funds**, (Attachment 2) identifies the data required and establishes the deadline dates for tribal participation in FY 2005 annual funding cycle and a schedule for submission of the data. As in recent years, regional offices

will be required to submit HIP eligible applicant summary data to the Central Office. This data will be used in Tier I of the distribution methodology to identify the amount of funds available for each region for the upcoming program year.

This memorandum describes the procedures that regional housing offices will use in preparing and submitting these reports and other pertinent information. The use of working documents and reporting forms are adopted for program consistency and data collection activities.

**BACKGROUND:** The HIP provides housing assistance for the most needy of its eligible applicants who have no other, immediate or in the near future, resource for housing assistance. Assistance is provided in the form of housing repairs and renovation, replacement of substandard housing with modest, standard housing, or the provision of modest, standard housing. The recipient receives a grant for the cost of the housing assistance provided. Eligibility for the HIP grant does not guarantee receipt of program services due to the limited availability of program funding. Accordingly, tribes that have eligible applicants with lower priority ranking points may not receive a HIP distribution. Tribes without eligible applicants, as defined in 25 CFR, Part 256 will not receive a HIP distribution.

HIP funds can only be used to provide program services to American Indians and Alaska Natives residing on Indian reservations or within the BIA approved service areas. An Indian reservation means any federally recognized Indian tribe's reservation, pueblo, or colony, including former reservations in Oklahoma, Alaska Native regions established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Pub. L. 92-203, and Indian allotments. Revised HIP regulations, effective on April 1, 1998 (with amendments on April 1, 1999 and December 20, 2002), establish the BIA's housing policy that every American Indian family should have the opportunity for a decent home and suitable living environment. To the extent possible, the program will serve the neediest of the needy Indian applicants. The BIA defines the HIP as a secondary safety net program that provides assistance to eligible American Indian and Alaska Native applicants who have no other (immediate or in the near future) resource for housing assistance.

Although HIP funds are included in the Tribal Priority Allocation (TPA) portion of the budget, HIP funds are not a part of the tribes' recurring TPA base and are not available for reprogramming to other TPA or compact programs. Tribes are encouraged to seek other resources to supplement its HIP funds, including reprogramming funds from within its recurring TPA allocation or from other grant programs.

#### Guidance for Tier II of the HIP Distribution Methodology

A. A distribution of HIP funds can be made to tribes that have:

- 1) Eligible applicants, as defined under the revised rule in 25 CFR 256, effective April 1, 1998, as amended on April 1, 1999, and December 20, 2002, that has the highest priority ranking points in the region;

- 2) Submitted its FY 2005 HIP applicant list/work plan and succeeding fiscal years;
- 3) Met the terms and conditions of its Pub. L. 93-638 contract or Pub. L. 103-413 Annual Funding Agreement (AFA);
- 4) An approved service area;
- 5) Provided a report of prior year accomplishments; and,
- 6) The capacity to timely obligate and expend the full amount of new annual HIP funds identified by means of this methodology.

B. Each regional office will develop a regional priority ranked list of applicants in order of the highest priority ranked applicant to the lowest priority ranked applicant that provides, at a minimum, the following information. (Attachment 3) **HIP, Annual Regional List of Eligible Applicants**)

- 1) The name and tribal enrollment number of the eligible applicant;
- 2) The numerical value of the applicant's priority ranking points;
- 3) The program category of assistance needed;
- 4) When applicable, an **\*estimate of the costs based on local construction labor and material costs** (see: 25 CFR § 256.17(b)) of the assistance needed in item 3;
- 5) Name of tribe or native village and tribal consortium within whose service area the applicant resides; and,
- 6) How the funds will be provided (the BIA direct services, Public Law 638 contract, or annual funding agreement).

*\* The actual, estimated costs are only necessary for those applicants for whom funds will likely be available. Actual, estimated allowable costs means the costs to provide needed repairs, renovation or modest replacement dwelling. At this step of the process, detailed work plans including specifications, elevations, actual cost estimates, construction schedules, home site leases, clearances and grant agreements will be completed for each individual project. No HIP funds will be made available until appropriate review is completed by each regional housing officer who will determine final categories and funding amounts for all funded HIP projects.*

C. Using the regional priority ranked list of applicants and their estimated allowable costs of program services and the amount of funds identified in Tier I, each region will identify the applicants to receive program services. Beginning at the top of the list, with the applicant with the highest priority ranked points based on the HIP priority ranking criteria, each regional office will subtract the estimated allowable costs of housing improvements from the amount of funds identified for the region in Tier I, and continue down the list until the amount of funds available for distribution by the regional office are exhausted. Once the FY HIP recipients are identified, the regional office can identify the amount of HIP funds that will be distributed to the tribes under their service area.

- D. Regional Offices are to ensure that the distributed amounts are sufficient to fund one or more *complete* projects, within allowable program costs. The intention is to fund as many HIP projects as possible, while curtailing the amount of unexpended funds. Distributing funds for complete projects will enable tribes to expend HIP funds more efficiently, provide program services more timely, and aid the BIA in meeting the HIP performance goals outlined in its strategic plan.
- E. If a tribe or the regional office determines that the tribe does not have the capacity to timely obligate and expend the full amount of funds identified in this distribution, the regional office will notify the tribe of the reduced amount of funding. In this case, the regional office will return to the regional priority ranked list for the purpose of identifying the next eligible applicant(s) on the list and determine the ranking factors for services.

The regional office will annotate the regional priority ranked list and will take these changes into account for the next program year distribution. Additionally, the region will issue written notification to tribes not receiving HIP funds and specifically state the reason(s) a tribe will not receive a share of HIP funds. **An appeal from this decision can be made under Part 2 of Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations.**

- F. Each regional office is responsible for providing the Central Office with an annual Tier II report of notification of the amounts of HIP funds to be distributed to: 1) the Region for direct services and Public Law 93-638 contracting tribes; and, 2) to tribes with an annual funding agreement, by tribe, applicant name(s) and amounts. Regional offices are required to provide this information to the Central Office as soon as available to enable a timely distribution of the funds.
- G. Regional offices also are requested to negotiate the inclusion of certain HIP funding reporting requirements in all Public Law 93-638 contracts and self-governance annual funding agreements for the HIP. Tribes receiving HIP funds through an annual funding agreement receive such funds under the same guidance as for other tribes. This guidance is in accordance with the payment provision of Public Law. 103-413, § 403(g)(3), which requires the Secretary to provide funds to the tribes under an agreement under this title for programs, services, functions, and activities, or portions thereof, in an amount equal to the amount that the tribe would have been eligible to receive under contracts and grants under the Act. Accordingly, tribes having an annual funding agreement must provide the same type of data that tribes participating under a Public Law 93-638 contract provide. Therefore, it is recommended that in addition to existing provisions, that regional offices negotiate inclusion of the following provisions in Public Law 93-638 contracts and annual funding agreements for the HIP:
- 1) That the government will provide to the tribe the name(s) of the applicant(s) identified for receipt of program services and the amount(s) of HIP funds provided for each applicant;

- 2) That the tribe will provide to the regional office an annual report of accomplishments, in accordance with 25 CFR 256.14(e); and,
- 3) That the tribe will provide to the regional office performance data on a quarterly basis, in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, Public Law 103-62.

**FY 2005 and future Data Collection and Submission of Summary Data for Tier I**

- A. Consistent with previous years and past distributions of the HIP appropriation, the limited availability of funds compared to the number of applicants eligible for the program requires the continued use of a needs-based distribution methodology. Tribal governments wishing to participate in the HIP funds distribution methodology must submit a list of the applications considered and/or received for HIP for the FY 2005 program year (Attachment 4) **HIP, Annual Tribal List of Eligible Applicants**. Regional offices are responsible for collecting this information from the tribes in their region. The list, also referred to as a "work plan" must contain:
- 1) A list of the eligible applicants ranked in order of need, from highest to lowest;
  - 2) The priority ranking points assigned to the applicant, based on the factors and points defined in Table B, in 25 CFR § 256.14;
  - 3) Identify the category of assistance needed and, when applicable the number of bedrooms needed;
  - 4) The estimated project costs for each eligible applicant, when specifically requested by the regional office; and,
  - 5) A report of prior year FY 2004 accomplishments and succeeding fiscal years (Attachment 5) **HIP, Annual Tribal Program Performance Report** including, at a minimum:
    - a) the fiscal year and name of the tribe/consortium;
    - b) the number of eligible applicants;
    - c) the number of applicants provided service
    - d) the names of applicants provided service, and
    - e) for each applicant provided service, the following:
      1. date of construction start
      2. date of construction completion, if applicable
      3. cost of the service, broken out by project & administration costs; and
      4. category of assistance provided.
- B. Submission of eligible applicant summary data, based on tribal work plans are due by each region to the Central Office by close-of-business, September 1, each year. The following data is required for each tribe with eligible applicants for the HIP:
- 1) The name of the tribe or native village and, where applicable, the name of the tribal entity that will provide the program services;

- 2) The number of eligible applicants requiring Category B services;
- 3) The number of eligible applicants requiring Category C services:
  - a) Category C-1, replacement of existing housing; and
  - b) Category C-2, provision of housing.

Identification of estimated costs of program services is not required for the first tier determination. The Central Office will use a cost weight factor based on the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) current Total Development Costs (TDC) for estimated costs purposes.

We note here, however, that each regional office should alert tribal servicing housing offices that HIP cost estimates, determined in accordance with 25 CFR § 256.17(b), will be required for the highest ranking eligible applicants in each region before HIP funds are distributed in the second tier (Use of HUD's TDC in the first tier of the methodology does not condone nor should it be construed to approve the use of the TDC for program services cost estimates in the second tier of the methodology).

- C. It is incumbent on each regional office to ensure the accuracy of the lists of eligible applicants and that the applicant's priority ranking points have been determined in accordance with the criteria in the HIP rule (25 CFR 256). While tribes can redesign their HIP programs or may obtain waivers of specific HIP regulations regarding eligibility and other matters, only applicants meeting the eligibility criteria and priority ranking determinations provided in the HIP rule will be included in the HIP distribution. The eligibility of the applicant and eligible priority ranking points must be determined in accordance with the HIP regulations. This also means that HIP funds will not be provided more than once for the same applicant.

In order to speed up the verification process, a tribe is required to either copy or make available to the regional housing office, the complete individual HIP eligible applicant's file who received priority ranking points of 50 points or higher.

**The regions must complete the verification task by December 31 of each year.**

Since the data collection process has been in place since FY 1999, there will be no extensions of the established timeframes outlined in this memorandum and schedule. The following sanction will be implemented if a tribe or region fails to meet these timeframes. The tribe will not receive a share of tier 2 HIP funds and the region will not receive a share of tier 1 HIP funds.

Because of the burden to the individual applicant regarding the medical statements for assigning handicap points only one statement from either IHS, VA, SSA or private hospital or clinic will satisfy this regulatory requirement. If the document does not state a specific percentage of disability the HIP applicant will only be allowed 10 handicap points. **This change does not guarantee an eligible HIP applicant housing services under this program.**

- D. Each regional office is responsible for providing the central office with an annual summary of program accomplishments.

This report is due to the central office by the close of business, October 31 of each year.  
(Attachment 6) **HIP, Annual Program Performance Report**).

Should you or your staff have questions concerning this memorandum, please contact Frank Joseph at (202) 513-7620. Tribes are invited to contact their local agency, regional or self-governance representative.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1, Tier I Distribution of HIP Funds to Regions
- Attachment 2, Schedule for HIP Program Data Collection & Distribution of Funds
- Attachment 3, HIP, Annual Regional List of Eligible Applicants
- Attachment 4, HIP, Annual Tribal List of Eligible Applicants
- Attachment 5, HIP, Annual Tribal Program Performance Report
- Attachment 6, HIP, Annual Program Performance Report

cc: Office of Self-Governance

cc: 100-A  
bcc: BIASurname450      Chron      400      Holdup  
LBLAIR:ob(202)513-7633:07/27/2004.ob  
Kshare/ots/Housing Meetings/Housing Schedule Program Review.word doc.

Space in Public Buildings and Grounds, to request the use of public space in Federal buildings and on Federal grounds for cultural, educational, or recreational activities. A copy, sample, or description of any material or item proposed for distribution or display must also accompany this request.

#### B. Annual Reporting Burden

Respondents: 8,000.

Responses Per Respondent: 1.

Hours Per Response: 0.05.

Total Burden Hours: 400.

#### Obtaining Copies of Proposals:

Requesters may obtain a copy of the information collection documents from the General Services Administration, Regulatory Secretariat (VIR), 1800 F Street, NW., Room 4035, Washington, DC 20405, telephone (202) 208-7312. Please cite OMB Control No. 3090-0044, GSA Form 3453, Application/Permit for Use of Space in Public Buildings and Grounds, in all correspondence.

Dated: January 13, 2006.

Michael W. Carleton,  
Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 06-671 Filed 1-23-06; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6820-23-S

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Office of the Secretary

#### Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines

AGENCY: Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice provides an update of the HHS poverty guidelines to account for last calendar year's increase in prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

**DATES:** *Effective Date:* Date of publication, unless an office administering a program using the guidelines specifies a different effective date for that particular program.

**ADDRESSES:** Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Washington, DC 20201. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information about how the guidelines are used or how income is defined in a particular program, contact the Federal, state, or local office that is responsible for that program. Contact information for two frequently requested programs is given below:

For information about the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program (free

or reduced-fee health care services at certain hospitals and other facilities for persons meeting eligibility criteria involving the poverty guidelines), contact the Office of the Director, Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery, Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS, Room 10-105, Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857. To speak to a person, call (301) 443-5656. To receive a Hill-Burton information package, call 1-800-638-0742 (for callers outside Maryland) or 1-800-492-0359 (for callers in Maryland). You may also visit <http://www.hrsa.gov/osp/dfcr/>. The Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery notes that as set by 42 CFR 124.505(b), the effective date of this update of the poverty guidelines for facilities obligated under the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program is sixty days from the date of this publication.

For information about the percentage multiple of the poverty guidelines to be used on immigration forms such as USCIS Form I-864, Affidavit of Support, contact U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at 1-800-375-5283 or visit <http://uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/affsupp.htm>.

For information about the number of people in poverty or about the Census Bureau poverty thresholds, visit the Poverty section of the Census Bureau's Web site at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html> or contact the Housing and Household Economic Statistics Information Staff at (301) 763-3242.

For general questions about the poverty guidelines themselves, contact Gordon Fisher, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20201—telephone: (202) 690-7507—or visit <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/>.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Section 673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) requires the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to update, at least annually, the poverty guidelines; which shall be used as an eligibility criterion for the Community Services Block Grant program. The poverty guidelines also are used as an eligibility criterion by a number of other Federal programs. The poverty guidelines issued here are a simplified version of the poverty thresholds that the Census Bureau uses

to prepare its estimates of the number of individuals and families in poverty.

As required by law, this update is accomplished by increasing the latest published Census Bureau poverty thresholds by the relevant percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The guidelines in this 2006 notice reflect the 3.4 percent price increase between calendar years 2004 and 2005. After this inflation adjustment, the guidelines are rounded and adjusted to standardize the differences between family sizes. The same calculation procedure was used this year as in previous years. (Note that these 2006 guidelines are roughly equal to the poverty thresholds for calendar year 2005 which the Census Bureau expects to publish in final form in August 2006.)

#### 2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
1 .....	\$9,800
2 .....	13,200
3 .....	16,600
4 .....	20,000
5 .....	23,400
6 .....	26,800
7 .....	30,200
8 .....	33,600

For family units with more than 8 persons, add \$3,400 for each additional person.

#### 2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR ALASKA

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
1 .....	\$12,250
2 .....	16,500
3 .....	20,750
4 .....	25,000
5 .....	29,250
6 .....	33,500
7 .....	37,750
8 .....	42,000

For family units with more than 8 persons, add \$4,250 for each additional person.

#### 2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR HAWAII

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
1 .....	\$11,270
2 .....	15,180
3 .....	19,090
4 .....	23,000
5 .....	26,910
6 .....	30,820
7 .....	34,730

## 2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR HAWAII—Continued

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
8 .....	38,640

For family units with more than 8 persons, add \$3,910 for each additional person.

Separate poverty guideline figures for Alaska and Hawaii reflect Office of Economic Opportunity administrative practice beginning in the 1966–1970 period. (Note that the Census Bureau poverty thresholds—the version of the poverty measure used for statistical purposes—have never had separate figures for Alaska and Hawaii). The poverty guidelines are not defined for Puerto Rico or other outlying jurisdictions. In cases in which a Federal program using the poverty guidelines serves any of those jurisdictions, the Federal office that administers the program is responsible for deciding whether to use the contiguous-states-and-DC guidelines for those jurisdictions or to follow some other procedure.

Due to confusing legislative language dating back to 1972, the poverty guidelines have sometimes been mistakenly referred to as the “OMB” (Office of Management and Budget) poverty guidelines or poverty line. In fact, OMB has never issued the guidelines; the guidelines are issued each year by the Department of Health and Human Services. The poverty guidelines may be formally referenced as “the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).”

Some programs use a percentage multiple of the guidelines (for example, 125 percent or 185 percent of the guidelines), as noted in relevant authorizing legislation or program regulations. Non-Federal organizations that use the poverty guidelines under their own authority in non-Federally-funded activities can choose to use a percentage multiple of the guidelines such as 125 percent or 185 percent.

The poverty guidelines do not make a distinction between farm and non-farm families or between aged and non-aged units. (Only the Census Bureau poverty thresholds have separate figures for aged and non-aged one-person and two-person units).

Note that this notice does not provide definitions of such terms as “income” or “family.” This is because there is considerable variation in how different programs that use the guidelines define

these terms, traceable to the different laws and regulations that govern the various programs. Therefore, questions about how a particular program applies the poverty guidelines (e.g., Is income before or after taxes? Should a particular type of income be counted? Should a particular person be counted in the family or household unit?) should be directed to the organization that administers the program.

Dated: January 18, 2006.

Michael O. Leavitt,  
Secretary of Health and Human Services.  
[FR Doc. 06–624 Filed 1–20–06; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4151–05–P

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

## Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

## Solicitation for Nominations for New Primary and Secondary Health Topics To Be Considered for Review by the United States Preventive Services Task Force

**AGENCY:** Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), DHHS.

**ACTION:** Solicit for new topic nominations.

**SUMMARY:** The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) invites individuals and organizations to nominate primary and secondary prevention topics pertaining to clinical preventive services that they would like the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) to consider for review. A list of topics that have been recently reviewed or are currently under review by the USPSTF is listed below in the supplementary information section.

The USPSTF is an independent panel of experts that makes evidence-based recommendations regarding the provision of clinical preventive services. Clinical preventive services include screening, counseling and preventive medications. The USPSTF makes recommendations about preventive services for asymptomatic people—people without recognized signs or symptoms of the specific conditions targeted by the preventive service.

Topics can be nominated by individuals, organizations, evidence-based practice centers (EPC) and USPSTF members. The USPSTF will consider nominations and prioritize topics for review based on the following set of criteria: Public health importance (burden of suffering, potential of preventive service to reduce the burden); new evidence that has the

potential to change prior recommendations including inactive ones; and, potential for greatest Task Force impact (e.g., clinical controversy, practice does not reflect evidence, inappropriate timing in delivery of services). The USPSTF will prioritize topics for which there is a performance gap and the potential to significantly improve clinical practice. Individuals and organizations may nominate new topics or topics previously reviewed by the USPSTF.

*Basic Topic Nomination*

**Requirements:** Nominations must be no more than 500 words in length and must include the following information. Nominations may include an appendix that contains references and supporting documents (not included in word count).

1. Name of topic.
2. Rationale for consideration by the USPSTF, to include:
  - a. Primary or secondary prevention topic (screening, counseling or preventive medication).
  - b. Primary care relevance (applicable clinical preventive service must be initiated in the primary care setting which can be defined as family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics or obstetrics/gynecology and provided by a primary care provider).
  - c. Description of public health importance (burden of disease/suffering, potential of preventive service to reduce burden, including effective interventions). Citations and supporting documents are recommended.
  - d. Summary of new evidence, if any, that has potential to affect the Task Force's recommendation on a previously reviewed topic. Please refer to <http://preventiveservices.ahrq.gov> for USPSTF recommendations. Citations and supporting documents are recommended.
  - e. Description of potential impact of USPSTF's review of the topic, i.e., change in clinical practice, research focus, etc.

**DATES:** Topic nominations should be submitted by February 23, 2006, in order to be considered for 2006–2008. AHRQ will not reply to submissions in response to the request for nominations, but will consider all topic nominations during the selection process. If a topic is selected for review by the USPSTF, the nominator will be notified by AHRQ.

**ADDRESSES:** Please submit nominations to: Therese Miller, DrPH, ATTN: USPSTF Topic Nominations, Center for Primary Care, Prevention & Clinical Partnerships, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 540 Gaither Road,