Funds Available to Organize Section 8 Tenants in Your Community!

Issued: August 6th, 2025

For more information, contact:

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The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded a $10 million Tenant Education and Outreach (TEO) grant to the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) and its partner, the Mass Alliance of HUD Tenants (MAHT), to sub-award up to $300,000 over three years to local tenant groups and local community-based organizations to organize Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) Section 8 tenants in their communities.

The goal of the TEO program is to build the capacity of tenants to be active partners in the preservation and improvement of affordable rental housing for low-income people. The program will empower tenant groups to work productively with property management and owners, hold management accountable for property conditions, improve management and oversight of these multifamily properties, and advocate for the preservation of affordability.

What Organizations Can Apply for TEO Sub-Award Funding?

Eligible tenant organizations or other community-based nonprofit organizations that serve or propose to serve at least 25 units of one or more HUD Multifamily housing developments where at least 75 percent of the units PBRA funding. Eligible organizations include:

1) Tenant-affiliated, non-profit Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that serve or propose to serve one or more Section 8 PBRA properties eligible for TEO assistance in their community, city, metropolitan area, neighborhood rural community, or state, may apply for a TEO sub-award.

2) Established or newly-formed tenant organizations are eligible if they are a "legitimate tenant organization" under 24 CFR Part 245.110, a group of three or more PBRA tenants that meets regularly, operates democratically, represents all tenants in the development, and is completely independent of property owners and management.

   To see if your multifamily affordable housing community is eligible, you can check **here** or contact AHF/MAHT at 617-522-5133 or TEO@saveourhomes.org.

To receive federal TEO sub-award funds, a CBO or legitimate tenant organization must also possess an organizational bank account at a licensed financial institution. Under no circumstances will sub-award funds be disbursed into a bank account belonging to an individual member or employee of the sub-awardee organization or to a money transfer app (i.e., Walmart Pay, Venmo, Paypal, Zelle or Cash App). Applicants may submit an application before they have an organizational bank account set up, but if selected, cannot receive the funds until they provide their organizational bank account details. Sub-awards may be terminated if the sub-recipient fails to set up an organizational bank account promptly.

Joint applications. Newly-formed tenant organizations may apply on their own or submit a joint application with another, more experienced tenant organization or tenant-affiliated CBO. If sub-applicants are unsure whether they're ready to manage a sub-award, they are encouraged to seek out partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding or Letter of Agreement with another organization in their area with similar goals or experience conducting eligible activities.

Ineligible applicants. Current or prospective property owners, management agents, or subsidiaries or principals of owner entities that own or manage multifamily assisted housing, are ***not*** eligible to apply, including resident-owned cooperatives or resident-controlled nonprofit owners.

What Buildings are Eligible for TEO Assistance?

HUD multifamily buildings of at least 25 units with Project Based Section 8 contracts that serve 75% or more of the residents are eligible for assistance.

Buildings receiving Project Based Section 8 New Construction, State Housing Agencies Section 8, Substantial Rehabilitation, Loan Management Set-Aside (LMSA), Property Disposition Set Aside (PDSA), and HUD Pension Fund Section 8, and Section 202/8 Elderly/Handicapped housing are eligible. Section 515/8 Rural Housing Services

(including Section 8 Farmer Home Administration (FmHA) properties are also eligible if they have a HUD Project Based Rental Assistance contract.

Former Public Housing developments converted to private ownership through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) that receive Section 8 through HUD's PBRA program (but *not* Project Based Vouchers (PBVs)), are eligible for TEO assistance.

Public Housing developments, properties receiving *only* Section 8 Tenant Protection or Enhanced Vouchers, or properties receiving Project Based Vouchers (including RAD converted properties) are *not* eligible for TEO assistance.

What Activities Can Groups Perform with TEO Funds?

Organizations that are selected to receive sub-awards will choose priorities and plan TEO activities based on the specific needs of the PBRA properties served. TEO activities will emphasize the long-term engagement of tenants to improve property conditions and enhance the overall quality of life at the property.

Eligible uses of TEO sub-awards include funding for:

- board members and organizers to attend training events;
- staff Resident Outreach Coordinators to promote active participation;
- direct costs for supervisor time spent training and overseeing staff;
- connecting tenants with resources; and
- resident service stipends for tenant organization members who work on TEO activities for the tenant organization

Other eligible sub-recipient costs include:

- limited tenant organization overhead costs, such as meeting space rental;
- meeting flyers, printing costs, translation, and interpretation services;
- reasonable food and daycare costs for meetings;
- cell phone with a digital camera for photographing property issues; and
- a laptop or tablet with internet service/data plan for organizing activities.

Specific eligible activities may include, but are not limited to:

- publicizing and conducting regular tenant meetings;
- documenting any persistent, unresolved physical condition concerns and owners' responses to these complaints;
- salary and benefits for a FTE Resident Outreach Coordinator;

- addressing basic questions about tenant rights and responsibilities from residents;
- developing effective working relationships with owners/property managers;
- developing effective working relationships with HUD, Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC), Performance Based Contract Administrators (PBCA), and state and local oversight agencies regarding administrative policy and code enforcement;
- assuring that any board elections are held using a democratic process;
- organizing outreach and community meetings or events;
- establishing resident committees/groups to address specific quality of life issues, which may or may not be related to owner compliance with HUD agreements;
- preparing and submitting required data, reports and documentation to MAHT and AHF; and
- participating in training on topics that build organizational and tenant leadership capacity.

Resident Outreach Coordinators. If you are proposing to hire one or more staff Resident Outreach Coordinators with your TEO sub-award, you must enter into a written employment agreement with the Resident Outreach Coordinator(s) that outlines their salary, benefits and other conditions of employment.

Resident Board Stipends. TEO funding can be used for limited resident volunteer stipends for a PBRA household member on the lease to perform specific tasks (such as preparing expense reports, supervising volunteer teams, providing childcare or eldercare during meetings/activities, or organizing/leading trainings) per a written agreement with the tenant organization. Regular and recurring stipends at a suggested rate of $15 per hour for specified work or service cannot exceed $200/month, and must be reported as income.

To receive a stipend, the tenant performing the service must enter into a written agreement with the tenant organization or CBO that specifies the amount of stipend, the period of time during which it will be received, the work or service that the tenant must do in order to receive it, and the terms of repayment to the tenant organization if the agreed upon work is not performed. Each stipend recipient must submit the number of hours worked and the work performed each month.

A Resident Board Stipend is not a salary and does not come with fringe benefits. Stipends are compensation for residents who devote particular time and effort over a

specified period of time. General participation in the tenant organization, such as attending general meetings, responding to surveys or voting in general tenant organization elections does not constitute work for the tenant organization.

What Activities Are Not Eligible Uses for TEO Funding?

Lobbying activities are strictly prohibited. TEO funding may not be used for direct or indirect legislative lobbying activities, including 'grassroots' lobbying, for or against legislation at the local, state or federal levels. TEO funds must not be used to contribute to a political party, campaign, political action committee, or other organization established for the purpose of influencing the outcomes of legislation, referenda, initiatives or elections. (Administrative advocacy on policy or enforcement matters is *not* prohibited legislative lobbying under 2 CFR Part 200 or Section 514 (f)(3)(c) of the Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act (MAHRAA)).

TEO funds *must not* be used for these ineligible activities:

- Recreational activities;
- Landlord/tenant legal services for individual assisted households on matters such as evictions or termination of rental assistance;
- Activities funded from other sources, including resident participation funds provided at properties that have converted through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program; and
- Pre-award costs and activities completed prior to receiving a sub-award.

  Note: this would include getting approval signatures from tenants

How to Apply for Funds?

MAHT/AHF will open the application portal for TEO sub-applicants to submit their application package on Foundant this fall. Foundant is compliant with all 504 accessibility requirements and assistive program integrations. Sub-applicants who have trouble accessing the application portal may contact AHF/MAHT at 617-522-5133 or TEO@saveourhomes.org.

Required application components will include:

- Organizational points of contact
- A list of proposed Project Based Section 8 properties to be served
- Documentation that the applicant has received the endorsement of 50% of the households of the buildings they propose to serve
- Organizational structure

- Organizational operating procedures
- Organizational goals
- A draft plan of proposed activities
- An estimated timeline for completion of the proposed activities
- A budget proposal

Note that sub-applicants must provide documentation indicating that they have received the endorsement of 50% of the households of the buildings they propose to serve at the time of the application. If a sub-applicant is applying to assist multiple properties, a written endorsement of 50% of the households at the property must be submitted for each property. No more than one person from each household may endorse an application, and each household can only endorse the application of one tenant organization or tenant-affiliated CBO at a time. If a household endorses an application that is subsequently denied, that household may endorse another application.

Joint applicants. Joint applicants must submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Agreement that demonstrates a commitment to work collaboratively throughout the entirety of the period of performance, identifies which party is the Lead Applicant, and describes the respective roles of each co-applicant. If a co-applicant is providing an MOU or Letter of Agreement for more than one application, they must indicate this in each application, and provide a list of all TEO applications on which they are co-applicants.

AHF/MAHT will review applications and make subaward decisions on a first come, first served basis. Throughout the application review process, AHF/MAHT will communicate with sub-applicants to refine their goals, draft plans, and proposed budgets, as well as notify sub-applicants of any technical deficiencies in their application with deadlines for correction within 30 days.

Note that sub-applicants must provide enough information at the time of application for the intermediary organization to determine whether the sub-applicant's proposed activities are eligible in order to receive a sub-award.

AHF/MAHT may deny applications for the following reasons:

1. The sub-applicant is ineligible.
2. The application is incomplete or does not propose any eligible activities.
3. The proposed activities do not fall within the period of performance of AHF/MAHT's agreement with HUD.

4. The sub-applicant's proposed budget contains ineligible costs or costs determined by AHF/MAHT to be unreasonable, if not promptly revised when notified by AHF/MAHT that they are not allowable.
5. The sub-applicant proposes ineligible activities and does not promptly revise their application to remove the ineligible activities when notified by AHF/MAHT.
6. The sub-applicant and AHF/MAHT are unable to agree on a final sub-award budget, plan of activities, and timeline after reasonable efforts by AHF/MAHT to assist them with revisions.
7. The sub-applicant's proposed budget exceeds the amount of remaining available funds.

Appeal Process. Notification that the application has been denied will be accompanied by a denial of award letter explaining in writing AHF/MAHT's reasons for its determination. If an application for a sub-award is denied, the sub-applicant has the right to appeal that denial to HUD if:

- The sub-applicant has been rejected based on a requirement that they believe they meet; or
- The sub-applicant was not provided an opportunity to correct technical deficiencies in their application, other than failure to get the written endorsement of a majority of the tenant households in the properties served.

The appeal must be made within 45 days of application rejection to TEO@hud.gov with a subject line reading 'Sub-award Application Appeal – NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'.

HUD will make a binding determination within 45 days of the appeal.

Successful Sub-applicants. Organizations selected for a TEO sub-award will receive a cooperative agreement with AHF/MAHT for the execution of the proposed activities. Organizations who accept a sub-award and sign the cooperative agreement must inform the residents of the properties they proposed to serve of the sub-award within 30 days of acceptance.

AHF/MAHT will work with sub-awardees to refine their plan, budget, and timeline, and amend these documents as needed during the sub-award period of performance.

Amendment. If an organization is approved for a TEO sub-award and chooses to work in additional buildings during their performance period, they may amend their

cooperative agreement. Sub-awardees must submit the written endorsement for each new property to AHF/MAHT before amendment to their cooperative agreement.