



**May 13, 2021**

## GENERAL NEWS

### HUD Posts PIH ERAP FAQs

Yesterday on the [Public and Indian Housing COVID-19 Resources](#) webpage, the Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)) posted new set of frequently asked questions ([FAQs](#)) on the U.S. Department of Treasury ([Treasury](#)) Emergency Rental Assistance ([ERA](#)) program funds as they relate to Public and Indian Housing ([PIH](#)) programs. The five-page document, dated May 12, 2021, covers issues such as who can accept funds and who qualifies for assistance, whether to count ERA funds as income, data sharing, and duplication of benefits, among other topics.

As you know, the ERA program makes funding available to assist households that are unable to pay rent or utilities. Two separate programs have been established: ERA1 provides up to \$25 billion under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, enacted on December 27, 2020, and ERA2 provides up to \$21.55 billion under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, enacted on March 11, 2021. The funds are provided directly to states, U.S. territories, local governments, and, in the case of ERA1, Indian tribes. Grantees use the funds to provide assistance to eligible households through existing or newly created rental assistance programs.

You can find the links to the FAQs, in addition to other COVID-19 resources, on [this page](#) at HUD's website. For ERA resources, you can visit the [ERAP website](#).

### HUD Announces Latest in ConnectHome Webinar Series

HUD has announced that it will be hosting the latest in its series of [training webinars](#) on the [ConnectHome](#) initiative. The webinar series is meant to serve as guidance to help ConnectHome participating communities achieve their goals in connecting households to broadband and assisting communities in their digital inclusion and digital literacy efforts. As such, the series is relevant for PHA staff and community members responsible for ConnectHome program implementation.

The latest scheduled webinar, titled "[Utilizing Public Housing Capital and Operating Funds for Broadband Activities](#)," will discuss how capital and operating funds can support activities related to broadband infrastructure installation and resident training. The webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, May 25, 2021, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Eastern time. Click [here](#) for more information, including [instructions](#) on how to register.

### HUD Charges Indiana Housing Providers with Disability Discrimination

In a [press release](#) yesterday, HUD announced that it is [charging](#) a management agency in Indiana, two of its employees, and others with discrimination on the basis of disability. HUD's charge alleges that the housing providers violated the [Fair Housing Act](#) by refusing to allow a tenant with disabilities to keep an assistance animal in her apartment.

According to the charge, a graduate student with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with her doctor's support and monitoring, found relief with the assistance animal but was denied her request to keep it because of the owner's "no-pets" policy. As a result, the student was forced to rent another, more expensive unit farther from the university.

Under the Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful to deny or limit housing to persons with disabilities, which includes refusing to make reasonable accommodations in policies or practices. Allowing people with disabilities to have assistance animals that perform work, tasks, or provide disability-related emotional support is considered a reasonable accommodation under the Act. That means that a housing provider who otherwise enforces a "no-pets" policy must waive it for a prospective renter or resident who needs an assistance animal because of a disability.

## CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS NEWS

### HUD Opens Applications for Planning Grants

Yesterday on the [Grants.gov website](#), HUD [announced](#) that it is making available up to \$5,000,000 in funding for [Choice Neighborhoods planning grants](#). Applications are due by **July 13, 2021**.

Choice Neighborhoods planning grants support the development of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that focus on directing resources to address three core goals: housing, people, and neighborhood. To achieve these core goals, communities must develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, or "transformation plan." The transformation plan will become the guiding document for the revitalization of the housing units while simultaneously directing the transformation of the surrounding neighborhood and positive outcomes for families.

You can find the notice of funding opportunity ([NOFO](#)) and additional information on the grants on [this page](#) on HUD's website.



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Nan McKay & Associates, 1810 Gillespie Way, Suite 202, El Cajon, CA 92020, USA, 1-800-783-3100

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