



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Community Services | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
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Rural Community Development Program Action Transmittal

AT#: RCD-AT-2021-01

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Rural Community Development Grantees

SUBJECT: Rural Community Development (RCD) Program Data Collection – Projects Serving Persistent and High-Poverty Areas

ATTACHMENT(S): RCD Data Collection Tool – Persistent & High Poverty.xlsx

PURPOSE:

To collect information from Rural Community Development (RCD) grantees regarding technical assistance provided to projects using RCD-funding awarded in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 and FY 2020 located in persistent poverty areas or high-poverty areas, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

RELATED REFERENCES:

- Section 680(a)(3)(B) of the CSBG Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 9921(a)(3)(B)).
- Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No: 116-260; H Rept. 116-450

BACKGROUND:

RCD funds must be used to provide training and technical assistance to increase access for low-income families to water supply and waste disposal services and preserve affordable water and waste disposal services in low-income rural communities. Project efforts involve: increasing access to water supply and waste disposal services; preserving affordable water and waste disposal services; increasing local capacity and expertise to establish and maintain needed community facilities; ensuring basic water and sanitation; utilizing technical assistance to leverage additional public and private resources; and, promoting improved coordination of federal, state, and local agencies and financing programs in these communities.

On December 27, 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Public Law No: 116-260, was enacted into law. The House Report accompanying the law, H. Rept 116-450, requested that the Department of Health and Human Services provide a report within 120 days of

enactment on Rural Community Facilities Development projects supported by RCD grant funding issued in FY 2019 and 2020. The report will identify which projects are in persistent poverty areas, which shall be defined as any county that has had 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years, as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates published by the Census Bureau. In addition, the report will identify which projects are in high-poverty areas, where the term high-poverty area should mean any county or tribal census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014–2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Census Bureau.

ACTION:

RCD grantees are to provide a list of all projects in persistent poverty areas where FY 2019 or FY 2020 RCD grant funding was used, or will be used, to provide technical assistance. The report will identify the amount of time and the costs associated with technical assistance activities supporting projects in persistent and high-poverty areas.

Grantees are expected to enter the following information into the Excel-based tool for each project and location:

- Project Name
- County – to include county, city (incorporated city), Parish (LA), Census Area (AK), or Municipio (PR)
- State
- Census Tract
- Time associated with supporting this project
- Grant cost associated with supporting this project

The tool provides specific instructions for data entry. Once data is provided, the tool will automatically identify which projects serve areas (counties or census tracts) of persistent or high poverty, based on most recent available data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Please submit the completed *RCD Persistent Poverty Data Collection Tool* via email to OCSRegistrar@icf.com no later than **March 12, 2021**. Contact OCSRegistrar@icf.com directly with questions about this requirement.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As part of its FY 2021 non-competing continuation application process, RCD grantees are required to collect, and report, time and costs associated with work supporting projects in persistent and high-poverty areas. More information and guidance about the semiannual performance reporting on the persistent poverty data will be provided at a later time.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. OCS looks forward to continuing to provide high-quality services to OCS grantees.

/s/

Lynda E. Perez

Director, Division of Community Discretionary and Demonstration Programs
Office of Community Services