



Making the Most of Your State CDBG Program



Working with ICF International on State CDBG Programs

"We entered into a contract with ICF for the preparation of our Implementation and Reference Manuals and to conduct an Implementation Workshop and a Technical Workshop. . .

The manuals and workshop were well received by our grantees. I have received many positive comments. The workshop went extremely well. . .

On behalf of my staff, I want you to know how pleased we are to be associated with your firm. Your work is of the highest quality."

Bonnie Ammons
South Carolina
Department of Commerce

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program offers states great flexibility in meeting the housing, community development, and economic development needs of their communities. A wide range of activities are possible, and states make the decisions about how they wish to run their programs. Yet with this flexibility comes significant recordkeeping and program compliance requirements. Did the community document low-income benefit? Were the environmental review rules followed? Was the procurement processed correctly? Were the Davis-Bacon wage rates used?

As states manage their CDBG programs, they need to ensure that these and dozens of other compliance questions are correctly answered. Moreover, CDBG has evolved over its more than 25 year history. New program options are available, and many states are reviewing their application processes and program implementation procedures.

How ICF International Can Help

Over the past decade, ICF International has provided practical guidance on increasing CDBG program efficiency and effectiveness.

As trainers, technical assistance providers, and authors of key CDBG materials, we know this program inside and out. We work with grantees from across the country on issues ranging from ensuring that a state's grants administrators are qualified to helping a large county determine how it can increase its CDBG expenditure rate and ensure compliance with HUD's timeliness requirements.

For each of these engagements, we bring our national perspective and expertise, but our focus is on helping each client make its CDBG program a success.

ICF can help state CDBG program managers in a wide variety of ways, such as the following:

- Providing one-on-one **technical assistance** to managers eager to streamline program operations and use funds more wisely

- **Training** managers, staff, and grants administrators in the rules and regulations and in program management techniques
- Developing the **guidance manuals** and other documentation needed for grantee compliance with program requirements
- **Evaluating** program performance
- Designing new **program procedures** and strategies when needed

Why Turn to Us?

State CDBG program managers turn to ICF when they need specialized expertise to handle difficult problems or simply want their programs to be better than they are. Some examples include the following:

- Kentucky is having ICF design a program to certify that administrators of CDBG funds have a basic knowledge of federal regulations and state rules. Included are an administrators' test, a thorough revision of the state's CDBG handbook, and training across the state.

Why Turn to Us? (continued)

- Texas asked ICF for help in streamlining its CDBG program. We analyzed internal procedures, looked at the experience of funding recipients, and assessed state and federal overlays to generate streamlining recommendations and reengineer CDBG operating procedures.
- South Carolina regularly taps ICF for diverse CDBG program consulting support on an as-needed basis. We train staff once a year, run workshops on special topics, and keep implementation manuals up-to-date.
- In Indiana, we assisted the state's Department of Commerce develop periodic training for grants administrators. ICF worked with the Department and other technical assistance providers to deliver training on an ongoing basis to new state grants administrators on eligible activities and national objectives.
- ICF worked with New Jersey's CDBG grantees in danger of falling below minimum drawdown performance thresholds and having unspent funds withdrawn. ICF has experience working with grantees nationwide to identify causes of expenditure delays, ensure staff understand how to use IDIS, design strategies for obligating CDBG funds, and develop systems for tracking CDBG spending.

Accessing Our Services

ICF International can help agencies work within existing procurement policies to obtain our services. If necessary, we can help you refine needs and issues, develop a scope of work, and provide a proposal to facilitate the process. ICF also may be able to leverage local funds by tapping into federal resources for training and technical assistance.

About Our Services

ICF's Housing and Community Development team provides training, technical assistance, management consulting, and program evaluation for local, state, and federal government agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Housing Service. Our primary clients include local communities using the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, and the Supportive Housing Program (SHP). We also work with many lenders, nonprofit organizations, and private business enterprises. ICF's Housing and Community Development team can:

- **Prepare and deliver training.** We run HUD's Community Development Training Institute, offering courses on HOME, CDBG, Financial Management, Asset Management, and more.
- **Design and redesign housing programs.** From designing innovative homebuyer programs to restructuring rehabilitation programs, we help communities spend their CDBG and HOME dollars effectively.
- **Develop marketing materials.** We help communities define their products and publicize their initiatives through brochures, Web site design, and promotional materials.
- **Prepare procedures manuals, handbooks, and publications.** We help keep grantees up-to-date and staff informed through clear, well-written program guidance.
- **Restructure management systems and financial procedures.** Our staff can assess your organization and help streamline operations and improve management to achieve performance objectives.

About ICF International

ICF International (www.icfi.com) partners with government and commercial clients to deliver consulting services and technology solutions in defense, energy, environment, homeland security, social programs, and transportation. Combining passion for our work with industry expertise and innovative analytics, we deliver compelling results throughout the entire program life cycle, from analysis and design through implementation and improvement. Since 1969, ICF International has been serving government at all levels, major corporations, and multilateral institutions. More than 1,600 employees serve these clients worldwide.

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