Priority Points (lump sum score 0 or 10 points). Priority points may be awarded in both the General Funds competition, as well as the Reserved Funds competitions. Qualifying applicants may request priority points if they meet the requirements for one of the following categories and provide the documentation specified in §4284.922(d), as applicable. Priority categories include: Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, Operator of a Small or Medium-sized farm or ranch that is structured as a Family Farm, Mid Tier Value Chain proposals, and Farmer or Rancher Cooperative. It is recommended that applicants utilize the Agency application package when documenting for priority points and refer to the documentation requirements specified in §4284.922(d). All qualifying applicants in this category will receive 10 points.

Administrator Priority Categories (graduated score 0–10 points). Unless otherwise specified in a notification issued under §4284.915(b)(1), the Administrator of USDA Rural Development Business and Cooperative Programs has discretion to award up to 10 points to an application to improve the geographic diversity of awardees in a fiscal year.

§4284.951 Obligate and award funds.

(a) Letter of conditions. When an application is selected subject to conditions established by the Agency, the Agency will notify the applicant using a Letter of Conditions, which defines the conditions under which the grant will be made. Each grantee will be required to meet all terms and conditions of the award within 90 days of receiving a Letter of Conditions unless otherwise specified by the Agency at the time of the award. If the applicant agrees with the conditions, the applicant must complete, sign, and return the Agency’s Form RD 1942–46, “Letter of Intent to Meet Conditions.” If the applicant believes that certain conditions cannot be met, the applicant may propose alternate conditions to the Agency. The Agency must concur with any proposed changes to the Letter of Conditions by the applicant before the application will be further processed. If the Agency agrees to any proposed changes, the Agency will issue a revised or amended Letter of Conditions that defines the final conditions under which the grant will be made.

(b) Grant agreement and conditions. Each grantee will be required to sign a grant agreement that outlines the approved use of funds and actions under the award, as well as the restrictions and applicable laws and regulations that pertain to the award.

(c) Other documentation. The grantee will execute additional documentation in order to obligate the award of funds including, but not limited to,

(1) Form RD 1940–1, “Request for Obligation of Funds;”