

any comments received be sent via return email. Requests should be emailed to [Christopher.Moore@usda.gov](mailto:Christopher.Moore@usda.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Christopher Moore, Civil Rights by email at [Christopher.Moore@usda.gov](mailto:Christopher.Moore@usda.gov) or by phone at 703-605-4858. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 twenty-four hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Equal Opportunity Compliance Review Record.

*OMB Number:* OMB-0596-New.

*Expiration Date of Approval:* 11/30/2018.

*Type of Request:* New.

*Abstract:* All Federal agencies must comply with equal opportunity laws:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and
- Executive orders prohibiting discrimination in the delivery of all program and services to the public.

Federal agencies and entities receiving Federal Financial Assistance are prohibited from discriminating. Federal Financial Assistance is defined as, "Federal monies given by grants, cooperative agreements, commercial special use permits, training, loan/temporary assignment of Federal personnel, loan/use of Federal property at below market value."

The equal opportunity laws require agencies to conduct compliance reviews to ensure that entities receiving Federal Financial Assistance from the government are adhering to the nondiscrimination statutes. The statutes require that prior to awarding support or issuing permits, the Federal government shall conduct pre-award reviews to ensure that potential recipients understand their responsibilities to provide services equitable pursuant to the law. Thereafter, during the partnership with the agency, ongoing monitoring will take place to ensure the public is being served without any barriers or discrimination.

Forest Service employees will use form FS-1700-6, Equal Opportunity Compliance Review Record, to document demographics (race, ethnicity, and gender) and collect information regarding actions taken by recipients of Federal financial assistance

to ensure the public receives services without discrimination or barriers to access, and that recipients' employees understand their customer services role.

Collection will occur during face-to-face meetings or telephone interviews conducted by Forest Service employees as part of the pre-award and post award process. The pre-award interview will take place prior to the award of a grant, signing of a cooperative agreement, letting of commercial special use permit, or similar activity. The post award interview will take place once every 5 years, or upon report/discovery of discrimination.

The information collected will only be shared with other Federal agencies who share in the financial assistance activities with the Forest Service. Monitoring reviews have been a responsibility of the Federal government since 1964. Without the ability to monitor recipients of Federal financial assistance, the Forest Service would not be able to ensure compliance with laws and statutes. The Agency would not be aware of potential violations, thereby resulting in potential discriminatory practices.

*Affected Public:* Recipients of Federal financial assistance.

*Estimate of Burden per Response:* One.

*Estimated Annual Number of Respondents:* 11,000.

*Estimated Annual Number of Responses per Respondent:* One.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 11,000.

**Comment is Invited**

Comment is invited on: (1) Whether this collection of information is necessary for the stated purposes and the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical or scientific utility; (2) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the submission request toward Office of Management and Budget approval.

Dated: August 14, 2020.

**Ricky Balolong,**

*Acting Civil Rights Director.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Rural Business Cooperative Service**

**Rural Housing Service**

**Rural Utilities Service**

[Docket No. RBS-20-BUSINESS-0033]

**Implementation of Certain Provisions of Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 Specific to Persistent Poverty Counties**

**AGENCY:** Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Rural Housing Service and Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces implementation of certain provisions published in the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. 116-94) related to persistent poverty counties served by Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBSC), Rural Housing Service (RHS) and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) agencies of the Rural Development mission area of the United States Department of Agriculture, USDA, sometimes collectively hereinafter referred to as "Agency" or "the Agency."

**DATES:** The provisions of this notice are applicable August 21, 2020.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information specific to this notice contact Michele Brooks, Director, Regulations Management, Rural Development Innovation Center—Regulations Management, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, STOP 1522, Room 4266, South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 690-1078. Email [michele.brooks@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:michele.brooks@wdc.usda.gov). For information regarding implementation contact your respective Rural Development State Office listed here: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/browse-state>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Rural Development improves the quality of life in rural America by offering loans, grants and loan guarantees to help create jobs and support economic development and essential services such as housing; health care; first responder services and equipment; and water, electric and

communications infrastructure. The Agencies programs promote economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks, credit unions and community-managed lending pools. Many of Rural Development's programs offer priority funding for loans and grants located in persistent poverty counties. The term "persistent poverty counties" means 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 census and 2007–2011 American Community Survey 5-year average, or any territory or possession of the United States.

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. 116–94) enacted on December 20, 2019, contained provisions affecting persistent poverty counties and the allocation of funds for persistent poverty counties.

This notice announces implementation of the following provisions:

#### Allocation of Funds

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. 116–94) provides that to the maximum extent feasible, at least 10 percent of the funds allocated to the listed programs shall be allocated for assistance to persistent poverty counties.

#### Population Limits

Notwithstanding any other provision in the listed programs regarding population limits, section 740 of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Pub. L. 116–94) provides that for any county seat in a persistent poverty county that has a population that does not exceed the program's authorized population limit by more than 10 percent will be considered eligible for that program.

The listed programs are the Rural Housing Insurance Fund Program Account from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for the following programs: Direct Single Family Housing Loans (sec. 502); Very Low-Income Housing Repair Loans (sec. 504); Rural Rental Housing Direct Loan Program (sec. 515); Housing Site Development Loans (sec. 524); and, Self-Help Housing Land Development Loans (sec. 523); Mutual and Self-Help Housing Grants; Rural Housing Assistance Grants from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for the Very Low-Income Housing Repair (sec. 504) and Rural Housing Preservation (sec. 533); Rural Community Facilities Program Account from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated

funds for Community Facilities Grants; Rural Business Program Account from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for the following programs: Rural Business Development Grants—Business Enterprise Grants; Federally Recognized Native American Tribes, Rural Business Development Grants—Business Enterprise Grants; Grants to Delta Regional Authority; and, Grants to Appalachian Regional Commissions; Rural Economic Development Loans Program Account from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for Rural Economic Development Loans; Rural Cooperative Development Grants from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for Rural Cooperative Development Grants, Grants to Assist Socially Disadvantaged, and Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grants; WWD Program Account from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for Direct Water and Waste Disposal Loans, Water and Waste Disposal Grants, and Federally Recognized Native American Tribes Water and Waste Disposal Grants (sec. 306C(a)(1)); Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for Telecommunications Program Direct, Treasury Rate loans; and, Distance Learning and Telemedicine and Broadband Program from which the Agency has set aside Fiscal Year 2020 appropriated funds for Delta Health Care Services Grants and Broadband Telecommunications Grants.

The Agency, if applicable, will, with the publication of program funding announcements, provide guidance on qualifying for and, scoring criteria for persistent poverty areas. If no program funding announcement will be published, then the Agency will provide such guidance on the program's website.

#### Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or

activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720–2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877–8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD–3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632–9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) *Mail*: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250–9410;

(2) *Fax*: (202) 690–7442; or

(3) *Email*: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

#### Bette Brand,

*Deputy Under Secretary, Rural Development.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Economic Development Administration

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Form ED–209, Revolving Loan Fund Financial Report

**AGENCY:** Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of Information Collection, request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's