



HUD Issues Framework for COVID-19 Oversight

As relief funds from Congress are allocated to various affordable housing programs, HUD's Office of Inspector General issued a **COVID-19 oversight framework** to guide program audits and evaluations. Issued on April 28th, the framework will align audits, evaluations, investigative initiatives, and other reviews of timely and effective relief efforts undertaken by HUD.

In March, the CARES Act provided over \$12 billion to HUD to various HUD programs, including multifamily owners, renters, and communities impacted by the health crisis. Of that amount, \$50 million is for the Section 202 program and Service Coordinators and \$1 billion is for Section 8 project-based rental assistance.

SUPPORTING OLDER ADULTS AND MAINTAINING OPERATIONAL INTEGRITY

The **framework** specifically lists oversight of HUD's efforts to serve older adults and others at higher risk of COVID-19, including continued affordability of senior housing and service coordination. Additionally, because HUD has suspended many key mechanisms for oversight during the crisis – such as physical property inspections and file reviews – the OIG framework discusses efforts to ensure essential functions continue and obligations are met.

FIVE KEY AREAS FOR OVERSIGHT

According to the new framework, HUD's Inspector General will use key oversight areas to ensure that COVID-19 relief funds are received by the intended recipients and not undermined by fraud or abuse. The five areas highlighted for crisis relief oversight include:

Assistance for Vulnerable Populations

Oversight of funds to support older adults and Service Coordinators; also includes oversight of homelessness support and housing for people with AIDS

Rental Assistance

Oversight of additional rental assistance to cover reduced tenant income and help owners maintain affordable rental housing during the crisis

Mortgage Loan Forbearance

Oversight of mortgage relief for single family and multifamily loans, as well as credit options for loan servicers

HUD's Mission Performance

Oversight of operational and programmatic requirements at a time when HUD has suspended many ongoing oversight functions to limit in-person interactions; also includes oversight of funds to support and enforce fair housing obligations

Assistance for Communities' Response

Oversight of grants made through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

COVID-19 FRAUD PREVENTION RESOURCES

The OIG also issued resources to help reduce fraud and abuse of relief funds. The four newly-developed COVID-19 bulletins are designed to help **renters**, single family **borrowers**, and **others** recognize and avoid scams. The posters warn about fraud involving housing information, advance payment requests, or loan spoofs, and explain how to get assistance.

Source: LeadingAge