

**Replies to questions received in response to the May 2013**

**HILAPP Request for Proposals**

**Responses updated February 3, 2014**

1. Q: What if I can't provide a match of 30 cents for every DHCD dollar??

A: You are still encouraged to submit an application, but please understand that it will only be considered if we do not receive a sufficient number of applications that meet the minimum requirements of the RFP and are deemed worthy of funding. In evaluating leverage, the review team will consider the percentage match, the absolute dollar match, and the reliability of the source.

2. Q: I just received, or am about to receive, a Community Preservation Act (CPA) award for a roof project. Can I expand the scope and come in for this program?

A: Yes, assuming that the expanded scope meets the minimum criteria of the RFP.

3. Q: Can we put a lien on the property as required by our local CDBG program?

A: Yes, provided it does not include requirements that are contradictory to MGL c. 121B or other state laws, which cannot be waived. Local CDBG and HOME funds have previously funded capital improvements at state public housing developments and complied with program requirements. In such cases LHA counsel and/or DHCD Legal review the necessary documents to ensure that they do not conflict with the statutory requirements of c. 121B. Further, DHCD can provide waivers when federal requirements conflict with state requirements that are not statutory in nature.

4. Q: My CPA board says that under the CPA law they cannot give our LHA money for capital improvements, only for the construction of new units with CPA money. What can I do?

A: DHCD recently reviewed the CPA statute as it applies to capital improvements at state public housing developments and provided a Public Housing Notice (PHN) to help clarify the type of activities that it believes would be appropriate for CPA funding and those activities that would not be appropriate. Briefly, while activities classified as "rehabilitation" are not allowed, "preservation" work on existing community housing resources is allowed. In general, work that protects the housing structure (not residents) from future injury, harm or destruction is permitted under CPA. Please note that this guidance is advisory in nature and is not binding on your community. For more details please see the PHN here:

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/ph/publicnotices/13-14.pdf>

5. Q: My CPS/FCI data seems wrong. How do I deal with this?

A: If you believe your development was not on the original list of eligible HILAPP developments due to CPS error, then you should write an appeal in Section one of the required application. In the appeal, please state what errors you found and corrected in CPS in order to arrive at a new FCI that is 15% or higher.

6. Q: I'm not on the list. Does that mean I can't apply?

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A: As noted in the RFP, if you believe an eligible development was omitted from the list of approved developments due to error in the CPS generated FCI calculation, then you are permitted to file an application and an appeal.

7. Q: If I plan on filing an appeal, when should I submit it?

A: Submit the appeal with your complete application, per instructions.

8. Q: I have my own money – not state operating budget or state reserves. Can I use these funds for a match?

A: They may be acceptable for a match, but in all cases you should explain the source of the funds in your application to receive a firm answer to this question. Note that the RFP lists many sources that are or are not acceptable for match.

9. Q: I want to sell my 705 and develop the same number of units on other land to ensure one for one replacement of the sold units. The match would be the sales money, does that work?

A: While you may propose such a deal, the sales proceeds would not be considered matching funds, so other funds would need to be secured to meet the match requirement.

10. Q: Does weatherization program assistance (insulation, etc.) count as match?

A: Yes, if these funds pay for needed scope of the proposed project and if they are not provided by DHCD.

11. Q: The application has a question asking, if we anticipate a need for relocation, whether the housing authority has a DHCD-approved relocation specialist. I am not familiar with what is required to be an “approved” relocation specialist. Are there specific criteria, or something that the LHA would need to do in order to have someone “approved”?

A: DHCD’s Director of Relocation, Ashley Emerson, is authorized by state relocation regulations to designate relocation advisory agents. Relocation advisory agency is required component for all temporary and permanent relocation. Designation is based on the individual’s proven experience and understanding of applicable relocation requirements, and must be renewed every three years. For more detailed information she can be contacted at 617-573-1408. If she is not available please contact Carol Wolfe at 617-573-1450.

12. Q: Is it possible to get a one-day extension for the submission of the Board vote? If not, I will request a special meeting.

A: LHAs have two months to prepare HILAPP applications, so we are not granting any extensions for submitting the Board Vote.

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13. Q: We are seeking HILAPP funds for a c. 689 development, so the questions for turnovers, wait lists, applicants are not really applicable are they? We also assume the year-end operating reserve should reflect the 689 reserve only? The 689 is managed by a vendor, so would a letter from vendor satisfy the tenant participation piece?

A: If the intended use of the redeveloped c. 689 site is for a DMH or DDS community residence, then you will not need to provide information on turnover, wait lists or applicants in Section 5 of the application. However you should provide evidence that the relevant agency would be willing to enter into or extend a lease for the redeveloped site. If the plan is instead to repurpose the site into accessible housing for seniors or families, then the information in Section 5 should be provided for the relevant program type. In either case, the LHA's main state operating reserve should be listed in Section 4(b), since that question is focused on assessing LHA management capacity, not resources. You should list the 689 reserve as a resource in 4(d), but note that it will not be considered matching funds.

14. Q: If I were to submit a request for Technical Assistance only, does the application still require a full application or would it be something more like a letter requesting assistance with project?

A: We expect a competitive process, so you should attempt to fill out the full application to the best of your ability with as much of the requested information as you can assemble, and note that you are requesting Technical Assistance in your application cover letter.

15. Q: If I am submitting more than one application, can I combine them?

A: LHAs must submit one application package per eligible development. An LHA may submit multiple applications but may not submit more than one application per program group (ch.167, 689, 667, 200, 705). That is, even if the LHA has two qualifying c.667 developments, it can only submit an application for one of them. The only exception to this limitation is that eligible scattered site developments of the same program group may be bundled into one application. We expect this will only occur in the c. 705 program.

16. Q: We have a congregate development in which the units have shared half-baths, which has created major issues in maintaining occupancy. The best long-term solution to this problem is to reconfigure the units to eliminate shared baths. This is going to be too expensive to do with formula funding. The property was not on the eligibility list for the HILAPP program, and the project isn't really a good fit with the purpose of the program, but we don't currently have another option. Should we pursue our appeal for HILAPP program funds?

A: Currently the HILAPP program is designed to focus on the preservation of buildings with a high level of capital needs, so if your site does not fit that requirement, HILAPP as currently designed is not an appropriate program for you. We will review this issue with you independently of the HILAPP program and try to find a resolution.