

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

TO:
State Office
Area Office
Local Office

STATE PROCEDURE
NOTICE

ISSUE NO. 289

DATE: 1/25/05

RURAL DEVELOPMENT MANUAL CHANGE

PA Instruction 1775

GENERAL: The revised 7 CFR 1775 (Technical Assistance and Training and Solid Waste Management Grants) became effective January 7, 2005. One of the revisions to this regulation was to transfer grant processing and servicing responsibilities from the National Office to Rural Development State Offices. The most effective way to administer these programs in Pennsylvania is to divide processing steps between Field Offices and the State Office similar to the process used for the Water and Waste Disposal loans and grants.

The attached Exhibit A describes the procedure for processing Technical Assistance and Training and Solid Waste Management Grants in Pennsylvania. Field Offices and the State Office will follow the procedures listed in Exhibit A and comply with the requirements of RD Instruction 1775.

INSERT- PA PN 289 dated 1/25/05

TAT/SWM GRANT PROCESSING
PENNSYLVANIA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

All documents shown in **Bold Font** are available on the RD Intranet under RUS Document Library, **Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) and Solid Waste Management (SWM) Grant Procedures for States**, dated 01/13/2005.

All actions listed are the responsibility of Pennsylvania RD Field Offices, except where assigned to State Office or National Office.

The procedure will be as follows:

PA Field Office Actions

Applications received:

1. Two copies of the initial application for all state-level programs will be sent from the grant applicant to the PA Field Office between October 1st and December 31st of each year. Applications sent directly to the PA State Office will be sent to the PA Field Office for processing. National-level program applications will be sent directly to the National Rural Development Office for processing.
2. The application must be date stamped when received. (Any application received after 31 December must be returned to the applicant with a letter notifying them that the application will not be processed due to being received after the closing date.)
3. An eight-position grant file will be created.
4. A **Checklist** will be initiated – either for a **Public Body** (government entity) or a **Non-Profit**.
5. An **Acknowledgement Letter** will be generated and mailed out to the applicant within three (3) business days of receipt of the application.
6. The application is entered into CPAP – **see separate instructions**.
7. All documents received are reviewed, the checklist updated.
8. If the application is incomplete, an **Incomplete Notice** will be generated and mailed to the applicant within seven (7) business days of receipt of the application. The needed documents must be received by the due date on the letter to continue processing.
9. One complete application file will be then sent to the PA State Office for further processing. The second application file will be retained in the Field Office.

PA State Office Actions

1. Application files will be checked by the State Office for completeness.
2. If this is the first time an applicant has requested a TAT/SWM grant, a **Request for Legal Determination** will be completed and mailed with copies of required documents to the appropriate Regional Attorney within seven (7) business days of receipt of application.

3. When the grant application is 100% complete, send to the National Office for review and scoring. Retain a copy of the file at the State Office. Include a cover letter listing the applications included in the packet. **The deadline for receipt of all complete applications at the National Office is March 1st of each year.**

Mail to the following address:

Jim Maras, Director
Water Programs Division
Rural Utilities Service
Attention: TAT/SWM Grant Processing
MAIL STOP 1570
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250

National Office Actions

1. All applications will be reviewed and scored by a team of independent reviewers. The same **evaluation/scoring sheet** will be used for all applications.
2. The reviewers will meet as a team, discuss the applications and scores, and reach a consensus on the applications to recommend for funding. This list is sent to the Administrator for approval.
3. When the list is approved, the grant files will be returned to the State Office for final processing. The PA State Office will return the files to the PA Field Offices.

PA Field Office Actions

1. Applications not selected for funding
 - a. Complete **Form AD 622 (Low)** and the accompanying letter. Mail to the applicant on April 22 (Earth Day).
 - b. Update CPAP.
 - c. File is complete. Maintain at the Field Office following normal procedure.
2. Applications selected for funding
 - a. Complete **Form AD 622 (High)** and the accompanying letter. Mail to the applicant on April 22 (Earth Day).
 - b. Check all required forms in the letter, and include them in the packet for the applicant to complete and return.
 - c. If the applicant was approved for less money than they initially requested, they will have to complete a new SF 424 with attachments, a new budget, and a revised scope of work to reflect the lower funding available.
 - d. The applicant has 30 days from the date of the AD 622 to return the above documents and continue processing. Maintain contact with the applicant if they have not returned the forms in time to make sure they are intending to continue with the application.

3. Final application is received
 - a. Once the revised SF 424 and all supporting documents are received, update the checklist and CPAP.
 - b. Generate the **Approval Letter** using the appropriate letter for a Public Body or a Non-Profit organization. The Field Office Specialist may sign this letter. A copy must be sent to the State Office.
 - c. Print two (2) copies of the following forms from CPAP: RD 400-1, Equal Opportunity Agreement; RD 400-4, Assurance Agreement; Form 1940-1, Request for Obligation of Funds.
 - d. Print two (2) copies of the **Grant Agreement**.
 - e. Mail the entire packet to the applicant; they will sign and return the appropriate copies (see letter) by the due date assigned.

4. Signed Grant Agreement is received
 - a. Prepare a **Narrative** – as a cover sheet for the approval packet that will go to the State Director.
 - b. Complete the **Compliance Review**.
 - c. Complete the **Environmental Assessment** (usually a CatEx).
 - d. Mark the pages on the Grant Agreement and Form 1940-1 copies where the State Director needs to sign. Forward the packet through the Program Director to the State Director for final approval.

PA State Office Actions

1. Grant Agreement approved by State Director
2. Complete “Ready to Obligate” screen in CPAP.
3. Give a copy of the signed Form 1940-1 to the staff member responsible for completing the obligation.
4. Once confirmation is received and the funds have been obligated, complete the **LAPAS** form with the obligation date and transmittal date. Email the **LAPAS** form to Eric Schulz, RD Public Affairs – see Outlook Global address book for most current address. (Note: transmittal date is the date you send the email with the LAPAS document as an attachment – the same day you receive confirmation the funds are obligated.)
5. Generate the **Final Letter** to notify the applicant the grant was approved. **This letter is mailed on the obligation date.**
6. Include with the letter one executed Grant Agreement and Form 1940-1. Copies of these documents are sent to the Field Office.

PA Field Office Actions

1. File maintenance
 - a. When the State Director's Final Letter is received, send the applicant an Electronic Fund Transfer Form, a supply of Form SF 270, Request for Reimbursement, a supply of Form SF 269, and several "Justice For All" posters, with a cover memorandum stating that the Field Office will be processing all Requests for Reimbursement and account servicing.
 - b. Set up an account in EFT once the form is received back from the borrower.
 - c. Set up an Excel tracking sheet for the grant reimbursements (**see example**).
 - d. Prepare docket by placing appropriate forms in the 8-position folder according to the Position List.
2. Monitor fund usage and process disbursement requests from the Grantee.
3. Obtain and review reports as required under the Grant Agreement.