



March 18, 2019

Rural Development

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Acting Administrator

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Telephone: (202) 692-0268

TO: State Directors
Rural Development

ATTN: Program Directors
Multi-Family Housing

FROM: Richard A. Davis /s/ **Richard A. Davis**
Acting Administrator
Rural Housing Service

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2019 Site Manager and Maintenance Person of the Year
Recognition Program

We are pleased to announce guidelines for our annual Multi-Family Housing (MFH) Site Manager and Maintenance Person of the Year program, for fiscal year 2019.

Awards may be presented in each of the following four categories:

1. Site Manager of the Year for Elderly Housing;
2. Site Manager of the Year for Family Housing;
3. Site Manager of the Year for Farm-Labor Housing;
4. Maintenance Person of the Year.

From the pool of applications received each State will review their incoming applications, select and submit a nomination to the National Office for each of the above identified categories. The National Office will choose a National winner for each category from the pool of nominations submitted. The awards will be presented during the Council for Affordable and Rural Housing's 2019 Annual Meeting and Legislative Conference to be held in Arlington, Virginia **June 24 - 26, 2019**, at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Pentagon City.

Please review and consider the following selection criteria for making your choice in each Award Category:

- Tenant satisfaction with the employee is high.
- Property maintained by employee has good a curb appeal on a continuous basis
- Employee has no incidents of non-compliance and no unresolved findings.

EXPIRATION DATE:
March 31, 2020

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Housing Programs

- Employee provides exemplary customer service skills on a continuous basis.
- Employee consistently does more than what is expected to enrich the tenant's and property well-being.

Selections will be based on, but not limited to, the above criteria. Please use these primary criteria so that the award nomination process will be fairly and consistently administered across the Nation.

We have exciting news for this year's nomination submittal process. The nomination form may now be submitted electronically. No physical binders or hard copy nomination forms will be accepted. This helps reduce both the time and paper burden for submitting nominators.

The nomination form/checklist (Attachment 2A and Attachment 2B) is a guideline that is used to help identify all items necessary for a complete nomination package. When the State Office submits the nomination to the National Office for consideration, the following documents need to be attached to the e-mail:

- Completed **Electronic Nomination Form** (fillable) – including the electronic attachments submitted by the nominator.
- Contained in the e-mail message by the Submitting State Office **a statement** verifying that there are no incidents of non-compliance and no unresolved findings.
- Copy of the last **Supervisory Visit** (MFIS Form 2000) Note: a complete Supervisory Visit Report must have been completed during the nominee's tenure at the property).
- Copy of the last **Compliance Review** (Form RD 400-8) Note: a complete Compliance Review must have been completed during the nominee's tenure at the property).
- Copy of most recent **Physical Inspection Report** (Form RD 3560-11) Note: a complete Physical Inspection Report must have been completed during the nominee's tenure at the property).

Note: Please enter in the subject line of your e-mail the State and award type nomination. Example identified below:

Subject: *NY – Site Mgr Year – Elderly nomination* **or:** *KY – Site Mgr Year – Family nomination*

Subject: *CA – Maintenance Person nomination* **or:** *TX – Site Mgr Year – FLH nomination*

A signed certificate from the National Office is also available for recipients of the State Site Manager/Maintenance Person of the Year Award recipients. To obtain a signed certificate - please submit a completed National Office Request Form (Attachment 5), separate from your nomination package, and e-mail it to: tonya.boykin@wdc.usda.gov.

To summarize, all your nomination forms must be submitted electronically to the National Office via e-mail to: charlene.broussard@wdc.usda.gov. If you have more than one nomination, please submit each one in a separate e-mail. The deadline for receipt of nomination packages for

National consideration is **May 17, 2019**.

If you have any questions, please call Charlene Broussard, Multi-Family Housing Portfolio Management Division, at (337) 262-6611, extension 142.

Attachments

1. Site Manager and Maintenance Person of the Year Recognition Program Guidelines.
- 2.A. Section 515 or Section 514 Site Manager of the Year Evaluation Checklist (with evaluation criteria) to assist in reviewing the submitted nominations.
- 2.B. Section 515 or Section 514 Maintenance Person of the Year Evaluation Checklist (with evaluation criteria) to assist in reviewing the submitted nominations.
3. Sample Cover Letter Announcing Awards Program to staff/owners/management agents and the public who might be interested in submitting an electronic application to the State.
4. Example of Letter to Congressional Person.
5. 2019 Site Manager/Maintenance Person of the Year Award Winners (within the State) National Office Certificate Request Form.
6. Electronic Nomination Form (sent to each State Director and MFH Program Director).
 - A. Site Manager Form
 - B. Maintenance Person Form

SITE MANAGER AND MAINTENANCE PERSON OF THE YEAR RECOGNITION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines and suggestions for implementing a Site Manager of the Year and Maintenance Person of the Year program in your State.

1. Determine who is eligible to receive the award. The idea supporting this recognition program is to reward maintenance persons and site managers who have close interaction with tenants and who deal with properties hands-on and on a daily basis. In some States, these employees live on the property they maintain or manage, while in others they live off-site and may maintain or manage more than one property. Each State should decide whether it makes sense to limit the nomination to resident maintenance persons and site managers or extend it to traveling maintenance persons and site managers. Remember, that the recognition is for an individual maintenance person and/or site manager and **not** owners or management companies.
2. Solicit nominations from outside sources - tenants/owners/management companies from Section 515 and Section 514 properties. The nomination process should be open so that you receive the maximum number of nominations for your State. Rural Development employees with a good knowledge of the nominee may make nominations, so long as the employee is not a member of your State's judging panel.
3. Publicize the program to maximize the number of nominations you receive. Consider using resources such as local media, local/State affordable housing groups and owner/management associations within your State.
4. Make your selection based on the following criteria (you may add more, but as a minimum use the criteria below):
 - a. Tenant satisfaction with the employee is high.
 - b. Property maintained by employee has a good curb appeal on a continuous basis.
 - c. Employee has no incidents of non-compliance and no unresolved findings.
 - d. Employee provides exemplary customer service skills on a continuous basis.
 - e. Employee consistently does more than what is expected to enrich the tenant's and property well-being.

Please use the primary criteria so that the recognition program is consistent Nationwide.

Attachment 2A and Attachment 2B provide the National criteria and the necessary documentation that must be received with the nomination. It is important that all items are addressed so that the package will be considered complete. When submitting your "State" winning nominees to the National Office, please scan and attach the completed checklist to your nomination package.

5. It is helpful to use a panel of representatives from different stakeholder groups to make your selections. Panels consisting of Rural Development MFH staff and management industry representative, as well as others you think are appropriate may be most beneficial to this process. Possible panelists may include: tenants, staff from local Department of Housing and Urban Development Offices, State Housing Finance Agency staff, Public Housing Authority staff, owner/management agent association Board of Directors members

and local civic leaders. The idea is to give an award that is recognized by a wide variety of industry and civic professionals.

6. If you have a large portfolio, you may consider using a two-phased process to make your State selection. For example - the Servicing Office could convene a panel to choose the best maintenance person and/or site manager in their Region and then forward by e-mail the nomination package to the State Office, which could convene a panel to make the final selection.
7. Choose the best maintenance person and site manager and submit your nomination to the National Office by e-mail by **May 17, 2019**. Please ensure that you attach either attachment 2A or attachment 2B to you e-mail and the required documents identified below:
 - a. Completed **Electronic Nomination Form** (fillable) - including the electronic attachments that were submitted initially to support the nomination by the nominator.
 - b. Contained in the e-mail message by the submitting State Office **a statement** verifying that there are no incidents of non-compliance and no unresolved findings.
 - c. Copy of the last **Supervisory Visit** (MFIS Form 2000) Note: a complete Supervisory Visit Report must have been complete during the nominee's tenure at the property).
 - d. Copy of the last **Compliance Review** (Form RD 400-8) Note: a complete Compliance Review must have been completed during the nominee's tenure at the property).
 - e. Copy of most recent **Physical Inspection Report** (Form RD 3560-11) Note: a complete Physical Inspection Report must have been completed during the nominee's tenure at the property).
 - f. **Supporting photographs/support letters - maximum of 15**. Note: please include at least one photo of the nominee and one photo of the property. Due to the size of the attachment - these may need to be e-mailed to the National Office by separate e-mail.
8. Notify the National Office of the name(s) of the Maintenance Persons and Site Managers of the Year in your State if you wish to have a certificate signed by the Rural Housing Service, Acting Administrator for your State winner(s). To obtain a signed certificate - please submit a completed National Office Request Form (Attachment 5), separate from your nomination package, and e-mail it to: tonya.boykin@wdc.usda.gov.
9. Consider presenting your State award winners jointly with other management groups or at a State Management Conference. This will help highlight the achievements of the award recipients to a broad group of his or her peers. You may also consider presenting the award at the property that they serve.
10. Take advantage of this opportunity for favorable press coverage. The maintenance person/site manager recognition is a chance to highlight one of the most positive aspects of our MFH program delivery. Not only will press coverage help remind communities of how our program helps them, it will also focus their attention on one of their truly outstanding members whom they may not know. Encourage press coverage by inviting the press to your awards ceremony and be distributing in advance press releases.
11. Let your Congressional delegation know about the winners in their districts. This provides members of Congress a chance to send them a letter of recognition. It also helps to focus on the success of our MFH program in serving rural communities. Attached is a sample

letter you may use to send to your Congressional delegation for the maintenance person and/or site manager of the year program.

**BEST SECTION 515 OR SECTION 514
SITE MANAGER
NOMINATION CHECKLIST**

Please evaluate specific submitted nomination(s) based on the following criteria in the space provided. The nomination package should include the nomination letter/e-mail summarizing the nominee's qualifications and address the following items and include attachments. This completed checklist should be attached to your nomination package when submitting to the National Office. Failure to address each item will cause the package to be considered incomplete.

Name of Site Manager Nominee: _____

Name of Property(s): _____ State: _____

Name of Management Company (if applicable): _____

Year Began Managing at Property: _____

Brief Biography of Nominee: _____

I. Tenant Satisfaction

Overall, are tenants happy with the efforts this site manager makes on their behalf and on behalf of the property? Please explain below. Include reference to any letters or awards relating to the nominee's relationship and interactions with the tenants and community. _____

II. Curb Appeal

Is the property attractively maintained and landscaped? Are the grounds free of debris? If applicable, you may wish to discuss below particular actions the site manager has taken to increase the appeal of the property. Pictures submitted of the grounds, buildings and signage to indicate curb appeal are helpful. _____

III. Actions Above and Beyond What is Expected

Please review any actions this site manager takes on a consistent basis which make him/her truly exceptional and outstanding. Documentation of activities identified below are helpful:

- Pictures of tenants engaging in social activities.
- Copies of publications (such as newsletters) initiated and maintained for the residents.
- Newspaper articles depicting care of tenants.
- Articles or letters showing involvement in the community.
- Helping residents obtain additional support services.
- Receipt of additional certifications and/or trainings.
- Implement practices that result in cost savings to the property.

IV. Compliance with Rural Development Regulations

Attach the following documents to the nomination form when submitting to the National Office:

- Letter or written statement from the Rural Development Servicing Office verifying there are no incidents of non-compliance and no unresolved findings.
- Copy of last Supervisory Visit (MFIS Form 2000).
- Copy of last Compliance Review (Form RD 4-00-8).
- Copy of most recent Physical Inspection Report (Form RD 3560-11).
- Attach pictures and other submitted documents that support the information contained on the nomination form (please send by separate e-mail due to size of e-mail).

Additional Comments (if needed)

Section IV – Completed By: _____
(Agency Staff)

Date: _____

BEST MAINTENANCE PERSON NOMINATION CHECKLIST

Please evaluate specific submitted nomination(s) based on the following criteria in the space provided. The nomination package should include the nomination letter/e-mail summarizing the nominee's qualifications and address the following items and include attachments. This completed checklist should be attached to your nomination package when submitting to the National Office. Failure to address each item will cause the package to be considered incomplete.

Name of Maintenance Person Nominee: _____

Name of Property(s): _____ State: _____

Name of Management Company (if applicable): _____

Year Began Working at the Property: _____

Brief Biography of Nominee: _____

I. Tenant Satisfaction

Overall, are tenants happy with the efforts this maintenance person makes on their behalf and on behalf of the property? Are the tenants satisfied with maintenance and repairs, and do they consider them to be taken care of in a timely manner? _____

II. Curb Appeal

Is the property attractively maintained and landscaped? Are the grounds free of debris? If applicable, you may wish to discuss below particular actions the site manager has taken to increase

the appeal of the property. Pictures submitted of the grounds, buildings and signage to indicate curb appeal are helpful. _____

III. Actions Above and Beyond What is Expected

Please review any actions this site manager takes on a consistent basis which make him/her truly exceptional and outstanding. Documentation of activities identified below are helpful:

- Pictures of tenants engaging in social activities geared towards the physical improvement of the property.
- Newspaper articles depicting care of tenants.
- Articles or letters showing involvement in the community.
- Helping residents obtain additional support services.
- Receipt of additional certifications and/or trainings.
- Implement practices that result in cost savings to the property.
- Identify any efforts to assist with disaster relief related issues that may have occurred on the property or in the community

IV. Compliance with Rural Development Regulations

Attach the following documents to the Nomination form when submitting to the National Office:

- Letter or written statement from the Rural Development Servicing Office verifying there are no incidents of non-compliance and no unresolved findings.
- Copy of most recent Physical Inspection Report (Form RD 3560-11).
- Attach pictures and other submitted documents that support the information contained on the nomination form (please send by separate e-mail due to size of e-mail).

Additional Comments (if needed):

Section IV – Completed By: _____
(Agency Staff)

Date: _____

SAMPLE COVER LETTER ANNOUNCING AWARDS PROGRAM TO PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN MAKING NOMINATIONS

NOMINATOR's NAME:

NOMINATOR's ADDRESS:

Dear (NOMINATOR):

I know you will agree with us that United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development's Section 515 and Section 514 rental housing property staff guarantee the success of these programs. They make sure that day-to-day operations go smoothly and help to ensure a decent and sanitary living environment for the residents. Often, they invest a great deal of their own free time and resources in providing tenants with a safe and cohesive community. Although these management staff would perform their jobs regardless of any recognition, I believe we as management industry professionals should let them know we recognize and appreciate their efforts. They deserve recognition for their outstanding work, and for this reason, we are sponsoring a program to recognize the best Rural Development site manager and/or maintenance person in (STATE NAME). I hope that you might be able to join me/us in this important program by nominating someone you consider to be an outstanding candidate for this award.

This year, we have made it a much easier process to nominate an individual. We have created an E-Nomination Form that you will use to comment on four factors:

- Tell us about the property and its condition.
- Tell us about the nominee (awards, recognitions and what distinguishes he/she as being exceptional in their services on site.
- Describe in your words why they should be considered for this award.
- Identify activities or related programs on-site or off-site that he/she participates or coordinates.

Please make your presentation using the E-Nomination Form as complete as possible. You may also e-mail attached pictures, letters from tenants, members of the community, and other documents that highlight the good qualities of your nominee. Please make sure to include a picture of the nominee and of the property that depicts its outstanding curb appeal.

You can obtain your E-Nomination Form on our RD Website. Upon completion of the fillable form - please submit your E-Nomination Form to the following e-mail address: (State Office contact information).

All nominations will be reviewed at the State level and winner will be selected from the following categories:

- a. Site Manager of the Year for Family Housing
- b. Site Manager of the Year for Elderly Housing
- c. Site Manager of the Year for Farm-Labor Housing

d. Maintenance Person of the Year

The winners in each category will then be sent by our State Rural Development Office to the National Office and will subsequently be entered into the competition for the National award winners for each of the same categories.

We will present a plaque of recognition to the winner at a ceremony after the National winners have been selected. All owners and agents of Multi-Family Housing properties within our State will receive notice of the awards ceremony location, date and time. We also hope to engage the press in recognizing the exceptional efforts of the winner as well as all of our great nominees.

I hope that you will make the necessary effort to complete an E-Nomination Form for the candidate(s) of your choice. I can assure you that it will be worth your time.

Sincerely,

(STATE DIRECTOR)

EXAMPLE OF LETTER TO CONGRESSIONAL PERSON

Honorable [Name of Congressional Person]
United States Senate
1 House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative XXXX:

I am writing to inform you that [Name of Nominee] has been chosen as the (State Office) 2019 Site Manager of the Year or Maintenance Person of the Year for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Multi-Family Housing program. [Name of Nominee] operates the [Name of Apartments] in [City, State].

Rural Development administers a National loan portfolio of over 15,000 rural rental properties. In partnership with our private sector and non-profit borrowers, we house very low- and low- income rural families, elderly people, and farmworkers. The site managers of the properties we finance are employees of private companies, not the U.S. Government.

The site managers/maintenance persons guarantee the success of our properties. They make sure that day-to-day operations go smoothly, and they often invest a great deal of their own free time in providing tenants with a safe and cohesive community. Although these managers would do their jobs whether or not they received recognition, we believe that as lenders and program managers we should reward excellent performance.

In this spirit, we conducted a Site Manager of the Year competition in each State this year. State Rural Development staffs convened panels of public and private housing management experts to choose their best site managers. They used the following criteria: 1) tenant satisfaction; 2) property curbside appeal; 3) compliance with Rural Development's regulations; and 4) consistent performance of actions above and beyond the call of duty. States could add to these criteria, but they could not change or drop any of them.

The comments we received from tenants and our State Offices are testimony to the outstanding performance of the site managers. Following are a few typical examples:

Insert actual excerpts from your nomination packages. The following are examples.

- *He/she makes us very proud of where we live.*
- *They are always there to help with anything you need, no matter how big or small.*
- *He/she shows genuine concern and really puts his heart into the job.*
- *They look after my parents when I am not there. I do not know what I would do without them.*
- *He/she listens to the tenants.*
- *They enforce the rules fairly and makes us all feel safe.*
- *My friends [from outside the property] always comment on how beautiful and well maintained our grounds and buildings are.*

- *One of the greatest things about living here is the great security I feel. Once I became ill in the middle of the night. I pulled the chain on my alarm system and the managers were in my apartment immediately.*
- *Living here is like living at a big home full of loving friends and family. Once I was too sick to go to the barbecue [which the site manager had organized], so the site manager brought me a plate of food and sat down to tell me who was there and what the grandkids were doing. They really made me feel included in the fun.*

Mr./Ms. XXXXXXXX is a credit to himself/herself, the apartments they manage, their employer, the community, USDA, and the Federal Government as a whole. If you would like to recognize Mr./Ms. XXXXXXXX, you may contact them at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact (Name of State) State Director (Name of State Director) at (State Office phone number).

Sincerely,

State Director
Rural Development

**2019 SITE MANAGER/MAINTENANCE PERSON
OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS
NATIONAL OFFICE CERTIFICATE REQUEST FORM**

Please use this form to let the National Office know who the winners were in your State, for whom you would like a certificate prepared and signed by the Administrator. Please complete a separate attachment for each award winner.

TO: MFHPMD
PHONE: (202) 720-8473
CONCACT: Tonya Boykin – tonya.boykin@wdc.usda.gov

STATE CONTACT: _____
STATE NAME: _____
PHONE NUMBER: _____

Name of Award Winner(s): _____

Name(s) of Property/Properties he/she/they maintain(s) or manage(s): _____

Exact Name of the Category for which he/she/they were chosen the winner (as it should appear on the certificate -- for example, 2019 Pennsylvania Multi-Family Housing Site Manager of the Year for Elderly Housing). _____

Address to which the certificate should be sent. (This should be someone at the State Office, so that the State Director can sign the certificate. Please include State Director's name.) _____

Date by which you need the certificate: _____