

News Briefs

Housing Programs Rules Simplified

USDA has simplified income eligibility, asset rules and area loan limit determinations for Rural Development's Single Family Housing Loan Programs.

USDA has created a two-tier income structure for eligibility for USDA single-family housing loans. One category is for one- to four-person households. A second category is for five- to eight-person households. Certain types of assets – such as retirement and education savings – are excluded when calculating an applicant's down payment ability.

These changes are effective July 22, 2019. Effective Aug. 5, 2019, loan limits in USDA's single-family housing programs will be determined using a percentage of the Federal Housing Administration's loan limits. This new methodology will allow for more new construction within USDA's single-family housing loan programs.

[For complete information, see page 29034 of the June 21 Federal Register.](#)



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Rural Developments

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Federal Information Forum Planned For Pend Oreille County

A Federal Partners Information Forum will be held Tuesday, July 16, 2019 to provide an opportunity for local community, government and business leaders in Pend Oreille County to meet with representatives of the Federal Government and learn about the various programs and services their respective departments offer.

The forum, presented by the Pend Oreille County Economic Development Council (POCEDC), will be from 1 to 4:00 p.m. in the Camas Center for Community Wellness, located on the Kalispel Tribe's reservation in Usk, Wash.

Forum topics will include programs in broadband, critical infrastructure, business, single and multi-family housing programs, GSA programs for state and local governments, and Health and Safety programs, including perspectives on substance-abuse disorders, medically assisted treatment programs for drug addiction and harm reduction.

Participating Federal Government Agency officials include: U.S. Department of Agriculture



(USDA) Rural Development; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS); U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)

"This is an opportunity for those of us who represent the Federal Government to share what is available through our respective agencies, programs and services," said USDA's Kirk Pearson.

For more information, please contact Jamie Wyrobek by calling 509-447-5569 or email her at jwyrobek@pendoreille.org.

Chad Rupe Appointed as New Rural Utilities Service Administrator

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today released the following statement on President Donald Trump's appointment of Chad Rupe as Administrator of USDA Rural Development's Rural Utilities Service (RUS).



USDA appoints Chad Rupe as the new Administrator of Rural Development's Rural Utilities Service.

"Chad served us well as Rural

Development State Director in Wyoming for the past two years, and we are excited for him to join the team here in Washington, D.C. With more than 15 years of experience in commercial and community banking, Chad brings much-needed expertise and knowledge to the Rural Utilities Service. I know Chad is committed to helping rural Americans prosper and thrive," Secretary Perdue said.

Rupe has served as Acting Administrator for the Rural Utilities Service since April 30. Prior to stepping into that role, he served

as USDA Rural Development State Director of Wyoming from 2017 to 2019.

Prior to joining USDA, Rupe spent more than 13 years in the banking industry, specializing in commercial lending in Wyoming. Rupe began his service to our country in the United States Army.

He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and earned his MBA from the University of Phoenix. Chad is married with three children.

Broadband ReConnect Program Deadline

USDA has \$200 million available for low-interest loan projects-only projects for the final round of funding of the Broadband ReConnect Program.

State and local governments, Indian tribes, for- and non-profit entities, limited liability companies, and cooperative or mutual organizations may apply for funding through USDA's ReConnect Program to connect rural areas that currently have insufficient broadband service. Funds will be awarded to projects that have financially sustainable business models that will bring high-speed broadband to rural homes, businesses, farms, ranches and community facilities such as first responders, health care sites and schools.

The application deadlines is July 12, 2019. Applicants can request technical assistance from USDA by filling out the contact form at <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us>.

Community Facilities Program

USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities Program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas, including health care facilities, public facilities, community support services, public safety services and equipment, educational services, utility services, and local food systems, schools

Eligible borrowers include public bodies, community-based non-profit corporations, and Federally-recognized Tribes.

Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and / or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment and pay related project expenses.

For more information, please contact Peter McMillin by emailing him at peter.mcmillin@usda.gov.

USDA Testing Home Repair Loan and Grant Pilot Program

USDA Rural Development has announced a pilot program intended to evaluate the existing regulations and remove regulatory barriers to assist eligible applicants for the Section 504 Home Repair Program.

The pilot program, which will be held in 21 states including Washington, is an opportunity to increase loan and grant production and reduce restrictions that impede the Section 504 repair program by removing the requirement for title clearance and site size restrictions, expands the insurance, escrow and appraisal requirements, and increases the maximum allowable loan and grant amounts.

The property must meet area loan limits, be modest for the area, and it must not be used for agricultural or income producing purposes.

Waiving the prohibition on non-sub dividable properties will allow more rural applicants to be eligible.

Secured pilot loans exceeding \$25,000 will be subject for title clearance/title insurance and the use of a closing agent. This exception for smaller secured loans will reduce the financial burden on applicants with minimal additional risk to the Agency.



The applicant must have acceptable ownership interest in the Pilot loans and grants will not be subject to the maximum allowable limits currently imposed regulations.

Pilot loans may be approved up to a maximum unpaid Section 504 loan balance of \$40,000 and \$10,000 in Section 504 lifetime grant assistance. These increases reflect the inflation of labor and material costs. The pilot program is anticipated to continue for two fiscal years, at which time USDA Rural Development will evaluate annually to determine if the pilot will be extended.

For more information, contact Trudy Teter, Single Family Housing Program Director by emailing her at Trudy.teter@usda.gov.

USDA's Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantee Program

Private lenders may apply for a loan guarantee through USDA Rural Development on loans made to eligible borrowers who are building or preserving affordable rural rental housing.

USDA works with qualified private-sector lenders to provide financing to qualified borrowers to increase the supply of affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families in eligible rural areas and towns.

Qualified areas include rural areas and towns with 35,000 or fewer people. Funds may be used for construction, improvement and purchase of multi-family rental housing and buying and improving land and providing necessary infrastructure. The primary objective of this program is to provide rental housing for low to moderate income families and individuals.

Rural Development offers guarantees of up to 90% of the loan amount. For-profit entities may



borrow up to 90% and non-profit entities may borrow up to 97% of the total development cost or appraised value, whichever is less. Minimum term of 25 years and maximum term of 40 years Interest rate negotiated between the lender and the borrower is fixed for the life of the loan guarantee.

For more information, contact Mary Traxler, Multi-Family Housing Director by emailing her at Mary.traxler@usda.gov.

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