Secretary's Representatives;
Public Housing Directors;
Administrators, HUD Offices
of Native American Programs;
Public Housing Agencies;
Indian Housing Authorities;
Resident Management Corporations;
Resident Councils; Resident Organizations

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Travel Policy For Resident Management/Tenant Opportunities Program Grantees (RM/TOP)

1. PURPOSE

This Notice establishes policies and procedures for travel to be performed by RM/TOP grantees to ensure: (1) that all travel is directed toward the successful completion of the required work plan/performance standards and timeframes (see attachment), and (2) that there is compliance with applicable Federal policies and procedures.

2. BACKGROUND

The Public and Indian Housing Tenant Opportunities Program provides opportunities for Public and Indian Housing Resident Councils (RCs), Resident Management Corporations (RMCs), and Resident Organizations (ROs) to receive training to build the capacity of their resident organizations to meet the needs in their communities. In the past, problems have occurred because grantees have been permitted to travel to non-HUD sponsored training workshops/conferences without considering the benefit(s) as it relates to implementing the work plan/performance standards of the TOP program. To ensure that residents receive the maximum benefit from travel related to training, travel policies have been established and are effective immediately.

3. APPLICABILITY

This notice applies to:

A. RCs, RMCs, and ROs with FY 1988 - 1995 Resident Management/Tenant Opportunities program grants (RM/TOP) and any subsequently funded grantees.

B. Public Housing Agencies and Indian Housing Authorities (hereafter referred to as HAs), including HAs funded on behalf of RCs/RMCs in FY 1988.

C. Travel policies governing National Resident Organizations (NROs), Regional Resident Organizati

ons (RROs), and Statewide Resident Organizations (SROs) are being developed and will be published in the near future. However, NROs/RROs/SROs should be cognizant of the requirements contained in this Notice when providing travel-related training to the RM/TOP grantees.

4. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. In the prior TOP application kit, the guideline limit for travel related to training activities was approximately $5,000. This Notice establishes a $5,000 travel budget limit to support travel expenses related to activities that directly pertain to the grantees' ability to locally implement TOP work plans/performance standards, in accordance with program statutes and requirements.

B. All travel shall be directly related to the timely accomplishment of TOP work plan/performance standards that are associated with the goals to be accomplished in the various phases of the work plan.

C. Technical training conducted by public/private, profit/non profit organizations must meet the criteria stated in B. above. Such training must relate predominantly to the work plan/performance standards being implemented by the grantee. In addition,

it is critical that training workshops/conferences are structured to meet the needs of the participants and address the participants' training goals and objectives.

D. Training that provides a detailed "how-to" course on topics related to the TOP work plan/performance standards takes precedence over training that provides a general overview of program requirements.

E. Grantees must consider the cost of attending a training

workshop/conference, i.e., registration fee, local vs long distance travel, associated expenses, etc. and choose the most cost-effective training activity.

F. Grantees must establish travel policies and procedures in compliance with the TOP program. Grantees may (1) develop new policies and procedures using the General Services Administration Federal Travel Regulations as a guide, or (2) adopt the HA's policies and procedures.

The General Services Administration "Federal Travel Regulations" may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA. 15250-7954. Include the ordering number 41 CFR 301-304 and title to identify the document. The cost is $97 for a one year subscription which includes the basic document and any updated materials. The purchase of this document is an eligible expense under TOP.

G. Grantees are directed to review their TOP travel policies and procedures with the

HUD Field Office and the HAs to ensure compliance with TOP program travel requirements and guidelines.

H. Only travel which adheres to the above procedures and guidelines will be viewed as accomplishing the goals of the performance standards.

5. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. New Grantees are required to attend a HUD-sponsored TOP orientation training prior to spending any grant funds. However, travel cost incurred to attend the training does not apply to this policy.

B. Grantees must consider training-related travel cost and savings options, in addition to any other factors, when travel is required to attend training activities. For example, consideration should be given to attending local/state training activities instead of traveling long distance.

C. The $5,000 travel limit is for a three to five year period and should not be spent all at once during the first year.

D. A maximum of three (3) residents are allowed to travel to any one training activity and their attendance must be related to the accomplishment of the activities under TOP. To maximize the travel funds, consideration should be given to sending one person to a training activity rather than two or three persons.

E. Requests for travel budget increases must include support documentation and must be submitted to the HUD Field Office and Area Offices of Native American Programs (AONAP) for review and approval. A separate Notice will be forthcoming which establishes a new line item in the Line of Credit Control System/Voice Response System. The new line item is Travel, Budget Line Item (BLI) Code 9590.

6. TRAVEL COSTS POLICIES

TOP grantees are required to comply with 24 CFR 84 revised OMB Circular A-110, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations," and OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

In addition to adhering to the above policies, the grantees' travel policies and procedures should also include: (1) the amount allowed for each meal and incidentals, and (2) a statement that "The traveler cannot claim expenses for meals that are being furnished at training workshops/conferences. If the meals are provided at a nominal cost (less than the amount established in the travel policy), the traveler can claim only that amount actually paid for the meal. If the meal is more than allowed in the travel policy, the traveler can only claim the amount established in the travel policy." This also would apply to any meals provided with the registration fees.

Example: If the training workshop/conference is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost, then the traveler can only claim expenses for the dinner at the rate established in the grantee's travel policy.

AN EXAMPLE OF DAILY RATES FOR MEALS AND INCIDENTALS

If a daily rate is:	$20	$30	$34	$38
The meal and incidental rate could be:				
Breakfast	$ 5	$ 6	$ 7	$ 8
Lunch	$ 5	$ 6	$ 7	$ 8
Dinner	$14	$16	$18	$20
Incidentals	$ 2	$ 2	$ 2	$ 2

/s/Kevin Emanuel Marchman
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Distressed and Troubled Housing
Recovery

Attachment