

CHAPTER 1 – WELCOME TO HOME

Purpose of Manual

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (Department) provides this manual as a resource for local program administrators and property managers implementing HOME-assisted projects and local government, public housing agency and non-profit organization staff who are contemplating applying for activities under the Nebraska Affordable Housing Program (NAHP).

The on-line version of this manual contains the latest information provided by the Department to assist HOME grantees in complying with state and federal requirements. Additional reference material and forms are available at the Department's website (www.neded.org).

Updates

Users of this manual are encouraged to check for monthly updates at the Department's website. Updated material is clearly identified for those wanting only to print off new or updated material to incorporate into their hard copy manuals. Information may change for a variety of reasons, including changes in federal regulations, state requirements, and in the interpretation or clarification of a federal regulation.

The HOME Program

The HOME Program created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (NAHA), is referred to as the HOME Investment Partnerships Act, and has been amended several times by subsequent legislation.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the HOME Program. HUD uses the following to implement NAHA:

- Title 24 Code of Regulations, Part 92, as amended (The Final Rule).
- CPD Notices provide detailed guidance on a specific subject by explaining how the HOME program regulations should be interpreted or applied.
- HOMEfires is the official policy newsletter of the HOME Program. Each HOMEfires answers a specific policy question.

Other resources, such as Model Program Guides, are available from HUD in the on-line HOME Library.

The intent of the HOME Program is to:

- Provide decent affordable housing to lower-income households
- Expand the capacity of non-profit housing providers
- Strengthen the ability of state and local governments to provide housing
- Leverage private-sector participation.

HOME in Nebraska

HUD allocates HOME funds by formula to Participating Jurisdictions (PJs). PJs are state and local governments that receive funds to operate the program. The State of Nebraska receives funds as a PJ and the Department administers the program for the State.

The following are the principal means by which the Department describes the investment of HOME funds and provides administrative guidance:

- The Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan
- The Housing and Community Development Annual Action Plan
- NAHP Application Guidelines
- HOME Administration Manual
- HOME Training Workshops
- HOME Program Representatives
- The Department's Regional Housing Specialists

The Department invests HOME funds in the following housing activities:

- Homeowner Rehabilitation: Assist owner-occupants with the repair, rehabilitation or reconstruction of their homes.
- Homebuyer Activities: Finance the acquisition and/or rehabilitation or new construction of homes for homebuyers.
- Rental Housing: Affordable rental housing may be acquired and/or rehabilitated, or constructed.

States are given broad discretion in administering HOME funds. HUD allows State PJs to use HOME funds anywhere within the state including within the boundaries of local PJs. The Department invests in programs and projects developed, implemented and administered by local and regional organizations. Typical partners involved in the use of the state's HOME allocation:

- Local Governments – some also qualify as a PJ and receive a direct HOME allocation from HUD
- Consortia – contiguous units of local government formed for the purpose of qualifying for a direct allocation of HOME funds from HUD.
- Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) – a designation by the Department of a private, non-profit organization that meets a series of qualifications. The Department invests a minimum of 15 percent of its annual allocation of HOME funds for housing owned, developed or sponsored by CHDOs.
- Subrecipients – a public agency or non-profit organization selected by the Department to administer a portion of the HOME Program.
- Developers, Owners and Sponsors – nonprofits participating in the HOME Program as owners, developers and sponsors of housing.