



Designation Form for Section 504 Equal Opportunity/Fair Housing Officer



City/County: Hidalgo County

Address: 1916 Tesoro Street.

Pharr, TX 78577

Telephone Number: (956) 787-8127

GLO-2015 Contract #18-419-000-B128 and 18-217-000-A923

I, **Richard F. Cortez, Hidalgo County Judge**, do hereby appoint **Patricio Avila, Urban County Interim Director**, as the Fair Housing/Equal Opportunity/Section 504 Standards Officer for the **County of Hidalgo**.

The Civil Rights/Section 504 Standards/Equal Opportunity/Fair Housing Officer shall be responsible for the oversight and compliance of civil rights, fair housing and equal opportunity activities to be performed by the **County of Hidalgo**, as required by the Texas Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program Contract No. 18-419-000-B128 and 18-217-000-A923

The Civil Rights/Section 504 Standards/Equal Opportunity/Fair Housing Officer is responsible for being familiar with and adhering to all civil rights laws and regulations pertaining to the Texas Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program, including those described in the TxCDBG Implementation Manual and those listed in Exhibit D of the CDBG-DR contract.

Civil Rights/ Section 504 Standards /Equal Opportunity/ Fair Housing Officer:

Patricio Avila, UCP Interim Director

Appointed by: Richard F. Cortez, Hidalgo County Judge

Date: _____

SECTION 3 LOCAL OPPORTUNITY PLAN

In accordance with 12 U.S. C. 1701u (Section 3), the County of Hidalgo agrees to implement the following steps, which, to the greatest extent feasible, will provide job training, employment and contracting opportunities for Section 3 residents and Section 3 businesses of the areas in which the program/project is being carried out.

- A. Introduce and pass a resolution adopting this plan as a policy to strive to attain goals for compliance to Section 3 regulations by increasing opportunities for employment and contracting for Section 3 residents and businesses.
- B. Assign duties related to Implementation of this plan to the designated Civil Rights Officer.
- C. Notify Section 3 residents and business concerns of potential new employment and contracting opportunities as they are triggered by TxCDBG grant awards through the use of: Public Hearings and related advertisements; public notices; bidding advertisements and bid documents; notification to local business organization such as the Chamber(s) of Commerce or the Urban League; local advertising media including public signage; project area committees and citizen advisory boards; local HUD offices; regional planning agencies; and all other appropriate referral sources.
- D. Included Section 3 clause in all covered solicitations and contracts.
- E. Maintain a list of those businesses that have identified themselves as Section 3 businesses for utilization in TxCDBG funding procurements, notify those businesses of pending contractual opportunities, and make this list available for general Grant Recipient or contractors.
- F. Maintain a list of those persons who have identified themselves as Section 3 residents and contact those persons when hiring/training opportunities are available through either the Grant Recipient or contractors.
- G. Require that all Prime contractors and subcontractors with contracts over \$100,000.00 commit to this plan as part of their contract work. Monitor the contractors' performance with respect to meeting Section 3 requirements and require that they submit reports as may be required by HUD or GLO to the Grant Recipient.
- H. Submit reports as required by HUD or GLO regarding contracting with Section 3 businesses and/or employment as they occur; and submit reports within 20 days of calendar year end which identify and quantify Section 3 businesses and employees.
- I. Maintain records, including copies of correspondence, memoranda, etc., which document all actions taken to comply with Section 3 regulations.

As officer and representative of the County of Hidalgo, I the undersigned have read and fully agree to this plan, and become a party to the full implementation of this program.

Richard F. Cortez, Hidalgo County Judge

Date

Excessive Force Policy

In accordance with 24 CFR 91.325(b)(6), the County of Hidalgo hereby adopts and will enforce the following policy with respect to the use of excessive force:

1. It is the policy of the County of Hidalgo to prohibit the use of excessive force by the law enforcement agencies within its jurisdiction against any individual engaged in non-violent civil rights demonstrations and prohibits the physical barring of any entrance to, or exit from, such a facility within its jurisdiction.;
2. It is also the policy of the County of Hidalgo to enforce applicable State and local laws against physically barring entrance to or exit from a facility or location that is the subject of such non-violent civil rights demonstrations within its jurisdiction.
3. The County of Hidalgo will introduce and pass a resolution adopting this policy.

As officers and representatives of the County of Hidalgo, we the undersigned have read and fully agree to this plan, and become a party to the full implementation of this program.

Signature

Hidalgo County Judge

Title

Date

Section 504 Policy Against Discrimination based on Handicap and Grievance Procedures

In accordance with 24 CFR Section 8, Nondiscrimination based on Handicap in federally assisted programs and activities of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), and Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (42 U.S.C. 5309), the County of Hidalgo hereby adopts the following policy and grievance procedures:

1. Discrimination prohibited. No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
2. The County of Hidalgo does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its federally assisted programs and activities.
3. County of Hidalgo's recruitment materials or publications shall include a statement of this policy in 1. above.
4. County of Hidalgo shall take continuing steps to notify participants, beneficiaries, applicants and employees, including those with impaired vision or hearing, and unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipients that it does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in violation of 24 CFR Part 8.
5. For hearing and visually impaired individuals eligible to be served or likely to be affected by the TxCDBG program, County of Hidalgo shall ensure that they are provided with the information necessary to understand and participate in the TxCDBG program.
6. Grievances and Complaints
 - a. Any person who believes she or he has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability may file a grievance under this procedure. It is against the law for County of Hidalgo to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.
 - b. Complaints should be addressed to: **Patricio Avila, Hidalgo County Urban County Program Interim Director, and 1916 Tesoro Street. Pharr, Texas 78577 Phone No. (956) 787-8127** who has been designated to coordinate Section 504 compliance efforts.
 - c. A complaint should be filed in writing or verbally, contain the name and address of the person filing it, and briefly describe the alleged violation of the regulations.
 - d. A complaint should be filed within thirty (30) working days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation.

- e. An investigation, as may be appropriate, shall follow a filing of a complaint. The investigation will be conducted by **Patricio Avila, Hidalgo County Urban County Program Interim Director**. Informal but thorough investigations will afford all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to a complaint.
- f. A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and description of resolution, if any, shall be issued by **Patricio Avila, Hidalgo County Urban County Program Interim Director**; and a copy forwarded to the complainant with fifteen (15) working days after the filing of the complaint where practicable.
- g. The Section 504 coordinator shall maintain the files and records of the County of Hidalgo relating to the complaints files.
- h. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the determination/resolution as described in f. above. The request for reconsideration should be made to the County of Hidalgo within ten working days after the receipt of the written determination/resolution.
- i. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a Section 504 complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Utilization of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
- j. These procedures shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of interested persons, to meet appropriate due process standards and assure that the County of Hidalgo complies with Section 504 and HUD regulations.

Signature

Hidalgo County Judge

Title

Date

Fair Housing Policy

In accordance with Fair Housing Act, the County of Hidalgo hereby adopts the following policy with respect to the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing:

1. County of Hidalgo *agrees to* affirmatively further fair housing choice for all seven protected classes (race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, and national origin).
2. County of Hidalgo *agrees to* plan at least one activity during the contract term to affirmatively further fair housing.
3. County of Hidalgo will introduce and pass a resolution adopting this policy.

As officers and representatives of County of Hidalgo, we the undersigned have read and fully agree to this plan, and become a party to the full implementation of this program.

Signature

Hidalgo County Judge

Title

Date

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

These procedures are intended to serve as guidelines for the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction services and professional services for the Texas Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (TxCDBG-DR) Program and Community Development and Revitalization. The regulations related to conflict of interest and nepotism may be found at the Texas Government Code Chapter 573, Texas Local Government Code Chapter 171, Uniform Grant Management Standards by Texas Comptroller, 24 CFR 570.489(g) & (h), and 2 CFR 200.318.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As a Grant Recipient of a TxCDBG contract, County of Hidalgo shall avoid, neutralize or mitigate actual or potential conflicts of interest so as to prevent an unfair competitive advantage or the existence of conflicting roles that might impair the performance of the TxCDBG-DR contract or impact the integrity of the procurement process.

For procurement of goods and services, no employee, officer, or agent of the County of Hidalgo shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by TxCDBG-DR funds if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict could arise if the employee, officer or agent; any member of his/her immediate family; his/her partner; or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.

No officer, employee, or agent of the County of Hidalgo shall solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors or firms, potential contractors or firms, or parties to sub-agreements, except where the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value.

Contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements.

For all other cases, no employee, agent, consultant, officer, or elected or appointed official of the state, or of a unit of general local government, or of any designated public agencies, or subrecipients which are receiving TxCDBG-DR funds, that has any CDBG function/responsibility, or is in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information, may obtain a financial interest or benefit from the TxCDBG-DR activity.

The conflict of interest restrictions and procurement requirements identified herein shall apply to a benefitting business, utility provider, or other third party entity that is receiving assistance, directly or indirectly, under a TxCDBG-DR contract or award, or that is required to complete some or all work under the TxCDBG-DR contract in order to meet the National Program Objective.

Any person or entity including any benefitting business, utility provider, or other third party entity that is receiving assistance, directly or indirectly, under a TxCDBG-DR contract or award, or that is required to complete some or all work under the TxCDBG-DR contract in order to meet a National Program Objective, that might potentially receive benefits from TxCDBG-DR awards may not participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by CDBG funding.

Any alleged violations of these standards of conduct shall be referred to the County of Hidalgo's Attorney. Where violations appear to have occurred, the offending employee, officer or agent shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal or transfer; where violations or infractions appear to be substantial in nature, the matter may be referred to the appropriate officials for criminal investigation and possible prosecution.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY COMMISSIONER'S COURT OF THE COUNTY OF HIDALGO, TEXAS on _____, 2020.

Richard F. Cortez, County
Judge Hidalgo County, Texas

Attest:

Arturo Guajardo, Jr., County Clerk
Hidalgo County, Texas

RESOLUTION REGARDING CIVIL RIGHTS

Whereas, County of Hidalgo, Texas, (hereinafter referred to as "the County") has been awarded funding through a Texas Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (TxCDBG-DR) program from the Texas General Land Office as administered by their Community Development and Revitalization program (GLO-CDR) under CDBG-DR Contract Number 18-419-000-B128 and 18-217-000-A923.

Whereas, the County, in accordance with Section 109 of the Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act. (24 CFR 6); the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107); and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and for construction contracts greater than \$10,000, must take actions to ensure that no person or group is denied benefits such as employment, training, housing, and contracts generated by the CDBG activity, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability;

Whereas, the County, in consideration for the receipt and acceptance of federal funding, agrees to comply with all federal rules and regulations including those rules and regulations governing citizen participation and civil rights protections;

Whereas, the County, in accordance with Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended, and 24 CFR Part 135, is required, to the greatest extent feasible, to provide training and employment opportunities to lower income residents and contract opportunities to businesses in the TxCDBG project area;

Whereas, the County, in accordance with Section 104(1) of the Housing and Community Development Act, as amended, and State's certification requirements at 24 CFR 91.325(b)(6), must adopt an excessive force policy that prohibits the use of excessive force against non-violent civil rights demonstrations;

Whereas, the County, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, does not discriminate on the basis of disability and agrees to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities have access to programs and activities that receive federal funds; and

Whereas, the County, in accordance with Section 808(e)(5) of the Fair Housing Act (42 USC 3608(e)(5)) that requires HUD programs and activities be administered in a manner affirmatively to further the policies of the Fair Housing Act, agrees to conduct at least one activity during the contract period of the TxCDBG contract, to affirmatively further fair housing;

Whereas, the County, agrees to maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONER'S COURT OF HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS, that the COUNTY OF HIDALGO ADOPTS/REAFFIRMS THE FOLLOWING:

1. Section 3 Policy;
2. Excessive Force Policy;
3. Section 504 Policy and Grievance Procedures;
4. Code of Conduct Policy; and
5. Fair Housing Policy.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY COMMISSIONER'S COURT OF THE COUNTY OF HIDALGO, TEXAS on _____, 2020.

Richard F. Cortez, County Judge
Hidalgo County, Texas

Attest:

Arturo Guajardo, Jr., County Clerk
Hidalgo County, Texas