

Q: On June 17, 2008 our PHA got an email message from “support@ grants.gov” with the subject line, “Federal Grant Opportunity with FR-5198-N-01 has been modified.” That is the FY 2008 HOPE VI Revitalization grant NOFA. The message also states: “Please note a description of the modifications: Technical Correction to the General Section published JUNE 12. You can download the new application package from <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/packages/oppFR-5198-N-01-cfda14.866-cidHOPE-6.pdf>. The instructions for applying for this grant opportunity have also changed. You can download the new instructions from <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/oppFR-5198-N-01-cfda14.866-cidHOPE-6-instructions.zip>.” Do I need to do anything in response to this technical correction to the General Section of the SuperNOFA?

A: Because the HOPE VI NOFA is subject to the General Section of the SuperNOFA, this message went out regarding the HOPE VI NOFA (it would have gone out also for any other HUD program NOFA). However, no changes have been made to the HOPE VI NOFA itself. Rather, as the message mentions, a technical correction was made to the *General Section* on June 12. The only part of that technical correction that is relevant to HOPE VI Revitalization applicants is the following:

“III. Guidance To Address Grants.gov SF-424 Issue

The Department has been informed that applicants have experienced trouble completing the Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 electronic form in the Grants.gov funding opportunity application package. Specifically, the Department has been alerted that if an applicant checks “No” to question number 20 (Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt?) and inadvertently places his or her cursor and clicks on the space on page 4 entitled “Applicant Federal Debt Delinquency Explanation,” the SF-424 will make the space a mandatory field that is yellow in color. The SF-424 will not allow applicants to enter text in the mandatory field. The reason for this behavior is that Adobe Reader 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 opens with a default with the Text Select Tool pointer (which look like a finger). This default was intended by Adobe Reader. The issue that this causes for Grants.gov forms is that the Text Select Tool, if clicked in a read only form field will make the field mandatory without any means to fill in text or change it back to read only. As a result, HUD is advising applicants to avoid placing their cursors in the explanation space provided on the form if they check the response to question 20 as “No.” If an applicant inadvertently triggers the creation of the mandatory field, the way to clear the form of the problem is to go back to question 20, click the “Yes” box and then click the “No” box. This brings the form back to the original state and eliminates the explanation field from being a mandatory field. An alternative way to address the issue is to go to the menu bar, select “Tools,” select from the drop-down bar “Select and Zoom” and then select “Hand Tool.” The Grants.gov help desk has been alerted to this issue and can help applicants address this issue. In addition, applicants are alerted that the form contains edit checks. To avoid a rejection notice, please make sure that dates provided in response to question 17, “Proposed Project Start and end date,” are internally consistent and that the project does not end prior to its proposed start date. If an applicant mistakenly provides a project end date that is prior to the start date, the package will be rejected by Grants.gov due to an internal inconsistency. HUD again strongly advises applicants to

submit their application to Grants.gov 72 hours in advance to the deadline date so that if they receive a rejection error, there is sufficient time for the applicant to cure the problem and resubmit in time to meet the deadline date requirements.”

You can find the full notice on the June 12 technical correction by going to this webpage, <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm>, and clicking on “Technical Correction,” under the header, “2008 General Section.”

So HOPE VI applicants may find the information above helpful if they were experiencing this problem with the SF-424. Otherwise, HOPE VI applicants do not need to take any other action.

Please also note the following change in hourly rate for consultants under Section I of the June 12, 2008 technical correction. This would apply for the HOPE VI Revitalization grant applications as well. “1. *Salary Limitation for Consultants*. FY2008 funds may not be used to pay or to provide reimbursement for payment of the salary of a consultant, whether retained by the federal government or the grantee, at a rate more than the equivalent of General Schedule 15, Step 10 base pay rate for which the annual rate for FY2008 is \$124,010. The hourly rate is \$59.42.” Before the technical correction, it was stated that the hourly rate was \$57.90.