



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, DC 20410-5000

December 1, 2017

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am excited and pleased to announce that, on May 1, 2018, a new on-line system will be rolled out to recipients of HUD's Indian Housing Block Grants (IHBGs). This letter invites comments from tribal leaders and Indian housing officials regarding this new system's implementation.

The new system, EPIC (Energy and Performance Information Center), will make it much easier for IHBG recipients to submit the reports and "paperwork" required by the IHBG program, such as Indian Housing Plans (IHPs), Annual Performance Reports (APRs), IHP waivers and amendments, and Federal Financial Reports (SF-425s). Also,

- EPIC will have drop-down menus, check boxes, auto-fill data fields, and numerous data quality checks, which will streamline data entry and reduce errors.
- EPIC has been designed to closely resemble the traditional (Excel) IHP/APR format, so users will find it familiar.
- EPIC is Internet-based, allowing recipients and HUD staff to work on documents in real time—a major improvement over the current process!

To make the transition to EPIC as smooth as possible, HUD's Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) has established an EPIC Help Desk, has developed an EPIC User Manual, and will deliver training and technical assistance to users. Also, EPIC has already undergone extensive testing by several tribes and tribally designated housing entities around the country. The test roll outs have been successful, and feedback from current users has been universally positive.

Tribal leaders and Indian housing officials are invited to comment on any aspect of this system's roll out; however, ONAP managers are especially interested in tribal feedback on the three issues listed below:

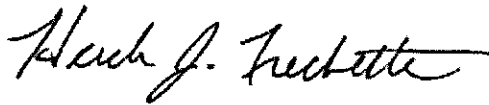
- HUD plans to make EPIC available to all IHBG recipients beginning on May 1, 2018; recipients would submit their Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 IHPs and SF-425s using EPIC.

- HUD proposes requiring the use of EPIC because of its benefits to recipients and ONAP staff. Recipients who lack reliable Internet access could use a fillable PDF version of forms after obtaining a waiver from the Area ONAP Administrator.
- HUD would no longer use the Excel (old) version of the IHP/APR, nor make it available to grant recipients, because EPIC's enhanced capabilities reduce the possibility of errors.

I look forward to receiving any opinions or observations you may have regarding EPIC. Please address your comments to Frederick Grier, Director of the Office of Grants Management, within 60 days of receipt of this letter. Mr. Grier may be reached by email at Frederick.J.Grier@hud.gov, or at the following address:

Mr. Frederick Grier, Director
Office of Grants Management
Office of Native American Programs
451 Seventh St. SW, Room 5156
Washington, DC 20410

Sincerely,



Heidi J. Frechette
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Native American Programs