



Homes and Community Renewal



Commitment & Disbursement Procedures for Local Program Administrators

Updated September 2023

The procedures set forth in this document should be followed by organizations programs for the Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC). Local Program Administrators (LPAs) must follow these procedures to report on program activities and receive disbursement of funds.

This document provides LPAs with instructions on commitment and disbursement procedures established by HTFC and the Office of Community Renewal (OCR).

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Fund Administration

Two forms must be completed and submitted to OCR to establish the procedure for requesting and receiving funds. Awardees must submit these forms with the signed Grant Agreement and provide updates throughout the term of grant administration in the event of staff changes.

Designation of Depository Form

Local Program Administrators must designate a bank account to receive program funds directly from HTFC. LPAs must complete and sign all required fields of the Designation of Depository for Direct Deposit of Funds form. This form will be submitted with the required forms to execute the Grant Agreement.

When projects are completed and appropriate paperwork is submitted, HTFC will use the bank account information to transfer funds to the LPA through an Automated Clearing House (ACH) procedure, i.e. direct deposit.

Instructions for Direct Deposit Form:

- This form must be typed—handwritten forms will not be accepted.
- On the top of the form, include the program name and the contract's SHARS number.
- In Part 1, fill in payee contact information.
- Below Part 1, initial the box acknowledging no IAT transactions will be accepted. The form cannot be accepted unless it is initialed.
- For Part 2, provide the financial institution's information and the account and routing numbers.
- Part 3 gives HTFC authorization to deposit payments by electronic funds transfer.

Authorized Signature Form

An Authorized Signature Form must be completed to designate the representative(s) authorized to sign disbursement requests and must reflect the LPA's written policy on internal controls.

A board member should authorize the executive director or fiduciary staff member to sign disbursement requests. To maintain effective internal controls, OCR suggests that the person responsible for preparing paperwork for disbursement requests not also be authorized to sign disbursement requests. Please contact an OCR representative for additional guidance.

Instructions for Authorized Signature Form:

- **Program Name:** Enter the applicable state program name, i.e. Resilient Retrofits etc.
- **Recipient Name:** Enter the Local Program Administrator (LPA) name. The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **SHARS ID:** This is the eight-digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **Mailing Address:** Enter the mailing address of the LPA.
- **Contact Person:** Provide a name and phone number for the person OCR should contact with questions related to the Authorized Signature Form.
- **Disbursement Requests require (check one):** Check the box that represents the number of signatures required to authorize a disbursement. It is recommended that two signatures be required for the authorization of requests for funds to maintain effective internal controls.
- **Persons Authorized to Sign Request for Funds:** Enter the name, title, date, and signature of the person(s) authorized to sign the Local Program Administrator Disbursement Request Form.
- **Certification:** Enter the name and title of the representative authorizing the signatures.
 - This representative may **not** also be an individual authorized to sign disbursement requests.
 - This certification must be signed and dated at least one day after the form has been completed and each authorized signatory has signed and dated the form.

Disbursement Process

This program operates as a cost-incurred and/or reimbursement-based program and payment will be made only upon satisfactory furnishing of supporting documents that show that the expense has been or will be made. A request must outline a proposed payment schedule.

Each grant agreement based on the project type outlines the Disbursement Schedule.

- Requests must be made estimating the actualized or potential costs for the upcoming month.
- To substantiate work costs, Recipient must provide copies of invoices in support of program delivery/professional services and any other documents deemed necessary by OCR to maintain effective internal controls. Recipient must clearly communicate the necessity of this documentation to the participating contractors prior to the start of construction.
- Please allow 45 days to process the payment.

Accessing Funds

Recipient must submit a Project Set-up and Completion Form to reserve, or formally commit, funds for each project. This Project Set-up process first requires a commitment at the local level to the project, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) programmatic clearance of the project, and completion of an environmental site-specific Checklist.

Project Set-up/Completion Form

HTFC and OCR use the data provided on the Project Set-up and Completion form to monitor program status and to reserve funds for the building project or other activity identified on the form. The LPA is responsible for submitting accurate Project Set-up and Completion forms to OCR for each property it assists. Set-up forms should be submitted via e-mail to HOCD.disbursements@hcr.ny.gov and the assigned OCR representative. OCR will confirm accuracy of building information and allowable funding amounts presented on the Project Set-up form.

The Project Set-up process first requires a commitment at the local level to the project. For building renovations or construction, it is expected that the LPA will have a preliminary agreement with the property owner to do the specified work prior to requesting a Project Set-up from OCR. A site-specific Environmental Compliance Checklist must be completed at the time of project set-up. LPAs must submit the Project Set-up and Completion Form and receive approval from OCR to commit funds prior to the start of project construction.

Project Set-up/Completion Form Instructions:

- **Date:** Enter the date that the form is prepared.
- **Project Status:** In the drop-down menu select Project Set Up.
- **SHARS ID:** This is the eight-digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **LPA Name:** Enter the name of the Local Program Administrator (LPA). The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **Program:** Enter program name.
- **Individual preparing form and Phone Number:** Provide a name and phone number for the person completing the form, or a person OCR should contact questions related to Project Set Up.

Project / Site Information

- **Project Name:** Enter the formal or informal name used to refer to this property, e.g. property owner name.
- **Project Street Address:** Enter the street address of the building. Confirm that the building address is accurate by referencing a tax bill or consulting the local assessor's office. OCR's database tracks projects by street address and staff will typically use the confirmed street address to reference a project. Enter N/A for Streetscape Set Ups.
- **Primary Activity:** A Project Set Up is required for each building or separate project activity. Identify the primary activity for this form.
- **City and Zip Code:** Enter the project's City and zip code.
- **County:** Enter the County in which the project is located.
- **SWIS Code:** The Statewide Information System is a numbering system established by the Office of

Real Property Service to uniquely identify each county, city, town, or village. This code is provided on a tax bill. Enter N/A for Streetscape Set Ups.

- **Section / Block / Lot:** Enter the tax parcel ID or Section / Block / Lot (SBL) number associated with the building. Confirm that the building address matches the SBL by referencing a tax bill or consulting the local assessor's office.

Project Activity Costs:

Enter the applicable budget information for the building. Indicate the amount designated as program funds in the first column and the amounts attributed to

- Project Delivery Costs associated with delivering the project
- Pre-Development Costs (site tests/surveys/design etc.) must be documented at the time of set up and must be *project* specific expenses.
- Building Renovation / Construction Costs
- Total Costs must be included within activity funding limits.
- If a completed building is "reopened" for additional renovations, a revised Set Up form must show the total project budget.

Clearances (Project Set Up)

- **HTFC Programmatic Environmental Review Determination Letter Date:** Provide the date of the determination letter issued by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation's Environmental Analysis Unit (EAU) for the contract. This may be for a programmatic or site-specific review.
- **Environmental Site-Specific Checklist:** Provide the date the Checklist was completed.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Indicate if Environmental Hazards were identified when the site-specific environmental Checklist was completed for the property.
- **SHPO Conditions:** Indicate if the OPRHP / SHPO letter issued conditions for compliance.

*The second Clearances section is for Project Completion only and does not need to be filled out at Project Set Up. It only needs to be filled out when requesting the final disbursement for the project.

Revised Set Up

If the amount of program funds committed to a project increases or decreases, the amount of program funds set aside for the activity must be revised. In the event of an increase of more than 10%, the LPA must resubmit a Project Set Up form with the Revision box checked, showing the new totals.

Cancelling a Set Up

If a commitment is withdrawn and a building project does not proceed, the building Set Up must be cancelled. The cancellation is important for maintaining accurate funding commitment information and assisted unit totals. If a property withdraws from participation, please notify OCR staff in writing and clearly document the cancellation in the project files. Please note, buildings may not be cancelled or removed once program funds have been disbursed for the project.

Disbursement Requests

LPAs must submit the Project Set-up and Completion Form to commit funds for a building prior to requesting disbursement of funds. LPAs may then request disbursement of program funds for completed or in progress projects by submitting the required forms and applicable supporting documentation. A disbursement request must be submitted in its entirety including all the documentation listed below:

- LPA Disbursement Request Form;
- Project Set-up/Completion Form
- Supporting documentation and proof of payment (typically cancelled checks);
- Invoices in support of Project Delivery / Professional Services
- Environmental Clearance documentation, e.g. lead, radon, as applicable;
- Signed Restrictive Covenant Form
- Before-and-After photographs must be taken for each project documenting the building renovation work completed. Please provide photos by email to OCR representatives. The digital photos should be sent as .jpg files, with file names that include the SHARS ID and building address. Please do not send PDFs, printouts, or hard-copy photographs unless specifically requested by OCR.
- Additional information as needed.

Submission Instructions for Disbursement Requests

Disbursement request forms and supporting documents must be packaged as a PDF in the order identified above and submitted electronically to HOCD.disbursements@hcr.ny.gov

When submitting disbursement requests via email, provide the following information:

- Original Submission Subject Line: *SHARS ID# - Organization Name*
- Resubmitted Subject Line: *Revision - SHARS ID# - Organization Name*

In the body of the email, provide contact information including:

- Name
- Telephone
- Email

If the LPA has concerns that the disbursement is too large or complicated to submit electronically, please contact OCR staff for instructions.

A single disbursement request package may include reimbursement requests for multiple buildings or activities. To do this, complete a single Disbursement Request Form and separate Project Set up forms for each building address/project or activity included in the request. Attach supporting documentation in the order identified.

OCR will make payments to LPAs through an automated deposit system, which is usually completed within 10-20 business days from the time of receipt of a complete and accurate request. Incomplete paperwork or insufficient supporting documentation will delay payments.

Supporting Documentation

Disbursement requests must be accompanied by appropriate and legible supporting documentation to substantiate expenses. LPAs must provide copies of detailed invoices or receipts and proof of payment in the form of cancelled checks etc.

OCR may request additional documentation, such as bids and the full scope of work, to maintain effective internal controls. LPAs must clearly communicate the necessity of this documentation to the participating property owners and contractors prior to the start of construction.

Please note:

Cash payments will not be reimbursed.

Material purchases separate from contractor invoices are not eligible for reimbursement without prior OCR approval.

Copies of invoices from contractors must support the information provided on the Project Detail Sheet(s). If formal invoices are not available, required information must be provided on the letterhead of the contractor, containing at **minimum** the following information:

- The contractor's name, business address, contact information, and signature;
- The building address where the work was completed;
- The date(s) the work was done;
- A description of the work completed; and
- The dollar amount of the work

Copies of invoices from consultants or vendors must support project delivery expenses listed on the Project Detail Sheet(s). LPAs must generate invoices for in-house staff time and have supporting payroll documentation available. Invoices for project delivery expenses must clearly outline specific activities.

For the initial or up-front disbursement of project delivery funds, estimate the amount of time the requested funds are expected to cover for project delivery expenses. For later disbursements of project delivery funds, indicate the time period for the project delivery expenses that are included in the disbursement request. Itemize project delivery expenses that are in addition to staff or consultant time. Staff and consultant time should be broken down by hour/rate and reference specific program activities performed.

LPAs must retain the original versions of all supporting documentation in project files.

Disbursement Request Form

- **Program Name:** Select the funding Program Name from the drop-down menu.
- **Name of LPA:** Enter the name of the Local Program Administrator (LPA). The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **SHARS ID:** Enter the eight-digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **Name and phone number of the person completing this form:** Provide the name and contact information for the person completing form, or the person OCR should contact with questions related to the disbursement paperwork.
- **Date:** Enter the date that the disbursement request paperwork is prepared.

- **Mailing Address:** Enter the complete mailing address of the LPA.
- **Total amount of this request:** Enter the full amount of the attached disbursement request. This amount must exactly equal the total of the amounts indicated on the attached Project/Project Delivery Funds Detail Sheet(s).
- **Payee Certification:** Enter the name(s) and title(s) of the LPA representative(s) indicated on the Authorized Signatory Form. Once the request is prepared and reviewed, the Authorized Signatories must sign and date the form. In signing the certification on the Disbursement Request form, the LPA is certifying that the reimbursement requested: complies with the requirements of the Grant Agreement between HTFC and the LPA; contains eligible expenses; does not include taxes from which the State is exempt; and does not duplicate reimbursement or disbursement of costs and/or expenses from any other source.
- **# Project Delivery Funds Detail Sheet(s):** Fill in how many Project Delivery Funds Detail Sheet are included with the request.
- **# of Project Set-Up Form(s):** Fill in how many Project Set-Up Forms are included with the request.
- **Identify Documents included with Disbursement Request:** Fill in or check off what forms are included with the request. The forms include Project Set-up/Completion Form(s), Invoices for Project Delivery/ Professional Services, HTFC Environmental clearance letters, Signed Restrictive Covenant, Elevation Certificates, Loan Closing Documents.

Project Delivery Funds Detail Sheet

A Project Delivery Funds Detail Sheet must be prepared and submitted each time a cost incurs, or a reimbursement of project delivery expenses is requested. All dollar amounts entered on the form must be supported by payroll documentation, invoices, and receipts.

Allowable uses of project delivery funds include salaries and related costs associated with the execution of the grant, including consultant expenses, or equipment and supplies used exclusively for the project delivery of the program. It is acceptable to request project delivery funds for a pro-rated portion of the cost, based on the percentage designated for program use. Requests for payment of project delivery costs must be charged to project delivery and not to other activities (e.g. Building Renovation Pre-Development Costs).

The first Project Delivery Funds Detail Sheet submitted will serve as the formal commitment of the budgeted Project Delivery funds.

A Project Delivery Funds Detail sheet should include the following information:

- **Program Name:** Select the funding Program Name from the drop-down menu.
- **SHARS ID:** Enter the eight-digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **LPA Name:** Enter the name of the Local Program Administrator (LPA). The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.

- **Time Period:** Enter the range of dates for which payment of project delivery expenses is requested. For the initial 50% drawdown of funds, an estimated time period will be accepted.

Personnel Services

- **Staff Name & Title:** Enter the names and job titles of staff members for the LPA whose duties include program administration, and for whom a disbursement of project delivery funds is being requested. (Individuals providing consulting or other professional services outside of the LPA organization should be listed on the lines for Other.)
- **Total prior project delivery requests:** Enter the sum of the project delivery funds requested to date for each staff person included. This amount should be the sum of all prior requests, and not include the amount requested for this period.
- **Total Salaries:** These fields will automatically calculate the totals identified above for staff salaries.
- **Fringe Benefits:** Enter the amount of fringe benefits being requested.
- **Total Personnel Services:** These fields will automatically calculate the total salaries and fringe benefits identified above.
- **Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS):** Enter non-personnel related costs included in the request for project delivery funds.
- **Total OTPS:** These fields will automatically calculate the total OTPS items identified above.
- **Other:** Enter any other project delivery expenses included in the request for project delivery funds. Typically, this includes consultants and other professional services.
- **Total Project Delivery Funds Requested:** These fields will automatically calculate the amounts entered for this this period, and the total of prior requests. If the amounts indicated are not correct, please check the amounts entered above.
- **Total Project Delivery Funds:** Enter the total amount of Project Delivery funds contracted as part of the program budget. Refer to Schedule A of the grant agreement. This amount should stay the same on each request.
- **Balance of Project Delivery Funds:** This field will use the amounts identified in the “Total Project Delivery Funds Requested” and “Total Project Delivery Funds” fields to automatically calculate the balance of Project Delivery funds.

Project Completion Form

A Project Completion form must be submitted with the final disbursement request for each building or project.

The Project Completion form is the same form as the Project Set Up form. The Project Completion form verifies final project budget data, required clearances (final property inspection, environmental and lead clearances as applicable), and assisted building unit information.

Provide all information included on the Project Set Up for the building with final budget information, in addition to the following:

Clearances (for Project Completion)

- **Date site was determined free from environmental hazard:** If the Set-Up form indicates that Environmental Hazards were identified when the property was evaluated using the environmental Checklist, provide the date the site was determined free from environmental hazards. If no environmental hazards were identified, enter the date the Building/Site specific environmental Checklist was completed.
- **Date assisted residential units were determined lead-safe:** Provide the date assisted residential units and/or residential windows that were impacted during renovations were determined lead-safe.
- **Date of the Final Inspection:** Provide the date of the final inspection of the property. Before a final payment can be made, a final inspection is required, and documentation, in the form of a Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion (COO/COC) must be provided with the disbursement request and saved in the project files.
- **Initial to confirm that project has received all required permits and approvals:** Confirm all required permits were received and relevant codes/regulations were followed.
- **Initial to confirm that SHPO conditions have been met:** If SHPO conditions were identified on the Set-Up form, confirm that the requirements were met. Confirmation that SHPO conditions have been met should also be included in the final inspection report submitted with the final disbursement request.

Recordkeeping, Reporting, and Monitoring

All Local Program Administrators are responsible for maintaining complete program and project files, including: participant applications, eligibility documentation, work specifications, bid documents, financial commitments, contracts, contractors' invoices, building permits, documentation on historic preservation issues, lead-based paint, environmental conditions and clearances, and program correspondence.

OCR recommends using the program and project file checklists available on the program forms pages. Files will be examined by an OCR representative during the monitoring process and technical assistance visits.

Housing Trust Fund Corporation is not able to advise on the taxable status of grant funds for participating property owners and LPAs. Seek consultation with a tax professional for advice on the taxable status of the grant fund.