



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-5000

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

December 28, 2021

SUBJECT: Introducing GEMS—A Streamlined Approach to Grant Administration

Dear Tribal Leader,

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) is modernizing its Information Technology (IT) systems to improve the administration of Tribal housing programs to simplify the grant management processes for Tribal recipients. ONAP, with the assistance of HUD's Office of Chief Information Officer (OCIO), is developing a new system; the Grants Evaluation and Management System (GEMS).

GEMS will not change current program and grant administration requirements. However, GEMS will modernize our administrative and reporting systems. Eventually all aspects of ONAP housing grant processes and grantee submission requirements will be incorporated. GEMS will replace the Energy Performance Information Center (EPIC) to centralize, and streamline required submissions and communications to reduce the administrative burden on recipients and ONAP staff. GEMS will also reduce administrative burden and ensure accurate information on program performance by eliminating duplicative submissions of information. EPIC data will be transferred to GEMS to ensure a smooth transition.

Testing of the system has started and is ongoing, including testing by Tribal recipients. Once that is complete, ONAP will begin to roll out the GEMS system in stages by grant programs. The Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) program will be released first. Efforts are now underway to have the Indian Housing Plan (IHP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) submissions, reviews, and approvals all processed within GEMS. Later, a quarterly SF-425 module will be developed and released. Within the scope of these two releases, EPIC will be discontinued. All data will be transferred from EPIC to GEMS, so there should be no need to duplicate any information that has already been entered.

Users will need to set up an account and enter information into GEMS. A series of training webinars will be hosted by ONAP, OCIO, and HUD Contractors. These trainings will be announced through Dear Tribal Leader letters, then posted on Codetalk, and promoted regionally via email. In addition, training materials and resources will be available on Codetalk. ONAP staff will be available to provide technical support for accessing and submitting grant information in GEMS.

There will be ongoing information disseminated on the status and next steps when additional housing programs are added into GEMS. Questions regarding the GEMS transition can be emailed to ONAP via ONAPGEMS@hud.gov.

Sincerely,



Heidi J. Frechette
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Native American Programs