



Implementation Report

On 13 October 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the Plain Writing Act of 2010 (Act). The Act requires federal agencies to communicate in a manner “that the public can understand and use the information.” Plain writing is easy to understand. To write plainly means to avoid the use of jargon and obscure terms. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) plans several actions to further these objectives:

Plain Writing Initiative: HUD provides information daily to Americans through many formats, such as brochures, reports, program guidance, bulletins, forms, notices, and correspondence. Each of these documents provides an opportunity for HUD to effectively communicate information about HUD programs and services. To maximize such opportunities, HUD has formed a Plain Writing Task Force (PWTF) that will develop plain writing guidelines and collaborate with staff to ensure that HUD communications, regardless of format, are written plainly and clearly.

Communicating the Act’s Requirements: In addition to developing plain writing guidelines, the PWTF will strive to ensure that all HUD employees and stakeholders are aware of the Act’s requirements. Posters and video monitors, placed throughout HUD, will display messages encouraging employees to visit and use plain writing tools on HUD.gov.

Providing Training to HUD Staff: HUD’s Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) will contribute to employees being familiar with the Act requirements and ability to implement the Act’s requirements by developing a plain writing training program for employees. Specifically, the program will include information on the Act and provide training on the “Principles of Plain Language.”

Plain Writing Act HUD Official: Henry Hensley, Acting Director for Office of Strategic Planning and Management, is HUD’s Senior Agency Official for Plain Writing.

HUD Website: HUD’s Plain Writing webpage is accessible to the public from the homepage at www.hud.gov in the section titled *Resources*.

Receiving and Responding to Comments from the Public: The Office of Strategic Planning and Management (OSPM) is the point of contact for public input. OSPM has arranged an email address, Help@HUD.gov. This provides a means for a member of the public to contact HUD if the person has difficulty understanding a form, notice, pamphlet, any of HUD's webpages, or if the person thought certain communications were unclear and plain language was not used. HUD welcomes feedback on communications that are understandable and comprehensible and those that are not. The public can access the email address through HUD's Plain Language webpage.

Ongoing Process for Compliance: Each HUD office is responsible for overseeing that communications comply with plain writing guidelines. Each HUD office will designate a senior manager to review a selection of external communications to assess compliance with the Act's requirements.

Resources:

- [Plain Writing Act of 2010](#) (October 2010)
- [Federal Plain Language Guidelines](#) (December 2010)
- [OMB Final Guidance on Implementing the Plain Writing Act of 2010, OMB Memorandum](#) (April 2011)