



## **Form HUD-9902, Housing Counseling Agency Activity Report Frequently Asked Questions 7/15/2014**

### **Form HUD-9902, Housing Counseling Agency Activity Report Assistance:**

#### **General Questions:**

- 1. Question: If the new 9902 is going into effect on October 1, 2014, that means the 9902 for this fiscal year 2014 remains the same; is that right?**

Answer: That is correct. The Office of Housing Counseling intends for the current 9902 that you have been using to remain in effect through the 2014 4<sup>th</sup> quarter reporting.

#### **Section 1: Counseling Agency Name:**

- 2. Question: What has changed in Section 1 of the form?**

Answer: Section 1 of the new form is the same as Section 1 of the previous edition of the form.

#### **Section 2: Reporting Period and Budget:**

- 3. Question: Has Section 2 changed?**

Answer: Most information required in Section 2 of the new form is the same as in the previous version. The new 9902 does not show the HUD-Funded Activity Ratio.

#### **Demographic Reporting:**

- 4. Question: How do you report the 9902 demographic data and client record for a household or one-on-one counseling activity that includes more than one person?**

Answer: When a household includes more than one person, generally the demographic data for the individual completing the intake process is identified for all demographic information recorded for that household. Client households should be encouraged to self-

identify the one race and ethnicity that will be recorded, along with the remaining demographic information.

- 5. Question: Our fair housing Workshops are typically comprised of groups of realtors, apartment management agencies and co-op and condo boards. It is virtually impossible to collect all the data listed on form 9902; is there any way to just list the number of individuals receiving training?**

Answer: The agency must collect the demographic data for all education participants. HUD recommends the agency devise a simple, anonymous form for households to complete at the beginning of the class.

- 6. Question: If a housing counseling agency teaches a class to a large group of people, must the agency collect demographic data for the participants? For example, if the agency provides a homebuyer education workshop to 100 participants.**

Answer: The agency must collect the demographic data for all education participants. HUD recommends the agency devise a simple, anonymous form for households to complete at the beginning of the class.

### **Section 3: Ethnicity of Household:**

- 7. Question: Has Section 3 changed?**

Answer: Section 3 remains unchanged.

### **Section 4: Race of Households:**

- 8. Question: Has Section 4 changed?**

Answer: Section 4 remains unchanged.

### **Section 5: Income Levels:**

- 9. Question: What has changed in Section 5?**

Answer: The new form requires the agency to report households earning less than 30% of Area Median Income and 30 to 49% of Area Median Income. All other items remain the same.

### **Section 6: Rural Area Status: This is a new Section.**

- 10. Question: How do we determine if a household is located in a rural area?**

Answer: The instructions on Page 7 of the HUD-9902 provide a USDA web address to determine the rural area status of each household.

**Section 7: Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Status: This is a new Section.**

**11. Question: What is the definition of LEP?**

Answer: The Department of Justice defines LEP as follows: If these individuals have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English, they are limited English proficient, or "LEP."

**Section 8: Households Receiving Group Education, by Purpose:**

**12. Question: Many agencies incorporate fair housing and predatory lending/loan scam/ or other fraud prevention workshop into their financial literacy, homebuyer or other types of workshops. How can this be reported in the 9902**

Answer: When combining different subject matter into one workshop, choose the predominant subject of the workshop for reporting in Section 8 of the 9902.

**13. Question: Regarding Sections 8 and 9, if a client is participating in a rental workshop and also receives one-on-one counseling on rental topics, will we report them under both sections, or only 1?**

Answer: The HUD-9902 is an important tool that HUD uses to track the Housing Counseling Program, and the data collected through the form is critical to demonstrating the program's impact to Congress and other industry stakeholders. The form is designed to capture unique counseling services, so that a household receiving two unique services (e.g. rental counseling on one occasion and pre-purchase counseling on another occasion) would be counted as two 9902 counseling households. On the other hand, a household receiving one counseling service over the course of multiple counseling sessions would be counted as one 9902 counseling household because the household only received one unique counseling service.

If a household receives both group education and one-on-one counseling, then the household received two unique counseling services and the agency will report the household twice - once in Section 8 for the group education service and once in Section 9 for the one-on-one counseling service. The agency will also report the household in Section 10.a and in any other applicable Section 10 categories. The household may have more than one outcome to report in Section 10.

Since the household was counted twice (in Sections 8 and 9), household demographics should also be counted twice in Sections 3 through 7.

**Section 9: Households Receiving One-on-One Counseling, by Purpose:**

**14. Question: Why are Home Maintenance and Financial Management listed as one and not two different counseling services?**

Answer: The name of this counseling category corresponds with the HUD-approved counseling types outlined in HUD's housing counseling regulations in 24 CFR Part 214. This category is similar to Section 7c on the previous version of Form HUD-9902, except that a separate category has now been created for HECM Counseling. Post purchase Counseling can now be included in Section 9d, Home Maintenance and Financial Management for Homeowners (Non-Delinquency Post-Purchase). Home Maintenance and Financial Management are typical non-delinquency post-purchase topics. As indicated on the new 9902 instructions and in the regulations, this category is designed to capture post-purchase counseling on topics such as escrow funds, budgeting, refinancing, home equity, home improvement, utility costs, energy efficiency and rights and responsibilities of home owners.

**15. Question: Why doesn't the new form contain Post-Purchase Counseling?**

Answer: One-on-One Post-purchase counseling should be recorded in Section 9d, Home Maintenance and Financial Management for Homeowners (Non-Delinquency Post-Purchase). Home Maintenance and Financial Management are typical non-delinquency post-purchase topics.

**16. Question: Please explain how Fair Housing Complaints should be reported.**

Answer: Counseling provided to a household with a Fair Housing Complaint should be reported in Section 9 under the applicable type of counseling (e.g. a renter with a Fair Housing Complaint would be reported as receiving Rental Topics counseling). That same household would also be reported in Section 10.b. (Households that received information on fair housing, fair lending and/or accessibility rights), and in any other applicable Section 10 categories, to show the impact and scope of that counseling.

**Section 10: Impact and Scope of One-on-One Counseling Services: This is a new Section.**

**17. Question: Can a counseling activity have more than one impact or outcome (Section 10)?**

Answer: Yes. One type of counseling may have multiple impacts during the continuum of counseling. Section 10 is the only section in which the total does not have to be the same as the other sections. The section total formula is: Section 3 Total = Section 4 Total = Section 5 Total = Section 6 Total = Section 7 Total = (Section 8 Total + Section 9 Total).

**18. Question: We plan to review our current individual appointment and classes intake forms to make sure we can collect the new information listed on the new 9902. Do we report outcomes for classes too, or just for individual counseling appointments?**

Answer: Housing Counseling Agencies will only report outcomes for one-on-one counseling activities in Section 10 of the new 9902.

**19. Question: Section 10, Item a. tracks households that received one-on-one counseling and also received group education services. But Section 10 does not have an option for just one-on-one without group education services. Where do we record one-on-one without group education services?**

Answer: Agencies will record a household receiving one-on-one counseling services in the appropriate category in Section 9. In Section 10, Impact and Scope of One-on-One Counseling Services, Item a. is the only item that records the impact of a household that receives both one-on-one counseling and group education services. Counselors will record one-on-one counseling impacts for all other households in Section 10, Items b. through m.

**20. Question: I heard that HUD will include Financial Counseling/Coaching as a service and in their program and outcome tracking. Is this no longer the case?**

Answer: HUD defines housing counseling as counselor to client assistance that addresses unique financial circumstances or housing issues and focuses on ways of overcoming specific obstacles to achieving a housing goal. Financial management and/or budget services can be an important component of housing counseling, but the primary focus of housing counseling is on achieving a housing goal. Therefore, households receiving financial management and/or budget services should be reported in Section 9 under the applicable type of counseling (e.g. a renter receiving financial management and/or budget services would be reported as receiving Rental Topics counseling). That same household would also be reported in Section 10.c. (Households for whom counselor developed a sustainable household budget through the provision of financial management and/or budget services), as well as any other applicable Section 10 categories, to show the impact and scope of that counseling.

**21. Question: Where would a client who received HECM counseling & decided not to obtain a HECM fall under Section 10?**

Answer: Possible outcomes could be 10e and/or 10f.

**22. Question: Since HUD sponsors the NFMCP reporting, and it reports on the delinquent outcomes, will that reporting change to correspond to the new lack of outcomes?**

Answer: Congress authorized NeighborWorks America to run the NFMC program and set statutory requirements for its reporting. HUD does not administer the NFMC program. NeighborWorks America runs NFMC and manages its reporting requirements.

### **Grant Reporting:**

**23. Question: We currently are the parent of a number of sub agencies that require their own 9902. Will the new 9902 allow the transmission of the columns "HUD**

**Housing Counseling Program Grantees Only” or will we have to continue manually updating each location after transmission?**

HUD uses the data collected through the two “HUD Housing Counseling Program Grantees Only” columns to track housing counseling grant activity and to demonstrate the impact of HUD’s housing counseling program appropriation to Congress and Stakeholders. To do so, HUD collects two columns from grantees on counseling activities specifically attributed to HUD counseling grant funds – “Actual, to date” data, and “Annual Projection” data. The “Actual, to date” column collects data on clients whose counseling services were charged to a HUD housing counseling grant. And the “Annual Projections” column collects targets that grantees set for the number of clients they will serve using HUD grant funds. These targets are set when grantees receive a new HUD grant, and they do not need to be updated each quarter like the rest of the 9902 data. Once set, the projections will only need to be updated under extenuating circumstances with prior approval from HUD.

Our plan is to include the “**Actual, to date**” column in the new instance of the Agency Reporting Module (ARM) that is being developed to start with the FY 2015 1<sup>st</sup> quarter reporting. Once the Client Management Systems (CMS) are updated, they will be able to submit this data via ARM so that agencies will not have to manually enter it. This will only apply to submissions for 2015 and beyond. Any submissions for periods previous to that will have to have the HUD attributed data entered manually.

The “Annual Projections” column will not be submitted through ARM. When receiving a new HUD grant, these annual projections will be manually entered by the grantee in HCS and then approved by HUD. Once it is entered in HCS, the projection will display on the grantee’s 9902 only. HUD is not requiring annual projections from sub-agencies that receive an allocation from a grantee.

**24. Question: Is the HUD Housing Counseling grant the only grant our agency will report on the 9902? If a HUD counseling agency has a HUD homeless grant, it is not to be reflected under the counseling grant category since it is not a counseling grant?**

You are correct. The only grant your agency will report in the HUD Grant column on the 9902 is the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant (and if we have any housing counseling supplemental grants in the future, those will be added as other columns to the 9902).

**25. Question: We are a LCHA but currently we are a sub-grantee of an intermediary for our HUD grant. On the new 9902 for the columns for Grant Funds and Annual Projection will we be entering this data for our agency or will the intermediary (Grantee) be submitting that data?**

Answer: The grantee (in this case, the intermediary parent organization) is responsible for setting the annual projections for the target number of households to be served using

the HUD grant funds. The grantee submits one set of projections representing the total target number of households whose counseling services will be charged to the HUD grant, including counseling services to be charged by all sub-grantees receiving funds under the HUD grant. These projections will only display on the grantee's consolidated 9902, which is an aggregate report of all the individual 9902s submitted by sub-grantees. Projections will not display on sub-grantees' individual 9902s, nor will sub-grantees need to enter any projections specific to their individual sub-grant in HCS.

As a sub-grantee, your agency will be responsible for submitting 9902 household numbers for counseling services your agency charges to the HUD Housing Counseling Grant in the “**Actual, to date**” column. Total data submitted by all sub-grantees will display in the grantee's consolidated 9902 so the grantee can monitor its progress toward meeting the annual projections.

**26. Question: HUD funded client records are identified using the activity type id for a specific NOFA/grant type. How do you report HUD funded activities if 1 activity has multiple funding sources and is partially HUD Funded?**

Answer: If an activity is partially funded by HUD (excluding NFMC grants), the agency may count the household in the HUD funded activity column. If the agency deems it necessary to bill multiple funding sources for the same client, the agency is required to keep detailed records to document that no multiple funding sources have been billed for the same service.

**Other Questions:**

**27. Question: How should agencies report carryover clients from one fiscal year to the next?**

Answer: Carryover clients are households that received counseling in a previous reporting year and continue to receive counseling services on the same topic in the current year. Households meeting this criterion are counted again on the current year's form HUD-9902. Do not count households counseled in a previous reporting year whose result changed, but who received no additional services in the current reporting year.

**28. Question: What if someone comes in for multiple, distinct types of counseling in a reporting period? Would an agency consider them as a new client each time and record their demographic data each time?**

Answer: Yes - record their ethnicity, race, income, rural area status, and LEP status data each time they visit the agency for a different type of counseling service. For example, if an individual comes in for one type of counseling, for example, pre-purchase, the agency would record their demographic data and the type of counseling and the impact(s). If, later in the same fiscal year reporting period, the same individual comes in for another type of counseling, for example default counseling, record this new activity and then record their demographic data again.

**29. Question: Top of page 8 refers to “reporting period” and counting the households. Is this referring to the quarterly reporting period mentioned at the top of page 4, or the reporting year mentioned on page 5 in the paragraph about carryover clients? If quarterly, then client can be counted more than once for the same type of counseling during the fiscal year.**

Answer: The reporting period begins with the first day of the federal fiscal year and ends with the end of the reporting quarter. For example, the Quarter 2 report should include all households receiving unique services from Oct 1 – March 31. If a household receives counseling in Quarter 1 and the household receives additional services of the same type in Quarter 2, the household should be counted once in the **cumulative** Quarter 2 report because the household only received one unique counseling service during the Oct 1 – March 31 reporting period.

### **For CMS Developers/Vendors**

**1. Question: When will ARM be able to take the new data elements outlined in the new 9902? There are significant changes and we wonder when will we see a new file format for ARM with these changes?**

Answer: The HUD HCS/ARM support teams are working on these updates. Details regarding the new fields, XML schema, and list of new reference values have been sent to the approved CMS developers. Further information will be emailed to all CMS developers that are registered with HCS. The CMS Guidance web page will also be updated with information sent to CMS developers:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/housing/sfh/hcc/cms](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/hcc/cms).

**2. Question: We want to know if you will continue to provide the reference data for the "old" options (termination reason, outcome of visit, etc.) to insure our systems will not be adversely effected.**

Answer: HUD’s plan is to keep the current version of ARM and associated reference data available until HUD is no longer accepting submissions for FY 2014 and earlier. However, only CMS that have been updated and approved to submit the new 9902 and client data will be allowed to submit to HCS starting with FY 2015 Quarter 1. Submissions using the old format will only be accepted for FY 2014.

**3. Question: Will we be required to create a new xml template for posting the 9902 or will you be taking that over and compiling from the client data now. I ask this because I still believe it to be an undue burden on the agencies to be forced to pay to make changes to send a compiled 9902 as well as the changes you will need to the client data file to incorporate the new fields for this new 9902 form. If we are sending the client data, why not compile it as it is processed into your database and save the agencies the time and expense? Agency, Counselor, and Client files are all that is needed to get everything you need including the 9902 initial counts. And since you have to make the**



**programming changes on your end too, why not make this change for the better now? It would be cost effective to add in the logic and counters now.**

Answer: Yes, CMS will be required to create the xml template for posting the new 9902 data. We agree with you that deriving the 9902 from the client data is the ideal; however we do not have the resources available to implement that change in addition to the other changes and updates that we have to make in time for FY 2015.

- 4. Question: Records started before October 2014 but not finished until after October 2014 will be an issue in our CMS platforms. The "old" options and rules will have to be replaced in the middle of working with the client. Have you given any thought to what our "best practice" type approach should be to dealing with that so we do not put any undue burden on the counselor or clients?**

Answer: This is a good question! We first want to make sure we understand your question correctly. Are you referring to a situation where a client comes in for counseling in 2014 but then continues to get counseling in 2015? In that case how should you handle the client data that is based on the pre-2015 reference information? If that is the correct understanding of your question, we suggest that when the counselor updates the client record to reflect the activity that occurred in 2015, that the client record should be updated at that time to be compatible with the new 9902 data. The counselor will have to enter the newly required data for rural area status, Limited English Proficiency, and impact/scope of counseling – just as they would for any new client that is counseled.

- 5. Question: We currently are the parent of a number of sub agencies that require their own 9902. Will the new 9902 allow the transmission of the columns “HUD Housing Counseling Program Grantees Only” or will we have to continue manually updating each location after transmission?**

Answer: Our plan is to include the HUD Attributed data in the new instance of ARM that is being developed to start with the FY 2015 1<sup>st</sup> quarter reporting. Once the CMS are updated they will be able to submit this data via ARM, and not have to manually enter it. This will only apply to submissions for 2015 and beyond. Any submissions for periods previous to that will have to have the HUD attributed data entered manually.

- 6. Question: Will CMS also be submitting data for the Annual Projection column?**

Answer: No. The Annual Projection will be manually entered by the grant awardee on HCS, as it is done once a year, and must be approved by HUD. Once it is entered on HCS, the projection will display on the grant awardee’s 9902. Annual projection data provides a benchmark to help HUD and awardees monitor the actual number of households who receive services attributed to HUD Housing Counseling Program funding. The data on actual households served is reported to Congress to show the use of the Housing Counseling Program appropriation.

- 7. Question: When will CMS be ready to accept the new 9902 data?**

Answer: CMS have been notified of the new 9902 form. HUD prepared updated submission requirements and provided them to CMS developers in March 2014. Each CMS will have their own schedule for updating their systems to allow for the new data elements. HUD will be updating both HCS and the ARM submission service to support these changes. HUD will also be supporting all CMS in their submission testing efforts.