

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Guarantee Fee Rates for Guaranteed Loans for Fiscal Year 2016; Maximum Portion of Guarantee Authority Available for Fiscal Year 2016; Annual Renewal Fee for Fiscal Year 2016

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice helps to improve applicants' awareness of the Guarantee Fee Rates for Guaranteed Loans for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016; Maximum Portion of Guarantee Authority Available for FY 2016; Annual Renewal Fee for FY 2016 when applying for guaranteed loans under the Business and Industry (B&I) program.

The Agency was authorized by the 2012 Appropriations Bill, and subsequent Appropriations Acts, to charge a maximum of 3 percent for its guarantee fee for FY 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. The guarantee fee for FY 2016 will be 3 percent.

The Agency has established that not more than 12 percent of the Agency's quarterly apportioned B&I guarantee authority will be reserved for loan requests with a reduced fee, and not more than 15 percent of the Agency's quarterly apportioned guarantee authority will be reserved for guaranteed loan requests with a guarantee percentage exceeding 80 percent. Once the respective quarterly limits are reached, all additional loans for that quarter will be at the standard fee and guarantee limits.

The Agency is establishing the renewal fee rate at one-half of 1 percent for the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program. This rate will apply to all loans obligated in FY 2016 that are made under the B&I program.

DATES: *Effective date:* December 14, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nichelle Daniels, USDA, Rural Development, Business Programs, Business and Industry Division, STOP 3224, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-3224, telephone (202) 720-0786, email nichelle.daniels@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As set forth in 7 CFR 4279.107, the Agency has the authority to charge an initial guarantee fee and an annual renewal fee for loans made under the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program. Pursuant to that authority, the Agency is establishing the renewal fee rate at one-half of 1 percent for the B&I Guaranteed Loan Program. This rate will apply to all loans obligated in FY 2016 that are made under the B&I program. As established in 7 CFR 4279.107(b)(1), the amount of the fee on each guaranteed loan will be determined by multiplying the fee rate by the outstanding principal loan balance as of December 31, multiplied by the percent of guarantee.

The Agency was authorized by the 2012 Appropriations Bill, and subsequent Appropriation Acts, to charge a maximum of 3 percent for its guarantee fee for FY 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. It is the Agency's expectation that the 2016 Appropriations Act will contain a provision to charge a maximum of 3 percent for its guarantee fee for FY 2016. As such, the guarantee fee for FY 2016 will be 3 percent.

As set forth in 7 CFR 4279.107(a) and 4279.119(b)(4), each fiscal year, the Agency shall establish a limit on the maximum portion of B&I guarantee authority available for that FY that may be used to guarantee loans with a reduced guarantee fee or guaranteed loans with a guarantee percentage exceeding 80 percent.

Allowing a reduced guarantee fee or exceeding the 80 percent guarantee on certain B&I guaranteed loans that meet the conditions set forth in 7 CFR 4279.107 and 4279.119 will increase the Agency's ability to focus guarantee assistance on projects that the Agency has found particularly meritorious. For reduced guarantee fees, the borrower's business must support value-added agriculture and result in farmers benefiting financially or must be a high impact business development investment as defined in 7 CFR 4279.155(b)(5) and be located in rural communities that experience long-term

population decline and job deterioration, remain persistently poor, are experiencing trauma as a result of natural disaster, or are experiencing fundamental structural changes in its economic base.

The Agency has established that not more than 12 percent of the Agency's quarterly apportioned B&I guarantee authority will be reserved for loan requests with a reduced fee, and not more than 15 percent of the Agency's quarterly apportioned guarantee authority will be reserved for guaranteed loan requests with a guarantee percentage exceeding 80 percent. Once the respective quarterly limits are reached, all additional loans for that quarter will be at the standard fee and guarantee limits.

This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866, as amended by Executive Order 13258.

Dated: December 1, 2015.

Samuel H. Ridders,
Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-31300 Filed 12-11-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Amendment to Notice of Solicitation of Applications for the Rural Energy for America Program

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (Agency) published a notice in the **Federal Register** of October 6, 2015 (80 FR 60349), announcing the acceptance of applications for funds available under the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. The 2014 Farm Bill provides funding for the program for FY 2016. This notice provides an amendment to Section V. Application Review Information, subsection A. Evaluation Criteria, to allow points to be awarded if any of the criteria are met and to maintain consistency with other Rural Development programs on how poverty areas are defined.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information about this Notice, please contact Kelley Oehler, USDA Rural Development, Energy Division, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Stop 3225, Room 6870, Washington, DC 20250. Telephone: (202) 720-6819. Email: Kelley.oehler@wdc.usda.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The October 6, 2015, Notice identified on page 60353, in the third column toward the bottom of the page, under Section V. Application Review Information, subsection A. Evaluation Criteria, paragraph (1)(a) indicates an “and” between the words “unserved” and “under-served populations”, and an “and” between subparagraphs (i) and (ii), as well as between subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of paragraph (1)(b), which is on page 60354 on the top of the first column. The “and” is being replaced with “or” in each of these locations to indicate the State Director and Administrator can award points if only one of the criterion is met.

Further, on page 60354 of the Notice, under paragraph (1)(b)(i), which is on the top of the first column, the following language is inserted after the phrase “living in poverty.” The period is replaced with a comma and the phrase is being added “a project is located in a community (village, town, city, or Census Designated Place) with median household income of 60 percent or less of the state’s non-metropolitan median household income.”

The changes are being made to ensure REAP maintains consistency with other Agency programs on how poverty areas are defined for State Director and Administrator points and to not restrict points from being awarded if only one criteria is met.

The following Summary of Changes apply to the October 6, 2015, Notice.

Summary of Changes

1. In the third column on page 60353, Section V. Application Review Information, subsection A. Evaluation Criteria, paragraph (1)(a), the sentence is revised to read as follows:

With regard to 7 CFR 4280.120(g)(3), which addresses applicants who are members of unserved or under-served populations, a project that is:

2. In the third column on page 60353, Section V. Application Review Information, subsection A. Evaluation Criteria, paragraph (1)(a)(i), the last sentence is revised to read as follows:

In order to receive points, applicants must provide a statement in their applications to indicate that owners of the project have veteran status; or

3. In the first column on page 60354, paragraph (1)(b)(i) is revised to read as follows:

(i) Located in rural areas with the lowest incomes where, according to the most recent 5-year American Community Survey data by the U.S. Census Bureau, tracts show that at least 20 percent of the population is living in poverty or a project is located in a community (village, town, city, or Census Designated Place) with a median household income of 60 percent or less of the State’s non-metropolitan median household income. This will support the Secretary of Agriculture’s priority of providing 20 percent of its funding by 2016 to these areas of need; or

Nondiscrimination Statement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, religion, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or complete the form at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442, or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an Equal Employment Opportunity or program complaint, please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us directly by mail or email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large

print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Dated: December 8, 2015.

Samuel H. Ridders,
Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-31325 Filed 12-11-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

Meetings

AGENCY: Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

ACTION: Notice of meetings.

SUMMARY: The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) plans to hold its regular committee and Board meetings in Washington, DC, Tuesday and Wednesday, January 12-13, 2016 at the times and location listed below.

DATES: The schedule of events is as follows:

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

10:30-11:30 p.m. Technical Programs Committee
11:30-Noon Planning and Evaluation Committee
1:30-2:00 p.m. Ad Hoc Committee on Design Guidance
2:00-2:30 Budget Committee
2:30-4:00 Ad Hoc Committee on Information and Communication Technology (Closed)

Wednesday, January 13, 2016

9:30-11:00 a.m. Ad Hoc Committee on Frontier Issues
11:00-Noon Architectural Barriers Act Compliance Program
1:30-3:00 Board Meeting

ADDRESSES: Meetings will be held at the Access Board Conference Room, 1331 F Street NW., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information regarding the meetings, please contact David Capozzi, Executive Director, (202) 272-0010 (voice); (202) 272-0054 (TTY).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: At the Board meeting scheduled on the afternoon of Wednesday, January 13, 2016, the Access Board will consider the following agenda items:

- Approval of the draft November 10, 2015 meeting minutes (vote)
- Ad Hoc Committee Reports: Design Guidance; Frontier Issues; and