



CDBG

Housing Rehabilitation Programs

Revised March 2022

Program Outline

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Applicability** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has made assistance available for projects and activities, which principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons, through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The City of Erie, as a “participating jurisdiction” receives an annual allocation of funds.
- B. Introduction** Consistent with the City’s Consolidated Plan, The City allocates funds to the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie (RACE) for rehabilitation of owner-occupied dwellings. RACE awards deferred-payment loans, which are forgivable after a five-year affordability period, to income-qualified homeowners and administers the rehabilitation process in order to improve the quality of the City’s housing stock and to correct conditions which pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of residents.
- C. Program Eligibility**
 - 1. To be eligible, you must own and occupy a residence in the target area of the City of Erie, and meet Department of Housing and Urban Development income requirements.
- D. Funding Usage**
 - 1. CDBG funds may be used in conjunction with other funding sources for housing rehabilitation, which may require that the rehabilitation meet requirements in addition to these guidelines.
 - 2. CDBG funds may be used to make repairs, rehabilitations, accessibility alterations, lead hazard mitigation, and/or to address code-related issues. RACE’s inspectors and staff will determine the

proper combination of work items for each project based on the level of deterioration, lead hazards, code issues, and accessibility issues found to be present at the property.

3. When addressing code issues, RACE will focus on:
 - a. Ensuring the health and safety of the residents.
 - b. Ensuring weather-tightness of the home.
 - c. Returning failed plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and structural systems to good working order. Plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and structural systems may be replaced when these systems cannot be repaired or when replacement is more cost effective than repair.
 - d. **Repair of serious structural decay or collapse is beyond the scope of work that can be accomplished by RACE.** When structural decay and collapse is encountered, RACE inspectors will assess the level of damage and make a determination on the viability of the project. If it is determined that the level of damage is beyond the scope of RACE, the project will be immediately terminated and the client will be notified in writing.
 - e. Program funding will not be used for removal of trash and debris other than that generated by the construction/rehabilitation activities.
 - f. Components of the property that are in good working order will not be replaced or modified for beautification purposes.

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Applications

1. Applications may be obtained from the RACE office at 626 State Street, Room 107, Erie, PA 16501. Applications can also be requested by calling (814) 870-1540.
2. The following information must be attached to each application submitted: (1) Paid property tax receipts for the past year. (2) Proof of income (i.e. 3 months of most recent consecutive pay stubs). (3) A basis (or general description) for projecting income for the next 12 months. (4) Latest federal income tax return and W-2 forms, if self employed. (5) Evidence of current property/homeowner insurance. (6) Completed income and asset verification forms. (7) Evidence that water and sewer/trash bills are paid.
3. Incomplete applications will not be processed. RACE staff will review each application package and notify the applicant if additional information is needed.
4. Program guidelines and financial assistance will be reviewed and explained to applicants by the RACE Program Administrator.
5. Only owner-occupied, single family dwellings are eligible for funding for this program. The housing unit is **NOT** eligible for participation in this rehabilitation program if it is being purchased under land contract, if it is a rental property, a mobile home, or a multi-family unit.
6. Once the application has been completed and verified, the RACE inspector will arrange an appointment with the applicant(s) to conduct an initial on-site inspection of the property. This inspection will determine eligible construction/rehabilitation activities including lead hazard and

accessibility issues. It is the RACE's goal to prioritize those construction/rehabilitation activities which:

- a. Correct conditions that pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of the residents;
- b. Repair or replace failed structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems as well as correct code conditions that are directly related to the scope of work;
- c. Correct conditions that, if left uncorrected, would lead to further decay of the property;
- d. Focus on exterior improvements that have the most potential to increase the fair market value of the property and neighboring properties, and remove obvious signs of blight; and/or
- e. Fulfill the City and RACE's general and specific objectives to improve the quality of the City's housing stock.

7. The initial inspection will be followed with the preparation of a preliminary work write-up and cost estimate. If it is determined that the necessary repairs will exceed available funding and the owner is unable to make up the cost difference, the inspector will submit to the RACE Executive Director a proposed prioritization of the eligible activities that will most substantially fulfill the above stated goals.

- a. The Program Manager will determine the viability of the project. If the Program Manager determines that the project does not meet the above stated goals given the budgetary limits, he/she may terminate the project and notify the client in writing.
- b. The following inspections will be conducted prior to preparation of the final scope of work and cost estimate:
 - A lead risk assessment will be conducted on all properties built prior to 1978 in which costs for the contemplated construction/rehabilitation activities are estimated to exceed \$5,000.00, to determine if the property contains lead-based paint hazards. A certified Risk Assessor will make recommendations for corrections.
 - An inspection will be conducted to determine the extent of rehabilitation needed and to ensure that all contemplated activities are consistent with applicable Erie City adopted Uniform Construction Codes, Property Maintenance Codes, City Ordinances, and Zoning Ordinances.
 - An inspection **may** be conducted to determine possible accessibility improvements when appropriate.
- c. If the project is considered feasible, a finalized scope of work and cost estimate will be prepared and scheduled for bidding.

B. Application Approval

1. RACE will verify ownership of property and verify that property taxes are paid up-to-date, and that the household income does not exceed federal requirements for family size.
2. RACE may consider applicants' previous experiences with housing and homeowner assistance programs in selecting participants in this program. RACE reserves its rights to reject applicants in poor standing with other housing and homeowner assistance programs and also prioritize those applicants which have not previously received housing and homeowner assistance.

C. Income Requirements

1. Applicants must meet the HUD income guidelines which are revised annually.

2. Family size determines the income limit and includes all family members, including shared-custody children who reside within the household at least 50% of the time. Foster children or live-in aides and their children may not be included.

3. Household income will be calculated in accordance with HUD's Part 5 Annual Income determination regulations. It includes the following income of family members 18 years of age and older: Gross income through wages, salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips, bonuses, and other personal compensation; net income from business; interest, dividends and other investment income; social security, pensions, retirement, disability, death benefits and other similar types of periodic payments; welfare or unemployment payments; alimony and child support; armed forces pay. (Earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years or older, excluding the head of household or spouse, may be excluded.)

D. Income Verification

1. The applicant must provide written verification of income from his/her employer. At least 3 months of the most recent paystubs must also be included for **complete income verification** in the household.

2. If an applicant is self-employed, his or her most recent income tax return will serve as verification of income as well as invoices for services provided.

E. Building Condition

1. RACE will conduct a preliminary structural evaluation of the property to determine eligibility for the program. Properties with serious structural defects will not be eligible under any RACE programs.

III. THE BIDDING PROCESS & CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS

A. Contractor Process

1. To be eligible to bid on rehabilitation and/or lead hazard control work the contractor must follow the RACE procurement policy regarding bonding, and also provide the following documentation:

- a. Proof of liability insurance
- b. Proof of lead contractor, lead supervisor and lead worker certifications if bidding on lead hazard control work
- c. Proof of workers' compensation insurance
- d. A description of recent projects completed and references

B. Bidding Process

1. RACE will solicit bids from pre-qualified contractors.

2. Owner-occupants and/or owners of rental properties are not permitted to be self-contractors or subcontractors for the work to be performed on their own units. Furthermore, any contracting company, that is an agent of a participating owner, is not eligible to bid on that owner's properties.

- a. RACE may advertise one or more projects in the local newspaper for public bidding as an alternate bidding process.

- b. Contractors will obtain a bid packet.
- c. Contractors are required to attend a pre-bid meeting held at the property location. The contractors and owner(s) will be notified of the results of the bid opening.
- d. RACE will review all bids and determine the lowest responsible bid. The property owner may choose to select a different bidder, but will be responsible for any cost difference.

C. Allocation of Funding

- 1. Funding is allocated only after a successful bid has been obtained and RACE has determined that the project can be successfully contracted.
- 2. If the low bid exceeds the program or budgeted limits, the client must show that he/she is financially able to fund the amount of the overage and is willing to provide the funds at the time of contract signing. Funding will not be allocated until this determination has been made.

D. Priority of Projects

- 1. When combining CDBG funding with other funding sources, priority status may be granted based on the priorities of those other funds.
- 2. In cases where no priority status is granted, projects will be considered on a first come, first served basis.

E. The Construction Process

- 1. Prior to the actual contract signing, the contractor will be notified of the number of calendar days allotted to complete the entire project. The number of days allotted will depend on the extent of the work to be completed and in most cases will not exceed 60 days.
- 2. The contractor must submit a pre-abatement plan to RACE following all appropriate HUD, EPA, and state, local, and other appropriate guidelines.
- 3. In most cases, the construction process will be scheduled so that all exterior work, basement work, and attic work will be completed prior to any applicable relocation. During relocation, all work taking place in the living areas of the home will be completed. The last phase of the project will be lead hazard clearance testing. When the clearance test has been passed, relocated occupants may return to the home. In some cases, weather or other conditions beyond the contractors' control may prevent adherence to this schedule.
- 4. Relocation:
 - a. Temporary relocation is required on most projects involving lead hazard control work. All relocation will be carried out according to RACE and HUD relocation policies.
 - b. Exceptions to relocation can occur and are reserved for very small projects where the sole residents of the unit are elderly.

V. TERMS

A. Repayment Terms of the Loan

1. Funding provided by RACE will be in the form of a “deferred loan” will be secured by a mortgage. The term of the deferred payment loan will be 5 years. No repayment will be required if the property remains titled to and occupied by the original applicant for the entire term.
2. If the property is sold or otherwise ceases to serve as the owner’s primary residence, the client will be expected to repay all or a portion of the funds invested into the property. The amount of repayment will be calculated on a pro-rated basis depending on the amount of time elapsed since the rehabilitation project.
3. The property must remain free of major code issues that affect the health and safety of the residents and the value of the property for the deferment to continue and all county and municipal obligations must be current.
4. During the term of the loan, if the mortgagor(s) should die or be placed in a long-term health care facility, ownership of the property must remain with the family of the borrower. All other terms and conditions contained herein will remain in effect, including income limits of the residents, and the property must remain free of major code issues that affect the health and safety of the residents and the value of the property for the continued deferment of the loan over the remaining term.
5. Funding for this program is provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The grant pays for 100% of the rehabilitation costs and the owner pays only the administrative fee of \$175.00.