

Arkansas CDBG-DR Citizen Participation Plan

The following table summarizes changes to the State of Arkansas CDBG-DR Citizen Participation Plan.

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
2	6/18/2025	Change of Lead Agency: CDBG-DR Contact Information to ADFA, CDBG-DR Contact Agency to ADFA, Clarify Citizen Participation Processes
		Add 2025 CDBG-DR disaster allocation
3	1/23/2026	Add Unit of Local Government subrecipient responsibilities

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN CDBG-DR

Background

The State of Arkansas is a recipient of a U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Grant appropriated in accordance of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114-223) and Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2025. This document describes the applicable waivers and alternative requirements, relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, the grant award process, criteria for the action plan approval, and eligible disaster recovery activities. The funds are being made available to assist disaster recovery efforts in response to FEMA DR 4441 (the Arkansas River Flooding), declared on June 8, 2019; FEMA DR 4698 severe storms and tornadoes, declared on April 2, 2023; and FEMA DR 4788 severe storms, straight-line winds, tornadoes, and flooding, declared on May 30, 2024

The primary goal of this Citizen Participation Plan is to provide all Arkansas citizens with an opportunity to participate in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the State's recovery programs. The plan set forth policies and procedures for citizen participation, which are designed to maximize the opportunity for citizen involvement in the community recovery process.

Public Hearing

For the 2020 CDBG-DR Action Plan, there was no requirement for a public hearing. Instead, the State's disaster recovery needs were incorporated into the required updates of the Consolidated Plans. The public will be engaged in the recovery

planning process through public and stakeholder outreach, including public meetings, in order to collect input from impacted citizens and community leaders. Public meetings are publicized in coordination with impacted jurisdictions and feedback received, is collected and incorporated into the process of the Action Plans. In addition, the State will ensure that all grantees adhere to fair housing requirements and will capture, review, and maintain records of its status.

For the 2025 CDBG-DR Action Plan, one public hearing is required during the 30-day public comment period. All public hearings (whether in-person or virtual) will be held at a time and accessible location convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodations for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency (LEP). If the meetings are held virtually, ADFA will allow questions in real time, with answers coming directly from ADFA representatives to all attendees.

Contact Information: Citizens may make comments or request information regarding the Consolidated Planning process by mail, telephone, facsimile transmission, or email to the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA), 1 Commerce Way, Suite 602, Little Rock, Arkansas 72202, Tel. (501) 682-3339, TTY: 1-800-285-1131 or dial 711 for Arkansas Relay Service, Fax (501) 682-5939, email Lori.Brockway@Arkansas.gov

The State will respond to written comments as appropriate.

Encouragement of Citizen Participation and Outreach: The State will invite and encourage citizen participation in the Action Plan process with a focus on outreach to low- and moderate- income persons, racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English Proficiency.

Strategy: 1) The State will advertise opportunities for public participation in the Action Plan process through state, federal, local governments, tribal communities, public housing, housing-related service providers, for-profit developers, professional organizations, other known constituency groups, and citizens who have requested notification. 2) Additionally, the State will advertise through: Groups, organizations, agencies, and churches providing services to or advocating for low- and moderate-income persons, racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English Proficiency; 3) and Media sources that have direct contact with low- and moderate-income persons, racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English Proficiency.

The Arkansas Development Finance Authority, Federal Housing Programs, Disaster Division, administrates the CDBG-DR Programs, (<https://adfa.arkansas.gov/programs/community-development-block-grant-disaster-recovery-cdbg-dr/>), and is committed to ensuring that all populations impacted by Presidential Declared Disasters in Arkansas, are made aware of the programs to assist in recovery. Through outreach events, online and traditional media, the state has

publicized the programs and conducted outreach efforts throughout the disaster impacted areas.

Public Notice and Comment Period

A comment period of at least thirty (30) days, as required by HUD, shall be provided for citizens, affected local governments, and other interested parties an opportunity to comment on the Action Plan and substantial amendments to the Action Plan. Notices advertising the public comment period will be placed in statewide published daily newspapers.

In accordance with CDBG-DR requirements, the State of Arkansas has developed and will maintain a comprehensive website regarding all disaster recovery activities assisted with these funds. The State will post all Action Plans and amendments on the State's CDBG-DR website <https://adfa.arkansas.gov/programs/community-development-block-grant-disaster-recovery-cdbg-dr/> to give citizens an opportunity to read the plan and to submit comment(s). This website is featured prominently on, and is easily navigable from, the State's homepage <https://adfa.arkansas.gov/>.

Paper copies of the Action Plan will be available in both English (including large, 18pt type) and Spanish upon request.

Comments and complaints may be submitted as follows:

Written comments may be mailed to:

Lori Brockway, Manager
ADFA Federal Housing Programs
Disaster Division
1 Commerce Way, Suite 602
Little Rock, AR 72202

By telephone: (501) 682-5900, TTY: 1-800-285-1131 or dial 711 for Arkansas Relay Service, or Fax: (501) 682-5939, or Email: Lori.Brockway@Arkansas.gov .

At the end of the comment period, all comments shall be reviewed, and a State response will be incorporated into the document. A summary of the comments and the State's responses will be submitted to HUD with the Action Plan. The Action Plan and any amendments including public comments and responses will be posted on the State's CDBG-DR website.

Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Based on LEP data within the impacted areas collected by the State, both the instructions for commenting on, and access to, the Action Plan will be translated into Spanish, upon request. Comments will be accepted through the online commenting

form in English and Spanish. The State will make every possible effort to translate and consider comments submitted in any other language within the timeframe.

Persons with Disabilities

As noted above, hard copies of Action Plans will be available in large print format (18pt font size) at the location listed above. The online materials will also be accessible for the visually impaired. For more information on how people with disabilities can access and comment on the Action Plan, dial 1-800-285-1131.

Performance Review

The requirements for submission of a Performance Evaluation Report (PER) are waived for the CDBG-DR program. As an alternative, the State's Action Plan must be entered into HUD's Disaster Recovery Grant Reporting (DRGR) system. The State will submit a performance report in a form to be prescribed by HUD no later than thirty days following the end of each quarter, beginning after the first full calendar quarter after grants award and continuing until all funds have been expended. The quarterly reports shall use the DRGR system and be posted on the State's website within three days of submission.

Action Plan Amendments

In the case of amendments, the State of Arkansas will follow two alternative citizen participation processes.

A substantial amendment shall be defined as: a change in program benefit, beneficiary or eligibility criteria, the allocation or re-allocation 10 percent or more of the budget, or the addition or deletion of an activity. A substantial amendment requires a 30-day public comment period, but no public hearing.

For amendments considered to be non-substantial, the State shall notify HUD, but public comment is not required. Every amendment, substantial or not, shall be numbered sequentially and posted on the website.

Applicant Status

The usual methods of notifying citizen of their application status regarding CDBG-DR programs involves communicating through interviews, telephone, email and written. In addition to these very effective methods, the Arkansas CDBG-DR program will include a system where applicants will be able to access their status online.

The Final HUD-Approved Action Plan

Following HUD approval of the Action Plan or amendment(s), it will be posted on the State's CDBG-DR website. Copies of the Final Action Plan will also be made available upon request.

Complaints

ADFA will respond in writing to written citizen complaints about the Action Plan, Performance Report, and Substantial Amendments. Citizen complaints should be submitted to the Arkansas Development Finance Authority. Complaints may also be received verbally, and by other means, as necessary where ADFA determines that a citizen is not reasonably able to submit a written complaint due to a physical or intellectual impairment. In these instances, ADFA may convert these complaints into written form.

ADFA will respond to complaints within fifteen (15) working days, where practicable. Complaints may be submitted as follows:

Lori Brockway, Manager
ADFA Federal Housing Programs
Disaster Division
1 Commerce Way, Suite 602
Little Rock, AR 72202

Complaints may also be submitted by email to: Lori.Brockway@Arkansas.gov.

The state will execute its Appeals Process in response to complaints and will require grantees to adopt a similar process that weighs complaints through an unbiased process of the citizen's peers. The process will be tiered whereby applicants will be able to appeal a decision and receive further review from another level.

If you need assistance in filing a written complaint, you may contact Lori Brockway, at 501-682-3339.

Any person that feels that the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000(d) and Executive Order 13166 regulations were not complied with may file a complaint directly to the Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the following links (or as otherwise directed):

FORT WORTH REGIONAL OFFICE U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Southwest Office 801 Cherry St., Unit 45, Suite 2500 Fort Worth, TX 76102	Garry Sweeney, Regional Director	(817) 978-5868 Fax: (817) 978-5876
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Or Contact (888) 560-8913 and for the hearing impaired, please call TTY (800) 927-9275.

The Arkansas Fair Housing Commission can be reached toll-free at (800) 340-9108.

Local Government Subrecipient Citizen Participation requirements

Citizen participation requirements of a unit of general local government. Each unit of general local government shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Provide for and encourage citizen participation, particularly by low and moderate income persons who reside in slum or blighted areas and areas in which CDBG-DR funds are proposed to be used;
- (2) Ensure that residents will be given reasonable and timely access to local meetings, consistent with accessibility and reasonable accommodation requirements in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the regulations at 24 CFR part 8, and the Americans with Disabilities Act and the regulations at 28 CFR parts 35 and 36, as applicable, as well as information and records relating to the unit of local government's proposed and actual use of CDBG-DR funds;
- (3) Furnish citizens information, including but not limited to:
 - (i) The amount of CDBG-DR funds expected to be made available for the current fiscal year (including the grant and anticipated program income);
 - (ii) The range of activities that may be undertaken with the CDBG-DR funds;
 - (iii) The estimated amount of the CDBG-DR funds proposed to be used for activities that will meet the national objective of benefit to low and moderate income persons; and
 - (iv) The proposed CDBG-DR activities likely to result in displacement and the unit of general local government's antidisplacement and relocation plans.
- (4) Provide for a minimum of two public hearings, each at a different stage of the program, for the purpose of obtaining residents' views and responding to proposals and questions. Together the hearings must cover community development and housing needs (including affirmatively furthering fair housing), development of proposed activities, and a review of program performance. The public hearings to cover community development and housing needs must be held before submission of an application to the State. There must be reasonable notice of the hearings and they must be held at times and accessible locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with accommodations for persons with disabilities. Public hearings shall be conducted in a manner to meet the needs of non-English speaking residents where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can reasonably be expected to participate;
- (5) Provide citizens with reasonable advance notice of, and opportunity to comment on, proposed activities in an application to the state and, for grants already made, activities which are proposed to be added, deleted or substantially changed from the unit of general local government's application to the state. Substantially changed means changes made in terms of purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries as defined by criteria established by the state.
- (6) Provide citizens the address, phone number, and times for submitting complaints and grievances, and provide timely written answers to written complaints and grievances, within 15 working days where practicable.