

Amortization (Yrs.)	Points
40 .....	20
At least 35 .....	15
At least 30 .....	10
At least 20 .....	5
Less than 20 .....	0

### VII. Additional Information

#### A. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The lender will provide the applicant's completed Form RD 1940-20, "Request for Environmental Information," available by contacting the Rural Development State Environmental Coordinator (SEC) at any RD State office and submit it with the NOFA response. A description of any known environmental issues that may affect the project must also be included. This step is necessary in order for the NOFA response to be complete.

The Agency's environmental review of the property, as required under NEPA and 7 CFR part 1940, subpart G will be initiated as early as possible, but no later than the selection of the proposal for further processing. This environmental impact review must be completed prior to the Agency's issuance of a conditional commitment. The environmental review is considered complete when the environmental documents have been properly executed, when all applicable public notices have been published, the associated public comment periods have expired, and the Agency has taken any necessary actions to address the comments received.

Lenders have a responsibility to become familiar with Federal environmental requirements so that they can advise applicants and reduce the probability of unacceptable NOFA responses being submitted to the Agency. Lenders are also expected to cooperate in the collection of any environmental data which the Agency determines is necessary and in the resolution of potential environmental problems.

#### B. Surcharges for Guarantee of Construction Advances

There is no surcharge for guarantee of construction advances for FY 2000.

#### C. Maximum Interest Rate

The maximum allowable interest rate on a loan submitted for a guarantee is 250 basis points over the 30-year Treasury Bond Yield as published in the Wall Street Journal as of the business day prior to the business day the rate is set.

#### D. Program Fees for FY 2000

(1) There is an initial guarantee fee of 1% of the total guarantee amount which will be due when the loan guarantee is issued. For purposes of calculating this fee, the guarantee amount is the product of the percentage of the guarantee times the initial principal amount of the guaranteed loan.

(2) There is an annual renewal fee of 0.5% of the guaranteed outstanding principal balance charged each year or portion of the year that the guarantee is in effect. This fee will be collected prospectively on January 1, of the calendar year.

(3) There is no site assessment and market analysis or preliminary feasibility fee in FY 2000.

(4) There is a non-refundable application fee of \$2,500 when the application is submitted following proposal selection under the NOFA.

(5) There is no lender application fee for lender approval in FY 2000.

(6) There is a flat fee of \$500 when a lender requests RHS to extend the term of a guarantee commitment.

(7) There is a flat fee of \$500 when a lender requests RHS to reopen a guarantee commitment after the period of the commitment lapses.

(8) There is a flat fee of \$1,250 when a lender requests RHS to approve the transfer of property and assumption of the loan to an eligible applicant.

Dated: December 10, 1999.

**Eileen M. Fitzgerald,**

*Acting Administrator, Rural Housing Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-32958 Filed 12-20-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-XV-U**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

#### Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program for Fiscal Year 2000

**AGENCY:** Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This NOFA announces the timeframe to submit applications for section 515 Rural Rental Housing (RRH) loan funds and section 521 Rental Assistance (RA) for new construction, including applications for the nonprofit set-aside for eligible nonprofit entities, the set-aside for the most Underserved Counties and Colonias (Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act), and the set-aside for Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/ECs) and Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP)

communities. This document describes the methodology that will be used to distribute funds, the application process, submission requirements, and areas of special emphasis or consideration.

**DATES:** The closing deadline for receipt of all applications, including those for the set-asides, in response to this NOFA is 5:00 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State office on February 22, 2000. The application closing deadline is firm as to date and hour. RHS will not consider any application that is received after the closing deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by a post office or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX) and postage due applications will not be accepted.

**ADDRESSES:** Applicants wishing to apply for assistance must contact the Rural Development State office serving the place in which they desire to submit an application for rural rental housing to receive further information and copies of the application package. Rural Development will date and time stamp incoming applications to evidence timely receipt, and, upon request, will provide the applicant with a written acknowledgment of receipt. A listing of Rural Development State offices, their addresses, telephone numbers, and person to contact follows:

**Note:** Telephone numbers listed are not toll-free.

Alabama State Office, Suite 601, Sterling Centre, 4121 Carmichael Road, Montgomery, AL 36106-3683, (334) 279-3455, TDD (334) 279-3495, James B. Harris

Alaska State Office, 800 West Evergreen, Suite 201, Palmer, AK 99645, (907) 745-2176, TDD (907) 745-6494, Ron Abbott

Arizona State Office, Phoenix Corporate Center, 3003 N. Central Ave., Suite 900, Phoenix, AZ 85012-2906, (602) 280-8765, TDD (602) 280-8706, Johnna Vargas

Arkansas State Office, 700 W. Capitol Ave., Rm. 3416, Little Rock, AR 72201-3225, (501) 301-3250, TDD (501) 301-3279, Cathy Jones

California State Office, 430 G Street, Agency 4169, Davis, CA 95616-4169, (530) 792-5819, TDD (530) 792-5848, Millie Manzanedo

Colorado State Office, 655 Parfet Street, Room E100, Lakewood, CO 80215, (303) 236-2801 (ext. 122), TDD (303) 236-1590, "Sam" Mitchell

Connecticut  
Served by Massachusetts State Office

Delaware and Maryland State Office, 5201 South Dupont Highway, PO Box 400, Camden, DE 19934-9998, (302) 697-4353, TDD (302) 697-4303, Pat Baker

- Florida & Virgin Islands State Office, 4440 N.W. 25th Place, PO Box 147010, Gainesville, FL 32614-7010, (352) 338-3465, TDD (352) 338-3499, Joseph P. Fritz
- Georgia State Office, Stephens Federal Building, 355 E. Hancock Avenue, Athens, GA 30601-2768, (706) 546-2164, TDD (706) 546-2034, Wayne Rogers
- Guam  
Served by Hawaii State Office
- Hawaii, Guam, & Western Pacific Territories State Office, Room 311, Federal Building, 154 Waiuanuenue Avenue, Hilo, HI 96720, (808) 933-8316, TDD (808) 933-8321, Abraham Kubo
- Idaho State Office, Suite A1, 9173 West Barnes Dr., Boise, ID 83709, (208) 378-5630, TDD (208) 378-5644, Roni Atkins
- Illinois State Office, Illini Plaza, Suite 103, 1817 South Neil Street, Champaign, IL 61820, (217) 398-5412 (ext. 256), TDD (217) 398-5396, Barry L. Ramsey
- Indiana State Office, 5975 Lakeside Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46278, (317) 290-3100 (ext. 423), TDD (317) 290-3343, John Young
- Iowa State Office, 873 Federal Building, 210 Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309, (515) 284-4493, TDD (515) 284-4858, Bruce McGuire
- Kansas State Office, 1200 SW Executive Drive, PO Box 4653, Topeka, KS 66604, (785) 271-2718, TDD (785) 271-2767, Gary Schumaker
- Kentucky State Office, 771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200, Lexington, KY 40503, (606) 224-2500, TDD (606) 224-7422, Paul Higgins
- Louisiana State Office, 3727 Government Street, Alexandria, LA 71302, (318) 473-7962, TDD (318) 473-7655 Yvonne R. Emerson
- Maine State Office, 444 Stillwater Ave., Suite 2, PO Box 405, Bangor, ME 04402-0405, (207) 990-9110, TDD (207) 942-7331, Dale D. Holmes
- Maryland  
Served by Delaware State Office
- Massachusetts, Connecticut, & Rhode Island State Office, 451 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002, (413) 253-4333, TDD (413) 253-7068, Donald Colburn
- Michigan State Office, 3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200, East Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 324-5192, TDD (517) 337-6795, Philip Wolak
- Minnesota State Office, 410 AgriBank Building, 375 Jackson Street, St. Paul, MN 55101-1853, (651) 602-7820, TDD (651) 602-3799, Jackie Goodnough
- Mississippi State Office, Federal Building, Suite 831, 100 W. Capitol Street, Jackson, MS 39269, (601) 965-4325, TDD (601) 965-5850, Danny Ivy
- Missouri State Office, 601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center, Suite 235, Columbia, MO 65203, (573) 876-0990, TDD (573) 876-9301, Gary Frisch
- Montana State Office, Unit 1, Suite B, 900 Technology Blvd., Bozeman, MT 59715, (406) 585-2515, TDD (406) 585-2562, MaryLou Affleck
- Nebraska State Office, Federal Building, room 152, 100 Centennial Mall N, Lincoln, NE 68508, (402) 437-5567, TDD (402) 437-5093, Byron Fischer
- Nevada State Office, 1390 South Curry Street, Carson City, NV 89703-9910, (775) 887-1222 (ext. 13), TDD (775) 885-0633, William L. Brewer
- New Hampshire State Office, Concord Center, Suite 218, Box 317, 10 Ferry Street, Concord, NH 03301-5004, (603) 223-6046, TDD (603) 229-0536, Jim Fowler
- New Jersey State Office, Tarnsfield Plaza, Suite 22, 790 Woodland Road, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060, (609) 265-3631, TDD (609) 265-3687, George Hyatt, Jr.
- New Mexico State Office, 6200 Jefferson St., NE, Room 255, Albuquerque, NM 87109, (505) 761-4944, TDD (505) 761-4938, Carmen N. Lopez
- New York State Office, The Galleries of Syracuse, 441 S. Salina Street, Suite 357, Syracuse, NY 13202, (315) 477-6419, TDD (315) 477-6447, George N. Von Pless
- North Carolina State Office, 4405 Bland Road, Suite 260, Raleigh, NC 27609, (919) 873-2062, TDD (919) 873-2003, Eileen Nowlin
- North Dakota State Office, Federal Building, Room 208, 220 East Rosser, PO Box 1737, Bismarck, ND 58502, (701) 530-2049, TDD (701) 530-2113, Kathy Lake
- Ohio State Office, Federal Building, Room 507, 200 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215-2477, (614) 469-5165, TDD (614) 469-5757, Gerald Arnett
- Oklahoma State Office, 100 USDA, Suite 108, Stillwater, OK 74074-2654, (405) 742-1070, TDD (405) 742-1007, Phil Reimers
- Oregon State Office, 101 SW Main, Suite 1410, Portland, OR 97204-3222, (503) 414-3325, TDD (503) 414-3387, Dan Streng
- Pennsylvania State Office, One Credit Union Place, Suite 330, Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996, (717) 237-2281, TDD (717) 237-2261, Gary Rothrock
- Puerto Rico State Office, New San Juan Office Bldg., Room 501, 159 Carlos E. Chardon Street, Hato Rey, PR 00918-5481, (787) 766-5095 (ext. 254), TDD 1-800-274-1572, Lourdes Colon
- Rhode Island  
Served by Massachusetts State Office
- South Carolina State Office, Strom Thurmond Federal Building, 1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007, Columbia, SC 29201, (803) 765-3432, TDD (803) 765-5697, Larry D. Floyd
- South Dakota State Office, Federal Building, Room 210, 200 Fourth Street, SW, Huron, SD 57350, (605) 352-1132, TDD (605) 352-1147, Dwight Wullweber
- Tennessee State Office, Suite 300, 3322 West End Avenue, Nashville, TN 37203-1084, (615) 783-1300, TDD (615) 783-1397, G. Benson Lasater
- Texas State Office, Federal Building, Suite 102, 101 South Main, Temple, TX 76501, (254) 742-9755, TDD (254) 742-9712, Eugene G. Pavlat
- Utah State Office, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 S. State Street, Room 4311, Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0350, (801) 524-4324, TDD (801) 524-3309, Robert L. Milianta
- Vermont State Office, City Center, 3rd Floor, 89 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 828-6028, TDD (802) 223-6365, Sandra Mercier
- Virgin Islands  
Served by Florida State Office
- Virginia State Office, Culpeper Building, Suite 238, 1606 Santa Rosa Road, Richmond, VA 23229, (804) 287-1582, TDD (804) 287-1753, Carlton Jarratt
- Washington State Office, Suite B, 1835 Black Lake Boulevard, SW, Olympia, WA 98512-5715, (360) 704-7707, TDD (360) 704-7760, Deborah Davis
- Western Pacific Territories  
Served by Hawaii State Office
- West Virginia State Office, Federal Building, 75 High Street, Room 320, Morgantown, WV 26505-7500, (304) 291-4793, TDD (304) 284-5941, Sue Snodgrass
- Wisconsin State Office, 4949 Kirschling Court, Stevens Point, WI 54481, (715) 345-7620 (ext. 7145), TDD (715) 345-7614, Sherry Engel
- Wyoming State Office, 100 East B, Federal Building, Room 1005, PO Box 820, Casper, WY 82602, (307) 261-6315, TDD (307) 261-6333, Charles Huff

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For general information, applicants may contact Linda Armour, Senior Loan Officer, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Housing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Stop 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20250, telephone (202) 720-1753 (voice) (this is not a toll free number) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Programs Affected**

The Rural Rental Housing program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under Number 10.415, Rural Rental Housing Loans. Rental Assistance is listed in the Catalog under Number 10.427, Rural Rental Assistance Payments.

**Explanation of 60-Day NOFA Application Deadline**

The Agency is using a 60-day application period so that the NOFA process will coincide with the time constraints placed upon our customers by participating lenders and state housing finance agencies (SHFA). Participating lenders such as commercial banks leverage their funds with RHS funds. State organizations can provide Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and HOME funds as another means of leveraging RHS funds, and SHFAs have certain timeframes whereby applicants can apply for tax credits. Therefore, to assist as many of our customers as possible in obtaining leveraged funds and to participate with

other funding sources, a 60-day application period is provided.

**Discussion of Notice**

*I. Authority and Distribution*

*Methodology*

**A. Authority**

Section 515 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1485) provides RHS with the authority to make loans to any individual, corporation, association, trust, Indian tribe, public or private nonprofit organization, consumer cooperative, or partnership to provide rental or cooperative housing and related facilities in rural areas for very-low, low, or moderate income persons or families, including elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Rental assistance (RA) is a tenant subsidy for very-low and low-income families residing in rural rental housing facilities with RHS financing and may be requested with applications for such facilities.

**B. Distribution Methodology**

The total amount available for FY 2000 for section 515 is \$114,322,076, of which \$49,783,694 is available for new construction as follows:

Section 515 new construction funds .....	\$ 22,500,000
Set-aside for nonprofits .....	\$ 10,288,987
Set-aside for Underserved Counties and Colonias .....	\$ 5,716,104
Set-aside for EZ, EC, and REAP zones .....	9,778,603
State Rental Assistance (RA) designated reserve .....	\$ 1,500,000

**C. Section 515 New Construction Funds**

For fiscal year 2000, the Administrator has determined that it would not be practical to allocate funds to States because of funding limitations; therefore, section 515 new construction funds will be distributed to States based on a National competition, as follows:

1. States will accept, review, score, and rank requests in accordance with 7 CFR part 1944, subpart E. The scoring factors are:

(a) The presence and extent of leveraged assistance for the units that will serve RHS income-eligible tenants at basic rents comparable to those if RHS provided full financing, computed as a percentage of the RHS total development cost (TDC). RHS TDC excludes non-RHS eligible costs such as a developer's fee. Points will be awarded in accordance with the following table. (0 to 20 points)

Percentage of leveraging	Points
75 or more .....	20
70-74 .....	19

Percentage of leveraging	Points
65-69 .....	18
60-64 .....	17
55-59 .....	16
50-54 .....	15
45-49 .....	14
40-44 .....	13
35-39 .....	12
30-34 .....	11
25-29 .....	10
20-24 .....	9
15-19 .....	8
10-14 .....	7
5-9 .....	6
0-4 .....	5

(b) The units to be developed are in a colonia, tribal land, EZ, EC, or REAP community, or in a place identified in the State Consolidated Plan or State Needs Assessment as a high need community for multifamily housing. (20 points)

(c) In states where RHS has an ongoing formal working relationship, agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State to provide State resources (State funds, State RA, HOME funds, CDBG funds, or Low-Income Housing Tax Credits) for RHS proposals; or where the State provides preference or points to RHS proposals in awarding such State resources, 20 points will be provided to loan requests that include such State resources. (National office initiative)

(d) The loan request includes donated land meeting the provisions of 7 CFR 1944.215(r)(4). (5 points)

2. The National office will rank all requests nationwide and distribute funds to States in rank order, within funding and RA limits. If insufficient funds or RA remain for the next ranked proposal, the Agency will select the next ranked proposal that falls within the remaining levels.

**D. Applications That Do Not Require New Construction Rental Assistance (RA)**

For fiscal year 2000, limited new construction RA is available. Therefore, the Agency is inviting applications to develop units in markets that do not require RA. The market study for non-RA proposals must clearly demonstrate a need and demand for the units by prospective tenants at income levels that can support the proposed rents without tenant subsidies. The proposed units must offer amenities that are typical for the market area at rents that are comparable to conventional rents in the market for similar units.

**E. Set-asides**

Loan requests will be accepted for the following set-asides:

1. *Nonprofit set-aside.* An amount of \$10,288,987 has been set aside for nonprofit applicants. All loan proposals must be in designated places in accordance with 7 CFR part 1944, subpart E. A State or jurisdiction may receive one proposal from this set-aside, which cannot exceed \$1 million. A State could get additional funds from this set-aside if any funds remain after funding one proposal from each participating State. If there are insufficient funds to fund one loan request from each participating State, selection will be made by point score. If there are any funds remaining, they will revert to the National office reserve. Funds from this set-aside will be available only to nonprofit entities, which may include a partnership that has as its general partner a nonprofit entity or the nonprofit entity's for-profit subsidiary which will be receiving low-income housing tax credits authorized under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. To be eligible for this set-aside, the nonprofit entity must be an organization that:

(a) Will own an interest in the project to be financed and will materially participate in the development and the operations of the project;

(b) Is a private organization that has nonprofit, tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) or section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(c) Has among its purposes the planning, development, or management of low-income housing or community development projects; and

(d) Is not affiliated with or controlled by a for-profit organization.

2. *Underserved counties and colonias set-aside.* An amount of \$5,716,104 has been set aside for loan requests to develop units in the 100 most needy underserved counties or colonias as defined in section 509(f) of the Housing Act of 1949.

3. *EZ, EC, and REAP set-aside.* An amount of \$9,778,603 has been set aside to develop units in EZ, EC, or REAP communities. Loan requests that are eligible for this set-aside may also be eligible for regular section 515 funds as a high-need community. The state must indicate on the list submitted to the National office if the request is eligible for the EZ, EC, and REAP set-aside and regular section 515 funds. If requests for this set-aside exceed available funds, selection will be made by point score.

**F. Prior Year Applications**

The Rural Housing Service published a final rule in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 67216) on December 23, 1997 outlining its application and review process for section 515 Rural Rental

Housing new construction program. The implementation proposal for those regulations provided that some applicants who filed acceptable loan requests in prior years could proceed with their loan requests provided they were in compliance with the newly published regulations, until the beginning of FY 2000. Therefore, effective this fiscal year, prior year applications will no longer be processed. All loan requests must be submitted under this NOFA.

## II. Funding Limits

A. Individual loan requests may not exceed \$1 million. This applies to regular section 515 funds and set-aside funds. The Administrator may make an exception to this limit in cases where a State's average total development costs exceed the National average by 50 percent or more.

B. No State may receive more than \$2.5 million from regular section 515 funds. Reserve funds, including set-aside funds, are not included in this cap.

## III. Rental Assistance (RA)

New construction RA will be held in the National office for use with section 515 Rural Rental Housing loans. RA may be requested by applicants, except for non-RA requests in accordance with section I.D. above.

## IV. Application Process

All applications for section 515 new construction funds must be filed with the appropriate Rural Development State office and must meet the requirements of 7 CFR part 1944, subpart E and section V of this NOFA. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and will be returned to the applicant. No application will be accepted after 5:00 p.m., local time, on the application deadline previously mentioned unless that date and time is extended by a Notice published in the **Federal Register**.

## V. Application Submission Requirements

A. Each application shall include all of the information, materials, forms and exhibits required by 7 CFR part 1944, subpart E as well as comply with the provisions of this NOFA. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to include a checklist and to have their applications indexed and tabbed to facilitate the review process. The Rural Development State office will base its determination of completeness of the application and the eligibility of each applicant on the information provided in the application.

B. Applicants are advised to contact the Rural Development State office serving the place in which they desire to submit an application for the following:

1. Application information;
2. Any restrictions on funding availability (applications that exceed the National limit of \$1 million will be returned to the applicant); and
3. List of designated places for which applications for new section 515 facilities may be submitted.

## VI. Areas of Special Emphasis or Consideration

A. The selection criteria contained in 7 CFR part 1944, subpart E includes two optional criteria, one set by the National office and one by the State office. This fiscal year, the National office initiative will be used in the selection criteria as follows: In states where RHS has an ongoing formal working relationship, agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State to provide State resources (State funds, State RA, HOME funds, CDBG funds, or LIHTC) for RHS proposals; or where the State provides preference or points to RHS proposals in awarding these State Resources, 20 points will be provided to loan requests that include such State resources. No State selection criteria will be used this fiscal year.

B. \$10,288,987 is available nationwide in a set-aside for eligible nonprofit organizations as defined in 42 U.S.C. 1485(w).

C. \$5,716,104 is available nationwide in a set-aside for the 100 most Underserved Counties and Colonias.

D. \$9,778,603 is available nationwide in a set-aside for EZ, EC, and REAP communities.

E. \$1,500,000 million is available nationwide in a set-aside for States with viable State Rental Assistance (RA) programs. In order to participate, States are to submit specific written information about the State RA program, *i.e.*, a memorandum of understanding, documentation from the provider, etc., to the National office.

Dated: December 10, 1999.

**Eileen M. Fitzgerald,**

*Acting Administrator, Rural Housing Service.*

[FR Doc. 99-32959 Filed 12-20-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-XV-U**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

#### Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) For Section 533 Housing Preservation Grants

**AGENCY:** Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Housing Service (RHS) announces that it is soliciting competitive applications under its Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) program. The HPG program is a grant program which provides qualified public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, and other eligible entities grant funds to assist very low- and low-income homeowners repair and rehabilitate their homes in rural areas, and to assist rental property owners and cooperative housing complexes to repair and rehabilitate their units if they agree to make such units available to low- and very low-income persons. This action is taken to comply with Agency regulations found in 7 CFR part 1944, subpart N, which requires the Agency to announce the opening and closing dates for receipt of preapplications for HPG funds from eligible applicants. The intended effect of this Notice is to provide eligible organizations notice of these dates.

**DATES:** The closing deadline for receipt of all applications in response to this NOFA is 5:00 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State office on March 22, 2000. The application closing deadline is firm as to date and hour. RHS will not consider any application that is received after the closing deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by a post office or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX) and postage due applications will not be accepted.

**ADDRESSES:** Applicants wishing to apply for assistance must contact the Rural Development State office serving the place in which they desire to submit an application to receive further information and copies of the application package. Rural Development will date and time stamp incoming applications to evidence timely receipt, and, upon request, will provide the applicant with a written acknowledgment of receipt. A listing of Rural Development State offices, their addresses, telephone numbers, and person to contact follows: