

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Rural Development Removes Harmful DEIA Scoring Criteria from 14 Programs

WASHINGTON, Mar. 25, 2025 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development has amended fourteen program funding opportunities to remove harmful DEIA scoring criteria. The overhaul brings these programs into compliance with <u>Executive Order 14151, Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI</u>

Programs And Preferencing, issued on January 20, 2025.

USDA Rural Development will not consider previous Administration DEIA-based "key priorities" and discretionary points while scoring applications submitted under the following programs: Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program, High Energy Cost Grant Program, Decentralized Water System Grant Program, Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Loans & Grants, Rural Energy for America Program Energy Audit & Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grants, Rural Business Development Grant Program, Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program, Rural Business Development Grant Program to Provide Technical Assistance for Rural Transportation, Timber Production Expansion Guaranteed Loan Program, Intermediate Relending Program, Guarantees for Bonds and Notes Issued for Utility Infrastructure Purposes Program (313 A), Community Connect Grant Program, Calendar year 2022 Disaster Water Grant Program and the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program.

Applicants who have already submitted their applications for any of the fourteen amended programs do not need to withdraw, submit a new or revised application or supplement their application to be considered for funding. However, applicants applying for a program for which the application deadline has not passed may voluntarily withdraw, resubmit or supplement their application before the deadline has passed and still be considered for funding.

For additional information, see the March 25, 2025, Federal Register Notice.

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