

Lee County Section 3 Plan

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Overview of Requirements	3
a) What is Section 3?	3
b) Purpose of the Plan	3
c) Applicability	3
Section 3 Coordinator	4
Employment, Training, and Contracting Goals	4
a) Safe Harbor Compliance	4
b) Safe Harbor Benchmarks	4
c) Certification of Prioritization of Effort	5
Section 3 Eligibility and Certifications	6
a) Section 3 Worker and Targeted Section 3 Worker Certif	ication6
b) Section 3 Business Concern Certification	7
Assisting Contractors with Achieving Section 3	7
Section 3 Outreach	8
a) Employment and Training	8
b) Contracting	9
Section 3 Contracting Policy and Procedure	9
Section 3 Provisions / Contract Language	10
Reporting Requirements	10
a) Monthly Reporting	10
b) Annual Reporting	10
c) Reporting on Multiple Funding Sources	10
Internal Section 3 Complaing Procedure	11
Appendices	12
Appendix A: Definitions	
Appendix B: Multiple Funding Sources	



Overview of Section 3 Requirements

A. What is Section 3?

Section 3 is a provision of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. 1701u) that is regulated by the provisions of 24 CFR 75. Section 3 regulations ensure that employment and other economic opportunities generated by certain HUD financial assistance shall, to the greatest extent feasible, and consistent with existing Federal, State and local laws and regulations, be directed to lowand very low-income persons, particularly those who are recipients of government assistance for housing, and to business concerns which provide economic opportunities to low- and very low-income persons.

B. Purpose of Plan

This plan outlines how Lee County and its subrecipients, contractors and subcontractors will comply with HUD's Section 3 requirements in implementing all of Lee County's HUD funded programs. Lee County will, to the greatest extent feasible, ensure that employment and other economic opportunities are directed to low- and very low-income persons (Section 3 workers and Targeted Section 3 workers) and to eligible businesses (Section 3 Businesses) and requires the same of its contractors.

Lee County may amend its Section 3 Policies and Procedures document as necessary to ensure continued compliance with HUD's requirements and/or to reflect updated Section 3 guidance and outreach strategies.

C. Applicability

For housing and community development financial assistance, this plan applies to housing rehabilitation, housing construction, and other public construction projects that exceed \$200,000 or more of housing and community development financial assistance from one or more HUD programs. Applicability is determined at the project level.

For public housing financial assistance, all funding is covered, regardless of the amount of expenditure or size of a contract. This plan applies to development assistance, operating funds, capital funds, and all mixed-finance development.

For projects funded with Lead and Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Programs, this plan applies to projects that exceed \$100,000.

This plan also applies to projects that include multiple funding sources. Multiple funding source projects include projects that include public housing financial assistance, housing and community development financial assistance for single or multiple recipients, and the Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Program.

Section 3 requirements do not apply to: 1) Material Supply Contracts - § 75.3(b), 2) Indian and Tribal Preferences - § 75.3(c), and 3) Other HUD assistance and other Federal assistance not subject to Section 3 §75.3 (d). However, for financial assistance that is not subject to Section 3, recipients are encouraged to consider ways to support the purpose of Section 3.



Section 3 Coordinator

Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator serves as the central point of contact for Section 3 compliance for Lee County and its subrecipients, contractors, and subcontractors supporting the program. Subrecipients, contractors, subcontractors and others are encouraged to reach out to Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator with questions regarding Section 3 compliance:

Clare Molloy

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Employment, Training, and Contracting Goals

A. Safe Harbor Compliance

Lee County will be considered to have complied with the Section 3 requirements and met safe harbor, if they certify that they followed the required prioritization of effort and met or exceeded the Section 3 benchmarks, absent evidence of the contrary.

Prior to the beginning of work, contractors and subcontractors will be required to certify that they will follow the required prioritization of effort for Section 3 workers, Targeted Section 3 workers, and Section 3 business concerns as outlined below in section C. After completion of the project, on the Section 3 Cumulative Report, contractors and subcontractors will be required to certify that they followed the prioritization of effort requirements.

If the contractor and subcontractor does not meet the safe harbor requirements, they must provide evidence that they have made qualitative efforts to assist low and very low-income persons with employment and training opportunities.

B. Safe Harbor Compliance

Lee County has established employment and training goals that subrecipients, contractors, and subcontractors should meet in order to comply with Section 3 requirements outlined in 24 CFR Part 75.19. The safe harbor benchmark goals are as follows:

1) Twenty-five (25) percent or more of the total number of labor hours worked by all workers on a Section 3 project are Section 3 workers;

Section 3 Labor Hours/Total Labor Hours = 25%

And

2) Five (5) percent or more of the total number of labor hours worked by all workers on a Section 3 project are Targeted Section 3 workers, as defined at 24 CFR Part 75.21.

Targeted Section 3 Labor Hours/Total Labor Hours = 5%



HUD establishes and updates Section 3 benchmarks for Section 3 workers and/or Targeted Section 3 workers through a document published in the Federal Register, not less frequently than once every 3 years. Given that the Section 3 benchmarks are subject to change every three years or sooner, Lee County will review and update the Section 3 Plan every 3 years as needed.

It is the responsibility of contractors to implement efforts to achieve Section 3 compliance. Any contractor that does not meet the Section 3 benchmarks must demonstrate why meeting the benchmarks were not feasible. All contractors submitting bids or proposals to Lee County are required to certify that they will comply with the requirements of Section 3.

C. Certification of Prioritization of Effort

Employment and Training

Under Lee County's Section 3 contractors and subcontractors should make best efforts to provide employment and training opportunities to Section 3 workers within the metropolitan area (or non-metropolitan county) in which the project is located in the priority order listed below:

- 1) Section 3 workers residing within the service area or the neighborhood of the project, and
- 2) Participants in YouthBuild programs.

Contractors and subcontractors will be required to certify that they will and have made best efforts to follow the prioritization of effort requirements prior to the beginning work and after work is completed.

Contracting

Under Lee County's Section 3 Program, contractors and subcontractors must make their best efforts to award contracts and subcontracts to business concerns that provide economic opportunities to Section 3 workers in the following order or priority:

- 1) Business concerns that provide economic opportunities to Section 3 workers residing within the metropolitan area (or non-metropolitan county) in which assistance is located in the following order of priority (where feasible):
 - a. Section 3 business concerns that provide economic opportunities to Section 3 workers residing within the service area or the neighborhood of the project; and
 - b. YouthBuild programs.

Contractors and subcontractors will be required to certify that they will and have made best efforts to follow the prioritization of effort requirements prior to the beginning work and after work is completed.



Section 3 Eligibility and Certifications

Individuals and businesses that meet Section 3 criteria may seek Section 3 preference from Lee County or its contractors / subcontractors for training, employment, or contracting opportunities generated by housing and community development financial assistance. To qualify as a Section 3 worker, Targeted Section 3 worker or a Section 3 business concern, each must self-certify that they meet the applicable criteria.

Businesses who misrepresent themselves as Section 3 business concerns and report false information to Lee County may have their contracts terminated as default and be barred from ongoing and future considerations for contracting opportunities.

A. Section 3 Worker & Targeted Section 3 Worker

A Section 3 worker seeking certification shall submit self-certification documentation to the recipient contractor or subcontractor, that the person is a Section 3 worker or Targeted Section 3 worker as defined in 24 CFR Part 75. For the purposes of Section 3 worker eligibility, Lee County will use individual income rather than family/household income to determine eligibility. The income limits will be determined annually using the guidelines published https://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html.

Persons seeking the Section 3 worker preference shall demonstrate that it meets one or more of the following criteria currently or when hired within the past five years, as documented:

- 1) A low or very low-income resident (the worker's income for the previous or annualized calendar year is below the income limit established by HUD); or
- 2) Employed by a Section 3 business concern; or
- 3) A YouthBuild participant.

Persons seeking the Targeted Section 3 worker preference shall demonstrate that it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- 1) Employed by a Section 3 business concern or
- 2) Currently meets or when hired met at least one of the following categories as documented within the past five years:
 - a. Living within the service area or the neighborhood of the project, as defined in 24 CFR Part 75.5; or
 - b. A YouthBuild participant

Section 3 workers and Targeted Section 3 workers who are seeking preference in training and employment must submit the Section 3 Worker and Targeted Section 3 Worker Certification Form. The certification procedure is available through the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Myers.



B. Section 3 Business Concern Certification

Lee County should encourage contractors and subcontractors to make best efforts to award contracts and subcontracts to Section 3 business concerns.

Businesses that believe they meet the Section 3 Business requirements can may self-register in the HUD Business registry, here: http://www.hud.gov/Sec3Biz. Businesses may seek Section 3 Business Concern preference by demonstrating that it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- At least 51 percent of the business is owned and controlled by low- or very low-income persons;
 or
- 2) At least 51 percent of the business is owned and controlled by current public housing residents or residents who currently live in Section 8-assisted housing; or
- 3) Over 75 percent of the labor hours performed for the business over the prior three-month period are performed by Section 3 workers.

Businesses that seek Section 3 preference shall certify, or demonstrate to Lee County, contractors or subcontractors, that they meet the definitions provided in the above. Businesses may demonstrate eligibility by submitting the Section 3 Business Concern Certification Form, located in the bid packet.

Section 3 Business Concern Certification Forms must be submitted at the time of bid/proposal. If the Lee County previously approved the business concern to be Section 3 certified, then the certification can be submitted along with the bid, as long as the form is submitted within the prescribed expiration date. The Section 3 Business Concern Certification Form will expire after 36 months. Establishing a 36 month certification of eligibility period allows Lee County the ability to assess contractor performance to ensure the business is striving to meet the required goals.

Assisting Contractors with Achieving Section 3 Goals

In an effort to assist contractors with meeting or exceeding the Section 3 goals, Lee County will do the following:

- 1) Share Section 3 Plan with contractors and subcontractors and explain policies and procedures
- 2) Require contractors wishing to submit a bid/offer/proposal to attend pre-bid meeting
- 3) Require contractor to sign the Section 3 Plan at pre-construction conference
- 4) Review Section 3 benchmarks and prioritization of effort with contractors and subcontractors to ensure that the goals are understood. It is not intended for contractors and subcontractors to terminate existing employees, but to make every effort feasible to meet Section 3 benchmark goals by utilizing existing qualified workforce and by considering qualified eligible Section 3 workers and Targeted Section 3 workers (per the prioritization of effort outlined in Section #3) before any other person, when hiring additional employees is needed to complete proposed work to be performed with HUD Funded Projects.
- 5) At the time of bid, require the contractor to present a list, of the number of total labor hours, Section 3 worker labor hours, and Targeted Section 3 worker labor hours expected to be generated from the initial contract and a list of projected number of available positions, to include job descriptions and wage rates.



- 6) Maintain a local Section 3 worker/Targeted Section 3 worker database and provide the contractor with a list of interested and qualified Section 3 workers and Targeted Section 3 workers and contact information.
- 7) Inform contractors about the HUD Section 3 Opportunity Portal https://hudapps.hud.gov/OpportunityPortal/
- 8) Require contractors to notify Section 3 Coordinator of their interests regarding employment of Section 3 workers prior to hiring.
- 9) Encourage local business to register on the HUD Business Registry and direct contractors to the HUD Section 3 Business Registry https://www.hud.gov/section3businessregistry
- 10) Leverage Lee County 's communication outlets (social media, website, etc.) to effectively communicate employment and contracting opportunities that arise.
- 11) Require contractors to submit a list of core employees (including administrative, clerical, planning and other positions pertinent to the construction trades) at the time of contact award.

Section 3 Outreach

A. Employment and Training Efforts

In order to educate and inform workers and contractors, Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator will be prepared to provide training and technical assistance on a regular basis per program guidelines. When training opportunities are available, contractors and subcontractors should, to the greatest extent feasible:

- 1) Notify the Section 3 Coordinator when training opportunities are available
- 2) Provide information/handouts about Section 3 training opportunities to potential Section 3 workers and Targeted Section 3 workers
- 3) Conduct an annual training for Section 3 workers and Section 3 businesses

Contractors and subcontractors should employ several active strategies to notify Section 3 workers and Targeted Section 3 workers of Section 3 job opportunities, including:

- 1) Clearly indicating Section 3 eligibility on all job postings with the following statement: "This job is a Section 3 eligible job opportunity. We encourage applications from individuals that are low income and/or live in Public Housing and/or receive a Section 8 voucher";
- Including the Section 3 Worker and Targeted Section 3 Worker Self-Certification Form in all job postings
- 3) Working with the Section 3 Coordinator to connect Section 3 worker and Targeted Section 3 workers in the Lee County database with opportunities and/or utilize the Section 3 Opportunity Portal to find qualified candidates
- 4) Establishing a current list of Section 3 eligible applicants
- Contacting local community organizations and provide them with job postings for Section 3 eligible applicants; and
- 6) Coordinating a programmatic ad campaign, which results in widespread job posting across diverse ad networks including:
 - a. Advertising job opportunities via social media, including LinkedIn and Facebook;



- b. Advertising job opportunities via flyer distributions and mass mailings and posting ad in common areas of housing developments and all public housing management offices
- Contacting resident councils, resident management corporations, and neighborhood community organizations to request their assistance in notifying residents of available training and employment opportunities

B. Contracting Efforts

When contracting opportunities arise in connection with HUD funded programs, Lee County will employ the following strategies to notify Section 3 Business Concerns of Section 3 contracting opportunities, including but not limited to:

- 1) Adding Section 3 language to all RFPs, procurement documents, bid offerings and contracts.
- 2) Coordinating pre-bid meetings to inform Section 3 Business Concerns of upcoming contracting opportunities. The Section 3 Coordinator will participate in these meetings to explain and answer questions related to Section 3 policy.
- Advertising contracting opportunities in local community papers and notices that provide general information about the work to be contracted and where to obtain additional information.
- 4) Providing written notice of contracting opportunities to all known Section 3 Business Concerns. The written notice will be provided in sufficient time to enable business concerns the opportunity to respond to bid invitations.
- 5) Coordinating with the prime contractor to publicize contracting opportunities for small businesses.
- 6) Coordinating with Lee County's Business/Economic Development Department and all other business assistance agencies and contractor associations to inform them of contracting opportunities and request their assistance in identifying Section 3 business concerns. Could include local community development organizations, business development agencies (Chamber of Commerce), and minority contracting associations.
- 7) Connecting Section 3 business concerns with resources to support business development to assist in obtaining contracting opportunities (e.g., bonding and insurance assistance, etc.). Contractors will also be encouraged to collaborate with Lee County as subcontract opportunities arise in an effort to notify eligible Section 3 business concerns about the contracting opportunities.

Section 3 Contracting Policy & Procedure

Lee County will incorporate Section 3 in its existing Procurement Policy and adopt a Section 3 Contracting Policy and Procedure to be included in all procurements generated for use with HUD funding. This policy and procedure contain requirements for making efforts to award contracts to Section 3 Business Concerns. All contractors/businesses seeking Section 3 preference must, before submitting bids/proposals to Lee County be required to complete certifications, as appropriate. Such certifications shall be adequately supported with appropriate documentation as referenced in the Section 3 Business Concern Certification Form.



Section 3 Provisions & Contract Language

Lee County will include standard Section 3 language in all of its contracts to ensure compliance with regulations in 24 CFR Part 75. Lee County will take appropriate actions upon finding that a contractor is in violation of 24 CFR Part 75 and does not knowingly contract with any contractor that has been found in violation of the Section 3 regulations. On a periodic basis the Section 3 Coordinator will audit Lee County contractors for compliance with the minimum Section 3 requirements outlined in the Section 3 Plan.

In addition, contractors and subrecipients are required to include language in all Section 3 covered contracts or agreements for subcontractors to meet the requirements of 24 CFR Part 75.19.

For businesses, noncompliance with HUD's regulations in 24 CFR part 75 may result in sanctions, termination of this contract for default, and debarment or suspension from future HUD assisted contracts.

Reporting Requirements

For Section 3 covered contracts, contractors must submit the Section 3 Performance and Summary Report to Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator on a monthly basis, and the annual reporting requirement set forth in that form's instructions.

A. Monthly Reporting

Contractors are required to submit monthly activity reports to Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator, CMolloy@leegov.com, by the 5 day of each month.

B. Annual Reporting

- 1) Once a project is completed, contractors must submit a final Section 3 cumulative report for the program year.
- 2) Upon the completion of a project, Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator will conduct a final review of the project's overall performance and compliance.
- 3) Lee County's Section 3 Coordinator will submit the Section 3 data into IDIS.

C. Reporting on Multiple Funding Sources

- 1) For Section 3 projects that include public housing financial assistance and housing and community development financial assistance, Lee County and any public housing authority will report on the project as a whole and will identify the multiple associated recipients.
- 2) For projects assisted with funding from multiple sources of housing and community development assistance that exceed the thresholds of \$200,000 and \$100,000 for Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Programs (LHCHH), Lee County will follow subpart C of Part 75 and will report to the applicable HUD program office, as prescribed by HUD.

Note: LHCHH assistance is not included in calculating whether the assistance exceeds the \$200,000 threshold. HUD public housing financial assistance and HUD housing and community development financial assistance is not included in calculating whether the assistance exceeds the LHCHH \$100,000 threshold. Refer to chart in Appendix B.



Internal Section 3 Complaint Procedure

In an effort to resolve complaints generated due to non-compliance through an internal process, Lee County encourages submittal of such complaints to its Section 3 Coordinator as follows:

- 1) Complaints of non-compliance should be filed in writing and must contain the name of the complainant and brief description of the alleged violation of 24 CFR Part 75.
- 2) Complaints must be filed within seven (7) calendar days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation.
- 3) An investigation will be conducted if complaint is found to be valid. Lee County will conduct an informal, but thorough investigation affording all interested parties, if any, an opportunity to submit testimony and/or evidence pertinent to the complaint.
- 4) Lee County will provide written documentation detailing the findings of the investigation. Lee County will review the findings for accuracy and completeness before it is released to complainants. The findings will be made available no later than thirty (30) days after the filing of complaint. If complainants wish to have their concerns considered outside of the Lee County a complaint may be filed with:

The HUD program office responsible for the public housing financial assistance or the Section 3 project, or to the local HUD field office. These offices can be found through the HUD website, www.hud.gov/.

Complainants may be eligible to bring complaints under other federal laws. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information (medical history or predisposition to disease). For more information about complainant rights, please contact EEOC at: www.EEOC.gov.

The Department of Labor Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) enforces, for the benefit of job seekers and wage earners, the contractual promise of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity required of those who do business with the Federal government. More information about the services they provide can be obtained at: http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/.



Appendices

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

The terms HUD, Public housing, and Public Housing Agency (PHA) are defined in 24 CFR part 5.

The following definitions also apply to 24 CFR Part 75 HUD's Economic Opportunities for Low-and Very Low-Income Persons:

1937 Act means the United States Housing Act of 1937, 42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq. activities related to Public Housing

Contractor means any entity entering into a contract with:

- (1) A recipient to perform work in connection with the expenditure of public housing financial assistance or for work in connection with a Section 3 project; or
- (2) A subrecipient for work in connection with a Section 3 project.

Labor hours means the number of paid hours worked by persons on a Section 3 project or by persons employed with funds that include public housing financial assistance.

Low-income person means a person as defined in Section 3(b)(2) of the 1937 Act, at or below 80% AMI. Note that Section 3 worker eligibility uses individual income rather than family/household income.

Material supply contracts means contracts for the purchase of products and materials, including, but not limited to, lumber, drywall, wiring, concrete, pipes, toilets, sinks, carpets, and office supplies.

Professional services means non-construction services that require an advanced degree or professional licensing, including, but not limited to, contracts for legal services, financial consulting, accounting services, environmental assessment, architectural services, and civil engineering services.

Public housing financial assistance means assistance as defined in 24 CFR Part 75.3(a)(1).

Public housing project is defined in 24 CFR 905.108.

Recipient means any entity that receives directly from HUD public housing financial assistance or housing and community development assistance that funds Section 3 projects, including, but not limited to, any State, local government, instrumentality, PHA, or other public agency, public or private nonprofit organization.

Section 3 means Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701u).

Section 3 business concern means:

- (1) A business concern meeting at least one of the following criteria, documented within the last sixmonth period:
 - (i) It is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by low- or very low-income persons;



- (ii) Over 75 percent of the labor hours performed for the business over the prior three-month period are performed by Section 3 workers; or
- (iii) It is a business at least 51 percent owned and controlled by current public housing residents or residents who currently live in Section 8-assisted housing.
- (2) The status of a Section 3 business concern shall not be negatively affected by a prior arrest or conviction of its owner(s) or employees.
- (3) Nothing in this part shall be construed to require the contracting or subcontracting of a Section 3 business concern. Section 3 business concerns are not exempt from meeting the specifications of the contract.

Section 3 Coordinator is person tasked with overseeing all Section 3 responsibilities for the PHA/CD office.

Section 3 project means a project defined in 24 CFR Part 75.3(a)(2).

Section 3 worker means:

- (1) Any worker who currently fits or when hired within the past five years fit at least one of the following categories, as documented:
 - (i) The worker's income for the previous or annualized calendar year is below the income limit established by HUD.
 - (ii) The worker is employed by a Section 3 business concern.
 - (iii) The worker is a YouthBuild participant.
- (2) The status of a Section 3 worker shall not be negatively affected by a prior arrest or conviction.
- (3) Nothing in this part shall be construed to require the employment of someone who meets this definition of a Section 3 worker. Section 3 workers are not exempt from meeting the qualifications of the position to be filled.

Section 8-assisted housing refers to housing receiving project-based rental assistance or tenant-based assistance under Section 8 of the 1937 Act.

Service area or the neighborhood of the project means an area within one mile of the Section 3 project or, if fewer than 5,000 people live within one mile of a Section 3 project, within a circle centered on the Section 3 project that is sufficient to encompass a population of 5,000 people according to the most recent U.S. Census.

Small PHA means a public housing authority that manages or operates fewer than 250 public housing units.

Subcontractor means any entity that has a contract with a contractor to undertake a portion of the contractor's obligation to perform work in connection with the expenditure of public housing financial assistance or for a Section 3 project.

Subrecipient has the meaning provided in the applicable program regulations or in 2 CFR 200.93.



Targeted Section 3 worker has the meanings provided in 24 CFR Part 75.11, 75.21, or 75.29, and does not exclude an individual that has a prior arrest or conviction.

Very low-income person means the definition for this term set forth in section 3(b)(2) of the 1937 Act (at or below 50% AMI).

YouthBuild programs refers to YouthBuild programs receiving assistance under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3226).

APPENDIX B: MULTPILE FUNDING SOURCES

Type of Financial Assistance	Definitions *Targeted Section 3 Worker*	Thresholds	Prioritization	Reporting
Public Housing	PHA – must	None	PHA – must	PHA – must follow subpart B
and Housing and	follow subpart B	*Any amount of	follow subpart	of Part 75
Community	of Part 75	PH assistance	B of Part 75	HCD – may follow subpart B
Development		triggers Section 3	HCD – may	or C of Part 75
	HCD – may		follow subpart	Both - Must report on project
	follow subpart B		B or C of Part	as a whole and identify the
	or C of Part 75		75	multiple associated
				recipients
Multiple Sources	Must follow	Exceeds	Must follow	Must follow subpart C of Part
of Housing and	subpart C of	\$200,000 for	subpart C of	75
Community	Part 75	Section 3 projects	Part 75	Must report on project as a
Development		*LHCHHP		whole and identify the
(single or multiple		exceeds		multiple associated
recipients)		\$100,000		recipients
				Must report to the applicable
				HUD program office, as
				prescribed by HUD