



# **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION & COMPLAINT POLICY**

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## Citizen Participation Plan Purpose

The U.S. Department Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides that subrecipients shall engage in inclusive, equitable, and efficient development of housing and other community infrastructure. To that end, as Calhoun-Liberty Hospital (the Hospital) undertakes usage of CDBG funds, it will work to disseminate information to residents, business, and the general public. Additionally, the general public will have the ability to file a complaint or appeal regarding a CDBG-related decision.

The purpose of this plan is to provide an adequate opportunity for community-wide participation in the planning, development, implementation, and performance evaluation activities related to the Hospital's CDBG program in accordance with 24 CFR 91.105

## Current CDBG-DR Activity: New Hospital Facility

As of 2021, the Hospital is undertaking a project to fully replace its facility with a new, larger complex. The new hospital complex is anticipated to include a two-story main building with 8 treatment rooms, 2 trauma rooms, blood and specimen laboratory, rehabilitation department, and 25 in-patient rooms. The total expected funding for the hospital is \$36,607,310. Per the Hurricane Michael, [CDBG State Action Plan](#), \$18,700,000 of this amount originates from CDBG-DR. Sources of funding are as follows:

Insurance Proceeds	FEMA Public Assistance	FEMA Public Assistance – Mitigation	FEMA PA Hospital Cost Share	Department of Health Grant	DEO CDBG-DR
\$3,657,000	\$7,887,546	\$3,550,609	\$3,812,155	\$1,000,000	\$18,700,000

Once operational, the hospital will serve inhabitants of the rural area in and around Calhoun County, including all persons of low and moderate income requiring healthcare services. A full Environmental Assessment has been conducted, and no significant impacts were found. This includes no displacement of persons at the new facility parcel, located at 15985 State Road 71 South, Blountstown, Calhoun County, Florida.

## Citizen Participation Coordinator

The CEO of Calhoun-Liberty Hospital shall be the Citizen Participation Coordinator, unless they delegate the responsibility. It is the Citizen Participation Coordinator's role to:

- Ensure that public notice is provided for input on all Hospital CDBG projects as specified in the below "Public Hearings" section;
- Coordinate with the Citizens Advisory Task Force for specific input on CDBG project, as needed;

- Provide technical assistance as needed to the community so that persons may become knowledgeable about the CDBG program and can contribute ideas to addressing needs;
- Implementation of policies found within this document.

## Participation and Public Involvement

To provide citizens with information concerning the CDBG program, the Hospital – through the Citizen Participation Coordinator - will do the following:

1. When applying for CDBG funding, make information about the funding, range of activities, and program income available to the public in a reasonable and timely manner.
2. Make information about CDBG activities likely to induce displacement available to the public.
3. Provide technical assistance to parties representative of low- to moderate-income persons requesting assistance provided by the hospital, including actions to affirmatively further fair housing, as needed.
4. Provide citizens with advance notice of changes to the grant application regarding scope, purpose, location, or other criteria.
5. Consider any comments expressed by citizens on the proposed application.
6. Hold at least one public hearing to obtain views of citizens on the final application.
7. Make available programmatic information to all citizens during project phases, such as invitation to bid, request for proposal, and construction – and keep records of past CDBG fund usage.
8. Respond to citizen input about requested changes to this Citizen Participation Plan.
9. Make performance reports for project activities, such as Section 3 and Section 504, available for public comment.
10. Per 24 CFR 91.105.d.1 and 91.105.d.2 – Citizens will be provided reasonable notice and opportunity to comment of 15 days after each performance report is posted publicly. All comments received in writing or orally at public hearings will be summarized within the performance report, and responses or considerations thereto also included.
11. The Hospital will respond to and address complaints in 15 working days or fewer, utilizing the inquiry follow up form provided as Appendix A.
12. Through the Citizens Advisory Task Force, encourage citizens to participate in an advisory role in planning, implementing, and assessing CDBG projects.
13. Implement the below “Complaint Procedure” program.
14. Obtain input on program income re-use, as applicable.

## **Citizens Advisory Task Force**

The Hospital shall establish a Citizens Advisory Task Force in accordance with state and federal laws to gather citizen input on the planning, implementation, and assessment of the Hospital's CDBG program. The Hospital will establish bylaws to govern the Citizens Advisory Task Force.

Through the Task Force, the Hospital will look to assure representation of segments of the community, in order to provide community-wide perspective on information, programmatic suggestions, and complaints.

Task Force meetings will be held as needed and shall be open to the general public.

## **Public Hearings, Notices, Meetings**

A public hearing or public comment period will be held if the Hospital elects to pursue CDBG funding requests beyond the Hurricane Michael CDBG-DR project. Input will be considered prior to final application submittal. Public notices of these activities will be posted on the main page of the Hospital website and advertised in the local newspaper of record. The plan, and planning meetings, will be available on request, to non-English speaking individuals to the greatest extent feasible.

Adequate notice of public hearings or public comment periods will be provided – at least five (5) days prior to the hearing. Hearings will occur at a place and time convenient to the general public and accommodations for those with disabilities or impairments.

## **Public Information**

Program information will be available to interested citizens. Documents are available during normal business hours at Hospital Administration offices located at 20370 Burns Avenue, Blountstown, FL and through the Hospital's website ([calhounlibertyhospital.com](http://calhounlibertyhospital.com)). For requests totaling less than one hour of staff time to compile, no charge will be assessed; subsequent hours of document gather will be billed according to staff hourly rates working to compile said information.

Specific information will also be shared, and technical assistance activities will be undertaken to inform low- and moderate-income persons residing within the County, as needed.

If a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to attend a public hearing, an interpreter will be provided for the language to be represented.

Inquiries regarding the Hospital's CDBG program will be promptly answered either by electronic mail, telephone, personal contact, or writing. All written inquiries will be answered in writing. Applicable staff will utilize fifteen (15) working days from receipt of the inquiry as the goal for providing a response.

## Complaint Procedure

The Hospital will provide a means by which persons may file complaints regarding HUD assisted contracts. In accordance with the Hospital's Equal Employment Opportunity, Fair Housing, Section 504, and Section 3 policies:

- Any person that feels they have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability can create a complaint which will be processed by the applicable Compliance Officer at the Hospital.
- Any person that has a complaint regarding quality of workmanship can create a complaint which will be processed by the applicable Compliance Officer at the Hospital.
- Complaints should be filed with the Hospital at its official address within forty-five (45) calendar days of the alleged unlawful practice.
- Upon receipt of the complaint, notice will be served in writing to the individuals or entity against which the complaint has been filed. The Hospital shall investigate the complaint and respond with findings and determinations within 30 working days. Full resolution may take longer than 30 days.
- Within ten (10) working days after service of said findings and determinations, either party may request a hearing if they are not satisfied.
- The determination of a hearing officer will be submitted to the CLH Board of Directors for determination; the Board of Directors can uphold, rescind, or reverse the determination of the hearing officer.
- Nothing in this policy prohibits a person from filing a complaint with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or any regulatory agency or court.
- Housing discrimination complaints may be filed by calling these State and National hotlines:
  - State: 1-800-424-8590
  - HUD: 1-800-342-8170

# Appendix A: Citizen Inquiry/Complaint Form

## Citizen Inquiry / Complaint Form

### Calhoun-Liberty Hospital

This form can be utilized to capture Citizen Inquiries and Complaints- made to the Citizen Participation Coordinator. This form will log nature of calls, actions taken, and results of actions.

- Date:
- Caller Name:
- Caller Contact:
- Caller Address:

	<b>Citizen Complaint Detail</b>	<b>Other Notes / Further Information</b>
<b>What was the nature of the Inquiry?</b> <i>(Taken on date of the call)</i>		
<b>What actions will the Hospital / Citizen Participation Coordinator take to address the call?</b> <i>(Can be entered on date of call or shortly afterward)</i>		
<b>What were the results of the action taken to address the call?</b> <i>(To be obtained within 15 days or fewer of receiving an inquiry)</i>		