



**NEW CASTLE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Update of Citizen Participation Plan**

**FOR FEDERAL HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

In pursuant to Section 104 (a) (3) of the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1974, as amended, New Castle County's (NCC) Citizen Participation (CP) Plan ensures that the residents of the Urban County New Castle County are encouraged to participate in the planning and implementation of Community Development and Housing Programs administered by the Department of Community Services (CS).

This Citizen Participation (CP) Plan outlines methods used by New Castle County Department of Community Services (CS) to inform citizens of its Consolidated Plan for its housing and community development programs. The Consolidated Plan consists of a five-year Strategic Plan and a one-year Action Plan to meet the long-term goals established in the Strategic Plan. It serves as a planning document and as an application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding for various HUD programs for a given fiscal year.

The current Five-Year Consolidated Plan was developed in May 2015. Each year it is necessary to submit to HUD a new Action Plan to receive funding for the next fiscal year. The Citizen Participation Plan outlines citizen input into the planning process.

New Castle County's primary community development and housing programs are authorized under and partially funded by the following federal programs:

- The ***Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program***, authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended;
- The ***HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)***, authorized under the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, as amended;
- The ***Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program (formally the Emergency Shelter Grant Program)***, authorized under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, as amended under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, as amended; and

**The Citizen Participation Plan herein governs the Department of Community Services consolidated planning process.** It is distributed to agencies, citizen groups, and local jurisdictions, and its availability to others is advertised in local newspapers.

*The Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will allow grantees to host virtual public hearings (alone, or in concert with an in-person hearing) if it allows questions in real time, with answers coming directly from the elected representative to all "attendees". As with an in-person hearing, the grantee must select a virtual hearing method or platform that provides for accessibility for persons with disabilities and LEP to participate.*

*New Castle County's Citizen Participation Plan has been updated to include virtual public hearings as an acceptable mode as it relates to public participation and hearings.*

The following sections of the plan have been amended.

**I. ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:**

- **Overall scheduling of citizen input opportunities:** All activities and their dates will be advertised in a timely manner through combinations of the following: local newspapers, public service announcements, notifications, CS Department websites, virtual meetings and special postings in public places such as libraries, government buildings, and local agencies. For activities dated "To Be Announced" (TBA), Community Services will provide timely notification of the meeting dates through the sources indicated. Additionally, the CP Plan will be periodically revised and distributed to reflect the new dates.

**B. Mailings/Newspaper Public Notices/Radio Public Service Announcements/Virtual Meetings:**

Because the Consolidated Plan requires so much more by way of citizen involvement, notification, etc., it is expected that CS's primary vehicles for notifying the public of any public hearings/meetings, etc., will be newspaper public notices, the CS website, radio public service announcements, virtual meetings, as well as electronic mailings to present and past sub-recipient agencies and agencies who have expressed interest in funding. Additionally, as in the past, the local newspaper will be utilized for required environmental review notices.

Persons needing assistance reading this document, making responses, or requiring special assistance at the Public Hearing, due to physical impairment or Limited English Proficiency are encouraged to contact our office. This Citizen Participation Document is available using the following link:

<https://www.nccde.org/1274/Plans-Reports>

**Contact Information:**

Nicole Waters, Department of Community Services, 77 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720, 302-395-5644, TDD 302-395-5593, Nicole.Waters@newcastlede.gov

The Citizen Participation Plan Update is available for public comment from Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> through Friday, April 24, 2020. Please submit all written comments, within the public comment period to Nicole Waters using the contact information below. Persons needing assistance reading this document, making responses, or requiring special assistance at the Public Hearing, due to physical impairment, are encouraged to contact our office. The entire Citizen Participation Document is available using the following link:

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