

COMMUNITY LEADER ON-SITE INTERVIEW GUIDE

[Note: This guide is intended for respondents identified in pre-site visit outreach as community leaders who are familiar with the tribe's housing needs and conditions and relationships between housing and other service needs. Since the respondents will vary for each tribe, not all questions will apply to all respondents. Responses to questions in the first module will help to determine subsequent questions asked.]

Introduction/Purpose of the Study

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

My name is _____ and I'm a researcher from the Urban Institute, a non-profit research organization located in Washington, DC. With me today is [name and affiliation]. I'm here today because the Urban Institute, on behalf of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is studying the housing conditions and needs of Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians across the United States. The study will describe housing needs and socioeconomic conditions in Indian Country. It will provide HUD with information on how current programs are operating, the extent to which housing needs are being addressed, and demographic and economic trends. It will also answer questions about home ownership in Indian Country and the impacts of the recent financial crisis. This is a three and a half year study that includes analysis of census and administrative data, surveys and in-person interviews, and selected case studies.

[Name of tribe/village] is one of 24 sites we are visiting in to conduct these in-person interviews with tribal leaders, Tribal Housing Offices and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHE), other housing officials, program staff, and community leaders. Interviews will cover the way the tribal staff is organized and its relationship to the TDHE; tribal staff views on the performance of the TDHE; perceptions of social/economic conditions; housing preferences; housing conditions; and key challenges. These interviews will provide important qualitative information on local institutional arrangements, particularly as they relate to housing, housing problems and the implementation of housing programs.

We will use what we learn today and from other interviews to contribute to a report on housing conditions and needs among Native Americans. This report will be submitted to HUD to inform the federal government of housing needs and challenges.

Confidentiality Statement *[Interviewer must read this]:*

Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and remind you that your participation is voluntary. I (we) know that you are busy and will try to be as brief as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. The interview today should last about an hour. This interview is not part of an audit or a compliance

review. We are interested in learning about your ideas, experiences, and opinions about housing in your tribal area/village. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we will take notes during these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent in any reports or in any discussions with supervisors, colleagues, or HUD. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all the people we speak with is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. Respondent's Present/Previous Role in Housing Programs or Tribal Governance.

1. In our initial discussions with tribal leaders and housing officials to plan this site visit, you were recommended as a community leader knowledgeable about housing in this tribal area/village. Can you tell me how you came to be knowledgeable about housing (e.g., previous job, current job, board membership, etc.)?
2. What is your current position?
3. How long have you been in this position? If you have had other positions in this organization, in total, how long have you been with this organization?
4. What is the mission of this program/office/organization/how would you describe its primary goal?
5. What are the primary funding sources?
6. [If you do not already have this information] Is this organization part of the tribal/village government? (If YES): Please explain where this program sits organizationally. (If NO): Please describe this organization's affiliation.
7. Have you had other positions serving this tribe (in or outside of tribal government)? (If YES): What positions did you have? In total how many years have you worked with/for this tribe?

B. Tribal Geography, Demography, and Economy

1. Can you describe the geography of this tribal area/village in terms of physical terrain, climate, access to transportation, shopping, employment, education, etc.?
2. Can you describe the population of the reservation/village/tribal service area, such as population size; proportion that are Native American; proportion that are enrolled members of this tribe; elderly; youth; income; and other population characteristics?

3. What is your overall assessment of the economic conditions in the area? (Probe: Have you witnessed an impact of the recession on employment, economic activity, and need for housing? Please describe the changes over the past 3-4 years).
4. Have there been any significant changes in the tribal economy, or tribal economic development, over the past 5 years, for example, new industries, gaming, new businesses or employers? (If YES): Describe.
5. Are most adults employed? On or off the reservation? Main employers/industries?
6. Describe your perception of poverty and unemployment in this area? Is this a general problem? Has this changed over time?
7. Generally, are residents of the tribal area migrating away to other places, or are people, members of this tribe, other Native Americans, non-Indians or others moving here. Has this changed over time? Describe.

C. Your Organization's/Program's Clients and Services

[Tailor these questions based on responses to module A]

1. Please describe the services or activities of your program/organization.
2. What is the service area (one tribe/multi-tribe; on/near reservation)?
3. [If applicable] How many participants are there (approximately)?
4. Does the number change during the course of the year? (If YES): Why?
5. [If applicable] Please describe your client base. That is:
 - a. Ages served
 - b. Types of households served (e.g., singles/families)
 - c. Average length of time in program
 - d. Employment status or other characteristics
6. [If applicable] What are the eligibility requirements?
7. How does your program interact with tribal housing programs?
8. Please describe how you become aware of housing needs and conditions? (e.g., from individual clients, serving on tribal interagency committees, etc.)
9. Do you coordinate any activities with housing programs, such as outreach, application, or enrollment activities; education programs; transportation; referrals?

10. Are there particular challenges your program/office faces in carrying out its responsibilities? (If YES): Please describe the main challenges.
11. Are there housing-related services you would like to see offered by the tribe that aren't available at present?

D. Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA)

1. Are you familiar with the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA) that provides a block grant from the Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)?

[If YES] *Continue with module D.*

[If NO] *Skip to module E.*

2. Who administers the NAHASDA Indian Housing Block Grant program for the tribe/village? Describe the organizational relationship between your organization and the NAHASDA grantee.
3. Other than NAHASDA funds, does your tribe/village have additional funds specifically devoted to housing?
(If YES): Are those funds administered by the same people administering the NAHASDA funds?
(If NO): How and why are they administered separately?
4. Does your organization administer any of those funds? If so, please discuss which funds/programs and your organization's role.
5. Are you aware of the factors that influenced the tribe/village to adopt the current organizational structure to manage its housing program? (If YES): Could you tell us what the major factors were?
6. Has administration of the Block Grant changed in any way since the Block Grant was first received?
7. NAHASDA was first implemented in 1998. To the best of your knowledge, did NAHASDA make it easier for the tribe/village to administer housing funding, more difficult, or not change very much as compared to what was the case prior to 1998?
8. On average, has the amount of funds you have received for housing under NAHASDA been roughly comparable to what your Tribe/Village received prior to NAHASDA? [If NO]: Could you tell us if your funding has been significantly higher or significantly lower than pre-NAHASDA? Why has funding changed?

9. What would you change about NAHASDA if you were in a position to do so?

E. Tribal/Village Housing Stock and Needs

1. Some tribal/village members qualify for housing assistance and others don't. In your view, is there sufficient assisted rental housing available for those who qualify?
2. In your view, is there sufficient affordable housing (i.e., housing that would not require more than 30% of the household's standard monthly income)? on or near your reservation or village to meet the needs of tribal/village members who don't qualify for assisted housing?
3. Including both tribal/village members who do and do not qualify for housing assistance programs, how would you characterize the need for additional housing in your community? (Low, Moderate, High). (If High): Please describe the factors contributing to this level of need.
4. How would you characterize the physical condition of the tribe's/village's assisted housing properties compared to private housing on the tribe/village's land? (ask separately for rental and home ownership). (If difference between assisted and private): What are the differences?
5. Are there subgroups of residents in your tribe/village that are specifically in need of housing assistance, such as homeless, youth, substance abusers, single parent households, or the elderly? (If YES): Describe the conditions of these groups.
6. Does the existing housing stock on your reservation or village have a sufficient number of residences that are suitable for people with physical disabilities?
7. From your observations, about what percentage of households on your reservation/village would consider their housing situation to be "overcrowded"? Please include both assisted and non-assisted housing.
 - a. Is the overcrowding you refer to year-long or are there seasonal variations? If there are seasonal variations, please describe when the seasonal influx occurs and the factors contributing to it.
 - b. Could you indicate the two most important factors contributing to the overcrowding to which you refer?
8. How many homeless shelters operate in this tribal area? Are they open year-round? (If NO): What months are they open?
 - a. Can you estimate how many people stay in these shelters when they are open?

- b. How many beds do they have? How many beds would be needed to meet peak demand?
9. Do you think there is a need to build new housing or rehab some existing housing in order to better address the cultural traditions of your tribe? [If YES] Could you indicate the types of culturally relevant features that should be incorporated into some or all of your housing stock? Has your tribe/village undertaken any such efforts?
10. On average, do you think that your existing assisted housing stock is appropriate for the climatic and environmental conditions normally prevalent in your location? [If NO] Could you indicate the two most common deficiencies in your existing housing stock?
11. Do you think that the quality and availability of housing on the reservation or village affects the ability of your tribe to promote economic development on the reservation or village (e.g., keeping essential workers on the reservation, attracting investment and employers)? Discuss.
12. What would you say is the approximate percentage of households on your reservation or village that have access to the Internet either through broadband or satellite connections? Has the Tribe and/or households on the reservation encountered any major barriers in gaining access to the Internet? (If YES): Could you describe those barriers?
13. Has there been any attempt to integrate any of the so-called “new” or “green” energy efficient technologies into your new or rehabbed assisted housing stock? Into any of your housing stock? (If YES): Could you indicate what technologies/approaches have been employed?
14. Have you encountered any barriers in attempting to employ new or green technologies? (If YES): What have they been?
15. In the past 5 years, what have been the main challenges in providing housing for your tribe/village? What have been the main successes? Please describe the factors you considered in your response.

F. Leveraging Funding

[Determine appropriate questions to ask based on previous responses. Explain to respondent that we understand that they may not know the answers to some questions and they do not have to answer]

1. Has the Tribe or Village been contributing to its housing programs with funds derived from commercial enterprises or natural resources? [If YES] Please elaborate.

2. Has the Tribe or Village pursued external funding from other government programs, besides NAHADSA, to support development projects (including infrastructure)? How have these efforts worked so far? What are the major barriers in leveraging public funding this way?
3. Has the Tribe or Village encountered any significant barriers when trying to access housing or community development funds in private sector capital markets? (If YES): Please indicate what those barriers have been.
4. In the past 5 years, what do you think have been the main challenges in providing housing for your tribe/village? What have been the main successes? Please describe the factors you considered in your response.

G. Homeownership and Section 184 Program

[Determine appropriate questions to ask based on previous responses. Explain to respondent that we understand that they may not know the answers to some questions and they do not have to answer]

1. Have your tribe, village, housing entity, and/or individual households chosen to participate in ONAP's Section 184 mortgage program? (If YES): Did your organization have any role in promoting that program? (If YES): Did you encounter any significant reluctance on the part of households? (If YES): What factors appeared to discourage participation?
2. If your community is not participating in the Section 184 program, could you tell us why?

H. Other Tribal Programs and their Coordination with Housing

1. Who is responsible for constructing and maintaining the infrastructure (road, water/sewer lines, utility connections, etc.) for your tribe/village's housing units? (Probe for any differences between assisted units and other housing units).
2. Does the Tribe/Village provide funding for these activities and, if so, what is the source of these funds?
3. Does the tribe or village coordinate infrastructure development and maintenance activities with other governmental entities (federal, state, counties, municipalities, other tribes, etc.)? (If YES): Please describe these activities.
4. Have you encountered any significant problems in achieving effective coordination? (If YES): Could you describe the nature of those difficulties?
5. Are there other tribal programs we have not yet mentioned yet that coordinate their activities with housing (e.g., environmental, economic development, health)? Do

you work with any of these programs? (If YES): Please describe how you work with these programs around housing issues.

6. Is there any topic or issue you expected us to cover that we have not brought up yet? (If YES): Please describe the issue(s) and explain why you think it is/they are important.