

Annual Evaluation Plan— Fiscal Year 2024



PD&R



Annual Evaluation Plan—Fiscal Year 2024

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Introduction

This document presents the Annual Evaluation Plan for fiscal year 2024 for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD or the “Department”). HUD publishes an Annual Evaluation Plan (AEP) each year to document the major evaluation activities it plans to undertake in that fiscal year. Significant evaluation activities are those that meet defined criteria for topical relevance, coordination, and commitment of resources. The AEP describes the new significant evaluation activities to be started in the fiscal year and lists the significant evaluation activities that are already underway and will continue through the fiscal year. The remainder of this introduction provides background on HUD’s evaluation activities and how the AEP relates to HUD’s Strategic Plan and Learning Agenda.

Evidence-Building at HUD

HUD administers a diverse array of programs, including public housing, assisted multifamily housing, and tenant-based rental assistance; Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance; the Ginnie Mae guaranty on mortgage-backed securities; lead hazard control and healthy homes grants; fair housing and civil rights investigation, compliance, and enforcement; community development and housing block grants; homeless assistance grants; and disaster recovery support. Since HUD’s formation in 1965, research, statistics, and other evidence have been central in shaping housing and community development policy nationally.

HUD’s Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) leads HUD’s efforts related to evidence-based policymaking. PD&R’s mission is to provide reliable and objective research on housing and community development that is relevant for HUD and its constituents and enables informed policy decisions. PD&R focuses on finding definitive answers to questions about which programs work and how they can be made better through quick-turnaround studies and long-term evaluations that systematically assess impacts and outcomes and shed light on paths to improvement. In this way, PD&R helps drive HUD’s evidence-based policymaking, promoting the best possible policies and programs through accurate data, rigorous research, and sound policy advice. In addition to PD&R, several other offices maintain evaluation or data analytic functions.

HUD’s [Evaluation Policy Statement](#) articulates the core principles and practices of the department’s evaluation and research activities. HUD updated the Evaluation Policy Statement in August 2021, reaffirming the department’s commitment to conducting rigorous, relevant evaluations and using evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice. The Policy Statement applies to all HUD-sponsored evaluations and regulatory impact analyses; it also applies to the selection of projects, contractors, and HUD staff that are involved in evaluations.

Requirements of the Evidence Act

Building on the recommendations of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, in 2019, Congress passed the bipartisan Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Evidence Act).¹ The act and the Office of Management and Budget’s implementing guidelines establish several important new requirements for federal agencies.² Key requirements include developing a *Learning Agenda* that identifies the most policy-relevant and timely research questions for an agency to pursue during a five-year period; a *Capacity Assessment for Research, Evaluation, Statistics, and Analysis* that assesses the coverage, quality, methods, effectiveness, and independence of an agency’s evidence-building and

¹ Public Law 115–435 (132 STAT. 5529). “[Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018.](#)”

² The primary implementation guidance is in Memorandum M-19-23 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/M-19-23.pdf> and Circular A-11 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/a11.pdf#page=776&zoom=100,0,0>.

analysis activities for supporting evidence-based policymaking; and *Annual Evaluation Plans* that communicate significant planned research and evaluation activities for the coming fiscal year.

HUD published its [Interim Learning Agenda](#) and [Annual Evaluation Plan—Fiscal Year 2022](#) in 2021, followed the next year by the (final) [Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026](#), the [Capacity Assessment](#), and the [Annual Evaluation Plan—Fiscal Year 2023](#). These documents are publicly available on the [huduser.gov](https://www.huduser.gov) website. In 2023, in addition to publishing the Annual Evaluation Plan—Fiscal Year 2024, HUD plans to publish a *2023 Learning Agenda Supplement* that will document updates to the 5-year Learning Agenda.

Policy Framework and HUD’s Strategic Plan

The Evidence Act closely associates Annual Evaluation Plans with each agency’s strategic planning process. Strategic plans include material on evidence-building, and the Evidence Act requires Learning Agendas to align with and support these plans and to reflect knowledge gained through evidence-building activities. The evidence-building priorities identified in this Annual Evaluation Plan align with the major goals identified in the department’s Fiscal Year 2022–2026 Strategic Framework.

The Annual Evaluation Plan also aligns with HUD’s Learning Agenda, providing a real-time update on the major evaluation activities the department is undertaking. To connect the evaluation activities in the AEP to HUD’s programs and mission, the AEP adopts the policy topic categories developed for the Learning Agenda, which sorts priority research questions into 11 crosscutting policy topic areas.

Exhibit 1 shows the alignment between policy topics in HUD’s Learning Agenda and AEPs and the department’s strategic goals. Each policy topic area is flexible enough to contribute to most, if not all, of the strategic goals; however, the exhibit presents a single primary alignment highlighting the balance of the research questions under each topic that contribute to departmental goals.

Exhibit 1. Alignment of Policy Topics to HUD’s Strategic Goals

| Policy Topic | Aligned Strategic Goals |
|---|--|
| Community Development and Place-Based Initiatives | Goal 1: Support underserved communities |
| Core Housing Programs | Goal 2: Ensure access to and increase production of affordable housing |
| Disaster Recovery, Energy, and Climate Change | Goal 4: Advance sustainable communities |
| Fair Housing | Goal 1: Support underserved communities |
| Homeownership | Goal 3: Promote homeownership |
| Housing Finance and Affordable Housing Supply | Goal 2: Ensure access to and increase production of affordable housing |
| Housing and Health | Goal 4: Advance sustainable communities |
| Indian and Tribal Issues | Goal 1: Support underserved communities |
| Self-Sufficiency and Economic Opportunity | Goal 2: Ensure access to and increase production of affordable housing |
| Vulnerable and Special Populations | Goal 1: Support underserved communities |
| Enhanced Data and Methods | Goal 5: Strengthen HUD’s internal capacity |

Significant Evaluation Activities

The evaluation activities in the fiscal year 2024 AEP are a mix of long-running priorities, efforts to continue learning from existing projects, and opportunities to study new departmental initiatives. *The AEP does not capture every way HUD builds or uses evidence in support of its mission.* Instead, the AEP

focuses on *significant* evaluation activities, defined as activities that meet the following criteria for topical relevance, coordination, and commitment of resources.

- **Topical Relevance.** Significant evaluation activities address pressing questions and shed insights into important issues for the department. These projects investigate unaddressed research questions in the Learning Agenda or seek to respond thoughtfully and nimbly to emerging challenges and priorities of policymakers.
- **Coordination.** Significant evaluation activities require substantial advanced planning and cooperation. These projects leverage expertise, require buy-in across offices, and benefit a HUD program or an overarching element of HUD’s mission.
- **Commitment of Resources.** Significant evaluation activities require investment. These projects have secured funding through prior-year congressional appropriations (that is, 2023 appropriations or earlier) or are conducted using dedicated in-house staff resources and expertise.

The work to expand the knowledge base around policy topic areas critical to HUD’s mission includes a substantial number of activities that would not be classified as “evaluations.” Per section 101(a) of the Evidence Act—

The term “evaluation” means an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency.³

This definition clarifies those activities critical to the everyday work of PD&R and the department as a whole—such as data collection, modeling, monitoring efforts, exploratory research, and producing guidance and technical assistance—are not included in the AEP. These efforts can and do contribute to significant evaluation activities. Other documents, such as HUD’s annual Agency Performance Plans and Reports, discuss these efforts in more detail.⁴

Dissemination Efforts

Major evaluations offer an important opportunity for HUD to share best practices, translate complex findings, and ensure that stakeholders have access to actionable information. Each evaluation typically includes both broad and targeted dissemination strategies based on the nature of the findings and the stakeholders involved. The core of HUD’s approach to disseminating evidence is huduser.gov, the department’s research and communication platform that PD&R operates. The site is updated regularly with reports, briefs, and data releases associated with all major evaluation activities. PD&R stakeholders have access to more than 10,000 research reports, articles, books, and data sources; during fiscal year 2022, customers downloaded an average of more than 634,000 files per month from the huduser.gov research portal. For evaluations covering pressing issues or with significant findings, PD&R’s Assistant Secretary (or highest ranking official) will often draft a foreword emphasizing the importance of the work to the department’s and administration’s priorities. In addition to posting findings and datasets, PD&R publishes the research designs (hypotheses, outcome measures, and analysis methods) for major evaluations on huduser.gov at the outset of these projects, providing greater transparency to HUD’s evaluation work.

³ 5 U.S.C. § 311(3); https://www.govregs.com/uscode/title5_part1_chapter3_subchapterII_section311.

⁴ https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/spm/appr.

Beyond products associated with a specific evaluation, [PD&R produces several periodicals](#) that often draw from recently completed research and help ensure that the findings reach different audiences.

- **The Edge.** *The Edge* is PD&R's biweekly online magazine, providing news, a message from PD&R leadership, and a wide range of information about housing and community development issues, research, and best practices.
- **Evidence Matters.** *Evidence Matters* is designed to connect policymakers, researchers, advocates, and industry members with clear, accessible, and timely information on important housing and community development topics. Since its first publication in 2011, *Evidence Matters* has been published 23 times, and the subscriber base is more than 25,000, in addition to those who read it online.
- **Cityscape.** *Cityscape* is a multidisciplinary scholarly journal that PD&R publishes three times a year to advance the state of knowledge, policy, and practice in the areas of HUD's mission. Each issue includes at least one symposium of scholarly papers on a common theme. Each symposium has a guest editor.

New Significant Evaluation Activities Planned for Fiscal Year 2024

As previously noted, HUD's significant evaluation activities require support from Congress via the appropriations process. To conduct new activities in a given fiscal year, HUD generally needs funding appropriated to PD&R in the previous fiscal year. On December 29th, 2022, the President signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2023. *The fiscal year 2023 appropriation and its accompanying Joint Explanatory Statement did not request or provide funding for any new significant evaluation activities.* Thus, no new significant evaluation activities are planned for fiscal year 2024, only additional funding to support five of PD&R's major ongoing evaluations, as described in the following section.

Ongoing Evaluations Supported During Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024

PD&R's appropriation for fiscal year 2023 includes funding to support ongoing significant evaluations, including some described in previous AEPs. Although some significant evaluations can be funded solely through appropriations in 1 fiscal year, other evaluations receive additional years of funding to support optional tasks built into original contracts, longer periods of performance, unexpected costs or changes to scope, and longer periods of performance. In many fiscal years, PD&R receives funding for a mix of both new and ongoing projects, and whereas new projects are generally launched in the following fiscal year, funds for ongoing projects can often be obligated during the same fiscal year in which they were received. For fiscal year 2023, PD&R received funding for five ongoing significant evaluation activities.

- **Housing Choice Voucher—Community Choice Demonstration (CCD).** Launched in fiscal year 2021, the CCD evaluates the combination of incremental housing vouchers and public housing agency (PHA)-provided services such as pre- and post-move counseling and rent deposits designed to empower families to move to and remain in low-poverty areas. The fiscal year 2023 investment will support both home assessments and child-parent assessments to help understand how moving to lower poverty areas affects a wider range of outcomes in the short term.
- **Moving-to-Work (MTW) Expansion Evaluation.** First launched in fiscal year 2016, the MTW Expansion Evaluation is a multi-cohort expansion plan to evaluate a suite of MTW policies. HUD has designed and begun implementing evaluation efforts for four cohorts to date. The fiscal year 2023 investment will continue to support HUD's evaluation efforts, testing rent reforms, and

landlord incentives, in addition to launching an evaluation of asset-building strategies and other uses of programmatic flexibilities.

- **HUD-U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Pay for Success Long-Term Evaluation.** Launched in fiscal year 2016, HUD and the DOJ launched the Pay for Success Permanent Supportive Housing Demonstration. The DOJ funded the first phase of the study, covering through year 5 of the project, and HUD funded a new contract to cover demonstration years 6 and 7. The fiscal year 2023 investment will support final stage outcomes analysis and summary report writing across the expanded study window.
- **Family Options 12-Year Study.** First included in the fiscal year 2022 AEP, this long-term tracking study builds off the Family Options Study, a randomized controlled trial study of the impact of various housing and services interventions on homeless families with children that concluded in 2017. The purpose of the 12-Year Study is to learn about outcomes for the study families approximately 10 years after they participated in the original study. The fiscal year 2023 investment will support data linkages between HUD data and other sources and associated data analysis and reporting.
- **Older Adult Home Modification Program Evaluation.** Launched in fiscal year 2022, this pilot evaluation looks at a cohort of 32 grantees implementing programs to help make safety and functionality-oriented home modifications, including to provide accessibility to accommodate an individual's disability-related needs, and limited repairs that meet the needs of low-income older adult homeowners that allow them to age in place. The fiscal year 2023 investment will cover a full-scale evaluation of the next cohort of approximately 15 grantees.

Milestones from Significant Evaluations

Conducting rigorous research and evaluations can often be a complex and lengthy process. The research questions and outcomes of interest may evolve during the study's design process, and the implementation of the evaluation may face challenges that result in time delays or deviations from the original design. As a result, the completed evaluation may look different from that initially described in the Learning Agenda and Annual Evaluation Plans, although the core learning question typically remains the same. With these dynamics in mind, this section documents the major milestones that the significant evaluation activities achieved, as discussed in prior years' Annual Evaluation Plans, focusing on the publication of interim or final reports and substantial changes in study design or execution that have occurred since the publication of the previous year's Annual Evaluation Plan.

Publications

Family Unification Program-Family Self Sufficiency Demonstration Evaluation. The Family Unification Program-Family Self-Sufficiency Demonstration, first authorized in fiscal year 2015, was designed to improve services for youth aging out of foster care. The demonstration extended the rental assistance for youth participating in the Family Unification Program and provided case management services through the Family Self-Sufficiency program. This evaluation, now complete, assessed how well the program fulfilled the intent to serve youth aging out of foster care and the effectiveness of partnerships with public child welfare agencies and other youth-focused organizations that are components of the model. The report is available at <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Family-Unification-Program.pdf>.

Evaluation of the HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program: Youth Perspectives on Homeless Housing and Services. In 2017, HUD launched a four-year evaluation of the ten Continuums of Care (CoCs) funded in the first round of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). This

multipart evaluation examines how YHDP affects the development and implementation of comprehensive systems-level approaches to addressing youth homelessness. Published in 2022, the “Youth Perspectives Report” is the evaluation’s third report that summarizes the perspectives of youth aged 18–24 with experiences of homelessness in the funded communities 1 year after the initial provision of funding. The report is available at <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/Youth-Perspectives-Report.html>.

HUD First-Time Homebuyer Education and Counseling Demonstration. HUD designed a large-scale, rigorous, randomized experiment called the HUD First-Time Homebuyer Education and Counseling Demonstration to evaluate the effectiveness of offering free, voluntary, homebuyer education and counseling services to a large random sample of prospective first-time homebuyers. Launched in 2011, the First-Time Homebuyer study has yielded seven publications to date. In 2022, HUD published three important resources: The “Long-Term Impact Report,” which includes impact findings up to 6 years from random assignment; the “At-A-Glance Six-Year Findings” issue brief summarizing the demonstration’s findings; and “Exploring the Impact of Homebuyer Education and Counseling on Debt, Savings, and Non-housing Wealth,” a special topic report. All publications stemming from the First-Time Homebuyer study can be found at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/hud_firsttime_hmbyr_study.html.

The Rent Reform Demonstration: Impacts on Work, Housing, and Well-Being After 42 Months. The Rent Reform demonstration was launched to test an alternative to the current rent-setting system for families using housing choice vouchers (HCV). Using a rigorous random assignment design, the demonstration began enrolling voucher holders in MTW PHA sites in 2015, with approximately 6,600 HCV-assisted households in three cities participating. The current report presents results through the first triennial recertification (covering more than three and a half years of follow-up) on the new rent policy’s effects on labor market and housing-related outcomes based on administrative data and data from a long-term follow-up survey conducted approximately 42 months after the new rent policy took effect. The results indicate that, when the findings for all four PHAs are combined, the new policy did not increase tenants’ employment or average earnings in unemployment insurance covered jobs during the 42-month follow-up. This report and previous interim reports are available at <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/The-Rent-Reform-Demonstration-Impacts-on-Work.html>.

Ongoing Evaluation Activities

The full body of evaluation work enables Congress, the Secretary, and other HUD principal staff to make informed decisions on budget and legislative proposals and strengthen housing and community development policy. PD&R maintains a list of ongoing research and evaluation efforts and a library of published reports, periodicals, and other evaluation resources on the office’s website, huduser.gov. Exhibit 2 lists the significant evaluation activities that are expected to be ongoing in fiscal year 2024 and shows how they align to policy topic areas and the department’s strategic goals. As noted, this list does not include all PD&R evaluation or research activities; it is limited to those that the PD&R Evidence Act team has determined to meet the definition of significant evaluation activities.

Exhibit 2. Ongoing Significant Evaluation Activities by Strategic Goal and Policy Topic Area

| Ongoing Evaluation Activity | Policy Topic Area |
|---|---|
| Strategic Goal 1: Support Underserved Communities | |
| 1. Choice Neighborhoods Evaluation | Community Development and Place-Based Initiatives |
| 2. Use and Effectiveness of CDBG in Local Jurisdictions | |
| 3. National Family Self-Sufficiency Program Demonstration | Self-Sufficiency and Economic Opportunity |
| 4. Childcare in Assisted Housing | |
| 5. Evaluation of MTW Asset Building programs | |

| Ongoing Evaluation Activity | Policy Topic Area |
|---|---|
| 6. Broadband Access for HUD-Assisted Households | |
| 7. Leveraging Integrated Data to Examine Youth Homelessness | Vulnerable and Special Populations |
| 8. Evaluation of the HUD-DOJ Pay for Success Permanent Supportive Housing Demonstration | |
| 9. Youth Homeless Prevention Demonstration Evaluation | |
| 10. Family Options 12-Year Study | |
| 11. Emergency Housing Voucher Evaluation | |
| 12. Eviction Protection Grant Program Evaluation | |
| 13. Emergency Rental Assistance Program Evaluation | |
| Strategic Goal 2: Ensure Access to and Increase Production of Affordable Housing | |
| 14. Evaluating MTW Flexibilities for Smaller Public Housing Agencies | Core Housing Programs |
| 15. Evaluation of MTW Stepped and Tiered Rent Cohort | |
| 16. Evaluation of MTW Incentives for Landlords Cohort | |
| 17. Evaluation of the Community Choice Demonstration (formerly Housing Choice Vouchers Mobility) | |
| 18. RAD Choice Mobility and Long-Term Affordability Evaluation | |
| 19. Rent Reform Demonstration | |
| 20. Capital Needs Assessment for Public Housing | |
| 21. Impact of RAD on Children in Assisted Households | |
| 22. Voucher Success Rate Study | |
| 23. PHA Use of COVID-19 Waivers and Effects for PHAs and Tenants | |
| Strategic Goal 3: Promote Homeownership | |
| 24. The First-Time Homebuyer Education and Counseling Demonstration | Homeownership |
| Strategic Goal 4: Advance Sustainable Communities | |
| 25. Accelerating Housing Recovery After a Severe Disaster | Disaster Recovery, Energy, and Climate Change |
| 26. Effectiveness of Disaster Recovery Funding | |
| 27. Evaluation of the Supportive Services Demonstration Phase 2—Integrated Wellness in Supportive Housing | Housing and Health |

CDBG = Community Development Block Grant. DOJ = U.S. Department of Justice. MTW = Moving to Work. PHA = public housing agency. RAD = Rental Assistance Demonstration.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research
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