



Housing Assistance Council
HAC News

One-month federal funding extension in process.

The House and Senate are expected to pass a continuing resolution to fund the federal government through December 20 at FY19 funding levels. To keep the government open, President Trump will have to sign the legislation as well. The [current CR](#) ends on November 21.

Housing discrimination and hate crimes rose in 2018.

The National Fair Housing Alliance released its 2019 Fair Housing Trends Report, [“Defending Against Unprecedented Attacks on Fair Housing.”](#) NFHA’s research found 2018 had the highest number of housing discrimination complaints since 1995 and hate crime offenses increased by 14.7% since 2017. At the same time, NFHA reports, HUD, the agency charged with enforcing the Fair Housing Act, is working actively to undermine it, most notably by [eliminating](#) local governments’ ability to implement 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulations and by [proposing](#) to make it almost impossible to prove claims when policies have a “disparate impact” on protected classes.

HUD announces veteran homelessness decline continues.

The [total number](#) of reported veterans experiencing homelessness fell by 2.1% from 2018 to 2019, says HUD Secretary Ben Carson. Estimates of homeless veterans for each state and Continuum of Care are available [online](#). The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness [lists 78 communities and three states](#) that have ended veteran homelessness. The director of one of them, Mississippi’s Balance of State Continuum of Care, wrote a blog post for the National Alliance to End Homelessness offering [“Three Tips for Ending Veteran Homelessness in a Balance of State CoC.”](#)

Grants offered for community infrastructures for homeless individuals and families.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s [Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals](#) program funds community-based public and private nonprofits to develop and/or expand local implementation of a community infrastructure that integrates substance use disorder treatment, housing services and other critical services for individuals (including youth) and families experiencing homelessness. Deadline is December 16. For more information, contact [Michelle Daly](#), SAMHSA, 240-276-2789.

Senate committee reviews bills on carbon monoxide alarms and manufactured housing.

On November 7, the Senate Banking Committee held a hearing entitled [“Examining Bipartisan Bills to Promote Affordable Housing Access and Safety.”](#) The hearing covered several bipartisan bills, including the Carbon Monoxide Alarms Leading Every Resident to Safety Act, [H.R. 1690](#), which passed the House in September, and the HUD Manufactured Housing Modernization Act, [S. 1804](#). The House Subcommittee on Housing will hold a hearing November 20 themed [“Safe and Decent? Examining the Current State of Residents’ Health and Safety in HUD Housing.”](#)

2020 Census news: rural participation, minority and low-income undercounts, hiring.

Commentary in the Daily Yonder suggests [“How Rural Areas Can Avoid Being Undercounted in the Census”](#): become census partners, use data to target outreach, provide internet access in community spaces and partner with schools or employers. Black and Hispanic respondents to a [Pew Research Center](#) survey, as well as those with incomes under \$30,000, are the most likely to say they may not participate in the 2020 count. (The sample size was too small to provide results for Native Americans, Asians and other racial and ethnic groups.) The Census Bureau is [accepting applications online](#) as it recruits about half a million temporary workers to help with the census.

Comments requested on Opportunity Zones reporting form.

The IRS has drafted a [new version](#) of [Form 8996](#), used by Qualified Opportunity Funds to report their investments in Opportunity Zones. No deadline is set for [comments](#). The draft does not request information on investments' impacts on residents' incomes or other changes. That kind of information would be collected if [S. 1344/H.R. 2593](#) become law, but the bills have not moved forward in Congress.

Improved transportation and housing recommended to address rural food insecurity.

In a recently released [data dashboard](#), the Urban Institute highlights the interrelatedness of housing and food insecurity. UI maps counties by “peer groups” based on their level of food insecurity and the correlating risk factors. Rural counties with [low food insecurity](#) tend to have a good supply of affordable housing, while rural counties with [high food insecurity](#) tend to be experiencing economic challenges and are concentrated in high-needs regions of the Southeast. A corollary list of strategies communities can use to [disrupt food insecurity](#) includes efforts that target rural communities' food capacity by improving transportation to increase food access and promoting affordable housing as a baseline for supporting food security. These strategies connect to HAC's [Rural Voices](#) edition on hunger and housing in rural America, and its [rural research note](#) on childhood hunger in rural America.

Rural placemakers gather in Minnesota for Rural Arts and Culture Summit.

[PBS News hour](#) recently brought national attention to a Rural Arts conference hosted by Art of the Rural on [October 3-5](#). This gathering was a continuation of the growing nationwide conversation around the role of arts and culture in rural economic development, including the [Rural Generation Summit](#) in Jackson, MS last May and the recent [CIRD Learning Cohort Summit](#) in Thomas, WV. Community developers are continuing to recognize the role of creative placemaking as a way of [combatting narratives](#) of rural decline.

Recent publications and media of interest

- [LIHTC in Rural Lower Mississippi Delta](#), a recent white paper by Freddie Mac, highlights the importance of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program in providing affordable housing in the rural Lower Mississippi Delta.
- [Poverty in Rural Michigan: Relentless Aging and Few Opportunities for Those of Working Age](#) is a Detroit Free Press description of economic struggles in rural Michigan. The region has high poverty rates, an aging population and limited opportunities.
- [Rural America at a Glance: 2019 Edition](#), published by USDA's Economic Research Service, examines demographic and socioeconomic trends since the end of the Great Recession. Poverty rates in all types of nonmetro counties have fallen, but the gap between poverty rates in the most rural, isolated places and others has grown. Population has increased in metro counties and counties closest to metro areas, while others have lost residents. Employment has grown in all types of counties except for completely rural counties not adjacent to metro areas, with the fastest growth in metro counties.
- [Rural Health in America: How Shifting Populations Leave People Behind](#) presents National Institute for Health Care Management infographics detailing the state of rural healthcare. They include looks at the impact of population shift toward urban environments, rural population, the number of rural providers and what initiatives exist to address the challenges.

Next HAC News to be published after Thanksgiving.

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, there will be three weeks, instead of the usual two, between this HAC News and the next. In the meantime, check HAC on the [web](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for updates about federal funding.

Need capital for your affordable housing project?

HAC's loan funds provide low interest rate loans to support single- and multifamily affordable housing projects for low-income rural residents throughout the U.S. and territories. Capital is available for all types of affordable and mixed-income housing projects, including preservation, farmworker, senior and veteran housing. HAC loan funds can be used for pre-development, site acquisition, site development and construction/rehabilitation. Contact HAC's loan fund staff at haclloanfund@ruralhome.org, 202-842-8600. *Please note: HAC is not able to offer loans to individuals or families. Borrowers must be nonprofit or for-profit organizations or government entities (including tribes).*