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# The Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) Program: An Overview

The Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) program is a tribal economic development assistance program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Native American Programs. Although it is authorized under the same statute and has a name similar to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the ICDBG program operates distinctively from the CDBG program. This In Focus provides an overview of the ICDBG program's structure, program elements, and supplemental uses in response to certain emergencies and disasters.

The ICDBG program is sometimes compared to HUD's larger Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) program. However, the IHBG is more narrowly focused on housing, and does not allow for the breadth of projects potentially fundable under ICDBG. For more information on IHBG and related programs, see CRS Report R43307, *The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA): Background and Funding*, by Katie Jones.

## ICDBG Structure and Administration

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is among the largest sources of federal community and economic development funding, primarily through the CDBG program. Similarly, the ICDBG program provides significant funding to federally-recognized tribal nations and Alaska Native villages to address community and economic development needs, as well as "imminent threats" to community health or safety. Like the CDBG program, the ICDBG program derives its authority under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. §5301 et seq.).

## Recent Appropriations

By statute, the ICDBG program is to receive a 1% set-aside of Title I CDBG appropriations, excluding amounts provided for certain specified uses. In practice, Congress has enacted larger appropriations separately for ICDBG, exceeding the 1% set-aside. For FY2022, the ICDBG program received \$72 million in funding (or approximately 2%). **Table 1** shows ICDBG appropriations in millions and CDBG appropriations in billions, from FY2018 to FY2022.

**Table 1. ICDBG Appropriations**  
FY2018 to FY2022

Fiscal Year	ICDBG	CDBG	Public Law
2018	\$65.0 million	\$3.4 billion	P.L. 115-141
2019	\$65.0 million	\$3.4 billion	P.L. 116-6

Fiscal Year	ICDBG	CDBG	Public Law
2020	\$70.0 million	\$3.4 billion	P.L. 116-94
2021	\$70.0 million	\$3.5 billion	P.L. 116-260
2022	\$72.1 million	\$3.3 billion	P.L. 117-103

**Source:** Tabulated by CRS from appropriations legislation.

**Notes:** The "CDBG" column provides the base number from which the 1% set-aside would be calculated.

## Program Features

The ICDBG program provides both competitive and noncompetitive grants to federally-recognized Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages to support the development of housing, suitable living environments, and economic opportunities. Like CDBG, program funds are required to principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons (24 C.F.R. §1003.208). Under the ICDBG program, low- and moderate-income is defined as an individual, family, or household with an income at or below 80% of the area median income (24 C.F.R. §1003.4).

As mentioned above, despite its name, the ICDBG program is administered separately from CDBG, though they share authorizing legislation and similar community development goals. For instance, CDBG is a block grant program in which the majority of funds are distributed through two separate formula allocation processes for (1) states and (2) local "entitlement communities," after which sub-awards may be administered. ICDBG functions as a single program with two principal grant types, for eligible tribal entities. Grants are awarded in two categories:

- Single Purpose competitive grants for community and economic development needs; and
- Imminent Threat grants, which are allocated on a noncompetitive basis as available to eliminate or mitigate issues posing an imminent threat to the public health or safety of tribal residents (e.g., a natural disaster).

Eligible entities, such as tribes and Alaska Native villages, may apply for Single Purpose competitive grants through an annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). Most recently, HUD awarded a total of \$120 million to support 107 projects through a combined FY2019 and FY2020 announcement. For FY2018, HUD funded \$63 million in ICDBG awards to 85 tribal communities.

Single Purpose grants support projects in three broad categories: (1) housing, including construction and land

acquisition; (2) community facilities, such as basic infrastructure and community buildings; and (3) economic development, including a variety of commercial, industrial, and agricultural projects owned and operated by the grantee, or a third party.

HUD encourages tribal entities to contact the relevant HUD area Office of Native American Programs (ONAP), prior to applying for an Imminent Threat grant, in order to confirm eligibility and funding availability.

### Funding Allocations

ONAP allocates ICDBG funding to six area ONAPs, each with a specific geographic jurisdiction. Each area ONAP receives a base amount of \$1 million with additional ICDBG program funds awarded based on the following formula (24 C.F.R. §1003.101):

- 40% based on each area ONAP's share of the total eligible Indian population;
- 40% based on each area ONAP's share of the total poverty among the eligible Indian population; and
- 20% based on each area ONAP's share of the total extent of overcrowded housing among the eligible Indian population.

Each area ONAP uses its allocation to award grants to eligible entities in its jurisdiction. The six area ONAPs are:

- **Alaska;**
- **Eastern Woodlands** (Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin);
- **Northern Plains** (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming);
- **Northwest** (Idaho, Oregon, and Washington);
- **Southern Plains** (Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas); and
- **Southwest** (Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Nevada).

The ONAP headquarters and the area ONAP in Hawaii do not receive ICDBG allocations for distribution. Native Hawaiian communities are not eligible for ICDBG funding. Hawaii's Department of Hawaiian Home Lands receives dedicated funding for housing activities through HUD's Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant program. **Table 2** shows recent area ONAP allocations.

**Table 2. Area ONAP Allocations**  
FY2018 to FY2020 (Dollars in Millions)

ONAP	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
Alaska	\$7.85	\$7.89	\$8.86
Eastern Woodlands	\$4.95	\$5.03	\$5.42
Northern Plains	\$9.51	\$9.26	\$10.40
Northwest	\$3.35	\$3.38	\$3.71
Southern Plains	\$15.01	\$14.87	\$16.82
Southwest	\$21.75	\$21.07	\$23.90

**Source:** Tabulated by CRS from HUD data.

**Notes:** FY2021 allocations have not yet been released.

### ICDBG Emergency Supplemental Appropriations

Following an emergency, disaster, or other major contingency, Congress has sometimes enacted supplemental appropriations to the ICDBG program to provide additional assistance to ICDBG-eligible entities. Indian communities are also often eligible for supplemental CDBG funding for disaster recovery (CDBG-DR).

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136, Title XII), enacted on March 27, 2020, appropriated \$300 million for HUD's Native American Programs account, of which one-third, or \$100 million, was set-aside for the ICDBG program, in what became known as ICDBG-CARES. HUD allocated the funding through the noncompetitive Imminent Threats grant program to address community and economic impacts of the pandemic. Under this structure, eligible applicants received funds on a first come, first-served basis. HUD awarded ICDBG-CARES grants to 96 tribal entities, in six rounds of funding.

Additionally, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, enacted on March 11, 2021, included \$280 million in supplemental ICDBG funds (ICDBG-ARP), to prepare for and respond to imminent threats posed by the coronavirus (P.L. 117-2, Title XI, Sec. 11003). HUD awarded ICDBG-ARP in a phased approach, which prioritized eligible grantees that applied for ICDBG-CARES funding but received partial funding or no funding. Subsequent rounds of funding were made available for eligible applicants that had not applied for ICDBG-CARES funds, and later for ICDBG-CARES grantees. HUD announced ICDBG-ARP funding awards and amounts in four rounds between November 2021 and March 2022. In total, HUD made ICDBG-ARP awards to 240 grantees, over the course of four rounds.

**Joseph V. Jaroscak**, Analyst in Economic Development Policy

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