



SBA Procedural Notice

TO: HUBZone Liaisons and Stakeholders

CONTROL NO.: 6000-20015

SUBJECT: Improvements to application submission process

EFFECTIVE: February 23, 2021

The HUBZone Program will be implementing the following improvements to streamline the application review processes:

- 1. Reducing the timeframe for validating an application from 10 business days to 2 business days.** Currently, after submitting an application in the HUBZone Certification and Tracking System (HCTS), a firm is required to “validate” it by confirming that all of the information submitted in the application is true and accurate. Validation requires firms to simply reply to an automated email they receive from SBA after submitting their application to either edit or confirm the accuracy of the application they just submitted. The deadline for completing this validation process has been reduced from 10 business days to 2 business days.
- 2. Reducing the timeline for uploading documents from 10 business days to 3 business days.** Currently, once a firm has validated its application, the firm is sent an automated email from SBA with instructions for uploading all required documents, which includes a link to the list of required documents. This list of required documents is available on the SBA website and firms should be prepared to upload all required documents when they initiate an application. The deadline for uploading documents has been reduced from 10 business days to 3 business days.
- 3. Reducing the timeline for automatic closure.** Currently, an application is automatically closed when a firm fails to validate its application or fails to upload the required documents within the required time frames. The timeline for automatic closure has been reduced from 30 calendar days to 5 business days after the missed deadline.
- 4. Requesting submission of employee information on a spreadsheet calculator tool SBA will provide.** Currently, the HUBZone Program collects detailed payroll and other information to determine a firm’s compliance with the principal office and 35% HUBZone residency requirements. To expedite SBA’s review and facilitate a more complete submission, the HUBZone office will now offer a tool that helps firms organize

the information from their application, which applicants may utilize and upload as part of their formal application.

5. **Declining applications for lack of response.** Currently, SBA may close an application when a firm fails to provide additional or missing information within a prescribed time frame. Closing an application allows the applicant to re-apply immediately. SBA now may decline the application of a firm that fails to submit the requested information within prescribed time frame, which means that the firm will be required to wait 90 days before re-applying to the program.
6. **Removing requirement for application signature page to be notarized and mailed to the HUBZone Office.** Previously, a firm was required to mail to the HUBZone Office the application signature page with a wet signature page that had been notarized. The requirement for a wet and notarized signature page has been eliminated. Now, the application signature page must be signed and uploaded as part of the submission of an application.
7. **Removing requirement to input financial information.** Currently, the electronic application requires an applicant to submit financial information related to its revenues, profits, and balance sheet. This requirement is being removed, as the HUBZone Program relies on an applicant's self-certification as to its size for its primary NAICS code.

The changes outlined in this notice will result in a shorter submission timeline for applicants and will necessitate that they become prepared with all required documentation prior to initiating an application.

If you have any questions regarding this Procedural Notice, please contact Takeisha Hodge, Office of the HUBZone Program at TakeishaDuBoseHodge@sba.gov.

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