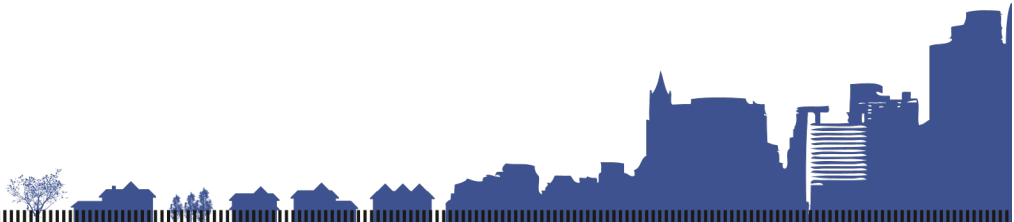


Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026 Supplement



PD&R



Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026 Supplement

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

August 2023

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Introduction

Evidence Building at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act)¹ directs federal agencies to develop evidence-building plans or learning agendas that identify and address policy-relevant questions and provide a blueprint for the direction of the Department’s research. Federal learning agendas include:

- Policy-relevant questions for which evidence will be developed.
- Data to be acquired to facilitate the use of evidence in policymaking.
- Methods and analytical approaches for developing evidence.
- Challenges for evidence development, including restrictions to data access.
- Steps to be taken to develop evidence for policymaking.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) guides the Department in its evidence-based policymaking efforts and is the primary research and evaluation office within HUD. PD&R leads the coordination of the HUD Learning Agenda, which integrates input from diverse interested parties to define a 5-year research and evidence-building plan for the Department that aligns with HUD’s strategic goals and objectives.

HUD’s Learning Agenda identifies research opportunities for HUD to highlight in its budget requests to Congress, drives in-house research, is used to develop research notices of funding opportunities (NOFOs), and signals to the external research community HUD’s evidence-building priorities. Because HUD can only tackle a subset of the Priority Learning Questions within the 5-year period, the hope is that this document provides a useful tool for other agencies, states, nonprofit organizations, and universities that are conducting research. HUD uses these evidence-building activities to inform a variety of operations, including technical assistance, allowable activities for grantees, programmatic decisions, and rulemaking. How that information is used depends on the nature of the findings and the type of information produced.

Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026

HUD’s first Learning Agenda, *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026*,² was published in March of 2022 and was designed to support the goals and objectives in HUD’s *Fiscal Year 2022–2026 Strategic Plan*.³ The Learning Agenda, which is built on PD&R’s *Research Roadmap* series, reflects a sweeping internal and external engagement effort that outlines the Department’s learning and data priorities through 2026 and integrates equity considerations consistent with President Biden’s Executive Order 13985.⁴

The Learning Agenda organizes HUD’s priority learning and research questions into 11 Policy Topics, which are not mutually exclusive:

- Community Development and Place-based Initiatives.
- Core Housing Programs.
- Disaster Recovery, Energy, and Climate Change.

¹Public Law 115–435 (132 STAT. 5529). “Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018.” <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ435/PLAW-115publ435.pdf>.

²<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/HUD-Learning-Agenda.pdf>.

³<https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CFO/documents/FY2022-2026HUDStrategicPlan.pdf>.

⁴<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-01753>.

- Fair Housing.
- Homeownership.
- Housing Finance and Affordable Housing Supply.
- Housing and Health.
- Indian and Tribal Issues.
- Self-sufficiency and Economic Opportunity.
- Vulnerable and Special Populations.
- Enhanced Data and Methods.

This organization of priorities does not directly map onto HUD’s strategic goals or program office structure as it is meant to encompass the full scope of issues related to HUD programs and aligns with how the Department conducts research, which cuts across goals and offices. Each Policy Topic has a Foundational Learning Question that is supported by a set of Priority Research Questions, and each Priority Research Question includes a proposed project and feasible methodological approach.⁵

Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026 Supplement Process

To ensure that the Learning Agenda remains a useful document and reflects the Department’s ongoing research, data, and evidence-building needs, PD&R conducted mid-point outreach and engagement to review and update the published Learning Agenda. Specifically, HUD sought input on two questions:

- Are there new priority learning questions or new data priorities that should be added to the Learning Agenda?
- Does the published Learning Agenda contain learning questions or data priorities that need to be adjusted, either because priorities have shifted or because they have been addressed through evidence-building activities by HUD or others?

Beginning in fiscal year 2023, PD&R solicited HUD-wide input from staff and leadership through 20 facilitated brainstorming sessions with PD&R and HUD program offices. Conducted over several months, the sessions lasted from 30 to 60 minutes and were both topic- and program office-based to ensure wide engagement. PD&R also published a Request for Information in the Federal Register⁶ asking for input on the two questions from the public, including researchers, state and local policymakers, and advocacy organizations. Although PD&R initially sought a streamlined engagement process, the actual outreach and input rivaled that of the process for developing the main Learning Agenda: **the process generated over 250 proposed new research questions from within HUD and the public**, as well as several suggested modifications that HUD should consider when initiating any main Learning Agenda projects (as described in the Learning Agenda Updates section below).

Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026 Supplement documents the key learning priorities that emerged from this process, emphasizing research questions that were **not included in the 5-year Learning Agenda** and that **reflect emerging or unanticipated needs and knowledge gaps that, if answered, could help advance HUD’s mission and strategic plan**. It was a great challenge to synthesize the more than 250 new research ideas into a manageable set of priorities for the Supplement, and some

⁵Under the project descriptions and methodological approaches section, the Learning Agenda provides proposals for how one might go about answering the Priority Research Question. The actual research approach taken may look somewhat different due to funding constraints and other factors that could affect the approach.

⁶<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-02740>

of the ideas not included in this document may be reconsidered when HUD prepares the next full Learning Agenda.⁷ The questions prioritized for this Supplement fall into two categories: **Emergent Priority Research Questions** that reflect new research needs resulting from environmental or policy changes not anticipated at the time for the published Learning Agenda, and **Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions** that do not necessarily reflect new conditions but are important for HUD’s current strategic plan and priorities.

This Supplement is organized into two sections: **Learning Agenda Updates** and **Evidence Building by Policy Topic**. The Learning Agenda Updates section provides a summary of major adjustments to the content in the *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* and a discussion of several special research topics. The Evidence Building by Policy Topic section includes new Priority Research Questions from the Supplement outreach process, which are separated into Emergent Priority Research Questions and additional Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions.

⁷PD&R maintains an internal list of all learning questions that may be considered for future HUD Learning Agendas.

Learning Agenda Updates

This section discusses major modifications proposed for the *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* and additional special topics that warrant further discussion.

Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026 Modifications

The *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* remains the primary document for directing the Department’s research and evidence-based policymaking activities. HUD will not be revising that document but, instead, is using this Supplement to note broad modifications and considerations if HUD pursues any of the Priority Research Questions in the published Learning Agenda. Six important issues are highlighted here: equity; flexible methodology; preferred terminology; Indian, tribal, and territory issues; fair housing; and interagency partnerships.

Equity

Centering equity is an important component of HUD’s main Learning Agenda, which is consistent with President Biden’s Executive Orders 13985⁸ and 14091⁹ to advance racial equity and support for underserved communities and the Department’s long-term equity work. Since the publication of the *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026*, PD&R published an issue of *Cityscape*,¹⁰ which included papers addressing whether and how equity should play a larger role in HUD’s research, evaluation, and evidence building. Recommendations from these papers—both methodological and topical—are reflected throughout the Supplement and will be carried into the next full Learning Agenda.

Flexible Methodology

Each Priority Research Question in *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* includes a project description that articulates the proposed research methods. These methods range from case studies to randomized controlled trials and reflect the anticipated data and resources needed to address the question and produce quality, credible evidence. However, the methods and approaches are subject to change based on new research findings, new methodologies, different policy interests, and funding constraints. Rather than updating each project description in the published Learning Agenda, HUD will revisit the proposed methodology before pursuing any of the Priority Research Questions. Changes may include using new or different data sources, expanding topics to include multiple HUD programs (for example, research that incorporates both public housing and assisted multifamily housing), including additional outcomes measures, or shifting from experimental to quasi-experimental approaches or vice versa. In future versions of the full Learning Agenda, a somewhat different approach to the project descriptions will likely occur in keeping with the anticipated need for flexibility.

Preferred Terminology

Some of the terminology used in *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026*—such as *victim*¹¹ instead of *survivor* of domestic violence and *elderly* instead of *older adult*—is not aligned with person-first and non-

⁸<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-01753>

⁹<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-03779>

¹⁰<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/cityscape/vol24num2/Cityscape-august-2022.pdf>

¹¹There are instances when “victim” may need to be used, such as when referencing a statute or regulation.

stigmatizing language. HUD will use the generally accepted preferred terms¹² in future publications and when undertaking any of the Priority Research Questions.

Indian, Tribal, and Territory Issues

Indian and Tribal Issues is one of the 11 Policy Topics in the *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* and includes five Priority Learning Questions stemming from the Foundational Learning Question: How can HUD better respond to housing and development challenges unique to Native American communities and tribal lands? Research on unique Indian and Tribal Issues should harness indigenous knowledge in partnership with tribal communities as well as with Indigenous peoples of the U.S. territories, both of whom are underrepresented in HUD research. President Biden’s memo entitled *Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Federal Decision Making*¹³ reinforces that “President Biden is committed to strengthening the relationship between the Federal Government and Tribal Nations and to advancing equity for Indigenous people, including Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Indigenous peoples of the U.S. territories. These commitments include ensuring that Federal agencies conduct regular, meaningful, and robust consultation with Tribal officials in the development of Federal research, policies, and decisions, especially decisions that may affect Tribal Nations and the people they represent.” Many of the Learning Questions found across the 11 Policy Topics (that is, not just under the Indian and Tribal Issues topic) are relevant to Tribal communities and U.S. territories, particularly research questions on Disaster Recovery, Energy, and Climate Change; Homeownership; Housing and Health; and Vulnerable and Special Populations. HUD should more deliberately and proactively include tribal communities and the U.S. territories in its broader studies.

Fair Housing

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, (including sexual orientation or gender identity), familial status, or disability. Housing providers may violate the Fair Housing Act if they use other characteristics as a pretext to discriminate based on one of the protected classes, or if their practice has an unjustified discriminatory effect, even without intent to discriminate. An important—but often overlooked—characteristic is limited English proficiency (LEP), which refers to a person’s limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. LEP is one characteristic that housing providers may use as a pretext for discrimination, particularly on the basis of national origin, race, or religion. The published Learning Agenda contains a Fair Housing Policy Topic, which includes 10 Priority Research Questions that support the Department’s fair housing research efforts, none of which explicitly refers to LEP discrimination; however, several of the Priority Learning Questions in the main Learning Agenda under the Fair Housing Policy Topic could be expanded to include LEP as part of the research.

Interagency Partnerships

Several HUD program offices noted the importance of collaborating with other federal agencies to enhance the Department’s evidence-building activities, particularly for multifaceted topics, such as Housing and Health and Vulnerable and Special Populations. HUD regularly collaborates with the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), and additional agencies in its programs,

¹²https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Preferred_Terms.html.

¹³<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/111521-OSTP-CEQ-ITEK-Memo.pdf>

evaluation, and data linkage activities. Capitalizing on the expertise of other agencies will only strengthen HUD's research capacity.

Special Topics

Several topics arose multiple times during facilitated listening sessions and in public comments, which underscore their importance across HUD programs and to external interested parties. These topics, which are reflected in new Supplement Priority Research Questions proposed in the next section, are included here as well because they are areas in which HUD could pursue more than one line of research and have become particularly relevant since the main Learning Agenda was published. These topics include disaster recovery equity, manufactured housing, the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA), National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE), construction costs, administrative fees, and waiting lists.

Disaster Recovery Equity

The term *equity* means the “consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.”¹⁴ Disaster recovery equity recognizes that disasters often disproportionately impact underserved and vulnerable people because they tend to live in areas more susceptible to disasters due to historical patterns of inequality, particularly systemic racial discrimination, *and* correspondingly lack the resources necessary for preparedness or recovery. Accordingly, disaster recovery equity requires concerted efforts to ensure that recovery resources are targeted to those with the greatest recovery and resilience needs. HUD serves an important disaster recovery role through its Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds to help states, local governments, and Indian tribes recover after presidentially declared disasters. CDBG-DR funds can promote disaster recovery equity by making communities more resilient and ensuring equitable distribution of the resources to support disaster recovery.

Through interdepartmental and public engagement activities, PD&R identified important research questions that, if answered, could inform efforts by HUD and other federal agencies to advance disaster recovery equity. Three questions on this topic are included in the list of Priority Research Questions under the Disaster Recovery, Energy, and Climate Change topic: *What are early lessons from the Department's new Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) disaster response program? How well are federal disaster recovery programs serving groups protected by fair housing and civil rights laws, as well as other historically disadvantaged communities, and what barriers remain to reaching those communities and the most vulnerable people living there? How have the most devastated neighborhoods affected by natural disasters recovered, how have the different public policies and their local implementation affected that recovery, and how has policy and implementation changed over time?* Other questions that could be explored include: *How have communities benefited from large disaster*

¹⁴<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-01753>

recovery investments and to what extent are the benefits helping the most vulnerable? What barriers impede access to recovery resources for protected class groups and vulnerable populations, and how can resources be more effectively deployed pre- and post-disaster to support preparedness and accessible recovery for individuals with disabilities? To what extent have relocation efforts (for example, community driven relocation programs, buyout programs) for those in disaster prone areas provided adequate support for successful relocation? How do disasters impact homeless service providers and individuals who were experiencing pre-disaster homelessness? How does a community's current preparedness efforts compare to 5, 10, or 20 years ago? What has been the preparedness investment in these disaster-prone communities and what type of return on investment (ROI) is forecasted? Are the lessons learned from impacted communities being implemented in communities that have yet to be impacted?

Manufactured Housing

Manufactured housing refers to homes that are built offsite and then transported to their final location. They are constructed according to specific Federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards,¹⁵ which regulate the design and construction of manufactured homes to ensure quality, durability, safety, and affordability. Manufactured housing is typically financed through chattel loans, which are personal property loans when the home itself—not the land it sits on—serves as collateral and usually has a higher interest rate and shorter repayment term than a traditional mortgage. A recent U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report examining the federal role in supporting the financing of manufactured housing recommended that HUD implement planned changes to provide additional financing options for manufactured homes.¹⁶ Additionally, PD&R sponsored the development of the Offsite Construction for Housing: Research Roadmap, which outlines six research topics related to manufactured housing and complements the Department's Learning Agenda efforts.¹⁷ Manufactured housing presents an opportunity to help increase the supply of affordable housing, but restrictive zoning laws, the misperception of manufactured homes as lower-quality housing, the higher cost of chattel loans, and the vulnerability of homeowners who do not own the land under their homes are major challenges.

Given HUD's unique position to research loan performance, the following question is included as a Priority Research Question under the Housing Finance and Affordable Housing Supply topic: *How can HUD incentivize more lending for manufactured housing, and how are loan limits affecting production?* Several HUD program offices and the public identified manufactured housing as an important topic for the Department to study and proposed several additional questions: *How are manufactured housing chattel loans performing? What are the property characteristics of new affordable housing types (for example, container homes, 3D printed homes, tiny homes) that would minimize risk to the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Fund should they be eligible for Title I and Title II FHA financing? How are "hidden" costs, such as lot rents, high-cost financing, and high energy and utility costs for older mobile homes, contributing to severe affordability concerns for manufactured home residents? Can manufactured housing help address the housing affordability, shortage, and overcrowding in tribal communities? How is manufactured housing affecting community health, resilience, and safe water*

¹⁵24 CFR 3280 and 3285. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-B/chapter-XX/part-3280> and <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-B/chapter-XX/part-3285>

¹⁶<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-105615.pdf>

¹⁷<https://www.huduser.gov/portal//portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Offsite-Construction-for-Housing-Research-Roadmap.pdf>

infrastructure? What are the causes of racial disparities in the chattel lending market, and what are the fair housing implications for such disparities?

Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016

HOTMA¹⁸ is intended to streamline administrative processes, reduce burden, and better align program rules for public housing agencies (PHAs) and owners of assisted multifamily housing, as well as revise program regulations for HUD's CDBGs, HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Housing Trust Fund (HTF), Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA), Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities programs. The final rule implementing Sections 102, 103, and 104 of HOTMA has an effective date of January 1, 2024, and PHAs must come into compliance no later than January 1, 2025. These sections make changes to the United States Housing Act of 1937, particularly those affecting income calculation, asset limitations, and program eligibility. HOTMA has sweeping, HUD-wide research implications.

The Priority Research Question—*How are PHAs and owners of assisted multifamily housing implementing Sections 102, 103, and 104 of HOTMA, and how are tenants impacted by the new income and asset limitations and other HOTMA changes?*—is included in the Supplement under Core Housing Programs. Other potential questions include: *How well are programs complying with the new requirements? Are PHAs taking advantage of HOTMA flexibilities and how are they being used? Is HOTMA resulting in streamlined administrative processes and reduced burden? How are tenants affected by changes in program eligibility and rent calculations? How are the new income and asset limitations affecting resident self-sufficiency, rent burden, and program exits?*

National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate

NSPIRE are new inspections standards developed by HUD.¹⁹ NSPIRE replaces both the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS) and is designed to streamline inspections, increase efficiency, create uniform standards across programs, and, most importantly, is focused on resident health and safety. These standards have an effective date of July 1, 2023, for public housing and multifamily housing programs, and an effective date of October 1, 2023, for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program; they apply to all housing currently inspected by HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC). Because NSPIRE is new and applies to public housing, the HCV program, and assisted multifamily housing programs, it presents many research questions that HUD could pursue to better understand the effect of the standards on HUD programs and tenants.

Under Core Housing Programs, the Supplement includes the question: *How is NSPIRE being implemented across different programs?* Other relevant questions for additional research include: *What is the impact of NSPIRE on the physical condition of the properties? Do the new standards affect landlord participation in the HCV program and, if so, in what ways?*

Construction Costs

The construction of affordable housing is frequently more expensive than market-rate housing due to several factors stemming from policy, regulation, and market conditions. Some federal regulations and requirements can contribute to higher construction costs. In addition, affordable housing projects often

¹⁸Public Law 114-201. 130 STAT. 782. <https://uscode.house.gov/statutes/pl/114/201.pdf>

¹⁹<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-13293>

rely on complex, multilayered financing structures that may include tax credits, tax-exempt bonds, and various forms of subsidy that can add to the cost and development time. There is growing concern that compliance with federal statutes and regulations and the regulatory challenges of layered funding may be suppressing affordable housing construction, which could also have downstream effects on HUD programs.

The Priority Research Question included under the Housing Finance and Affordable Housing Supply topic is: *Given that layering of financing for affordable housing development is more expensive than having a single funding source, what is the optimal role for HUD as a funder?* Several additional lines of research may be necessary to address open questions about construction costs: *What are the effects of various statutes and regulations on development costs, and what are the most effective ways to offset them? How do soft costs, such as architectural and engineering fees, legal fees, permitting, and developer fees, affect Total Development Costs (TDC)? How do soft costs affect the production of affordable housing and how do they compare with the costs in the production of market-rate rental housing? Does the methodology used to calculate Housing Construction Costs and TDC accurately reflect the actual costs of building housing in different parts of the country?*

Administrative Fees

HUD provides PHAs with administrative fees, or “admin fees,” to run their HCV programs. These fees help cover operating expenses, intake, recertifications, maintaining waiting lists, and providing family support services. They are calculated based on the number of vouchers under lease and the Fair Market Rent (FMR). In recent years, PHAs have received annual increases in their admin fees through the regular formula and through special supplemental fees from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.

Although HUD sponsored the Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Fee Study,²⁰ published in 2015, additional research is needed in light of program changes and new types of fees. An overarching question—*How are PHAs using extraordinary and other administrative fees, and what are the benefits?*—is included in the Supplement under the Core Housing Programs topic. Other related questions include: *What are the uses and effectiveness of extraordinary admin fees received to administer Mainstream Vouchers and special fees received to administer the Veterans Supportive Housing program (VASH)? Are PHAs using admin fees for new eligible activities related to waiting list, eligibility, lease-ups, inspections, recertifications, and other activities necessary to implement the HCV program?*

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists for HUD-assisted housing are managed by PHAs and other housing providers to manage the demand for affordable housing, as the number of eligible applicants typically far exceeds the number of available housing units or vouchers. Both waiting lists and the management of the waiting lists vary by housing program and PHA, and may use a first-come first-served approach, lottery, and/or local preferences criteria. Waiting list preferences are criteria that PHAs and owners of other HUD-assisted properties can set to prioritize the selection of applicants from the waiting list for housing assistance. HUD allows the establishment of local preferences to reflect the housing needs and priorities of local communities within the broad parameters set by HUD regulations, fair housing and civil right authorities,

²⁰https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/pdf/AdminFeeStudy_2015.pdf

and regulatory agreements. Examples include preferences for families experiencing homelessness, survivors of domestic violence, and those facing involuntary displacement. Households may remain on the waiting list for months to years until a unit or voucher becomes available.

Under Core Housing Programs, the Supplement includes the following question: *What are the experiences of households on waiting lists for assistance and how do they change over time and vary with different waiting list management practices?* Additional open questions include: *What waiting list practices are more efficient and equitable than others? How do PHAs balance waiting lists for project- and tenant-based vouchers and how does that affect applicants? What is the prevalence and patterns of waiting list shopping (that is, getting a voucher in a jurisdiction with a short waiting list then porting to a different jurisdiction)? Do lotteries for waitlists result in more equitable outcomes?*

Evidence Building by Policy Topic

For each Policy Topic, the new Priority Research Questions, resulting from the Supplement outreach process (Supplement Priority Research Questions) and separated into Emergent Priority Research Questions for covering unanticipated needs and additional Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions, are presented. The existing 2022–2026 Priority Research Questions from the published *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* are included for context and completeness.

An asterisk symbol (*) in lieu of a bullet point indicates that one or more aspects of the research question is being studied in-house at HUD or by external organizations with funding from a HUD contract, grant, or research partnership or through a data sharing agreement with HUD. For each item with an asterisk, a footnote provides additional information on the related study. Publications and other products resulting from the studies are documented in HUD’s Annual Evaluation Plans.

Community Development and Place-based Initiatives

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- How have communities used their CDBG CARES Act (CDBG-CV) funding, and how does it differ from CDBG State and Entitlement programs?
- How can HUD leverage its programs and policies to better support equitable urban and transit-oriented development?
- How should economic and community development strategies change in response to recent population shifts associated with increases in telework and remote work?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- What are the impacts of HUD’s rural serving programs on rural and underserved communities, including the Mississippi Delta, Appalachian distressed counties, Colonias, and Indian Country?
- How are HUD programs currently addressing community violence, and are there opportunities to do more to reduce violence either through housing-based service interventions or changes to the built environment?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- * What were the outcomes of the Choice Neighborhoods program for both residents and the communities in which it was implemented?²¹
- How effective are CDBG economic development activities across different community types and program approaches?
- To what extent does CDBG investment benefit low- and moderate-income persons and individuals who are members of protected class groups or underserved communities?
- How are CDBG grantees using the Section 108 loan guarantee program to support innovative affordable housing and economic development models?
- How can HUD support and increase access to healthy environments in communities through assets connected to place-based investments?

²¹HUD is funding a multiyear evaluation of the Choice Neighborhoods program.
https://www.huduser.gov/portal/choice_neighborhood_eval.html

- To what extent can technical assistance build capacity and improve organizational stability of distressed local governments?
- How effective are homeowner rehabilitation programs at improving individual quality of life and what effect do they have on neighborhood quality?
- How much affordable housing is created within Opportunity Zones, and what is the broader change in housing affordability in those areas?
- What has been the impact of the HOPE VI Urban Revitalization program over 20 years?
- What are the personal reasons, outcomes, and destinations of households who leave gentrifying neighborhoods? What motivations and perceptions of neighborhood change influence the choices of leavers and stayers?
- What are the housing needs of agricultural workers?

Core Housing Programs

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- What forms of regionalization are PHAs proposing, how great is the interest, and what are the barriers to regionalization?
- How are PHAs and owners of assisted multifamily housing implementing Sections 102, 103, and 104 of HOTMA, and how are tenants impacted by the new income and asset limitations and other HOTMA changes?
- How is NSPIRE being implemented across different programs?
- * How are PHAs using extraordinary and other administrative fees, and what are the benefits?²²
- What challenges do housing providers face in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce and to what extent do personnel challenges affect program operations and decision-making?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- How much of the assisted multifamily portfolio are distressed assets, and what are the best models for predicting and addressing distressed assets in the multifamily portfolio?
- What is the best approach for getting accurate comparable rents and assessing rent reasonableness in rapidly changing markets, and how might different approaches to rent reasonableness determinations affect landlord participation and retention and access to housing opportunities in well-resourced areas in the voucher program?
- To what extent do families in HUD's assisted housing programs have access to comprehensive or "wrap around" services, and how are those services provided?
- How might PHAs use housing assistance payment funds for tenant leasing expenses in challenging markets, and what are the outcomes related to leasing success, voucher utilization, access to housing opportunities in well-resourced areas, and number of families served?
- What are the most cost-effective methods of conducting inspections in HUD-assisted housing?
- What are the experiences of households on waiting lists for assistance, and how do they change over time and vary with different waiting list management practices?

²²HUD has funded an evaluation of the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, which features enhanced administrative fees. This study is ongoing and is expected to conclude in 2025.

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- * What are the most effective ways of engaging with and attracting landlords to the voucher program?²³
- What would change if tenant-based rental assistance programs made payments directly to tenants?
- What would it take to improve accessibility in the assisted housing stock, including public housing and privately owned multifamily housing?
- How does housing quality affect assisted housing tenure, employment, and quality of life outcomes of public housing and HCV tenants?
- * What are the tenant, neighborhood, and PHA outcomes associated with the implementation of Small Area FMRs?²⁴
- * What are the barriers to applying for federal housing assistance, especially for individuals who are members of protected class groups or underserved communities, and would tools that facilitate applying for housing assistance address them?²⁵
- * What is the pattern and distribution of voucher portability in the HCV Program?²⁶
- * How can HUD better support students in post-secondary education who are at risk of housing insecurity and homelessness?²⁷
- What are the pros and cons of updating utility allowances through energy consumption modeling rather than relying on actual utility data in multifamily properties?
- How do energy standards affect the long-term viability of Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversions?
- How are PHAs implementing the Project-Based Voucher program?
- Is the Project-Based Voucher program benefiting HUD’s target populations, and do underserved communities have equitable access to the program?
- * What are the long-term social and economic outcomes of persons who have exited public and assisted housing?²⁸

Disaster Recovery, Energy, and Climate Change

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- What is the pathway for moving HUD assets/investments to net-zero carbon emissions?
- What effects are efforts to direct benefits to disadvantaged communities, such as the Justice40 initiative, having on HUD-assisted tenants and other program beneficiaries?

²³HUD is conducting a multi-year evaluation of landlord incentives offered by PHAs participating in the Moving to Work Demonstration. The first interim report from this study is expected in 2024.

²⁴With household-level administrative data provided by HUD via a data license, researchers at New York University are examining [neighborhood outcomes](#) associated with Small Area FMRs.

²⁵PD&R staff are analyzing more than 140 responses to HUD’s Request for Comment on [Improving Access to Public Benefit Programs](#). Many of the responses concern barriers to applying for Federal housing assistance.

²⁶PD&R staff have analyzed voucher portability patterns for a forthcoming publication in HUD’s [Cityscape](#) journal.

²⁷Through its [Research Partnerships](#) program, HUD funded a study of a local program providing homeless and near-homeless community college students with HCVs and case management. The study’s final report is forthcoming.

²⁸In January 2024 HUD published the findings from a [study of the outcomes of tenants exiting](#) from HUD-assisted housing programs that offers a methodology for identifying positive, negative, and neutral exits.

- What are early lessons from the Department’s new RUSH disaster response program?
- How effective has the Green and Resilient Retrofit Program been in facilitating reduced national greenhouse gas emissions and utility expenditures through improvements to the built environment?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- How well are federal disaster recovery programs serving groups protected by fair housing and civil rights laws as well as other historically disadvantaged communities, and what barriers remain to reaching those communities and the most vulnerable people living there?
- What is the impact of the National Disaster Resilience (NDR) program, CDBG-MIT funds, the mitigation set-aside requirement in CDBG-DR, and other HUD mitigation funds and efforts on mitigating hazards and disasters?
- How have the most devastated neighborhoods affected by natural disasters recovered, how have the different public policies and their local implementation affected that recovery, and how has policy and implementation changed over time?
- To what extent do communities use CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT funds for rebuilding infrastructure to be more resilient?
- What are the health outcomes for residents of high-heat climate zones, and what are the strategies (including housing design options) to help low-income, vulnerable residents survive heat events while remaining in their current housing?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- Does HUD need to modify the CDBG-DR allocation process to account for new needs related to climate change?
- How do the impacts, costs, and resulting needs of slow-onset disasters compare with those of declared disasters, and what are implications for slow-onset disaster declarations, recovery aid programs, and HUD allocation formulas?
- What HUD-assisted properties are repeatedly harmed by or at increasing risk of disasters and what is the cost to HUD? What are the risks to HUD-assisted and other vulnerable populations?
- What enhancements to disaster-related data collection and data sharing between agencies are needed to improve coordination and accelerated recovery?
- How does the impact of CDBG-DR funding vary across communities, and how do impacts vary with local capacity?
- * What are the outcomes of CDBG-DR buyout programs and are these programs administered equitably?²⁹
- * Where do people go after a disaster?³⁰
- What is the optimal level of flood insurance coverage for the FHA single-family mortgage portfolio and how can flood insurance policies maximize coverage?
- Are current building efficiency, safety, and resiliency codes for various types of housing adequate?

²⁹HUD has initiated a study of the social equity impacts of CDBG-DR funded buyout programs. The study is expected to be completed in 2027.

³⁰In 2022, HUD awarded two [grants for research](#) on outcomes of renter households during various phases of disaster recovery. These studies are ongoing.

- How are climate change risk and disasters affecting mortgage performance, and what are implications of including climate risk in underwriting procedures?

Fair Housing

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- How well are covered housing providers in HUD programs complying with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and in what ways are they in or not in compliance with VAWA?
- Are there adequate provisions to ensure that survivors of abuse who assert rights in HUD VAWA-covered housing programs do not face adverse consequences?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- * Does HUD's methodology for calculating income limits affect equitable access to income-targeted programs in areas that have persistently low area median incomes (AMIs) and, if so, would a national AMI floor help address this issue?³¹
- In what ways and to what extent does housing discrimination occur through tenant screening practices, such as credit and criminal background checks, and non-rent costs, such as application fees and security deposits?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- To what extent do people of color with disabilities seek redress related to their disability?
- How can research support HUD and community efforts to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH)?
- To what extent is there bias in home appraisals and automated valuations, and what are the fair housing implications?
- Why do comparatively few fair housing complaints relate to the home sales process, and are there ways to identify discriminatory practices such as steering?
- What do early findings show about the experiences of voucher holders in jurisdictions with local source of income discrimination ordinances?
- * Can innovative housing discrimination study methodologies better detect and measure evidence of discrimination in advertised units than in-person paired testing methods?³²
- * What are the barriers that individuals with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency when searching for rental housing?³³
- How are HUD's definitions of 'areas of minority concentration' and Site and Neighborhood Standards shaping the development of new affordable housing?
- What portion of HUD-assisted rental housing continues to be non-compliant with applicable federal accessibility requirements, including in entrances and common areas of a building?

³¹HUD is preparing for publication an in-house report that examines the shares of households that are eligible for HUD assistance across various geographic areas using HUD's methodology for calculating income limits.

³²HUD has funded the Housing Discrimination Study Innovative Methodology Project to identify new and existing methodologies that augment housing discrimination research based on existing testing approaches like paired testing and sandwich testing. Results are expected in 2025.

³³This is a proposed replacement for the Priority Research Question "Do home seekers with communication-related disabilities experience substantial barriers to information in seeking rental units?" HUD is preparing for publication a qualitative study that identifies barriers that people with disabilities face when accessing and using rental housing assistance.

- How effective are Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) agencies in providing fair housing education, outreach, and investigations?

Homeownership

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- How effective is the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program at increasing uptake of counseling services and achieving its goals of increasing equity, language access, and reaching underserved communities?
- What are the best metrics for identifying and measuring patterns of mis-valuation of residential property appraisals, and can they be used to mitigate racial bias?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- How effective is the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program at providing pathways to homeownership for low-income households?
- How are gift funds and seller contributions used for down payment assistance, and does it vary as a function of loan size?
- What are the most promising strategies at the local, state, and federal levels to support low-income homeowners in meeting their repair and maintenance needs and sustaining homeownership?
- What are the best ways to structure down payment assistance to sustain homeownership and ensure success of the loan for both borrowers and the FHA portfolio?
- Can cashflow and various noncredit bureau data (for example, on-time rental payments) be incorporated into the FHA Scorecard to increase access to FHA mortgages?
- What are the most effective permanent loss mitigation options for FHA?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- How can equity in mortgage lending best be advanced, especially as algorithmic decisionmaking is becoming more prevalent?
- * What have HUD programs done to close the homeownership gap, and what role does homeowner equity play?³⁴
- What are FHA's policy options and tradeoffs for advancing shared equity as a federal homeownership strategy?
- Who has benefitted from pandemic forbearance programs?
- What are the implications for the housing finance system of differences in the composition of mortgage-backed securities of Ginnie Mae (GNMA) versus those of the housing Government-Sponsored Enterprise (GSE) and their changes over time?
- To what extent is the GNMA portfolio vulnerable to climate risk?
- How much does student loan debt influence mortgage default risk?
- How effectively does a post-purchase, light-touch homeownership counseling program prepare FHA borrowers for sustainable homeownership?

³⁴HUD recently awarded [grants to three institutions](#) for research on closing gaps in access to mortgage financing and homeownership faced by borrowers of color and other underserved groups.

- What risks and benefits are associated with providing down-payment assistance and other assistance to first-time homebuyers?
- Who is served by PHA-administered homeownership programs and to what extent have assisted households been able to maintain homeownership and build assets?

Housing Finance and Affordable Housing Supply

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- * What are the factors (for example, design, building technology, regulatory, market, and cost) that affect the feasibility of commercial-to-residential conversions, and do they differ between the private and public housing development sectors?³⁵
- How is the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act affecting material sourcing and associated costs for affordable housing production, and are the requirements impeding production?
- How are the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds provided under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) affecting housing supply, and what can HUD learn to inform future federal investments in housing?
- How have CDBG grantees, funded through the CDBG-Pathways to Removing Obstacles Housing (PRO Housing) Competition³⁶ to identify and remove barriers to affordable housing, prioritized the use of those funds?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- How can HUD support the continued liquidity of Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) lenders, and is there a role for the private sector?
- To what extent do the costs of construction and renovation of HUD-assisted properties differ from market-rate constructions costs due to various statutes and regulations, and what are the most effective ways to offset them?
- Given that layering of financing for affordable housing development is more expensive than having a single funding source, what is the optimal role for HUD as a funder?
- What are the impacts of short-term rental services on the rental and ownership housing market?
- What are the impacts of private equity and institutional investors on communities, renters, and homeowners, and how does it vary by location or protected class?
- How can HUD incentivize more lending for manufactured housing, and how are loan limits affecting production?
- How well are chattel loans for manufactured housing performing, and are there other financing options that should be considered?
- What are the financing and other non-zoning impediments to building “missing middle” housing—small multifamily buildings in areas zoned for single-family housing—and how could HUD or other federal funds help developers overcome these impediments?

³⁵In October 2023, HUD announced the [availability of funding](#) to study recent efforts to convert downtown office buildings to properties with residential units since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and expects to make awards in 2024.

³⁶https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/pro_housing.

- What are the opportunities and barriers to bring investment into communities that have used ARP-funded State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to demolish housing and build land banks—many of which have a shortage of habitable housing—and use this vacant land?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- What are the gaps in financing for multifamily housing, and under what conditions would an expanded FHA role be likely to support both increasing the supply of multifamily housing and preserving and enhancing the supply of naturally occurring affordable housing?
- How is the Housing Trust Fund being used to increase the production of affordable housing?
- What happens to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) portfolio as communities start to reach the end of the extended use affordability period?
- How would changes to basis boost policies impact patterns of LIHTC development?
- What do housing subsidies buy?
- How do zoning, subdivision regulations, procedural processes, and local land use conditions affect housing supply, and what regulatory reforms are most effective at matching housing supply to demand in a way that promotes inclusive communities?
- To what extent do land use policies and other regulatory factors drive differences in rents and production of affordable rental units?
- How successful have laws aimed at increasing duplexes, Accessory Dwelling Units, and other low-density, infill housing typologies been at creating new housing supply?
- What is the potential for alternative models for housing affordability?
- Can affordable housing and manufactured homes promote wealth building?
- What is the impact of Davis-Bacon wage requirements on the cost of housing development, project quality, and worker wages?
- * To what extent can modular or other offsite construction methods produce affordable accessible rental units, and how does the affordability of offsite methods compare with that of site-built housing?³⁷

Housing and Health

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- How can HUD update its evaluation of the effectiveness and longevity of specific residential lead hazard control interventions through a new Evaluation of the HUD Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program?
- What are the success and challenges related to the implementation of the Smoke-Free Public Housing Rule?
- How are states using Section 1115 Waivers (Medicaid) to address housing and other Health-Related Social Needs?
- What are the health benefits of HUD grants for radon testing and mitigation?

³⁷HUD recently published research on [energy efficiency in water heating systems](#) for modular construction.

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- How can cash transfers improve outcomes for households receiving rental assistance, including potential improvements in health and well-being, as well as financial stability and employment?
- How can HUD most effectively support maternal and child health through its rental assistance programs?
- What is the prevalence of food insecurity among HUD-assisted households, and what more can the federal government do to address food insecurity and improve nutrition among assisted households?
- What are the best models for meeting the mental and behavioral health needs of HUD-assisted households, including access to voluntary supportive services?
- How can HUD promote more widespread and effective use of community health workers to support the health of families in HUD-assisted housing?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- What are the most significant problems with indoor air quality in HUD-assisted housing? What are cost-effective ways to influence positive changes in indoor air quality?
- Which program designs for deploying Integrated Pest Management in public and assisted housing are most cost-effective and manageable?
- How can HUD reduce the incidence of elevated blood lead levels among children of families in the HCV program?
- How well do HUD’s homeless assistance programs meet the health needs of young children and their parents?
- What home visiting model would most successfully promote health or other beneficial outcomes for families with children in public housing and assisted housing or emergency shelters?
- * What are the most significant health disparities affecting HUD-assisted households? To what extent do health challenges represent opportunities for cost-effective coordination of healthcare services with housing assistance?³⁸
- How prevalent is receipt of Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) among HUD-assisted households?
- What accessibility features and design standards are recommended when building or rehabilitating housing for the elderly to support residents’ ability to age in place?

Indian, Tribal, and Territory Issues³⁹

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- What impact will the BABA Act have on tribal communities and territories?
- How is climate change impacting tribal communities and U.S. territories, and how can housing and community development programs mitigate these impacts?

³⁸In 2021, HUD initiated an interagency agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to build a collaborative relationship to leverage opportunities and resources in support of shared agency goals and priorities related to aging in place. HUD’s ongoing Evaluation of the Integrated Wellness in Supportive Housing (IWISH) Demonstration will conclude in 2026.

³⁹This Policy Topic was originally *Indian and Tribal Issues* and has been renamed to incorporate issues related to the U.S. territories.

- How well are HUD programs serving low-income people and protected classes in Puerto Rico and other territories, and how does the ratio of program participation compared with eligibility compare with the rest of the United States?
- How can supporting Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) potentially serve as an engine for new affordable housing construction in U.S. territories?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- What are the housing needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians?
- What asset building activities are effective in tribal communities? How effective are Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) at facilitating asset building in tribal and territory communities?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- What is the impact of the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) competitive grant program for housing in tribal areas?
- What are the distinct impacts and challenges of climate change in tribal communities and U.S. Territories, and what are implications for housing and community development?
- What are the most effective disaster preparedness recovery, mitigation, and adaptation strategies undertaken by tribal communities, including pandemic response?
- How are crisis response approaches to prevent and end homelessness different in tribal areas?
- What is the feasibility of developing local sources of building components and materials in tribal areas to reduce housing construction costs?

Self-sufficiency and Economic Opportunity

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- How does the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative contribute to the long-term housing stability and self-sufficiency of participating youth?
- How did the pandemic relief measures—such as expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), stimulus payments, and economic impact payments—affect the housing stability and employment of HUD-assisted households?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- What are the best ways to target youth economic opportunity and build self-sufficiency early on?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- * What additional approaches can encourage asset building among HUD-assisted households?⁴⁰
- * What is the unmet need for childcare among HUD-assisted households with children?⁴¹
- What effect does improved access to affordable childcare have on the employment outcomes of parents/guardians and on the developmental outcomes of children?

⁴⁰In 2023, HUD initiated a multi-year evaluation of [asset building programs](#) implemented through the Moving to Work Demonstration. The study is expected to be completed in 2027.

⁴¹In 2022, HUD initiated a study of early care and education available to HUD-assisted families living in public housing. The study is expected to be completed in 2024.

- What proportion of public housing residents employed under Section 3 requirements receive training or certifications to improve their long-term employment prospects?
- How many HUD-assisted tenants receive services from other federal programs focused on labor market outcomes?
- Are there service delivery models evaluated in the research literature that could improve self-sufficiency outcomes for HUD-assisted households?
- What are the costs and benefits of making broadband internet services a reimbursable expense for providers of HUD-assisted housing?
- What is the policy value of implementing rent payment reporting to credit bureaus, and what are the equity tradeoffs for households in HUD-assisted housing?

Vulnerable and Special Populations

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- Is Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) associated with increased access to anti-retroviral therapy, improved viral load, or achieved viral suppression?
- What kinds of new and scaled-up strategies are communities employing with new funding under the Stability Voucher Program and the Special Notice of Funding Availability to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness (Special NOFO)⁴² to address unsheltered and rural homelessness, including identification of and outreach to vulnerable subpopulations, and is that new investment improving homeless services systems?
- What are the best ways to measure or predict individual eviction risk and differentiate it from other measures of housing insecurity?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- What are the barriers for justice-involved individuals and their families to accessing and maintaining HUD-assisted housing, and how well are housing providers' policies and procedures addressing these barriers?⁴³
- What vulnerability tools and assessments—or adaptations to existing tools and assessments—are communities using to prioritize resources and are some tools more effective than others in identifying the most vulnerable subpopulations and developing nondiscriminatory factors that are used to prioritize certain households?
- What are the best models for serving clients with HIV/AIDS across different populations, including transwomen, older adults, and those residing in rural areas?

⁴²https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/coc/specialCoCNOFO

⁴³HUD published a Notice of Proposed Rule Making in the Federal Register on October 31, 2023. <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-23678>

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- * How did PHAs and Continuum of Care groups (CoCs) partner to administer their allocation of Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) and what were the outcomes of tenants who leased up with an EHV?⁴⁴
- * To what extent did the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program prevent evictions and homelessness in the short-term, did it have lasting effects on housing stability, and could it serve as a model for future HUD programs?⁴⁵
- How were eviction and foreclosure moratoria implemented during the pandemic, and what lessons does that experience have for the future?
- * How are HUD grantees implementing the Eviction Protection Grant Program (EPGP)?⁴⁶
- What have been the challenges and outcomes associated with implementing pandemic-related programs to prevent and end homelessness?
- What are the barriers people experiencing unsheltered homelessness face when trying to access the shelter system, and what can shelter providers do to address these barriers?
- * What kinds of homelessness prevention and diversion strategies are communities employing, and which strategies are most effective at resolving homelessness and preventing returns to homelessness?⁴⁷
- For what portion of people experiencing homelessness is Rapid Re-housing (RRH) the right resource, and what will the optimal program structure and duration be in different housing markets?
- What strategies best support formerly homeless tenants who wish to “Move-On” from Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)?
- What are the long-term outcomes of the Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities program?
- Are Mainstream, Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) vouchers an effective intervention for individuals with disabilities experiencing homelessness?
- What are the costs and preparation necessary for older adults to age in place successfully in public and assisted housing?
- How well are housing protections provided under VAWA assisting survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking achieve housing stability?⁴⁸

Enhanced Data and Methods

Supplement Priority Research Questions

Emergent Priority Research Questions

- How can HUD most feasibly collect information on the lived experience of program participants on a routine basis and support comparison across programs?

⁴⁴HUD is funding a process and outcomes study of the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program that will address PHA and CoC partnerships. The final report is expected in late 2025.

⁴⁵In 2022, HUD awarded grants to three institutions for research on the impact of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program on people and communities, with a focus on housing stability and eviction outcomes. Interim reports are expected in 2024.

⁴⁶HUD is funding a process evaluation of the EPGP, with a final report expected in 2025.

⁴⁷In 2023, HUD awarded grants to two institutions for research applying community-engaged research methods to address homelessness. Reports are expected in 2026.

⁴⁸The previously published Priority Learning Questions references “victims” rather than “survivors.”

- How can HUD use artificial intelligence like Large Language Models (LLM) to produce structured data from unstructured inputs such as the PHA Plan, Consolidated Plan, and Municipal Codes?
- How can HUD encourage technology that is sufficiently accurate, sensitive, and affordable in responding to the upcoming lead dust and paint standards?
- How can HUD identify novel models to improve coordination with internal and external interested parties on health and housing policies, practices, research, and data sharing?

Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions

- How can HUD capture useful data about household and community outcomes of CDBG and HOME activities (that is, impacts on the final beneficiaries of these funds)? How can CDBG and HOME recipients capture useful data about household and community outcomes?
- What are the benefits of and best ways to address barriers to HUD owning local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data and making a national dataset available for analysis?

2022–2026 Priority Research Questions

- * How can HUD capture “positive” and “negative” outcomes and motivations for exit by assisted tenants?⁴⁹
- What data linkages should HUD invest in as permanent, regular linkages and what data linkages can remain as ad-hoc efforts?
- Could HUD link the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), HUD, and U.S. Census Bureau records to add to the evidence base on the effects of housing assistance on tenants’ employment, income, and earnings?
- What can HUD learn about mortality outcomes through data linkages with the Census Bureau?
- Are there components of HUD’s administrative data collection that do not yield sufficiently complete and/or high quality data for effective policymaking? How can these deficiencies be addressed?
- Which data currently collected on paper forms would support useful policy analysis and performance assessment if digitized in accessible and searchable form?
- Are there data sources that HUD maintains internally that could be made public while protecting privacy?
- How do the Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) physical inspection results for the HUD stock compare with occupant-reported data from the American Housing Survey (AHS) and the American Healthy Homes Survey (AHHS)?
- What would be the policy value of creating a national evictions database, including how the database could inform policy to advance housing stability?
- What can HUD learn from the AHS about how renter and homeowner decisions are changing in response to climate change?
- As HUD works to test and validate the AHS Housing Insecurity module, are there examples or test cases worthy of research for how a housing insecurity index might be applied?
- What do the next generation surveys on lead hazards and healthy homes tell us?

⁴⁹In January 2024 HUD published the findings from a [study of the outcomes of tenants exiting](#) from HUD-assisted housing programs that offers a methodology for identifying positive, negative, and neutral exits.

- How could HUD cost-effectively capture data on energy expenditures and energy consumption for public and assisted housing developments?
- Which drivers of customer experience most frequently hinder satisfaction and trust for specific program services?

Summary and Next Steps

HUD's Learning Agenda is a 5-year, department-wide evidence-building plan that serves as a blueprint for research to address policy-relevant questions. The Learning Agenda Supplement is a mid-point review to ensure that the Learning Agenda continues to reflect the Department's ongoing research, data, and evidence-building needs. The Supplement provides major updates to the main Learning Agenda—with an emphasis on equity; flexible methodology; preferred terminology; Indian, tribal, and territory issues; fair housing; and interagency partnerships—and a discussion of seven special research topics: disaster recovery equity, manufactured housing, Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016, National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate, construction costs, administrative fees, and waiting lists. The Supplement also includes Emergent Priority Research Questions that reflect emerging or unanticipated needs and knowledge gaps that, if addressed, could help advance HUD's mission and strategic plan, and additional Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions that are important for HUD's current strategic plan and priorities. There are 37 Emergent Priority Research Questions and 43 Mission-Oriented Priority Research Questions that are the result of HUD and public input, organized by the 11 Policy Topics from the main Learning Agenda.

Through this Supplement, the Emergent Priority Questions are now considered part of HUD's *Learning Agenda: Fiscal Years 2022–2026* and may be used for future funding requests and shaping of the Department's evidence-building activities through 2026. HUD will develop its second full, 5-year Learning Agenda for fiscal years 2026–2030 starting in 2025. As part of that process, HUD will consider the totality of the input from the Supplement outreach process, may include Priority Research Questions that were proposed but did not make it into the Supplement, consider Mission-Oriented Questions that are part of the Supplement, and may carry over Priority Research Questions from the original Learning Agenda that are still relevant but have yet to be addressed. HUD will also revisit the general format and approach for the next Learning Agenda to ensure it aligns with the 2026–2030 strategic plan and the ways in which HUD approaches its research and evidence-building activities.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research
Washington, DC 20410-6000



April 2024