



# USDA Rural Development Summary of Major Programs

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USDA Rural Development is committed to future of rural communities. Through our programs, we help to improve the economy and quality of life for rural Americans.

Rural Development contacts and funding notices are at [www.rd.usda.gov](http://www.rd.usda.gov). The **Contact Us** menu tab has office addresses and phone numbers, or use our toll-free number at 1 (800) 670-6553 to be connected.

## Rural Housing and Community Facilities Programs

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
<b><u>Single-Family Housing Direct Loans (including Self-Help Loans)</u></b>	Safe, well-built, affordable homes for very-low- and low-income rural Americans.	Families and individuals.	Buy, build, improve, repair or rehabilitate a rural home as the applicant's permanent residence.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100% of market value or cost. Loan term of 33/38 years. Applicant may be eligible for payment assistance (subsidy) on the loan.
<b><u>Single-Family Housing Loan Guarantees</u></b>	To assist low- to moderate-income applicants/household buy their homes by guaranteeing loans made by private lenders.	Families and individuals.	Purchase new or existing homes and refinance existing Rural Development guaranteed or direct loans.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	30-year fixed. The interest rate is negotiated between lender and borrower. Loans up to 100% of market value plus the amount of the up-front guarantee fee being financed.
<b><u>Single-Family Repair Loans and Grants</u></b>	To help very-low-income applicants remove health and safety hazards or repair their homes.	Families and individuals who currently own their home.	Repair/replace roof, winterize, purchase or repair heating system, structural repair, water/sewage connect fees, etc.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan and grant.	Loans up to \$20,000 up to 20 years at 1%. Grants available to very-low-income applicants 62 years or older unable to pay a 1% loan.
<b><u>Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants</u></b>	Helps lower-income families build their own homes.	Nonprofits and public bodies.	Technical assistance to help small groups of families build each other's homes.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
<b><u>Rural Rental Housing Direct Loans</u></b>	Safe, well-built, affordable rental housing for very-low-income individuals and families.	Individuals, trusts, associations, limited partnerships, for-profit and nonprofit entities, tribes, public bodies.	Rental housing new construction or substantial rehabilitation.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100% of total development cost (nonprofits); 97% (for-profits); 95% (for-profits with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits). 30-year term with up to 50-year amortization.
<b><u>Rural Rental Housing Loan Guarantees</u></b>	Guarantees on loans to build or preserve affordable housing for very-low to moderate-income tenants.	For-profit and nonprofit lenders.	Build or rehabilitate affordable rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	At least 25-year term with fixed interest rate. Loan guarantees on up to 90% of the principal.
<b><u>Housing Preservation Grants</u></b>	Repair and rehabilitate housing owned or occupied by very-low- and low-income rural families.	Public bodies and nonprofit organizations.	To operate a program that finances repair and rehabilitation activities for single-family and small rental properties.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
<b><u>Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants</u></b>	Safe, well-built affordable rental housing for farmworkers.	Individuals, public and private nonprofit organizations.	Rental housing new construction or substantial rehabilitation.	Not applicable.	Direct loan and grant.	Up to 102% of total development cost. Up to 33 years to repay at 1% interest.
<b><u>Community Facilities Loans and Grants</u></b>	Improve, develop, or finance essential community facilities for rural communities.	Public bodies, nonprofits, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes.	Construct, enlarge, or otherwise improve essential community facilities, such as public safety, fire and rescue, telecommunications, schools, libraries, hospitals, other healthcare facilities, etc. This may include furnishings, fixtures, and other required equipment.	City, town, or unincorporated area of not more than 20,000 in population. Facilities must primarily serve rural residents.	Direct loan, loan guarantee, or grant.	Up to 100% of market value. Term is for useful life of the facility or equipment, the State statute, or 40 years. Maximum grant 75% of project cost. Grant eligibility based on income, population, and need.
<b><u>Rural Community Development Initiative</u></b>	To facilitate housing, community facility, and community and economic development projects.	Private nonprofit or public organizations, philanthropic foundations, low-income communities.	Technical assistance grants of \$50,000 to \$300,000 to develop the capacity and ability of awardees to carry out needed projects.	City, town, or unincorporated area of not more than 50,000 in population.	Grant.	Matching funds required for grant.

For direct loans and grants, apply to Rural Development. For loan guarantees, apply to participating intermediaries such as approved banks, mortgage companies, etc.

## Rural Business and Cooperative Programs

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
<a href="#"><u>Business and Industry Loan Guarantees</u></a>	Create jobs/stimulate rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses.	Lenders/businesses.	Real estate, buildings, equipment, supplies, working capital, and some debt refinancing.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Loan guarantee.	Lender and borrower negotiate terms. Up to 30 years for real estate, 15 years for machinery and equipment, and 7 years for working capital.
<a href="#"><u>Rural Business Development Grants</u></a>	Help small and emerging private businesses, and/or nonprofits in rural communities, startup or expand. <b>Note:</b> This program combines the former Rural Business Enterprise Grant and Rural Business Opportunity Grant programs and was created through the 2014 Farm Bill.	Public bodies, government entities, nonprofit entities, and Federally recognized tribes.	Acquire or develop land, buildings, plants and equipment; build or improve access roads, parking areas, utility extensions, and water and waste disposal facilities; provide technical assistance; establish revolving loan funds; and support rural distance learning programs that provide educational or job training.	All areas rural in character except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis.
<a href="#"><u>Intermediary Relending Program Loans</u></a>	Establish revolving funds for business facilities and community development projects.	Public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Native American tribes, and cooperatives.	Community development projects, establish or expand businesses, create or save rural jobs.	Rural areas and incorporated places with populations of less than 50,000.	Direct loan.	The intermediary makes loans to businesses from its revolving loan fund on terms consistent with security offered. Intermediary pays 1% for 30 years.
<a href="#"><u>Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program</u></a>	Establish revolving funds to target assistance to small rural enterprises.	Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs).	Loans, technical, and capacity-building assistance to businesses with 10 or fewer employees and sole proprietorships.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Loans, grants.	Rural microenterprises apply directly to the intermediary.
<a href="#"><u>Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants</u></a>	Finance economic development and job creation in rural areas.	Rural Utilities Service-financed electric and telephone utilities.	Business startups or expansion projects that create rural jobs.	Rural areas with priority to places with populations of 2,500 or less.	Direct loan or grant to establish revolving loan fund.	Intermediary makes loans to for-profit or nonprofit businesses and public bodies. Loans are 0% for 10 years.
<a href="#"><u>Rural Cooperative Development Grants</u></a>	Establish/operate centers for cooperative development.	Nonprofits and institutions of higher education.	Establish centers to provide technical assistance, training, applied research, and data collection and interpretation, for the purpose of cooperative development.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Minimum 25% fund match (5% for 1994 Institutions). Grants awarded competitively.
<a href="#"><u>Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grants</u></a>	Funds to eligible co-ops, co-op associations, or co-op development centers for technical assistance to small, socially disadvantaged groups in rural areas. <b>Note:</b> This program was formerly known as the Small, Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grants Program.	Cooperatives and co-op development centers that serve socially disadvantaged groups where a majority of the board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of socially disadvantaged groups.	Technical assistance.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. There is no matching requirement.
<a href="#"><u>Value-Added Producer Grants</u></a>	Help independent agricultural producers enter into activities that add value to their products.	Independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, producer groups, majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.	Feasibility studies, business plans; working capital.	All areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Funds may not be used to build facilities or purchase equipment. Funds must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

## Rural Business and Cooperative Programs (Continued)

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
<a href="#"><u>Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Loan Guarantees and Grants</u></a>	Provide assistance for energy efficiency improvements or to purchase a renewable energy system for operations.	Rural small businesses and agricultural producers.	Energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy systems, land acquisition, and working capital.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000. (Population limits do not apply to agricultural producers.)	Loan guarantee and/or grant.	Grants up to 25% of project costs not to exceed \$250,000 for energy efficiency projects and \$500,000 for renewable energy. Loan guarantees up to 75% of project cost not to exceed \$25 million.
<a href="#"><u>REAP Audit/ Development Grants</u></a>	Grants for entities to pass through to small businesses or agricultural producers for 75% of the cost of an energy audit or renewable energy development assistance.	State, tribal, or local government institutions of higher education; rural electric cooperatives; or public power entities.	\$100,000 grant to entities; smaller ones to small businesses and agricultural producers for 75% of energy audit or renewable energy development assistance.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000.	Grant.	\$100,000 to entities and up to 75% of the cost of energy audit for renewable energy development assistance.
<a href="#"><u>Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program Loan Guarantees</u></a>	Loan guarantees to develop and construct commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit facilities using eligible technology for the development of advanced biofuels. <b>Note:</b> This program was formerly known as the Biorefinery Assistance Program.	Individuals, Indian Tribes, State or local governments, corporations, farm cooperatives, associations of agricultural producers, national laboratories, higher learning institutions, rural electric co-ops, public power entities, consortiums of any of the entities.	Loan guarantees to develop and construct commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit facilities to use eligible technology for the development of advanced biofuels.	No restrictions.	Loan.	90% (maximum) guarantee on loans up to \$125 million; 80% (maximum) guarantee on loans less than \$150 million; 70% (maximum) guarantee on loans of \$150 million but less than \$200 million; 60% (maximum) guarantee on loans of \$200 million up to \$250 million.
<a href="#"><u>Repowering Assistance Program</u></a>	Payments to biorefineries to replace fossil fuels with biomass.	Biorefineries.	Grant to biorefineries, including ethanol and biodiesel plants that use electricity generated from natural gas and coal and require this for the fermentation process.	No restrictions.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review. Grant awards determined by National Office.
<a href="#"><u>Advanced Biofuel Payment Program</u></a>	Payments to producers of advanced biofuels.	Eligible producers of advanced biofuels.	Grant to producers of advanced biofuels (non-commercial-based).	No restrictions.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review. Grant awards determined by National Office.

*For direct loans and grants, apply to Rural Development. For loan guarantees, apply to participating intermediaries such as eligible banks, etc. For revolving funds (IRP, REDLG, RMAP), intermediaries apply to Rural Development, others to the intermediaries.*

## Rural Utilities Programs

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
<a href="#"><u>Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grants</u></a>	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit corporations.	Build, repair, and improve public water systems and waste collection and treatment systems.	Rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Direct loan and grant.	Repayment period is a maximum of 40 years. Grant funds may be available.
<a href="#"><u>Water and Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees</u></a>	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit corporations.	Construct, repair, and improve water supply and distribution systems and waste collection and treatment systems.	Rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Loan guarantee.	Eligible lenders obtain up to a 90% guarantee on loans they make and service.
<a href="#"><u>Solid Waste Management Grants</u></a>	Provide technical assistance and/or training to those who operate and maintain active landfills.	Public bodies, private nonprofit organizations, Indian Tribes, and academic institutions.	Technical assistance and training to improve landfill conditions and protect against threats to nearby water resources.	Rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Grant.	Applications accepted year-round. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
<a href="#"><u>Technical Assistance/ Training/Circuit Rider</u></a>	Provide technical assistance and training.	Public, private, and nonprofit organizations.	Technical assistance and training to assist with management of water and waste projects.	Rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
<a href="#"><u>Rural Broadband Direct Loans and Loan Guarantee</u></a>	Deployment of broadband service to eligible rural communities. <b>Note:</b> The 2014 Farm Bill revised program provisions. An interim rule was published in published in FY 2015.	Entities seeking to provide broadband services in rural areas.	Funds to construct, improve, and acquire facilities and equipment to provide broadband service in eligible rural communities.	Refer to the rule for specific definition and population limits.	Minimum and maximum loan amounts published annually in the <i>Federal Register</i> .	Refer to the rule for loan terms and conditions.
<a href="#"><u>Electric and Telecommunications Loans</u></a>	Help rural communities obtain affordable, high-quality electric and telecommunications services.	Nonprofit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities.	Generation, transmission facilities and distribution of electric power, including alternative, renewable, conservation and energy efficiency programs. Enhance 911 emergency service, digital switching equipment, and fiber optic cable, along with traditional main system telecommunications service.	Electric: areas served by an existing rural electric borrower, or rural areas other than a city or town of more than 20,000. Telecommunications: areas cities with population under 5,000.	Direct loan or loan guarantee.	Interest rates established in accordance with 7 CFR 1714. Contact RUS at <a href="http://www.rd.usda.gov">www.rd.usda.gov</a> or 1 (800) 670-6553.
<a href="#"><u>Energy Efficiency and Conservation Loan Program</u></a>	Finances energy efficiency and conservation projects for commercial, industrial, and residential consumers.	Existing electric loan borrowers (utilities) serving rural areas.	Improve energy efficiency for existing electric facilities; attract new business and create jobs; reduce fossil-fuel use; energy-efficiency measures for consumers; energy audits; and more.	Rural areas and towns up to 20,000 population. Eligible communities can be combined into larger service areas.	Loans.	Repayment period is 15 years unless ground-loop source investments or technology have a longer lifespan.
<a href="#"><u>Rural Energy Savings Program</u></a>	Helps rural families and small businesses achieve cost savings through loans to qualified consumers to implement durable cost-effective energy efficiency measures.	Current and former RUS borrowers or their subsidiaries, and entities that meet retail electric service needs in rural areas.	Implement energy efficiency measures to decrease energy use or costs for rural families and small business.	Contact RUS to determine whether a project is in an eligible rural area.	Loans.	Up to 20 years at 0% interest; up to 3% interest for relending to qualified end-users/ consumers for up to 10 years; up to 4% of the loan total may be used for startup costs.

## Rural Utilities Programs (Continued)

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
<b><u>Distance Learning and Telemedicine</u></b>	Develop and deploy advanced telecommunication services throughout rural America to improve education and healthcare.	Incorporated entities, including municipalities, for-profit, and nonprofit corporations that operate rural schools, libraries, healthcare clinics, and other educational or healthcare facilities.	To provide end-user equipment and programming that delivers distance learning and telemedicine services into eligible areas.	Rural areas outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with populations up to 20,000.	Grant.	Awards range from \$50,000 to \$500,000. A minimum of 15% in matching funds is required.
<b><u>Community Connect Grants</u></b>	Provide public access to broadband in otherwise un-served communities.	Public bodies, tribes, cooperatives, nonprofits, limited dividend or mutual associations, corporations, and other legally organized entities	To build broadband infrastructure and establish a community center that offers free public access to broadband for 2 years.	A single community outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with a population over 20,000 and that does not have broadband.	Grant.	Minimum: \$50,000; Maximum: \$1 million. Amounts are published in Notices of Funding Availability and may vary.

*Electric and Telecom programs: Contact the Rural Utilities Service Administrator; Water programs: Contact the Rural Development State Office.  
CFR refers to Code of Federal Regulations.*

## Rural Development Program Purposes

Rural Housing and Community Facilities Programs	Land & Buildings	Machinery & Equipment	Working Capital	Infrastructure	Technical Assistance/ Training
Single Family Housing Direct Loans (including Self-Help Loans)	◆				
Single Family Housing Loan Guarantees	◆				
Single Family Housing Repair Loans/Grants	◆				
Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants					◆
Rural Rental Housing Direct Loans	◆			◆	
Rural Rental Housing Loan Guarantees	◆			◆	
Housing Preservation Grants	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Farm Labor Housing Loans/Grants	◆			◆	
Community Facilities Direct Loans, Loan Guarantees, Grants*	◆	◆	◆	◆	
Rural Community Development Initiative					◆
<b>Rural Business and Cooperative Programs</b>					
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees	◆	◆	◆	◆	
Rural Business Development Grants	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Intermediary Relending Program Loans	◆	◆	◆		
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Rural Cooperative Development Grants				◆	◆
Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grants					◆
Value-Added Producer Grant			◆	◆	◆
Rural Energy for America Program Loan Guarantees/Grants	◆	◆		◆	◆
Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program Loan Guarantees					
Repowering Assistance Program					
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program					
<b>Rural Utilities Programs</b>					
Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loans, Loan Guarantees, Grants	◆	◆		◆	
Solid Waste Management Grants					◆
Technical Assistance/Training/Circuit Rider					◆
Rural Broadband Direct Loans and Loan Guarantees	◆			◆	
Electric and Telecommunications Direct Loans/Loan Guarantees	◆	◆		◆	
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Loan Program	◆	◆		◆	
Rural Energy Savings Program	◆	◆		◆	
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loans/Grants		◆		◆	
Community Connect Grants	◆	◆	◆	◆	

\*Initial operating expenses are eligible in conjunction with financing an eligible Community Facility project. However, grant funds may not be used to fund initial operating expenses.