



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

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To: Communities Preparing a Community Housing Improvement Strategy (CHIS)

From: Mike Burns, Office of Housing and Community Partnerships

Subject: Availability and Use of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Data

As discussed at the CHIS training, certain CHIS tables require reporting by the three HUD income categories (0-30%, 30-50% and 50-80% of median income). HUD has posted needs data (called CHAS data) to the HUDUSER website at <http://socds.huduser.org/index.html> that provide this information for selectable geographies, and the data can be downloaded into an Excel format.

However, it has come to our attention that there are discrepancies between this CHAS data set and the HUD LMI data, which HUD issued in March 2002 and which was distributed on the OHCP data CDs and is part of the OhioMaps CD as well. Specifically, the methodology that HUD used to create the LMI data was the same one used in 1990. This methodology used household summary data for Census areas to calculate LMI persons and percents. (This is why the LMI universe differs from the actual population in many cases.) Nevertheless, to produce the LMI information quickly this method was used and is the accepted HUD data for qualifying CDBG eligible areas. For the HUD CHAS information, a special tabulation was run by the Census, which means that the Census bureau went back to the original respondent data and determined LMI status based on income and family size. Consequently, the CHAS data is more accurate than, and different from, the HUD LMI data. That is, the number of LMI households reflected in the CHAS data for a particular area differs from the HUD LMI household data for the same area.

The question becomes which data to use. OHCP's guidance is that you should use the HUD LMI data to qualify CDBG area-wide benefit projects and to determine areas of LMI concentration, but use the CHAS data when discussing numbers and percents of LMI households with particular housing needs. In general, you can avoid confusion by not citing the data on LMI households provided in the HUD LMI data set, but rather discuss numbers of LMI persons and percent LMI persons.

One other discrepancy in the data also exists. According to the HUD staff that prepared the CHAS data, the Census Bureau used a certain "rounding routine" when it prepared the special tabulation for HUD, which was not used when developing the actual published Census data. This means that the total households listed for a particular Census area in the CHAS data will not match the published Census data for that same area (i.e., the data contained on the Census SF3 CD-ROM). Once again, the question is how to deal with this discrepancy. OHCP's guidance is that you should continue to cite the Census SF3 data when preparing the overall analysis and discussion of needs in your CHIS, but cite the percentages and numbers from the CHAS data when discussing numbers and percents relative to LMI housing needs cited in the CHAS data. In general, the percentages of need among various populations and income groups is the most important factor, rather than the exact numbers.

HUD has indicated to OHCP that it will be able to provide the CHAS data in a .dbf format for the entire state in "a couple of weeks", which should allow OHCP to put it into an Access data format and also in GIS format.

Also, note that the training materials provided at the Maptitude session have been posted to OHCP's website at <http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/ohcp/Data.htm> so persons who were unable to attend the training session can now access these step-by-step guides.