

MATERIALS REBATE PROGRAM
FY 2006-2007

SECTION 1 ADMINISTRATION

1.01 General. The Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) is responsible for the administration of the policy guidelines for the City of Austin's Materials Rebate Program (the Program). The Program is under the administrative control of the Director of Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department (NHCD). The Director shall have the authority to:

- Establish processes, procedures, and criteria for the development, implementation and operation of the Program;
- Establish yearly financial assistance limits based on funding availability;
- Establish organization participation standards; and

1.02 Purpose. The purpose of the Program is to provide eligible non-profits with a rebate on materials purchased to repair homes of low-income, owner-occupied households. This assistance, in the form of a rebate, will be provided to the non-profits after repairs have been completed to eligible homes. Materials will be used to perform repairs on specific homes.

1.03 Form of Assistance. The form of assistance will be a rebate, not to exceed \$5,000 per home repaired. Under special circumstances, and with prior approval of the Program Manager, funds may be advanced to a nonprofit organization if a business imprinted invoice is presented. Under no circumstances will funds be advanced directly to a homeowner.

1.04 Fund Source. The program will be evaluated each fiscal year to determine fund availability.

1.05 Definitions:

- **AHFC** – Austin Housing Finance Corporation
- **Applicant** – The organization requesting the rebate on behalf of the household.
- **City** – Austin, Travis County, Texas
- **Director** – Director, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development
- **Fund Source** – the origination point of the funds used to provide assistance to each project
- **Program** – refers to Materials Rebate Program
- **Program Manager** – refers to the person responsible for the administration of the program.
- **Project** – the property identified for receipt of rebate
- **Rebate** – form of assistance not requiring a payback of funds

1.06 Grievance. Organizations aggrieved by any action or inaction of the program which occurs in the implementation of these policies, and who wish to appeal said action or inaction, must do so by submitting an appeal in writing to the Program Manager within 30 days of the action or inaction deemed aggrieving by said entity applying for the rebate.

The Program Manager is charged with the administrative responsibility for reviewing an appeal or grievance. He / She shall submit to the Director a written summary of each grievance received and an explanation of the administrative action taken or recommended within 15 days of his / her receipt of a written grievance from the organization. If the grievant is not satisfied with the Program Manager's decision, the grievant may appeal to the Director. An appeal to the Director must be filed no later than 15 days from the date the grievant receives in writing the Program Manager's decision. The Executive Director shall function as the highest final level of administrative appeal.

1.07 Program Implementation. AHFC will be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the day-to-day activities of the Program. AHFC shall ensure compliance of the Program with all applicable state and/or local requirements. AHFC shall develop and maintain all applicable files, documents, and reports on behalf of the City as required.

1.08 Program Performance Measures. For the purposes of consistency, accountability, evaluation, and tracking of unit completion, the following performance measures will be used:

- Completed projects shall be defined as projects that have received a rebate.
- All repairs shall meet the standards for repair listed in the S.M.A.R.T. Housing Guide and shall comply with applicable permit, inspection, and license requirements related to these repairs.

Each fiscal year's program progress and accomplishments will be assessed by calculating the total number of completed projects. Unless otherwise changed by written directive by the Executive Director at the beginning of each fiscal year, the above stated methodology will be used to track the performance of the Program.

1.09 Non-Discrimination. As a matter of policy, neither the City of Austin nor the Austin Housing Finance Corporation discriminate based on sex, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. The Program will operate in accordance with these policies and with all applicable federal, state and local Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity laws and regulations.

The Program is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Please call 974-3100 (voice) or Relay Texas at 1-800-735-2989 (TDD) for assistance.

The City of Austin and AHFC do not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission to, access to, treatment by or employment in their programs and activities. Dolores Gonzalez is designated as the City's Section 504/ADA Coordinator. Her office is located at 505 Barton Springs Road, 6th floor. If you have any questions or complaints regarding your Section 504/ADA rights, please call the Section 504/ADA Coordinator at 974-3256 (voice) or 974-2445 (TTY).

SECTION 2 PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

2.01 General. The Materials Rebate Program shall consist of repairs made to protect the basic livability of the home.

2.02 Ineligible Repairs. The following items have been determined to be ineligible for rebate under the Program. The omission of any item from this list, however, should not be construed as rendering it eligible. Exceptions may be made for items on this list with prior AHFC approval when documented evidence is received to warrant that such items are necessary for the basic livability of the home.

- Appliances (other than built-in kitchen appliances)
- Architect's Fee
- Bar or Wet Bar
- Barbecue Pit
- Bathhouse
- Carpeting for Kitchen, Bathroom or Patio
- Deck
- Dehumidifier (portable)
- Draperies, Shades, Curtains, etc.
- Dumbwaiter
- Fence
- Finishing Work on New Home
- Fireplaces (except repair or addition of permanently attached, energy-efficient equipment to an existing fireplace)
- Flower box
- Greenhouse
- Hangars (airplane)
- Hot Tub, Sauna, Spa or Whirlpool
- Humidifier (portable)
- Jacuzzi Tub
- Kennel
- Landscaping
- Outdoor Fireplace or Hearth
- Patio
- Penthouse
- Photo mural
- Physically moving a building
- Pier, steps to lake or water
- Pond
- Radiator Cover or Enclosure
- Retaining wall
- Scotch Tint (and other similar reflective window coatings)
- Sidewalk (public)
- Spray Insulation on exterior of buildings

- Steam cleaning of exterior surface
- Storage Sheds, Pole buildings, Barns and other Outbuildings
- Swimming pool, Sauna, Spa or whirlpool
- Tearing down a building or any portion of a building that will not be replaced through the program
- Television Antenna or Satellite Dish
- Tennis Court
- Tools
- Tree Surgery
- Valance or Cornice Boards
- Waterproofing of a structure by pumping or injecting any substance in the earth next to or beneath the basement or foundation floor
- Food

2.03 Eligible Expenses. The following items have been determined to be eligible for rebate under the Program. The omission of any item from this list, however, should not be construed as rendering it ineligible. Exceptions may be made for items on this list with prior AHFC approval when documented evidence is received to warrant that such items are necessary for the basic livability of the home.

- Construction materials for repairs not listed in section 2.02.
- Fees and permits.
- Labor, when a repair is reported as an emergency, affecting health and safety, labor may be reimbursed.
- Safety equipment; i.e.; safety goggles, gloves, dust masks, respirators, etc.

SECTION 3 PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.01 General. Organizations requesting assistance through the Program must submit a complete and accurate application, in the form prescribed by the Program. The household receiving the materials from the participating organization must be an owner occupied, principal place of residence and homestead. The Program is under no obligation to provide any assistance to any recipient who does not meet, or whose home does not meet, applicable eligibility guidelines.

3.02 Eligible Organizations. Organizations must have a 501 (c) (3) designation. Organizations must show that part of their mission is to assist low/moderate income people in need, that they are volunteer based and that they possess the administrative capacity to administer funds.

3.03 Income. The household income of the homeowner (household) receiving the repair must not exceed **60% of the Median Family Income** as established by HUD, as periodically amended.

As of March 8, 2006, the income limits per household size are as follows:

| Household Size | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Total Household Income cannot exceed | \$29,850 | \$34,150 | \$38,400 | \$42,650 | \$46,050 | \$49,500 | \$52,900 | \$56,300 |

3.04 Location. Under the Program, the property containing the home to be repaired must be located within the city limits of Austin.

3.05 Occupancy. As an eligibility condition of the Program, the owner must use the property as his/her principal place of residence.

3.06 Fund Availability. As a condition of eligibility, the Program must have sufficient funds to issue the rebate. The Program is under no obligation to process any application for rebates if it has been determined there are insufficient funds available to complete the rebate. It is the intent of the program to budget its funds in the following manner:

- A total of \$25,000 will be budgeted for small nonprofits who have insufficient own funds to accomplish their mission.
- Establish a yearly budget for projects (i.e.: Raise the Roof) sponsored in collaboration with Hands on Housing.
- The remaining funds will be available to all approved organizations.

3.07 Ineligible Properties. For the purposes of this Program, ineligible properties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- property used in part or in whole as rental or leased property.
- property located outside of Austin’s city limits.
- property whose owners do not adhere or agree to adhere to Program requirements as defined herein.
- property which has outstanding liens, or delinquent taxes, or whose owners have judgments or amounts owned to the City of Austin or Austin Housing Finance Corporation at the time of application.
- property where the applicant is not the fee simple owner (e.g. contract for sale, lease, etc.).
- property whose owner is requesting reimbursement for costs of repairs already made, or for materials already purchased.

SECTION 4 APPLICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

4.01 General: In order to be considered for the Program, a complete and accurate application, in a form as prescribed by the Program, must be submitted to the Program office by the organization requesting the rebate. The organization and applicant recipient must be determined eligible prior to receiving rebate assistance. The Program is under no obligation to

process an application that has been found ineligible at any point during the application review process.

4.02 Staff Functions: Designated AHFC staff shall have the responsibility for the review, approval and processing of all Program applications. AHFC staff will be responsible for making determinations of eligibility, rebate application completeness, project tracking, application approvals and denials. AHFC staff shall have the authority to develop and implement appropriate forms, processes and procedures required to satisfy Program guidelines and limits for application processing and approval.

4.03 Organization Application: The organization applying for a rebate from the Materials Rebate Program must provide the following documentation:

- Proof of 501 (c) (3) status.
- Proof of Worker's Compensation and General and Commercial Liability insurance, and business auto insurance.
- Most recent financials.
- Demonstrated ability in doing the type of work required.
 - List of Principals and resumes.
 - 3 letters of recommendation.
- Accurate and complete Program application with appropriate documents.

4.04 Rebate Application Process: Application processing shall be determined as follows:

- Applications received and deemed complete with all required information will be considered for assistance on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Complete applications will be reviewed within 3 business days. The date the application was received by the Program will serve as the beginning reference date as long as the application was received before 12:00 noon.
- Rebate request must be accompanied by:
 - Materials Rebate Client Application.
 - Materials Rebate program Checklist.
 - Final Concurrence Inspection Report.
 - Before and after pictures of the repair site.
 - Original invoices or receipts.

4.04.1 Application Submittal / Processing: The Program may accept applications for assistance throughout the Program year on a first-come, first-serve basis, or may limit when applications may be accepted. An application must be filled in completely and accurately. Although the Program may process the application as submitted, the Program retains the right to make requests for information and / or verification at any time during the review process. Applications will be returned or canceled if the application is incomplete, or requested information / verification has not been submitted by the applicant. The date when the complete and accurate application is received is considered the application date.

4.06 Application Review/Approval. Rebate applications will be reviewed and approved by AHFC staff. The application review and approval process may include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Organization Eligibility
- Property location
- Property Owner eligibility
- Sufficient funding availability

It is the applicant organization's responsibility to determine that the property and homeowner are eligible for the rebate. The City of Austin and AHFC are not responsible for and cannot be held liable for guaranteeing a rebate on an ineligible property, applicant, or organization or guaranteeing a rebate related to an ineligible repair.

4.07 Application Denial/Closure. Once an application has been reviewed and denied for legitimate Program reasons, the application will be considered closed. If an organization should wish to be considered for assistance in the future, a new application must be submitted. The Program will not retrieve or utilize any previous application information.

4.08 Disqualification of Organizations. Organizations may be disqualified from participating in the Program for any of the following reasons which may include, but are not limited to:

- Any organization, at any stage of the Program process, knowingly presents false or misleading information, makes false statements, or misrepresents themselves or their financial condition to the Program and/or staff.
- Any organization that has been debarred from participation in city and/or federal procurement and non-procurement programs.

4.09 Organization files and Documentation. All organizations will be required to provide the following documentation at the time of the first rebate application or prior to submitting the first rebate application:

- 501 (c) (3) IRS Determination Letter
- Most recent financials for the organization
- Proof of Worker's Compensation, Commercial General Liability Insurance, and Business Auto Insurance
- Demonstrated ability in doing the type of work required (letters of reference)

4.10 Application File and Documentation. All approved Materials Rebate Program applications will be retained for 5 years from the date of receipt. For an application to be considered complete, the organization shall submit an application consisting of, but not limited to, the following documents:

- Program Application
- Pictures of Project with completed repairs [before and after photos]
- Receipts for materials purchased for eligible repair
- Signed Final Concurrence Inspection form