

or be wholly incorporated into the OPTN framework? Please address issues including communicable disease transmission, manufacturing variability, sterility, product potency, traceability, and post-market surveillance.

9. *Provider implications.* If deceased donor islet cell products were reclassified as “organs”, would OPTN membership need to expand to include new types of providers (e.g., endocrinologists) to perform these treatments? Or would the existing pool of providers at OPTN member institutions perform these treatments if islet cells are classified as “organs”?

a. What are the potential provider implications?

b. What are the potential system costs and implications for each approach?

10. *Patient access.* If deceased donor islet cell products were reclassified as organs, what effect could that have on:

- a. the number and geographic distribution of treatment centers;
- b. patient travel requirements;
- c. provider participation;
- d. waiting times;
- e. patient costs;
- f. insurance coverage and
- g. donor willingness to participate in organ donation?

11. *Operational and financial impact on OPTN.* The OPTN is funded primarily through organ transplant patient registration fees. What operational, administrative, or financial impacts would reclassification have on the OPTN, its member organizations, and patients waiting for an organ transplant? Please comment on potential effects on policy development, Board of Directors and committee workload, information technology systems, membership requirements, patient registration processes, and overall program costs.

**Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.,**  
*Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services.*

[FR Doc. 2026–19563 Filed 9–23–26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4150–28–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### National Institutes of Health

#### National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders; Notice of Closed Meeting

Pursuant to section 1009 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

The meeting will be closed to the public as indicated below in accordance with the provisions set forth in section 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended for the review, discussion, and evaluation of individual intramural programs and projects conducted by the National Institute On Deafness And Other Communication Disorders, including consideration of personnel qualifications and performance, and the competence of individual investigators, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

*Name of Committee:* Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

*Date:* October 28, 2026.

*Time:* 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate personnel qualifications and performance, and competence of individual investigators.

*Address:* Porter Neuroscience Research Center, Building 35A, 35 Convent Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892.

*Meeting Format:* Virtual Meeting.

*Contact Person:* Lisa L Cunningham, Ph.D., Scientific Director, National Institute on Deafness, and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health, 35A Convent Drive, Rockville, MD 20850, (301) 443–2766 [lisa.cunningham@nih.gov](mailto:lisa.cunningham@nih.gov).

Information is also available on the Institute's/Center's home page: <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/about/advisory-committees>, where an agenda and any additional information for the meeting will be posted when available.

Dated: September 21, 2026.

**Rosalind M Niamke,**

*Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.*

[FR Doc. 2026–19577 Filed 9–23–26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4167–05–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR–6513–N–02]

### Civil Monetary Penalty Amounts for 2026

**AGENCY:** Office of the General Counsel, HUD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice informs the public that inflation adjustments of civil monetary penalty amounts required by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (the 2015 Act) are not being made for 2026.

**DATES:** September 24, 2026.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Scott Knittle, Principal Deputy General

Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20024; telephone number 202–402–2244 (this is not a toll-free number). HUD welcomes and is prepared to receive calls from individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as from individuals with speech or communication disabilities. To learn more about how to make an accessible telephone call, please visit <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-relay-service-trs>.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### I. Background

The Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (the 2015 Act) (Pub. L. 114–74, Sec. 701), which further amended the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101–410), requires agencies to make annual adjustments to civil monetary penalty (CMP) amounts for inflation. The annual adjustment is based on the percent change between the U.S. Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (“CPI-U”) for the month of October preceding the date of the adjustment, and the CPI-U for October of the prior year (28 U.S.C. 2461 note, section (5)(b)(1)). Pursuant to the 2015 Act, adjustments are rounded to the nearest dollar.<sup>1</sup>

#### II. This Notice

On April 17, 2026, the Office of Management and Budget informed the heads of executive departments and agencies that “Due to the government shutdown, [the Bureau of Labor Statistics] was unable to produce the October 2025 data. Based on the lack of October 2025 CPI-U data, which is needed to make adjustments under the 2015 Act, there will be no updated cost-of-living adjustment multiplier for 2026 and agencies will continue using the 2025 civil monetary penalty levels as applicable.”<sup>2</sup>

As such, this notice informs the public that the statutory annual inflation adjustments of civil monetary penalty amounts are not being made for 2026 and that all HUD civil money

<sup>1</sup> 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

<sup>2</sup> OMB Memorandum M–26–11: *Cancellation of Penalty Inflation Adjustments for 2026, Regarding the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015*, April 17, 2026, pp. 1–2.

penalties are maintained at their 2025 level.

David Woll,

General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2026-19600 Filed 9-23-26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-67-P

## DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. 6620-N-01]

### HUD Evaluation Policy

**AGENCY:** Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This policy articulates the core principles of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's evaluation and research activities. This notice updates the Department's Evaluation Policy and reaffirms HUD's commitment to conducting rigorous, relevant evaluations, adhering to the tenets of Executive Order 14303, "Restoring Gold Standard Science," and using evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice.

**DATES:** Effective date of this notice: September 24, 2026.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information about this notice, contact Jennifer Turnham, Evaluation Officer, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20410, email [PDREPublicComments@hud.gov](mailto:PDREPublicComments@hud.gov), or telephone (202) 402-6021. The listed telephone number is not a toll-free number. HUD welcomes and is prepared to receive calls from individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as individuals with speech and communication disabilities. To learn more about how to make an accessible telephone call, please visit <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-relay-service-trs>.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### I. Background

Evaluation activity occurs in several offices at HUD, but the special mission of HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) is to improve life in American communities by building evidence to inform and strengthen housing and community development policy and practice and accelerate progress on HUD's priorities. PD&R builds evidence by conducting, supporting, and sharing research, surveys, demonstrations, program

evaluations, and best practices. Within HUD, PD&R is responsible for most, but not all, program evaluations. The office also conducts regulatory impact analyses that accompany regulations proposed by the Department.

In 2016, PD&R published its first Evaluation Policy describing the core standards guiding its evaluation and research activities.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, PD&R revised the Evaluation Policy to align with the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 ("Evidence Act"),<sup>2</sup> expand the scope of the policy to include all of HUD, and reflect PD&R's experience since publishing its initial policy.<sup>3</sup>

This 2026 revision reaffirms HUD's commitment to the program evaluation standards required by OMB Circular A-11 Section 290.5, consistent with the Evidence Act<sup>4</sup>—rigor; relevance and utility; transparency; independence and objectivity; and ethics—and affirms HUD's commitment to the tenets of Gold Standard Science (GSS) in producing and communicating evidence, consistent with Executive Order 14303, "Restoring Gold Standard Science" (May 23, 2025). Executive Order 14303 seeks to ensure that federally-funded research is transparent, rigorous, and impactful, and that Federal decisions are informed by reliable scientific evidence. The Executive Order requires federal agencies to conduct scientific activities in a manner that is: reproducible; transparent; communicative of error and uncertainty; collaborative and interdisciplinary; skeptical of findings and assumptions; structured for falsifiability of hypotheses; subject to unbiased peer review; accepting of negative results as positive outcomes; and without conflicts of interest. HUD reports annually on its efforts to implement Executive Order 14303.<sup>5</sup>

#### II. HUD Evaluation Policy

The Evaluation Policy covers evaluation, as defined by the Evidence Act,<sup>6</sup> as well as other research and

evidence building projects and regulatory impact analyses. The policy applies to HUD's contractors, grantees, and staff involved in these activities and affirms HUD's commitment to federal evaluation standards (rigor, relevance and utility, transparency, independence and objectivity, and ethics).

#### Rigor

HUD is committed to using the most rigorous methods appropriate to the research questions and feasible within budget and other constraints. Rigor is necessary in all types of evaluations (impact evaluations, implementation or process evaluations, outcome evaluations, formative evaluations, and other types of scientific research) and applies to both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Rigor requires identifying well-founded inferences about cause and effect; understanding and correcting for bias in research questions and methods; using measures that capture the intended information; and clarity about the generalizability of findings. Where feasible and appropriate, rigorous research uses experimental or quasi-experimental methods to enable the falsification of hypotheses and assignment of causation, aligning with the GSS tenet of structuring (science) for the falsifiability of hypotheses.

HUD ensures that contractors and grantees conducting evaluations have appropriate expertise to apply rigor by evaluating applicants' experience and the skillsets of the proposed team members. HUD employs staff from a range of disciplines to ensure they have the technical and subject matter expertise to develop, oversee, and conduct high-quality evaluations that advance the agency's mission. HUD staff critically review all steps in the research and evaluation process, question findings, and assess underlying assumptions, consistent with the GSS tenet of skepticism of findings and assumptions. Evaluations must also clearly communicate uncertainty, margins of error, and limitations in findings, consistent with the GSS tenet of communicating error and uncertainty.

#### Relevance and Utility

HUD's evaluation and research activities reflect legislative requirements and HUD policy priorities. Relevance and utility are key considerations at all stages of the research process. Early input from stakeholders on research topics and questions helps ensure that

policies, and organizations intended to assess their effectiveness and efficiency." See <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4174/text>.

<sup>1</sup> PD&R's 2016 Evaluation Policy can be found here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/06/2016-29215/hud-program-evaluation-policy-policy-statement>.

<sup>2</sup> Public Law 115-435, January 14, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> HUD's 2021 Evaluation Policy can be found here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/08/13/2021-17339/hud-program-evaluation-policy-policy-statement>.

<sup>4</sup> The standards are set forth in Section 290.5 of the Office of Management and Budget's Circular No. A-11, August 2025. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/a11.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> See [www.hud.gov/gss](https://www.hud.gov/gss).

<sup>6</sup> Section 101 of the Evidence Act defines evaluation as "an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs,