Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Housing Finance and Development Division
Office of Housing Finance
Excel Core Application Instructions

All applicants must use the most recent DCA-protected HFDD Excel Core Application Form provided on the DCA website under the applicable funding round. DCA recommends that applicants use Excel 365 on a PC (not Apple) device less than 5 years old to achieve the best results and avoid some technical issues.

The tabs contained with each core application are interconnected with references to each other and are NOT standalone. As such, the tabs must not be deleted or moved to external Excel files. Do not substitute or transfer tabs between different versions or copies of the core application, even if it is for the same application. The built-in references will still be tied back to the original file, causing problems. Also, deleting the existing tab in the destination file will destroy references to the existing tab in the data collector feature built into each core application. This means no data will be collected for either the existing tab or the new tab. Use the core application as downloaded from the DCA website and do not alter its structure in any way. Anything else may be cause for automatic rejection of the application.

To submit more than one application, make additional electronic copies of the applicable HFDD Core Application Form file only after completing portions that *are* common to your applications and before completing any portions that are *not* common to all applications. This copying process must occur while the electronic file is unopened. In other words, right-click on the closed file in the folder where you have stored it on your computer, select Copy, right click in a white space of the destination folder and select Paste.

DCA prohibits the copying of cells from external spreadsheets and pasting over the corresponding DCA core application cells. This is to preserve the existing formatting, conditional formatting, data validation and data retrieval mechanisms built into the core application.

Fill in only the areas shaded in Blue or Green. Green shaded cells automatically calculate information provided by the applicant but are unlocked. All questions (generally denoted by black or blue font in the electronic application) are intended to elicit a response, so do not leave out any requested information. Yellow- or white-shaded cells are not for applicant use and have been locked.

This electronic application has been designed so that some information, such as the project name and address, need only be entered once. In order to take advantage of this feature, the user must enter information in the order in which it is requested. An exception to this is the completion of the “Uses of Funds” tab, which feeds back into the “Project Identification” tab.

In order to maintain the integrity of the electronic application, many cells are locked and inaccessible by the applicant. Any attempt to access or tamper with the formulas in those cells or to otherwise “fool” the system or alter its intent will be cause for automatic rejection of the application. This includes entering zeros or blank spaces in blue-shaded cells intended for actual text data. Leave all number cells completely empty unless a number greater than zero is entered to indicate actual pertinent data.

Any attempt to replicate the form in such a manner so as to remove the DCA-protection feature and then submit the unprotected (or re-protected) replicated version for consideration may be cause for automatic rejection of the application.

DATA ENTRY RULES

1. When entering text data, do not use all upper-case letters or all lower-case letters.
2. When entering phone and cellular numbers or zip codes, enter numbers only with no blank spaces, parenthesis or hyphens – these cells are pre-formatted. Phone and cellular numbers will require area codes.
3. Zip code cells are pre-formatted and will require 4-digit extensions (enter 4 zeroes at end if needed).
4. Applicants must complete **all** boxes that apply to their project – if a box does not apply, then leave it empty (do not enter zero, “n/a”, nor a space “ “).

5. Do NOT enter zeros or blank spaces in any cell in order to cause the spreadsheet to function in a certain way, or for any arbitrary reason. Leave all number cells completely empty unless a number greater than zero is entered to indicate actual pertinent data.
6. Applicants may initially enter a formula or reference into a cell to determine a correct amount but must NOT leave formulas or references to other cells in cells requesting numerical values. However, using the Comments section to explain a calculation (i.e., soft debt service payment = cash flow x .75) can be valuable to DCA's review and prevent the necessity of a clarification later.
7. All circular references must be removed before application submission.
8. If cell references are made to external spreadsheets, those references must also be removed prior to submission to DCA.

If a particular cell's text appears to be cut off, simply highlight the cell and the entire text will appear in the text box directly above the document body. If the text font is too small or appears shoved together, simply adjust the zoom percentage. Selecting Print Preview will show how the text will look when printed out.

Unless otherwise noted, enter all comments/recommendations in spaces provided in the electronic application.

Print margins may shift in viewing and printing due to different printers and printer drivers. In these cases, applicants are requested not to adjust margins except just prior to printing to PDF. Margin adjustments must not be saved and should be returned to the preset positions before submitting to DCA. To do this, save the document BEFORE making margin changes (close and re-open if necessary), then make margin changes, then print, then either click the "Undo" button at the top of the open file or else close the file without saving, and then re-open the file if needed. DCA has pre-set the margins to work on DCA printers.

Test the final version before submission by reviewing it alone on a separate non-networked computer from the one used for data entry. Remove any Shared workbook settings enabled for group use before submission.

Contact Allocation via email at allocation@dca.ga.gov regarding any technical issues with the Excel core application or these instructions. Save time by including the following:

- A virus-free copy of the Excel core application workbook you are working in as an attachment. Perform a virus scan on the file prior to sending but ***after*** updating your anti-virus files from the manufacturer's website (e.g., Norton or McAfee).
- The tab name and cell reference (column letter, row number) where the issue occurs, if applicable
- Detailed description of the nature of your problem
- Your computer manufacturer and age of unit, and Excel version installed

Thank you for your cooperation with these instructions!