



## Sponsorship Policy

### Statement of Policy

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (the "Department") accepts requests for sponsorship subject to the following guidelines:

1. The Department will consider opportunities that promote its mission of improving the quality of life in Maryland by working to revitalize communities and expand homeownership and affordable housing opportunities.
2. The Department will consider sponsoring activities, events, and programs that will significantly educate the public about the Department's work related to housing, homeownership, broadband, homeless solutions, community development, small business lending, energy efficiency and neighborhood revitalization. A request must demonstrate a specific focus related to, as well as provide relevant and direct connection to constituencies that can benefit from, the Department's work on these issues.
3. The Department will not consider sponsorships for sports or college/fraternal/alumni events, street/arts festivals or school fairs that do not specifically have a focus on issues within the Department's mission unless requested by the Governor's Office or Office of the Secretary.
4. An organization seeking sponsorship under this Policy must not have received any non-sponsorship funding from the Department through any other Department program within the twelve (12) months immediately preceding a request for sponsorship.
5. An event sponsorship does not automatically carry over from year to year and an organization must apply every year for a sponsorship. For an annually-recurring event, the Department's support is limited to three years, with its investment decreasing by half each following year. Any waiver of this requirement is in the sole discretion of the Secretary, provided it is in the best interests of the State.

6. The Department will not agree to sponsorships that reflect in a negative manner on the Department, administration, or state; do not align with the Department's mission; or are not in the best interest of the health and safety of the Department and/or its employees as determined by the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development.
7. Any sponsorship opportunity must be consistent with government policies, such as being non-discriminatory, and should provide access for every individual in the community regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or genetic information.
8. All sponsorships are subject to applicable procurement requirements.
9. The Department has a standard sponsorship agreement that is strongly preferred. Any agreement prepared externally is subject to legal review by the Office of the Attorney General. The following provisions are prohibited in any sponsorship agreement entered into by the Department:
  - a. a provision that requires the State to indemnify, defend, or hold harmless the sponsored entity;
  - b. a provision by which the State agrees to binding arbitration or any other binding extrajudicial dispute resolution process;
  - c. a provision that names a jurisdiction or venue for any action or dispute against the state other than a court of proper jurisdiction in the State;
  - d. a provision that requires the State to agree to limit the liability of the sponsored entity for any direct loss to the state caused by the negligence, intentional or willful misconduct, fraudulent act, recklessness, or other tortious conduct of the sponsored entity;
  - e. a provision that requires the state to be bound by a term or condition that: is unknown to the state at the time of signing a contract; may be unilaterally changed by the sponsored entity; is electronically accepted by a state employee without authority;
  - f. a provision for automatic renewal that obligates the state to allocate funding in subsequent fiscal years.

### **Purpose of Policy**

The Department receives numerous requests for sponsorship and this policy is intended to ensure that the Department supports and makes its information available to a diverse cross-section of constituencies throughout Maryland. DHCD adheres to this policy when evaluating, responding to, and approving sponsorship requests. A request must meet the Department's business development, community education, and marketing goals.

## **Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, “sponsorship” means a mutually beneficial business relationship between the Department and another entity, whereby the Department contributes funds, materials, or services in return for recognition, acknowledgement or other promotional consideration.

Sponsorship benefits could include a range of marketing opportunities including but not limited to the display of the Department’s name and logo, media releases, speaking engagements, grand openings, award presentations, inclusion in newsletters, displays and exhibitions, which publicize the housing industry and other objectives related to the Department’s mission.

## **Cancellation of Events - Return of Funds**

If for any reason an event is canceled **ALL** sponsorship funds must be returned to the Department within five (5) business days. As a condition of receiving sponsorship funds from the Department, you expressly acknowledge that you have read, understand, and agree to this Cancellation of Events - Return of Funds provision. The Department expressly reserves all rights to any legal or equitable remedy available to it to enforce this requirement.

## **Review Process**

Sponsorship applications are reviewed based on the soonest upcoming event date, not by submission date. Organizations should submit an application at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the scheduled event date, in order to allow ample time for review and processing. The Department can review an application for an event occurring in less than 60 days but on a case-by-case basis, and a timely decision cannot be guaranteed if sufficient review time is not provided..

## **Approvals**

All sponsorship arrangements must be approved by the Secretary’s designee and the Director of Community Engagement. Sponsored organizations must agree to send an original copy of all materials created under the sponsorship agreement bearing the Department’s logo, name or image to the Department fourteen (14) calendar days after the sponsorship has ended.

## **Payment**

All sponsorship payments will be made by way of a check, unless the sponsored organization is already approved and set up by the Comptroller's Office to receive payments from the State of Maryland by way of Electronic Funds Transfer.

Once a Purchase Order (“PO”) is set up, the Office of Community Engagement will prepare a Request for Payment (“RFP”) with appropriate supporting documents attached, and submit the RFP package to the Department’s Division of Finance & Administration (“DFA”) for review and payment processing. After DFA receives the RFP, Budget and General Accounting will review it before processing any payment. The review includes vendor setup, FEIN check, mailing address check, PO and PO balance, supporting documents check and confirmation of proper coding on the RFP. If any of the information is not correct, DFA will return the RFP package to the Office of Community Engagement for correction. Once the RFP is approved for processing, General Accounting will enter the RFP in the Financial Management Information System and submit the requested payment to the General Accounting Division of the Maryland Comptroller's Office for

issuance. Internally, this process of review and payment processing typically takes 10-15 business days.

The payment is then sent to the General Accounting Division of the Maryland Comptroller's Office and then mailed by the department, this is normally processed within Business 5 days.

*Please send the above reference materials to:*

**Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development  
7800 Harkins Road  
Lanham, Maryland 20706  
Attn: Office of Community Engagement**