

Noise Abatement Program—Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

To help reduce the impact of noise related to construction of the Hudson Tunnel Project (HTP), certain residential properties in North Bergen and Weehawken, New Jersey will be eligible for upfront payments to enable the purchase and installation of sound-reducing windows, sliding doors and, where necessary to create a closed-window environment, air conditioning units.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

1. What are the steps to participate in the Noise Abatement Program?

Eligible property owners will be invited to apply in the fall of 2024. A list of eligible properties is available at <https://www.gatewayprogram.org/noise.html>

2. How long does the entire claim process take?

The timeframe from the submission of the completed claim application, along with its supporting documentation, to the receipt of the payment typically ranges from 60 to 90 days. This duration may vary based on the specifics of the application.

ELIGIBILITY AND DOCUMENTATION

1. How were the eligible properties identified?

Eligible properties were identified in the HTP's Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD), issued in May of 2021, which includes a noise analysis conducted following the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual.

2. What if I'm a tenant of the eligible property?

If you live in one of the eligible properties, be sure to reach out to your landlord. Payments can only be made to the property owner. Property owners are responsible for installing windows, sliding doors, and/or air conditioning with the payments.

3. I live in a condominium. Do I need permission from my board to make improvements?

Gateway Development Commission (GDC) recommends checking with your Homeowners Association to confirm whether you are permitted to make direct improvements.

4. If I was not contacted or if I am not one of the eligible property owners, does this mean I have no protection against construction noise?

GDC is closely monitoring construction noise to assess whether construction activities are within allowable noise levels as determined by the United States Department of Transportation and identified in the HTP's FEIS/ROD. Monitoring will occur throughout construction, particularly during anticipated noise-intensive construction activities. Should noise exceed allowable levels, GDC will require the contractors to promptly take additional noise abatement measures, such as the installation of noise curtains, barriers, or enclosures.

FINANCIAL DETAILS

1. How much money am I eligible for?

Payment amounts will vary according to various factors, such as the number of bedrooms and sliding doors, and whether residences have existing air conditioning systems.

Guidelines: The program will generally provide the following amounts for windows and sliding doors:

- **\$2,845** per replacement window.
- **\$9,150** for up to one replacement sliding door.

In most cases, the program will pay for the replacement of up to **FOUR** windows per common area (common area includes living room, dining room, and kitchen combined) and **TWO** windows per bedroom/office. Rooms not reflected on the Township's tax roll cannot be included.

Since the intent of this program is to create a "closed-window condition," residences that do not have existing air conditioning systems (central, split, or window units) are eligible for an additional payment of **\$1,350** for the common area (common area includes living room, dining room, and kitchen combined) and **\$800** for each bedroom.

2. Is the payment taxable income?

The abatement payment received under this program is considered income. To assist with your tax reporting, GDC's Paying Agent will issue a 1099-MISC form. While the recipient of the funds may be able to claim a tax credit through federal programs, everyone's tax situation is unique. Please be sure to consult a tax professional for advice specific to your circumstances.

3. Will anyone from GDC contact property owners to request payment or payment information related to the Noise Abatement Program?

GDC will only contact property owners for payment information after the claim application has been reviewed and approved during the settlement agreement and release stage. GDC will never request any payment from an applicant; and will only ask for payment information (i.e., where to send a payment) to facilitate the processing of approved claim. All legitimate communications regarding the program will be clearly identified and conducted through official channels.

INSTALLATION AND USAGE

1. Will window replacement block all construction noise?

Construction noise is constantly changing depending on the type and intensity of the activities. The Noise Abatement Program is intended to provide residents with a quieter environment inside their homes.

2. What type of windows should I consider installing?

We recommend a window that achieves a Sound Transmission Class (STC) at or above 35. This can be achieved with a dual-pane window that incorporates:

- Panes of different thicknesses (making one pane thicker makes it harder for sound to travel through the glass)
- One pane made of laminated glass

3. What if I want to install a central air system instead of a/c window units?

The intent of the payment is to help create a "closed-window condition" that will reduce noise for the residents living within the impacted area. To that end, the property owner may elect to install a central air or split system. However, any costs beyond the payment will be the owner's responsibility. **Please note:** if the property already has window air conditioning units or an air conditioning system, no additional payment will be provided.

4. What does the payment cover?

The payment is intended to cover the costs of materials, labor, delivery, standard installation, and applicable sales taxes directly associated with window, sliding door, and air conditioning installation. However, it does not extend to additional work or costs arising from pre-existing conditions or any other

unforeseen circumstances. Any expenses beyond the scope of the program will be the responsibility of the property owner.

5. What if my property sustains damage during the installation of noise abatement measures?

Responsibility for any damages incurred during installation lies with the contractor you hire. GDC recommends selecting a licensed and insured contractor and reviewing the contractor's insurance policy before work begins.

6. Will GDC send a contractor to my property to discuss this Program?

No, GDC will never send a contractor to your property for the installation of the noise abatement measures. If someone does visit you suggesting they are with GDC or representing the Program, it may be a scam. If you are concerned about being the target of a possible scam, please contact your local police department.

7. Can you recommend a contractor to do the work?

While GDC cannot make specific recommendations, we do strongly urge property owners to engage only licensed and insured contractors. To ensure they meet necessary qualifications, you can consult resources such as Better Business Bureau (BBB) or use government-verified contractor directories like such as: <https://newjersey.mylicense.com/verification/>

SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

1. If I have questions regarding eligibility or Payments, whom should I contact?

For any inquiries related to eligibility or Payments, please reach out to GDC via email at noiseabatement@gatewayprogram.org or call us at 973-888-8368 or 973-888-8378. You can also write to us at:

Gateway Development Commission
ATTN: Noise Abatement Program
2 Penn Plaza East – 11th Floor
Newark, NJ 07105

2. Is the Noise Abatement Program information available in languages other than English?

Yes, we offer translations of key program documents in Spanish. Spanish-language versions of documents are available at <https://www.gatewayprogram.org/noise.html>. You can also contact our office using the contact information above for information in Spanish. If you need information in another language, please reach out, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

3. Where can I get help if I have questions about the application process?

You can contact our main office by email at noiseabatement@gatewayprogram.org or call us at 973-888-8368 or 973-888-8378 for support. We also have staff available to assist you at our public information center.

Tonnelle Avenue Public Information Center

Tonnelle Avenue and 49th Street in North Bergen
Hours of Operation: Tuesday – Thursday, 11AM
– 7PM

Weehawken Public Information Center

Department of Public Works, 1714 Willow Ave,
Weehawken
Hours of Operation: Thursday, 4PM – 7PM

4. Can I request an interpreter for in-person assistance at a public information center?

Yes, Spanish interpreter services are available upon request. Please contact us at least 48 hours in advance to arrange for an interpreter at your preferred public information center.

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