The Community Reinvestment Act
Overview

- Purpose of the Community Revestment Act (CRA)
- Different CRA evaluation types
- How to comply with CRA
- Practical ideas to consider
Background

CRA enacted in 1977 to:

- Encourage financial institutions to meet the credit needs of their community.
Background

Focuses on serving the credit needs of:

- Low- and moderate-income (LMI) borrowers/geographies;
- Small businesses; and
- Small farms.
Background

- Requires FDIC to evaluate each institution’s record of meeting the credit needs of its community, consistent with safe and sound operations.
Requirements of CRA:

- Public Notice;
- Public File; and
- Data Collection and Reporting for Large Banks.
CRA regulation requires banks to delineate one or more assessment areas within which the FDIC evaluates the bank’s record of helping to meet the credit needs of its community.
Assessment Areas

Limitations to Assessment Areas:

- Must consist of whole census tracts;
- May not reflect illegal discrimination;
- May not arbitrarily exclude low- or moderate-income census tracts;
- Must include bank’s main office, branches, and deposit-taking ATMs; and
- Must include areas where the bank has originated or purchased a substantial portion of its loans.
Performance Context is the environment in which a bank operates.

It includes a broad range of information:

- Economic;
- Demographic; and
- Institution-specific and community-specific.
Examination Types

- Small Bank
- Intermediate Small Bank (ISB)
- Large Bank
- Community Development Test for limited purpose/wholesale banks
- Strategic Plan
Determining Examination Types

Small Bank
- Assets less than $296 million as of December 31 in either of two prior calendar years

Intermediate Small Bank
- Assets of at least $296 million as of December 31 in both of the prior two calendar years and
- Less than $1.186 billion as of December 31 in either of the prior two calendar years

Asset thresholds effective January 1, 2013
Determining Examination Types

Large Bank

- Assets of at least $1.186 billion as of December 31 in both of the prior two years

Asset thresholds effective January 1, 2013
Small Banks

How are small banks different?

- Staffing and Expertise
- Product Offerings
- Financial Resources
Lending Test

- Average Net Loan to Deposit Ratio
- Assessment Area Concentration
- Borrower Distribution (by income/revenue)
- Geographic Distribution
- Response to written CRA complaints
Two Performance Tests for ISB:

- **Lending Test** – same five performance criteria utilized for Small Banks

- **Community Development Test** – flexible approach that measures your bank’s responsiveness to community development needs through the combination of loans, investments, and services
Must achieve at least Satisfactory on both the Lending and Community Development tests to be rated Satisfactory or better overall.
What is Community Development?

- Affordable Housing for LMI Individuals/Families
- Community Services Targeted to LMI Individuals/Families
- Activities that Promote Economic Development
- Activities that Revitalize or Stabilize:
  - Low- or Moderate-Income Census Tracts
  - Designated Disaster Areas
  - Distressed or Underserved Non-Metropolitan Middle-Income Census Tracts
- Abandoned or Foreclosed Homes
Large banks face three separate comprehensive CRA tests:

- Lending Test
- Investment Test
- Service Test
Rating Comments

- Outstanding
- Satisfactory
- Needs to Improve
- Substantial Noncompliance
Discriminatory or Other Illegal Credit Practices

- Discrimination against applicants on a prohibited basis (Equal Credit Opportunity Act / Fair Housing Act)

- Substantive violations of the Home Ownership and Equity Protection Act (HOEPA) provisions of the Truth in Lending Act (TILA)
Discriminatory or Other Illegal Credit Practices

- Violations of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Act (Unfair or Deceptive Acts or Practices)
- Violations of Section 8 of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA)
- Violations of TILA provision regarding a consumer’s right of rescission
Impact of Less than Satisfactory CRA Performance

CRA Ratings are considered when a bank applies for:

- Establishment of branches
- Relocation of offices and branches
- Mergers/acquisitions

Potential Consequences:

- Reputation risk – CRA rating is public
CRA Examination Frequency

Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act

Extended examination frequency for banks with total assets of $250 million or less

- CRA rating Satisfactory - at least four years
- CRA rating Outstanding - at least five years
My bank is transitioning from being a Small Bank to being an Intermediate Small Bank. What do we need to do to be prepared?
My bank purchases a large volume of loans. Are there potential CRA implications to this business strategy?
Practical Ideas

- Develop a CRA Strategy
- Perform Self-Assessments
- Utilize FDIC Resources
Develop a CRA Strategy

- Involve employee responsible for CRA compliance
- Assess community needs
- Match products and services to needs
- Consider FDIC’s small dollar loan program and Safe accounts
Perform Self-Assessments

- Review adequacy of Assessment Area
- Review your bank’s data
- Review your competitor’s data
- Track progress and require Board reporting
Information to Help Banks Comply

- CRA Regulation (Part 345)

- Interagency Questions and Answers Regarding CRA
Information to Help Banks Comply

- A Guide to CRA Data Collection and Reporting

- FDIC Regional Community Affairs Staff
Resources

- FDIC’s National Survey of Unbanked / Underbanked Households
  http://www.fdic.gov/householdsurvey

- Models for small dollar loan programs and Safe deposit accounts
  http://www.fdic.gov/smalldollarloans
  http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/template/
Resources

- Director's Resource Center

- Questions? - Please send email to [supervision@fdic.gov](mailto:supervision@fdic.gov)