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§ 92.251 Property standards.

(a) (1) Housing that is constructed or rehabilitated with HOME funds must meet all applicable local codes, rehabilitation standards, ordinances, and zoning ordinances at the time of project completion, except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section. The participating jurisdiction must have written standards for rehabilitation that ensure that HOME-assisted housing is decent, safe, and sanitary. In the absence of a local code for new construction or rehabilitation, HOME-assisted new construction or rehabilitation must meet, as applicable, one of three model codes: Uniform Building Code (ICBO), National Building Code (BOCA), Standard (Southern) Building Code (SBCCI); or the Council of American Building Officials (CABO) one or two family code; or the Minimum Property Standards (MPS) in 24 CFR 200.925 or 200.926. To avoid duplicative inspections when FHA financing is involved in a HOME-assisted property, a participating jurisdiction may rely on a Minimum Property Standards (MPS) inspection performed by a qualified person. Newly constructed housing must meet the current edition of the Model Energy Code published by the Council of American Building Officials.

(2) All other HOME-assisted housing (e.g., acquisition) must meet all applicable State and local housing quality standards and code requirements and if there are no such standards or code requirements, the housing must meet the housing quality standards in 24 CFR 982.401.

(3) The housing must meet the accessibility requirements at 24 CFR part 8, which implements Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and covered multifamily dwellings, as defined at 24 CFR 100.201, must also meet the design and construction requirements at 24 CFR 100.205, which implement the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601–3619).

(4) Construction of all manufactured housing must meet the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards established in 24 CFR part 3280. These standards pre-empt State and local codes covering the same aspects of performance for such housing. Participating jurisdictions providing HOME assistance to install manufactured housing units must comply with applicable State and local laws or codes. In the absence of such laws or codes, the participating jurisdiction must comply with the manufacturer's written instructions for installation of manufactured housing units. Manufactured housing that is rehabilitated using HOME funds must meet the requirements set out in paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(b) The following requirements apply to housing for homeownership that is to be rehabilitated after transfer of the ownership interest:

(1) Before the transfer of the homeownership interest, the participating jurisdiction must:

(i) Inspect the housing for any defects that pose a danger to health; and

(ii) Notify the prospective purchaser of the work needed to cure the defects and the time by which defects must be cured and applicable property standards met.

(2) The housing must be free from all noted health and safety defects before occupancy and not later than 6 months after the transfer.

(3) The housing must meet the property standards in paragraph (a)(1) of this section not later than 2 years after transfer of the ownership interest.

(c) An owner of rental housing assisted with HOME funds must maintain the housing in compliance with all applicable State and local housing quality standards and code requirements and if there are no such standards or code requirements, the housing must meet the housing quality standards in 24 CFR 982.401.

(d) All housing occupied by tenants receiving HOME tenant-based rental assistance must meet the housing quality standards in 24 CFR 982.401.

[61 FR 48750, Sept. 16, 1996, as amended at 62 FR 28929, May 28, 1997]

§ 92.252 Qualification as affordable housing: Rental housing.

The HOME-assisted units in a rental housing project must be occupied only by households that are eligible as low-

income families and must meet the following requirements to qualify as affordable housing. The affordability requirements also apply to the HOME-assisted non-owner-occupied units in single-family housing purchased with HOME funds in accordance with § 92.254.

(a) *Rent limitation.* HUD provides the following maximum HOME rent limits. The maximum HOME rents are the lesser of:

(1) The fair market rent for existing housing for comparable units in the area as established by HUD under 24 CFR 888.111; or

(2) A rent that does not exceed 30 percent of the adjusted income of a family whose annual income equals 65 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for number of bedrooms in the unit. The HOME rent limits provided by HUD will include average occupancy per unit and adjusted income assumptions.

(b) *Additional Rent limitations.* In rental projects with five or more HOME-assisted rental units, twenty (20) percent of the HOME-assisted units must be occupied by very low-income families and meet one of following rent requirements:

(1) The rent does not exceed 30 percent of the annual income of a family whose income equals 50 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families. HUD provides the HOME rent limits which include average occupancy per unit and adjusted income assumptions. However, if the rent determined under this paragraph is higher than the applicable rent under paragraph (a) of this section, then the maximum rent for units under this paragraph is that calculated under paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) The rent does not exceed 30 percent of the family's adjusted income. If the unit receives Federal or State project-based rental subsidy and the very low-income family pays as a contribution toward rent not more than 30 percent of the family's adjusted income, then the maximum rent (i.e., tenant contribution plus project-based rental subsidy) is the rent allowable under the Federal or State project-based rental subsidy program.

(c) *Initial rent schedule and utility allowances.* The participating jurisdiction must establish maximum monthly allowances for utilities and services (excluding telephone). The participating jurisdiction must review and approve rents proposed by the owner for units subject to the maximum rent limitations in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section. For all units subject to the maximum rent limitations in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section for which the tenant is paying utilities and services, the participating jurisdiction must ensure that the rents do not exceed the maximum rent minus the monthly allowances for utilities and services.

(d) *Nondiscrimination against rental assistance subsidy holders.* The owner cannot refuse to lease HOME-assisted units to a certificate or voucher holder under 24 CFR part 982—Section 8 Tenant-Based Assistance: Unified Rule for Tenant-Based Assistance under the Section 8 Rental Certificate Program and the Section 8 Rental Voucher Program or to the holder of a comparable document evidencing participation in a HOME tenant-based rental assistance program because of the status of the prospective tenant as a holder of such certificate, voucher, or comparable HOME tenant-based assistance document.

(e) *Periods of Affordability.* The HOME-assisted units must meet the affordability requirements for not less than the applicable period specified in the following table, beginning after project completion. The affordability requirements apply without regard to the term of any loan or mortgage or the transfer of ownership. They must be imposed by deed restrictions, covenants running with the land, or other mechanisms approved by HUD, except that the affordability restrictions may terminate upon foreclosure or transfer in lieu of foreclosure. The participating jurisdiction may use purchase options, rights of first refusal or other preemptive rights to purchase the housing before foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure to preserve affordability. The affordability restrictions shall be revived according to the original terms

if, during the original affordability period, the owner of record before the foreclosure, or deed in lieu of foreclosure, or any entity that includes the former owner or those with whom the former owner has or had family or business ties, obtains an ownership interest in the project or property.

Rental housing activity	Minimum period of affordability in years
Rehabilitation or acquisition of existing housing per unit amount of HOME funds: Under $15,000	5
$15,000 to $40,000	10
Over $40,000 or rehabilitation involving refinancing	15
New construction or acquisition of newly constructed housing	20

(f) *Subsequent rents during the affordability period.* (1) The maximum HOME rent limits are recalculated on a periodic basis after HUD determines fair market rents and median incomes. HUD then provides the new maximum HOME rent limits to participating jurisdictions. Regardless of changes in fair market rents and in median income over time, the HOME rents for a project are not required to be lower than the HOME rent limits for the project in effect at the time of project commitment.

(2) The participating jurisdiction must provide project owners with information on updated HOME rent limits so that rents may be adjusted (not to exceed the maximum HOME rent limits in paragraph (f)(1) of this section) in accordance with the written agreement between the participating jurisdiction and the owner. Owners must annually provide the participating jurisdiction with information on rents and occupancy of HOME-assisted units to demonstrate compliance with this section.

(3) Any increase in rents for HOME-assisted units is subject to the provisions of outstanding leases, and in any event, the owner must provide tenants of those units not less than 30 days prior written notice before implementing any increase in rents.

(g) *Adjustment of HOME rent limits for a particular project.* (1) Changes in fair market rents and in median income over time should be sufficient to maintain the financial viability of a project within the HOME rent limits in this section.

(2) HUD may adjust the HOME rent limits for a project, only if HUD finds that an adjustment is necessary to support the continued financial viability of the project and only by an amount that HUD determines is necessary to maintain continued financial viability of the project. HUD expects that this authority will be used sparingly.

(h) *Tenant income.* The income of each tenant must be determined initially in accordance with § 92.203(a)(1)(i). In addition, each year during the period of affordability the project owner must re-examine each tenant's annual income in accordance with one of the options in § 92.203 selected by the participating jurisdiction. An owner of a multifamily project with an affordability period of 10 years or more who re-examines tenant's annual income through a statement and certification in accordance with § 92.203(a)(1)(ii), must examine the income of each tenant, in accordance with § 92.203(a)(1)(i), every sixth year of the affordability period. Otherwise, an owner who accepts the tenant's statement and certification in accordance with § 92.203(a)(1)(ii) is not required to examine the income of tenants in multifamily or single-family projects unless there is evidence that the tenant's written statement failed to completely and accurately state information about the family's size or income.

(i) *Over-income tenants.* (1) HOME-assisted units continue to qualify as affordable housing despite a temporary noncompliance caused by increases in the incomes of existing tenants if actions satisfactory to HUD are being taken to ensure that all vacancies are filled in accordance with this section until the noncompliance is corrected.

(2) Tenants who no longer qualify as low-income families must pay as rent the lesser of the amount payable by the tenant under State or local law or 30 percent of the family's adjusted income, except that tenants of HOME-assisted units that have been allocated low-income housing tax credits by a housing credit agency pursuant to section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of

1986 (26 U.S.C. 42) must pay rent governed by section 42. In addition, in projects in which the Home units are designated as floating pursuant to paragraph (j) of this section, tenants who no longer qualify as low-income are not required to pay as rent an amount that exceeds the market rent for comparable, unassisted units in the neighborhood.

(j) *Fixed and floating HOME units.* In a project containing HOME-assisted and other units, the participating jurisdiction may designate fixed or floating HOME units. This designation must be made at the time of project commitment. Fixed units remain the same throughout the period of affordability. Floating units are changed to maintain conformity with the requirements of this section during the period of affordability so that the total number of housing units meeting the requirements of this section remains the same, and each substituted unit is comparable in terms of size, features, and number of bedrooms to the originally designated HOME-assisted unit.

[61 FR 48750, Sept. 16, 1996, as amended at 62 FR 28929, May 28, 1997; 62 FR 44840, Aug. 22, 1997]

§ 92.253 Tenant and participant protections.

(a) *Lease.* The lease between a tenant and an owner of rental housing assisted with HOME funds must be for not less than one year, unless by mutual agreement between the tenant and the owner.

(b) *Prohibited lease terms.* The lease may not contain any of the following provisions:

(1) *Agreement to be sued.* Agreement by the tenant to be sued, to admit guilt, or to a judgment in favor of the owner in a lawsuit brought in connection with the lease;

(2) *Treatment of property.* Agreement by the tenant that the owner may take, hold, or sell personal property of household members without notice to the tenant and a court decision on the rights of the parties. This prohibition, however, does not apply to an agreement by the tenant concerning disposition of personal property remaining in the housing unit after the tenant has moved out of the unit. The owner may dispose of this personal property in accordance with State law;

(3) *Excusing owner from responsibility.* Agreement by the tenant not to hold the owner or the owner's agents legally responsible for any action or failure to act, whether intentional or negligent;

(4) *Waiver of notice.* Agreement of the tenant that the owner may institute a lawsuit without notice to the tenant;

(5) *Waiver of legal proceedings.* Agreement by the tenant that the owner may evict the tenant or household members without instituting a civil court proceeding in which the tenant has the opportunity to present a defense, or before a court decision on the rights of the parties;

(6) *Waiver of a jury trial.* Agreement by the tenant to waive any right to a trial by jury;

(7) *Waiver of right to appeal court decision.* Agreement by the tenant to waive the tenant's right to appeal, or to otherwise challenge in court, a court decision in connection with the lease; and

(8) *Tenant chargeable with cost of legal actions regardless of outcome.* Agreement by the tenant to pay attorney's fees or other legal costs even if the tenant wins in a court proceeding by the owner against the tenant. The tenant, however, may be obligated to pay costs if the tenant loses.

(c) *Termination of tenancy.* An owner may not terminate the tenancy or refuse to renew the lease of a tenant of rental housing assisted with HOME funds except for serious or repeated violation of the terms and conditions of the lease; for violation of applicable Federal, State, or local law; for completion of the tenancy period for transitional housing; or for other good cause. To terminate or refuse to renew tenancy, the owner must serve written notice upon the tenant specifying the grounds for the action at least 30 days before the termination of tenancy.

(d) *Tenant selection.* An owner of rental housing assisted with HOME funds must adopt written tenant selection policies and criteria that:

(1) Are consistent with the purpose of providing housing for very low-income and low-income families;

(2) Are reasonably related to program eligibility and the applicants' ability to perform the obligations of the lease;