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or servicer shall make a payoff statement available to a consumer, or a person authorized by the consumer to obtain such information, by a method other than by fax or courier and without charge pursuant to paragraph (a)(9)(i) of this section.

(iii) *Processing fee disclosure.* Prior to charging a processing fee for provision of a payoff statement by fax or courier, as permitted pursuant to paragraph (a)(9)(ii) of this section, a creditor or servicer shall disclose to a consumer or a person authorized by the consumer to obtain the consumer's payoff statement that payoff statements, as described in paragraph (a)(9)(i) of this section, are available by a method other than by fax or courier without charge.

(iv) *Fees permitted after multiple requests.* A creditor or servicer that has provided a payoff statement, as described in paragraph (a)(9)(i) of this section, to a consumer, or a person authorized by the consumer to obtain such information, without charge, other than the processing fee permitted under paragraph (a)(9)(ii) of this section, four times during a calendar year, may thereafter charge a reasonable fee for providing such statements during the remainder of the calendar year. Fees for payoff statements provided to a consumer, or a person authorized by the consumer to obtain such information, in a subsequent calendar year are subject to the requirements of this section.

(v) *Timing of delivery of payoff statements.* A payoff statement, as described in paragraph (a)(9)(i) of this section, for a high-cost mortgage shall be provided by a creditor or servicer within five business days after receiving a request for such statement by a consumer or a person authorized by the consumer to obtain such statement.

(10) *Financing of points and fees.* A creditor that extends credit under a high-cost mortgage may not finance charges that are required to be included in the calculation of points and fees, as that term is defined in §1026.32(b)(1) and (2). Credit insurance premiums or debt cancellation or suspension fees that are required to be included in points and fees under §1026.32(b)(1)(iv) or (2)(iv) shall not be

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considered financed by the creditor when they are calculated and paid in full on a monthly basis.

(b) *Prohibited acts or practices for dwelling-secured loans; structuring loans to evade high-cost mortgage requirements.* A creditor shall not structure any transaction that is otherwise a high-cost mortgage in a form, for the purpose, and with the intent to evade the requirements of a high-cost mortgage subject to this subpart, including by dividing any loan transaction into separate parts.

[78 FR 6964, Jan. 31, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 30745, May 23, 2013; 78 FR 63005, Oct. 23, 2013]

§ 1026.35 Requirements for higher-priced mortgage loans.

(a) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) “Higher-priced mortgage loan” means a closed-end consumer credit transaction secured by the consumer's principal dwelling with an annual percentage rate that exceeds the average prime offer rate for a comparable transaction as of the date the interest rate is set:

(i) By 1.5 or more percentage points for loans secured by a first lien with a principal obligation at consummation that does not exceed the limit in effect as of the date the transaction's interest rate is set for the maximum principal obligation eligible for purchase by Freddie Mac;

(ii) By 2.5 or more percentage points for loans secured by a first lien with a principal obligation at consummation that exceeds the limit in effect as of the date the transaction's interest rate is set for the maximum principal obligation eligible for purchase by Freddie Mac; or

(iii) By 3.5 or more percentage points for loans secured by a subordinate lien.

(2) “Average prime offer rate” means an annual percentage rate that is derived from average interest rates, points, and other loan pricing terms currently offered to consumers by a representative sample of creditors for mortgage transactions that have low-risk pricing characteristics. The Bureau publishes average prime offer rates for a broad range of types of transactions in a table updated at least

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weekly as well as the methodology the Bureau uses to derive these rates.

(b) *Escrow accounts*—(1) *Requirement to escrow for property taxes and insurance.* Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, a creditor may not extend a higher-priced mortgage loan secured by a first lien on a consumer's principal dwelling unless an escrow account is established before consummation for payment of property taxes and premiums for mortgage-related insurance required by the creditor, such as insurance against loss of or damage to property, or against liability arising out of the ownership or use of the property, or insurance protecting the creditor against the consumer's default or other credit loss. For purposes of this paragraph (b), the term "escrow account" has the same meaning as under Regulation X (12 CFR 1024.17(b)), as amended.

(2) *Exemptions.* Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(1) of this section:

(i) An escrow account need not be established for:

(A) A transaction secured by shares in a cooperative;

(B) A transaction to finance the initial construction of a dwelling;

(C) A temporary or "bridge" loan with a loan term of twelve months or less, such as a loan to purchase a new dwelling where the consumer plans to sell a current dwelling within twelve months; or

(D) A reverse mortgage transaction subject to §1026.33.

(ii) Insurance premiums described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section need not be included in escrow accounts for loans secured by dwellings in condominiums, planned unit developments, or other common interest communities in which dwelling ownership requires participation in a governing association, where the governing association has an obligation to the dwelling owners to maintain a master policy insuring all dwellings.

(iii) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2)(v) of this section, an escrow account need not be established for a transaction if, at the time of consummation:

(A) During any of the three preceding calendar years, the creditor extended more than 50 percent of its total cov-

ered transactions, as defined by §1026.43(b)(1), secured by a first lien, on properties that are located in counties that are either "rural" or "underserved," as set forth in paragraph (b)(2)(iv) of this section;

(B) During the preceding calendar year, the creditor and its affiliates together originated 500 or fewer covered transactions, as defined by §1026.43(b)(1), secured by a first lien; and

(C) As of the end of the preceding calendar year, the creditor had total assets of less than \$2,000,000,000; this asset threshold shall adjust automatically each year, based on the year-to-year change in the average of the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, not seasonally adjusted, for each 12-month period ending in November, with rounding to the nearest million dollars (see comment 35(b)(2)(iii)-1.iii for the current threshold); and

(D) Neither the creditor nor its affiliate maintains an escrow account of the type described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section for any extension of consumer credit secured by real property or a dwelling that the creditor or its affiliate currently services, other than:

(1) Escrow accounts established for first-lien higher-priced mortgage loans on or after April 1, 2010, and before January 1, 2014; or

(2) Escrow accounts established after consummation as an accommodation to distressed consumers to assist such consumers in avoiding default or foreclosure.

(iv) For purposes of paragraph (b)(2)(iii)(A) of this section:

(A) A county is "rural" during a calendar year if it is neither in a metropolitan statistical area nor in a micropolitan statistical area that is adjacent to a metropolitan statistical area, as those terms are defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and as they are applied under currently applicable Urban Influence Codes (UICs), established by the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (USDA-ERS). A creditor may rely as a safe harbor on the list of counties published by the Bureau to determine whether a

county qualifies as “rural” for a particular calendar year.

(B) A county is “underserved” during a calendar year if, according to Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data for the preceding calendar year, no more than two creditors extended covered transactions, as defined in §1026.43(b)(1), secured by a first lien, five or more times in the county. A creditor may rely as a safe harbor on the list of counties published by the Bureau to determine whether a county qualifies as “underserved” for a particular calendar year.

(v) Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section, an escrow account must be established pursuant to paragraph (b)(1) of this section for any first-lien higher-priced mortgage loan that, at consummation, is subject to a commitment to be acquired by a person that does not satisfy the conditions in paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section, unless otherwise exempted by this paragraph (b)(2).

(3) *Cancellation*—(i) *General*. Except as provided in paragraph (b)(3)(ii) of this section, a creditor or servicer may cancel an escrow account required in paragraph (b)(1) of this section only upon the earlier of:

(A) Termination of the underlying debt obligation; or

(B) Receipt no earlier than five years after consummation of a consumer’s request to cancel the escrow account.

(ii) *Delayed cancellation*. Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(3)(i) of this section, a creditor or servicer shall not cancel an escrow account pursuant to a consumer’s request described in paragraph (b)(3)(i)(B) of this section unless the following conditions are satisfied:

(A) The unpaid principal balance is less than 80 percent of the original value of the property securing the underlying debt obligation; and

(B) The consumer currently is not delinquent or in default on the underlying debt obligation.

(c) *Appraisals*—(1) *Definitions*. For purposes of this section:

(i) *Certified or licensed appraiser* means a person who is certified or licensed by the State agency in the State in which the property that secures the transaction is located, and who performs the appraisal in conformity with the Uni-

form Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice and the requirements applicable to appraisers in title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, as amended (12 U.S.C. 3331 *et seq.*), and any implementing regulations in effect at the time the appraiser signs the appraiser’s certification.

(ii) *Credit risk* means the financial risk that a consumer will default on a loan.

(iii) *Manufactured home* has the same meaning as in 24 CFR 3280.2.

(iv) *Manufacturer’s invoice* means a document issued by a manufacturer and provided with a manufactured home to a retail dealer that separately details the wholesale (base) prices at the factory for specific models or series of manufactured homes and itemized options (large appliances, built-in items and equipment), plus actual itemized charges for freight from the factory to the dealer’s lot or the home-site (including any rental of wheels and axles) and for any sales taxes to be paid by the dealer. The invoice may recite such prices and charges on an itemized basis or by stating an aggregate price or charge, as appropriate, for each category.

(v) *National Registry* means the database of information about State certified and licensed appraisers maintained by the Appraisal Subcommittee of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council.

(vi) *New manufactured home* means a manufactured home that has not been previously occupied.

(vii) *State agency* means a “State appraiser certifying and licensing agency” recognized in accordance with section 1118(b) of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989 (12 U.S.C. 3347(b)) and any implementing regulations.

(2) *Exemptions*. Unless otherwise specified, the requirements in paragraph (c)(3) through (6) of this section do not apply to the following types of transactions:

(i) A loan that satisfies the criteria of a qualified mortgage as defined pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1639c;

(ii) An extension of credit for which the amount of credit extended is equal to or less than the applicable threshold

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amount, which is adjusted every year to reflect increases in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, as applicable, and published in the official staff commentary to this paragraph (c)(2)(ii);

(iii) A transaction secured by a mobile home, boat, or trailer.

(iv) A transaction to finance the initial construction of a dwelling.

(v) A loan with a maturity of 12 months or less, if the purpose of the loan is a “bridge” loan connected with the acquisition of a dwelling intended to become the consumer’s principal dwelling.

(vi) A reverse-mortgage transaction subject to 12 CFR 1026.33(a).

(vii) An extension of credit that is a refinancing secured by a first lien, with refinancing defined as in §1026.20(a) (except that the creditor need not be the original creditor or a holder or servicer of the original obligation), provided that the refinancing meets the following criteria:

(A) Either—

(1) The credit risk of the refinancing is retained by the person that held the credit risk of the existing obligation and there is no commitment, at consummation, to transfer the credit risk to another person; or

(2) The refinancing is insured or guaranteed by the same Federal government agency that insured or guaranteed the existing obligation;

(B) The regular periodic payments under the refinance loan do not—

(1) Cause the principal balance to increase;

(2) Allow the consumer to defer repayment of principal; or

(3) Result in a balloon payment, as defined in §1026.18(s)(5)(i); and

(C) The proceeds from the refinancing are used solely to satisfy the existing obligation and amounts attributed solely to the costs of the refinancing; and

(viii) A transaction secured in whole or in part by a manufactured home.

(3) *Appraisals required*—(i) *In general.* Except as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, a creditor shall not extend a higher-priced mortgage loan to a consumer without obtaining, prior to consummation, a written appraisal of the property to be mortgaged. The ap-

praisal must be performed by a certified or licensed appraiser who conducts a physical visit of the interior of the property that will secure the transaction.

(ii) *Safe harbor.* A creditor obtains a written appraisal that meets the requirements for an appraisal required under paragraph (c)(3)(i) of this section if the creditor:

(A) Orders that the appraiser perform the appraisal in conformity with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice and title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, as amended (12 U.S.C. 3331 *et seq.*), and any implementing regulations in effect at the time the appraiser signs the appraiser’s certification;

(B) Verifies through the National Registry that the appraiser who signed the appraiser’s certification was a certified or licensed appraiser in the State in which the appraised property is located as of the date the appraiser signed the appraiser’s certification;

(C) Confirms that the elements set forth in appendix N to this part are addressed in the written appraisal; and

(D) Has no actual knowledge contrary to the facts or certifications contained in the written appraisal.

(4) *Additional appraisal for certain higher-priced mortgage loans*—(i) *In general.* Except as provided in paragraphs (c)(2) and (c)(4)(vii) of this section, a creditor shall not extend a higher-priced mortgage loan to a consumer to finance the acquisition of the consumer’s principal dwelling without obtaining, prior to consummation, two written appraisals, if:

(A) The seller acquired the property 90 or fewer days prior to the date of the consumer’s agreement to acquire the property and the price in the consumer’s agreement to acquire the property exceeds the seller’s acquisition price by more than 10 percent; or

(B) The seller acquired the property 91 to 180 days prior to the date of the consumer’s agreement to acquire the property and the price in the consumer’s agreement to acquire the property exceeds the seller’s acquisition price by more than 20 percent.

(ii) *Different certified or licensed appraisers.* The two appraisals required

under paragraph (c)(4)(i) of this section may not be performed by the same certified or licensed appraiser.

(iii) *Relationship to general appraisal requirements.* If two appraisals must be obtained under paragraph (c)(4)(i) of this section, each appraisal shall meet the requirements of paragraph (c)(3)(i) of this section.

(iv) *Required analysis in the additional appraisal.* One of the two required appraisals must include an analysis of:

(A) The difference between the price at which the seller acquired the property and the price that the consumer is obligated to pay to acquire the property, as specified in the consumer's agreement to acquire the property from the seller;

(B) Changes in market conditions between the date the seller acquired the property and the date of the consumer's agreement to acquire the property; and

(C) Any improvements made to the property between the date the seller acquired the property and the date of the consumer's agreement to acquire the property.

(v) *No charge for the additional appraisal.* If the creditor must obtain two appraisals under paragraph (c)(4)(i) of this section, the creditor may charge the consumer for only one of the appraisals.

(vi) *Creditor's determination of prior sale date and price—(A) Reasonable diligence.* A creditor must obtain two written appraisals under paragraph (c)(4)(i) of this section unless the creditor can demonstrate by exercising reasonable diligence that the requirement to obtain two appraisals does not apply. A creditor acts with reasonable diligence if the creditor bases its determination on information contained in written source documents, such as the documents listed in Appendix O to this part.

(B) *Inability to determine prior sale date or price—modified requirements for additional appraisal.* If, after exercising reasonable diligence, a creditor cannot determine whether the conditions in paragraphs (c)(4)(i)(A) and (c)(4)(i)(B) are present and therefore must obtain two written appraisals in accordance with paragraphs (c)(4)(i) through (v) of this section, one of the two appraisals

shall include an analysis of the factors in paragraph (c)(4)(iv) of this section only to the extent that the information necessary for the appraiser to perform the analysis can be determined.

(vii) *Exemptions from the additional appraisal requirement.* The additional appraisal required under paragraph (c)(4)(i) of this section shall not apply to extensions of credit that finance a consumer's acquisition of property:

(A) From a local, State or Federal government agency;

(B) From a person who acquired title to the property through foreclosure, deed-in-lieu of foreclosure, or other similar judicial or non-judicial procedure as a result of the person's exercise of rights as the holder of a defaulted mortgage loan;

(C) From a non-profit entity as part of a local, State, or Federal government program under which the non-profit entity is permitted to acquire title to single-family properties for resale from a seller who acquired title to the property through the process of foreclosure, deed-in-lieu of foreclosure, or other similar judicial or non-judicial procedure;

(D) From a person who acquired title to the property by inheritance or pursuant to a court order of dissolution of marriage, civil union, or domestic partnership, or of partition of joint or marital assets to which the seller was a party;

(E) From an employer or relocation agency in connection with the relocation of an employee;

(F) From a servicemember, as defined in 50 U.S.C. App. 511(1), who received a deployment or permanent change of station order after the servicemember purchased the property;

(G) Located in an area designated by the President as a federal disaster area, if and for as long as the Federal financial institutions regulatory agencies, as defined in 12 U.S.C. 3350(6), waive the requirements in title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, as amended (12 U.S.C. 3331 *et seq.*), and any implementing regulations in that area; or

(H) Located in a rural county, as defined in 12 CFR 1026.35(b)(2)(iv)(A).

(5) *Required disclosure—(i) In general.* Except as provided in paragraph (c)(2)

of this section, a creditor shall disclose the following statement, in writing, to a consumer who applies for a higher-priced mortgage loan: “We may order an appraisal to determine the property’s value and charge you for this appraisal. We will give you a copy of any appraisal, even if your loan does not close. You can pay for an additional appraisal for your own use at your own cost.” Compliance with the disclosure requirement in Regulation B, 12 CFR 1002.14(a)(2), satisfies the requirements of this paragraph.

(ii) *Timing of disclosure.* The disclosure required by paragraph (c)(5)(i) of this section shall be delivered or placed in the mail no later than the third business day after the creditor receives the consumer’s application for a higher-priced mortgage loan subject to paragraph (c) of this section. In the case of a loan that is not a higher-priced mortgage loan subject to paragraph (c) of this section at the time of application, but becomes a higher-priced mortgage loan subject to paragraph (c) of this section after application, the disclosure shall be delivered or placed in the mail not later than the third business day after the creditor determines that the loan is a higher-priced mortgage loan subject to paragraph (c) of this section.

(6) *Copy of appraisals—(i) In general.* Except as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, a creditor shall provide to the consumer a copy of any written appraisal performed in connection with a higher-priced mortgage loan pursuant to paragraphs (c)(3) and (c)(4) of this section.

(ii) *Timing.* A creditor shall provide to the consumer a copy of each written appraisal pursuant to paragraph (c)(6)(i) of this section:

(A) No later than three business days prior to consummation of the loan; or

(B) In the case of a loan that is not consummated, no later than 30 days after the creditor determines that the loan will not be consummated.

(iii) *Form of copy.* Any copy of a written appraisal required by paragraph (c)(6)(i) of this section may be provided to the applicant in electronic form, subject to compliance with the consumer consent and other applicable provisions of the Electronic Signatures

in Global and National Commerce Act (E-Sign Act) (15 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*).

(iv) *No charge for copy of appraisal.* A creditor shall not charge the consumer for a copy of a written appraisal required to be provided to the consumer pursuant to paragraph (c)(6)(i) of this section.

(7) *Relation to other rules.* The rules in this paragraph (c) were adopted jointly by the Federal Reserve Board (Board), the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, the Federal Housing Finance Agency, and the Bureau. These rules are substantively identical to the Board’s and the OCC’s higher-priced mortgage loan appraisal rules published separately in 12 CFR 226.43 (for the Board) and in 12 CFR part 34, subpart G and 12 CFR part 164, subpart B (for the OCC).

(d) *Evasion; open-end credit.* In connection with credit secured by a consumer’s principal dwelling that does not meet the definition of open-end credit in §1026.2(a)(20), a creditor shall not structure a home-secured loan as an open-end plan to evade the requirements of this section.

[78 FR 4753, Jan. 22, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 10442, Feb. 13, 2013; 78 FR 30745, May 23, 2013; 78 FR 44718, July 24, 2013; 78 FR 60441, Oct. 1, 2013; 78 FR 78585, Dec. 26, 2013]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 78 FR 78586, Dec. 26, 2013, §1026.35 was amended by revising (c)(2)(viii), effective July 18, 2015. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

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(c) * * *

(2) * * *

(viii) A transaction secured by:

(A) A new manufactured home and land, but the exemption shall only apply to the requirement in paragraph (c)(3)(i) of this section that the appraiser conduct a physical visit of the interior of the new manufactured home; or

(B) A manufactured home and not land, for which the creditor obtains one of the following and provides a copy to the consumer no later than three business days prior to consummation of the transaction—

(1) For a new manufactured home, the manufacturer’s invoice for the manufactured

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home securing the transaction, provided that the date of manufacture is no earlier than 18 months prior to the creditor’s receipt of the consumer’s application for credit;

(2) A cost estimate of the value of the manufactured home securing the transaction obtained from an independent cost service provider; or

(3) A valuation, as defined in § 1026.42(b)(3), of the manufactured home performed by a person who has no direct or indirect interest, financial or otherwise, in the property or transaction for which the valuation is performed and has training in valuing manufactured homes.

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§ 1026.36 Prohibited acts or practices and certain requirements for credit secured by a dwelling.

(a) Definitions—(1) Loan originator. (i) For purposes of this section, the term “loan originator” means a person who, in expectation of direct or indirect compensation or other monetary gain or for direct or indirect compensation or other monetary gain, performs any of the following activities: takes an application, offers, arranges, assists a consumer in obtaining or applying to obtain, negotiates, or otherwise obtains or makes an extension of consumer credit for another person; or through advertising or other means of communication represents to the public that such person can or will perform any of these activities. The term “loan originator” includes an employee, agent, or contractor of the creditor or loan originator organization if the employee, agent, or contractor meets this definition. The term “loan originator” includes a creditor that engages in loan origination activities if the creditor does not finance the transaction at consummation out of the creditor’s own resources, including by drawing on a bona fide warehouse line of credit or out of deposits held by the creditor. All creditors that engage in any of the foregoing loan origination activities are loan originators for purposes of paragraphs (f) and (g) of this section. The term does not include:

(A) A person who does not take a consumer credit application or offer or negotiate credit terms available from a creditor, but who performs purely administrative or clerical tasks on behalf

of a person who does engage in such activities.

(B) An employee of a manufactured home retailer who does not take a consumer credit application, offer or negotiate credit terms available from a creditor, or advise a consumer on credit terms (including rates, fees, and other costs) available from a creditor.

(C) A person that performs only real estate brokerage activities and is licensed or registered in accordance with applicable State law, unless such person is compensated by a creditor or loan originator or by any agent of such creditor or loan originator for a particular consumer credit transaction subject to this section.

(D) A seller financier that meets the criteria in paragraph (a)(4) or (a)(5) of this section, as applicable.

(E) A servicer or servicer’s employees, agents, and contractors who offer or negotiate terms for purposes of renegotiating, modifying, replacing, or subordinating principal of existing mortgages where consumers are behind in their payments, in default, or have a reasonable likelihood of defaulting or falling behind. This exception does not apply, however, to a servicer or servicer’s employees, agents, and contractors who offer or negotiate a transaction that constitutes a refinancing under § 1026.20(a) or obligates a different consumer on the existing debt.

(ii) An “individual loan originator” is a natural person who meets the definition of “loan originator” in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section.

(iii) A “loan originator organization” is any loan originator, as defined in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section, that is not an individual loan originator.

(2) Mortgage broker. For purposes of this section, a mortgage broker with respect to a particular transaction is any loan originator that is not an employee of the creditor.

(3) Compensation. The term “compensation” includes salaries, commissions, and any financial or similar incentive.

(4) Seller financiers; three properties. A person (as defined in § 1026.2(a)(22)) that meets all of the following criteria is not a loan originator under paragraph (a)(1) of this section: