

ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST
VAN APARTMENTS, LTD. WITH
RESPECT TO VAN APARTMENTS
(HTC FILE # 92181 / CMTS # 1091)

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BEFORE THE
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

AGREED FINAL ORDER

General Remarks and official action taken:

On this 3rd day of September, 2015, the Governing Board (“Board”) of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (“TDHCA”) considered the matter of whether enforcement action should be taken against **VAN APARTMENTS, LTD.**, a Texas limited partnership (“Respondent”).

This Agreed Order is executed pursuant to the authority of the Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”), Tex. Gov’t Code §2001.056, which authorizes the informal disposition of contested cases. In a desire to conclude this matter without further delay and expense, the Board and Respondent agree to resolve this matter by this Agreed Final Order. The Respondent agrees to this Order for the purpose of resolving this proceeding only and without admitting or denying the findings of fact and conclusions of law set out in this Order.

Upon recommendation of the Enforcement Committee, the Board makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law and enters this Order:

WAIVER

Respondent acknowledges the existence of their right to request a hearing as provided by TEX. GOV’T CODE § 2306.044, and to seek judicial review, in the District Court of Travis County, Texas, of any order as provided by TEX. GOV’T CODE § 2306.047. Pursuant to this compromise and settlement, the Respondent waives those rights and acknowledges the jurisdiction of the Board over Respondent.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Jurisdiction:

1. During 1993, Respondent was awarded an allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits by the Board, in the amount of \$31,853 to build and operate Van Apartments (“Property”) (HTC file No. 92181 / CMTS No. 1091 / LDLD No. 320).
2. Respondent signed a land use restriction agreement (“LURA”) regarding the Property. The LURA was effective April 21, 1994, and filed of record at Volume 1310, Page 739 of the Official Public Records of Real Property of Van Zandt County, Texas (“Records”),

as amended by a First Amendment executed on December 19, 1994, and filed in the Records at Volume 1332, Page 0779.

3. Respondent is a Texas limited partnership that is qualified to own, construct, acquire, rehabilitate, operate, manage, or maintain a housing development that is subject to the regulatory authority of TDHCA.

Compliance Violations¹:

4. A Uniform Physical Condition Standards ("UPCS") inspection was conducted on September 24, 2014. Inspection reports showed numerous serious property condition violations, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.621 (Property Condition Standards). Notifications of noncompliance were sent and a January 8, 2015, corrective action deadline was set. Corrective documentation was not received until June 30, 2015, 173 days after the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee. These violations are fully corrected.
5. An on-site monitoring review was conducted on March 19, 2014, to determine whether Respondent was in compliance with LURA requirements to lease units to low income households and maintain records demonstrating eligibility. The monitoring review found violations of the LURA and TDHCA rules. Notifications of noncompliance were sent and an August 18, 2014, corrective action deadline was set, however, the following violations were not timely corrected:
 - a. Respondent failed to provide a Notice of Amenities and Services to units 804 and 817, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 (Lease Requirements), which required owners to provide to each household, at the time of execution of an initial lease and whenever there was a subsequent change in amenities and services, a notice describing those amenities and services. This form has since been combined with the Fair Housing Disclosure Notice into a replacement document called a "Tenant Rights and Resources Guide."

Corrective documentation was timely submitted on August 18, 2014, however, it was not acceptable because the form did not meet minimum rule requirements. The finding remains unresolved for units 804 and 817, and no further corrective documentation has been received.

¹ Within this Agreed Final Order, all references to violations of TDHCA Compliance Monitoring rules at 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE, CHAPTERS 10 AND 60 refer to the versions of the code in effect at the time of the compliance monitoring reviews and/or inspections that resulted in recording each violation. All past violations remain violations under the current code and all interim amendments.

- b. Respondent failed to maintain written tenant selection criteria, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.610 (Tenant Selection Criteria), which requires all developments to establish written tenant selection criteria that meet minimum TDHCA requirements.

Corrective documentation was timely submitted on August 18, 2014, however, it did not meet minimum rule requirements. The finding remains unresolved and no further corrective documentation has been received.

- c. Respondent failed to provide the Fair Housing Disclosure Notice for units 804, 814, and 817, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 60.108 (Lease Requirements), which requires all developments to provide prospective households with a fair housing disclosure notice within a certain time period. This form has since been combined with the Notice of Amenities and Services into a replacement document called a “Tenant Rights and Resources Guide.”

Corrective documentation was timely submitted on August 18, 2014, however, the Fair Housing Disclosure Notices that were submitted were not signed during the time frame required by the rule. The findings remain unresolved for units 804, 814, and 817, and no further corrective documentation has been received.

6. The following violations remain outstanding at the time of this order:
 - a. Notice of Amenities and Services violation described in FOF #5a;
 - b. Written tenant selection criteria violation described in FOF #5b; and
 - c. Fair Housing Disclosure Notice violation described in FOF #5c.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Department has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code §§2306.041-.0503, 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 1.14 and 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE Chapter 60, both of which were replaced by 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §2 as of November 19, 2014.
2. Respondent is a “housing sponsor” as that term is defined in Tex. Gov’t Code §2306.004(14).
3. Pursuant to IRC §42(m)(1)(B)(iii), housing credit agencies are required to monitor for noncompliance with all provisions of the IRC and to notify the Internal Revenue Service of such noncompliance.
4. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.621 in 2014, and I.R.C. §42, as amended, by failing to comply with HUD’s Uniform Physical Condition Standards when major violations were discovered and not timely corrected.²

² HUD’s Uniform Physical Condition Standards are the standards adopted by TDHCA pursuant to 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE 10.616(a)

5. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 in 2014, by failing to execute the Notice of Amenities and Services for units 804 and 817;
6. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.610 in 2014, by not maintaining written tenant selection criteria meeting TDHCA requirements;
7. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.612 in 2014, by failing to execute the Fair Housing Disclosure Notice during the appropriate time frame for units 804, 814, and 817;
8. Because Respondent is a housing sponsor with respect to the Property, and has violated TDHCA rules and agreements, the Board has personal and subject matter jurisdiction over Respondent pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE §2306.041 and §2306.267.
9. Because Respondent is a housing sponsor, TDHCA may order Respondent to perform or refrain from performing certain acts in order to comply with the law, TDHCA rules, or the terms of a contract or agreement to which Respondent and TDHCA are parties, pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §2306.267.
10. Because Respondent has violated rules promulgated pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code Chapter 2306 and has violated agreements with the Agency to which Respondent is a party, the Agency may impose an administrative penalty pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE §2306.041.
11. An administrative penalty of \$500 is an appropriate penalty in accordance with 10 TAC §§60.307 and 60.308, which were in place at the time of the file monitoring and UPCS violations. It remains appropriate under the replacement rule at 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §2, which became effective on November 19, 2014.

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Based upon the foregoing findings of fact and conclusions of law, and an assessment of the factors set forth in Tex. Gov't Code §2306.042 to be considered in assessing such penalties as applied specifically to the facts and circumstances present in this case, the Board of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs orders the following:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Respondent is assessed an administrative penalty in the amount of \$500, subject to deferral as further ordered below.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall fully correct the file monitoring violations as indicated in Attachment 1 and submit full documentation of the corrections to TDHCA on or before October 5, 2015.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall follow the requirements of 10 Tex. Admin. Code 10.406, a copy of which is included at Attachment 2, and obtain approval from the Department prior to consummating a sale of the property, if contemplated.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that if Respondent timely and fully complies with the terms and conditions of this Agreed Final Order, correcting all violations as required, the satisfactory performance under this order will be accepted in lieu of the assessed administrative penalty and the full amount of the administrative penalty will be deferred and forgiven.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that if Respondent fails to satisfy any conditions or otherwise violates any provision of this order, then the full administrative penalty in the amount of \$500 shall be immediately due and payable to the Department. Such payment shall be made by cashier's check payable to the "Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs" upon the earlier of (1) within thirty days of the date the Department sends written notice to Respondent that it has violated a provision of this Order, or (2) the property closing date if sold before the terms and conditions of this Agreed Final Order have been fully satisfied.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that corrective documentation must be uploaded to the Compliance Monitoring and Tracking System ("CMTS") by following the instructions at this link: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcdocs/CMTSUserGuide-AttachingDocs.pdf>. After the upload is complete, an email must be sent to Ysella Kaseman at ysella.kaseman@tdhca.state.tx.us to inform her that the documentation is ready for review. If it comes due and payable, the penalty payment must be submitted to the following address:

If via overnight mail (FedEx, UPS):	If via USPS:
TDHCA Attn: Ysella Kaseman 221 E 11 th St Austin, Texas 78701	TDHCA Attn: Ysella Kaseman P.O. Box 13941 Austin, Texas 78711

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the terms of this Agreed Final Order shall be published on the TDHCA website.

Attachment 1

File Monitoring Violation Resources and Instructions

1. Refer to the following link for all references to the rules at 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10 that are referenced below:

[http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=10&sch=F&rl=Y](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=10&sch=F&rl=Y)

2. Refer to the following link for copies of forms that are referenced below:

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcomp/forms.htm>

3. Technical support and training presentations are available at the following links:

Tenant Selection Criteria Training Materials: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcomp/presentations.htm>

FAQ's: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcomp/compFaq.htm>

4. **Notice of Amenities and Services** – Respondent submitted notices for multiple units, but the submission did not meet minimum rule requirements. In addition, the submission was a combined tenant criteria and amenities addendum, which was not acceptable.

Implement Tenants Rights and Resource Guide as indicated at [10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613\(k\)](#), and submit signed Tenants Rights and Resource Guide Acknowledgments for units 804 and 817. If the affected tenant has moved out without signing this form, please submit a letter to TDHCA including the move-out date and acknowledging that the finding cannot be resolved.

5. **Written tenant selection criteria** – Respondent submitted written tenant selection criteria, however, the criteria did not meet minimum rule requirements. In addition, the submission was a combined tenant criteria and amenities addendum, which was not acceptable.

Submit updated written tenant selection criteria addressing all requirements at [10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.610](#), including but not limited to the requirement to state that the Development will comply with state or federal fair housing and anti-discrimination laws. See <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcomp/presentations.htm> for technical support and training on this topic.

6. **Fair Housing Disclosure Notice** – Respondent submitted notices for multiple units, however, they were not signed during the appropriate time period. The notice has since been replaced by the Tenants Rights and Resource Guide as indicated at 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613(k).

Implement Tenants Rights and Resource Guide as indicated at [10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613\(k\)](#), and submit signed Tenants Rights and Resource Guide Acknowledgments for units 804, 814, and 817. If the affected tenant has moved out without signing this form, please submit a letter to TDHCA including the move-out date and acknowledging that the finding cannot be resolved.

Attachment 2:

Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 10	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PART 1	TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
CHAPTER 10	UNIFORM MULTIFAMILY RULES
SUBCHAPTER E	POST AWARD AND ASSET MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS
RULE §10.406	Ownership Transfers (§2306.6713)

(a) Ownership Transfer Notification. All multifamily Development Owners must provide written notice to the Department at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to any sale, transfer, or exchange of the Development or any portion of or Controlling interest in the Development. Transfers that are the result of an involuntary removal of the general partner by the investment limited partner must be reported to the Department, as soon as possible due to the sensitive timing and nature of this decision. If the Department determines that the transfer, involuntary removal, or replacement was due to a default by the General Partner under the Limited Partnership Agreement, or other detrimental action that put the Development at risk of failure, staff may make a recommendation to the Board for the debarment of the entity and/or its Principals and Affiliates pursuant to the Department's debarment rule. In addition, a record of transfer involving Principals in new proposed awards will be reported and may be taken into consideration by the Executive Award and Review Committee, in accordance with §1.5 of this title (relating to Previous Participation Reviews), prior to recommending any new financing or allocation of credits.

(b) Requirement. Department approval must be requested for any new member to join in the ownership of a Development. Exceptions include changes to the investment limited partner, non-controlling limited partner, or other partners affiliated with the investment limited partner, or changes resulting from foreclosure wherein the lender or financial institution involved in the transaction is the resulting owner. Any subsequent transfer of the Development will be required to adhere to the process in this section. Furthermore, a Development Owner may not transfer an allocation of tax credits or ownership of a Development supported with an allocation of tax credits to any Person or entity unless the Development Owner obtains the Executive Director's prior, written approval of the transfer. The Executive Director may not unreasonably withhold approval of the transfer requested in compliance with this section. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Development Owner shall be required to notify the Department but shall not be required to obtain Executive Director approval when the transferee is an Affiliate of the Development Owner with no new members or the transferee is a Related Party who does not Control the Development and the transfer is being made for estate planning purposes.

(c) Transfers Prior to 8609 Issuance or Construction Completion. Transfers (other than those that do not require Executive Director approval, as set forth in subsection (b) of this section) will not be approved prior to the issuance of IRS Form(s) 8609 (for Housing Tax Credits) or the completion of construction (for all Developments funded through other Department programs) unless the Development Owner can provide evidence that the need for the transfer is due to a hardship (ex. potential bankruptcy, removal by a partner, etc.). The Development Owner must provide the Department with a written explanation describing the hardship and a copy of any applicable agreement between the parties to the transfer, including any Third-Party agreement.

(d) Non-Profit Organizations. If the ownership transfer request is to replace a non-profit organization within the Development ownership entity, the replacement non-profit entity must adhere to the requirements in paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection.

(1) If the LURA requires ownership or material participation in ownership by a Qualified Non-Profit Organization, and the Development received Tax Credits pursuant to §42(h)(5) of the Code, the transferee must be a Qualified Non-Profit Organization that meets the requirements of §42(h)(5) of the Code and Texas Government Code §2306.6706.

(2) If the LURA requires ownership or material participation in ownership by a qualified non-profit organization, but the Development did not receive Tax Credits pursuant to §42(h)(5) of the Code, the Development Owner must show that the transferee is a non-profit organization that complies with the LURA.

(e) Historically Underutilized Business ("HUB") Organizations. If a HUB is the general partner of a Development Owner and it (i) is being removed as the result of a default under the organizational documents of the Development Owner or (ii) determines to sell its ownership interest, in either case, after the issuance of 8609s, the purchaser of that general partnership interest is not required to be a HUB as long as the LURA does not require such continual ownership or a material LURA amendment is approved. Such approval can be obtained concurrent with Board approval described herein. All such transfers must be approved by the Board and require that the Board find that:

(1) the selling HUB is acting of its own volition or is being removed as the result of a default under the organizational documents of the Development Owner;

(2) the participation by the HUB has been substantive and meaningful, or would have been substantial and meaningful had the HUB not defaulted under the organizational documents of the Development Owner, enabling it to realize not only financial benefit but to acquire skills relating to the ownership and operation of affordable housing; and

(3) the proposed purchaser meets the Department's standards for ownership transfers

(f) Documentation Required. A Development Owner must submit documentation requested by the Department to enable the Department to understand fully the facts and circumstances that gave rise to the need for the transfer and the effects of approval or denial. Documentation includes but is not limited to:

(1) a written explanation outlining the reason for the request;

(2) a list of the names of transferees and Related Parties;

(3) detailed information describing the experience and financial capacity of transferees and related parties holding an ownership interest of 10 percent or greater in any Principal or Controlling entity;

(4) evidence and certification that the tenants in the Development have been notified in writing of the proposed transfer at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date the transfer is approved by the Department. The ownership transfer approval letter will not be issued until this 30 day period has expired.

(g) Within five (5) business days after the date the Department receives all necessary information under this section, staff shall initiate a qualifications review of a transferee, in accordance with §1.5 of this title, to determine the transferee's past compliance with all aspects of the Department's programs, LURAs and eligibility under this chapter.

(h) Credit Limitation. As it relates to the Housing Tax Credit amount further described in §11.4(a) of this title (relating to Tax Credit Request and Award Limits), the credit amount will not be applied in circumstances described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection:

(1) in cases of transfers in which the syndicator, investor or limited partner is taking over ownership of the Development and not merely replacing the general partner; or

(2) in cases where the general partner is being replaced if the award of credits was made at least five (5) years prior to the transfer request date.

(i) Penalties. The Development Owner must comply with any additional documentation requirements as stated in Subchapter F of this chapter (relating to Compliance Monitoring). The Development Owner, as on record with the Department, will be liable for any penalties imposed by the Department even if such penalty can be attributable to the new Development Owner unless such ownership transfer is approved by the Department.

(j) Ownership Transfer Processing Fee. The ownership transfer request must be accompanied by corresponding ownership transfer fee as outlined in §10.901 of this chapter (relating to Fee Schedule).

Source Note: The provisions of this §10.406 adopted to be effective December 9, 2014, 39 TexReg 9518