

**TITLE 10  
PART 1  
CHAPTER 20**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
SINGLE FAMILY PROGRAMS UMBRELLA RULE**

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§20.1 Purpose.

This Chapter sets forth the common elements of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' (the "Department") single family Programs, which includes the Department's HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Texas Housing Trust Fund (HTF), Bond/First Time Homebuyer (FTHB), Taxable Mortgage Program (TMP), Texas Neighborhood Stabilization (NSP), and Office of Colonia Initiatives (OCI) Programs and other single family Programs as developed by the Department. Single family Programs are designed to improve and provide affordable housing opportunities to low-income individuals and families in Texas and in accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 2306 and any applicable statutes and federal regulations.

§20.2 Applicability.

Unless otherwise noted, this Chapter only applies to single family Programs. Program Rules may impose additional requirements related to any provision of this Chapter. Where Program Rule is less restrictive than and not preempted by federal law of this Chapter, the provisions of this Chapter will control Program decisions. The Amy Young Barrier Removal Program is excluded from the Inspection and Construction Requirements identified in §20.10 and Survey Requirements in §20.11.

§20.3 Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this Chapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context or the NOFA indicates otherwise. Other definitions may be found in Texas Government Code, Chapter 2306 and Chapter 1 of this Title (relating to Administration), and the applicable federal regulations.

- (1) Activity--A form of assistance provided to a Household or Administrator by which single family funds are used for acquisition, new construction, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, refinance of an existing

Mortgage, tenant-based rental assistance, or other single family Department approved expenditure for single family housing.

(2) Administrator--A unit of local government, Nonprofit Organization or other entity acting as a Community Housing Development Organization under 24 C.F.R. Part 92 ("CHDO"), Subrecipient, Developer or similar organization that has an executed written Agreement with the Department.

(3) Affirmative Marketing Plan--HUD Form 935.2B or equivalent plan created in accordance with HUD requirements to direct specific marketing and outreach to potential tenants and homebuyers who are considered "least likely" to know about or apply for housing based on an evaluation of market area data.

(4) Affiliate--If, directly or indirectly, either one Controls or has the power to Control the other or a third person Controls or has the power to Control both. The Department may determine Control to include, but not be limited to:

(A) interlocking management or ownership;

(B) identity of interests among family members;

(C) shared facilities and equipment;

(D) common use of employees; or

(E) a business entity which has been organized following the exclusion of a person which has the same or similar management, ownership, or principal employees as the excluded person.

(5) Affiliated Party--A person or entity with a contractual relationship with the Administrator through an Agreement with the Department.

(6) Agreement--Same as "Contract." May be referred to as a "Reservation System Agreement" or "Reservation Agreement" when providing access to the Department's Reservation System as defined in this Chapter.

(7) Amy Young Barrier Removal Program--Program designed to remove barriers and address immediate health and safety issues for Persons with Disabilities as outlined in the Program Rule or NOFA.

(8) Annual Income--The definition of Annual Income and the methods utilized to establish eligibility for housing or other types of assistance as defined under the Program Rule.

(9) Applicant--An individual, unit of local government, nonprofit corporation or other entity who has submitted to the Department an Application for Department funds or other assistance.

(10) Application--A request for a Contract award or a request to participate in a Reservation System submitted by an Applicant to the Department in a form prescribed by the Department, including any exhibits or other supporting material.

(11) Certificate of Occupancy--Document issued by a local authority to the owner of premises attesting that the structure has been built in accordance with building ordinances.

(12) Chapter 2306--Texas Government Code, Chapter 2306.

(13) Combined Loan to Value (CLTV)--The aggregate principal balance of all the Mortgage Loans, including Forgivable Loans, divided by the appraised value.

(14) Competitive Application Cycle--A defined period of time that Applications may be submitted according to a published Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) that will include a submission deadline and selection or scoring criteria.

(15) Conforming Mortgage Loan--A first-lien Mortgage Loan that meets Federal Housing Administration (FHA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac guidelines.

(16) Contract--The executed written Agreement between the Department and an Administrator performing an Activity related to a single family Program that describes performance requirements and responsibilities. May also be referred to as "Agreement."

(17) Contract Administrator (CA)--Same as "Administrator."

(18) Control--The possession, directly or indirectly, of the power to direct or cause the direction of the management and policies of any person or entity, whether through the ownership or voting securities, by contract or otherwise, including ownership of more than 50 percent of the general partner interest in a

limited partnership, or designation as a managing member of a limited liability company or managing general partner of a limited partnership or any similar member.

(19) Deobligate--The cancellation of or release of funds under a Contract or Agreement as a result of the termination of or reduction of funds under a Contract or Agreement.

(20) Department--The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs as defined in Chapter 2306 of the Texas Government Code.

(21) Developer--Any person, general partner, Affiliate, or Affiliated Party or affiliate of a person who owns or proposes a Development or expects to acquire control of a Development and is the person responsible for performing under the Contract with the Department.

(22) Domestic Farm Laborer--Individuals (and the family) who receive a substantial portion of their income from the production or handling of agricultural or aquacultural products.

(23) Draw--Funds requested by the Administrator, approved by the Department and subsequently disbursed to the Administrator.

(24) Forgivable Loan--Financial assistance in the form of money that, by Agreement, is not required to be repaid if the terms of the Mortgage Loan are met.

(25) HOME Program--HOME Investment Partnerships Program at 42 U.S.C. §§12701 - 12839.

(26) Household--One or more persons occupying a rental unit or owner-occupied Single Family Housing Unit. May also be referred to as a "family" or "beneficiary."

(27) Housing Trust Fund (HTF)--State-funded Programs authorized under Chapter 2306 of Texas Government Code.

(28) Housing Contract System (HCS)--The electronic information system that is part of the "central database" established by the Department to be used for tracking, funding, and reporting single family Contracts and Activities.

(29) HUD--The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development or its successor.

(30) Life of Loan Flood Certification--Tracks the flood zone of the Single Family Housing Unit for the life of the Mortgage Loan.

(31) Limited English Proficiency (LEP)--Requirements as issued by HUD and the Department of Justice to ensure meaningful and appropriate access to programs and activities by individuals who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English.

(32) Loan Assumption--An agreement between the buyer and seller of Single Family Housing Unit that the buyer will make remaining payments and adhere to terms and conditions of an existing Mortgage Loan on the Single Family Housing Unit and Program requirements. A Mortgage Loan assumption requires Department approval.

(33) Loan to Value (LTV)--The amount of the Mortgage Loan(s) divided by the Single Family Housing Unit's appraised value, excluding Forgivable Loans.

(34) Manufactured Housing Unit (MHU)--A structure that meets the requirements of Texas Manufactured Housing Standards Act, Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1201 or FHA guidelines as required by the Department.

(35) Mortgage--Has the same meaning as defined in §2306.004 of the Texas Government Code.

(36) Mortgage Loan--Has the same meaning as defined in §2306.004 of the Texas Government Code.

(37) Nonconforming Mortgage Loan--Any Mortgage Loan that does not meet the definition of a "Conforming Mortgage Loan" defined in this section.

(38) Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)--A HUD-funded program authorized by HR3221, the "Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008" (HERA) and §1497 of the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010, as a supplemental allocation to the CDBG Program.

(39) NOFA--Notice of Funding Availability.

(40) Nonprofit Organization--An organization with a current tax exemption ruling from the Internal Revenue Service under the Internal Revenue Code, or classification as a subordinate of a nonprofit under the Internal Revenue Code.

(41) Office of Colonia Initiatives--A division of the Department authorized under Chapter 2306 of Texas Government Code which acts as a liaison to the colonias and manages some Programs in the colonias.

(42) Parity Lien--A lien position whereby two or more lenders share a security interest of equal priority in the collateral.

(43) Persons with Disabilities--Any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment.

(44) Principal Residence--The primary Single Family Housing Unit that a Household inhabits. May also be referred to as "primary residence."

(45) Program--The specific fund source from which single family funds are applied for and used.

(46) Program Income--Gross income received by the Administrator or Affiliate directly generated from the use of Single Family funds.

(47) Program Manual--A set of guidelines designed to be an implementation tool for the single family Programs which allows the Administrator to search for terms, statutes, regulations, forms and attachments. The Program Manual is developed by the Department and amended or supplemented from time-to-time.

(48) Program Rule--Chapters of this Title which pertain to specific single family Program requirements.

(49) Reconstruction--The demolition and rebuilding a Single Family Housing Unit on the same lot in substantially the same manner. The number of housing units may not be increased; however, the number of rooms may be increased or decreased dependent on the number of family members living in the housing unit at the time of Application.

(50) Rehabilitation--The improvement or modification of an existing residential unit through an alteration, addition, or enhancement.

(51) Reservation--Funds set-aside for a Household Applicant or single family Activity registered in the Department's registration system.

(52) Reservation System--The Department's computer registration system(s) that allows Administrators to reserve funds for a specific Household.

(53) Resolution--Formal action by a corporate board of directors or other corporate body authorizing a particular act, transaction, or appointment. Resolutions must be in writing and state the specific action that was approved and adopted, the date the action was approved and adopted, and the signature of person or persons authorized to sign resolutions. Resolutions must be approved and adopted in accordance with the corporate bylaws.

(54) Self-Help--Housing Programs that allow low, very low, and extremely low-income families to build or rehabilitate their Single Family Housing Units through their own labor or volunteers.

(55) Set-up--The creation of a new Activity in the Department database by an Administrator, which requires review and approval by the Department.

(56) Single Family Housing Unit--A home designed and built for one person or one Household for rental or owner-occupied. This includes the acquisition, construction, Reconstruction or Rehabilitation of an attached or detached unit. May be referred to as a single family "home," "housing," "property," "structure," or "unit."

(57) Soft Costs--Costs related to and identified with a specific Single Family Housing Unit other than construction costs. May also be referred to as "direct delivery" costs.

(58) Subgrantee--Same as "Administrator."

(59) Subrecipient--Same as "Administrator."

(60) TAC--Texas Administrative Code.

(61) TMCS--Texas Minimum Construction Standards as amended and described in the Miscellaneous Section of the *Texas Register*.

(62) TREC--Texas Real Estate Commission.

#### §20.4. Eligible Single Family Activities.

(a) Availability of funding for and specific Program requirements related to the Activities described in subsection (b)(1) - (7) of this section are defined in each Program's Rules.

(b) Activity Types for eligible single family housing Activities include the following, as allowed by the Program Rule or NOFA:

- (1) rehabilitation, or new construction of Single Family Housing Units;
- (2) reconstruction of an existing Single Family Housing Unit on the same site;
- (3) replacement of existing owner-occupied housing with a new MHU;
- (4) acquisition of Single Family Housing Units, including acquisition with Rehabilitation and accessibility modifications;
- (5) refinance of an existing Mortgage;
- (6) tenant-based rental assistance; and
- (7) any other single family Activity as determined by the Department.

#### §20.5. Funding Notices.

(a) The Department will make funds available for eligible Administrators for single family activities through NOFAs, requests for qualifications (RFQs), request for proposals (RFPs) or other methods for the release of funding, describing the submission and eligibility guidelines.

(b) Funds may be allocated through Contract awards by the Department or by Department authority to submit Reservations.

(c) Funds may be subject to regional allocation in accordance with Chapter 2306.

(d) The Department will develop and publish Application materials for participation in the HCS and/or Reservation Systems.

(e) Eligible Applicants must comply with the provisions of the Application materials and NOFA and are responsible for the accuracy and timely completion and submission of all Applications and timely correction of all deficiencies.

#### §20.6. Applicant Eligibility.

(a) Eligible Applicants may include entities such as units of local governments, Nonprofit Organizations, or other entities as further provided in the Program Rule and/or NOFA.

(b) Applicants shall be in good standing with the Department, Texas Office of the Secretary of State, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and HUD, as applicable.

(c) Applicants shall comply with all applicable state and federal rules, statutes, or regulations including those requirements in Chapter 1 of this Title.

(d) Resolutions must be provided in accordance with the applicable Program Rule or NOFA.

(e) The violations described in paragraphs (1) - (5) of this subsection may cause an Applicant and any Applications they have submitted, to be ineligible:

(1) Applicant did not satisfy all eligibility requirements described in the Program Rule and NOFA to which they are responding;

(2) Applicant failed to make timely payment on fee commitments or on debts to the Department and for which the Department has initiated formal collection or enforcement actions;

(3) Applicant failed to comply with any other provisions of debt instruments held by the Department including, but not limited to, such provisions as timely payment of property taxes and proper placement and maintenance of insurance;

(4) Applicant is debarred by HUD or the Department; or

(5) current or previous noncompliance. Each Applicant will be reviewed for compliance history by the Department. Applications submitted by Applicants found to be in noncompliance or otherwise violating the Rules of the Department may be terminated and/or not recommended for funding.

(f) The Department reserves the right to adjust the amount awarded based on the Application's

feasibility, underwriting analysis, the availability of funds, or other similar factors as deemed appropriate by the Department.

(g) The Department may decline to fund any Application if the proposed Activities do not, in the Department's sole determination, represent a prudent use of the Department's funds. The Department is not obligated to proceed with any action pertaining to any Applications which are received, and may decide it is in the Department's best interest to refrain from pursuing any selection process. The Department reserves the right to negotiate individual elements of any Application.

#### §20.7. Household Eligibility Requirements.

(a) The method used to determine Annual Income will be provided in the Program Rule or NOFA.

(b) Households must occupy the Single Family Housing Unit as their Principal Residence for a period of time as established by the Program Rule or NOFA.

#### §20.8. Single Family Housing Unit Eligibility Requirements.

(a) A Single Family Housing Unit to be acquired or constructed with Department funds must be located in the State of Texas, and must have good and marketable title at the closing of any Mortgage Loan.

(b) Real property taxes assessed on an owner-occupied Single Family Housing Unit must be current (including prior years) or the Household must be satisfactorily participating in an approved payment plan with the taxing authority, must qualify for an approved tax deferral plan or has received a valid exemption from real property taxes.

(c) An owner-occupied Single Family Housing Unit must not be encumbered with any liens which impair the good and marketable title. The Department will require the owner to be current on any existing Mortgage Loans or home equity loans prior to assistance.

#### §20.9. General Administration and Program Requirements.

(a) Costs incurred by Administrator for travel, including costs of lodging, other subsistence, and incidental expenses, shall be considered reasonable and allowable only to the extent such costs do not exceed charges normally allowed by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>.

(b) Administrators must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and ordinances for procurement with single family Program funds.

(c) In addition to Chapter 1, Subchapter B of this Title, Administrators receiving Federal funds must comply with all applicable state and federal rules, statutes, or regulations, involving accessibility including the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Architectural Barriers Act as well as state and local building codes that contain accessibility requirements; where local, state, or federal rules are more stringent, the most stringent rules shall apply.

(d) Administrators receiving Federal funds must also comply with HUD's Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Limited English Proficiency Requirements and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. Administrators receiving Federal funds must also have an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan.

#### §20.10. Inspection Requirements for Construction Activities.

(a) New construction requirements.

(1) A Certificate of Occupancy shall be issued prior to final payment for construction, as applicable. In instances where the local jurisdiction does not issue a Certificate of Occupancy for the Activity undertaken, the Administrator must provide to the Department documentation evidencing that the Single Family Housing Unit has passed all required building codes.

(2) Applicant must demonstrate compliance with Texas Government Code §2306.514, "Construction Requirements for Single Family Affordable Housing," and other Program Rules.

(b) Reconstruction requirements.

(1) The initial inspection must identify all substandard conditions listed in TMCS along with any other health or safety concerns.

(A) The initial inspection may be waived if the local building official certifies that the extent of the subject property's substandard conditions is beyond repair, or the property has been condemned.

(B) A copy of the initial inspection report must be provided to the Department and to the Household.

(C) All substandard conditions identified in the initial inspection report shall be addressed in the work write-up in adequate detail to document the need for Reconstruction.

(2) A Certificate of Occupancy shall be issued prior to final payment for Reconstruction, as applicable. In instances where the local jurisdiction does not issue a Certificate of Occupancy for the Activity undertaken, the Administrator must obtain and provide to the Department documentation evidencing that the Single Family Housing Unit has passed all required building codes.

(3) Applicant must demonstrate compliance with Texas Government Code §2306.514, "Construction Requirements for Single Family Affordable Housing," and other Program Rules.

(c) Rehabilitation requirements.

(1) The initial inspection must identify all substandard conditions listed in TMCS along with any other health and safety concerns.

(A) A copy of the initial inspection report must be provided to the Department and to the Household.

(B) All substandard conditions identified in the initial inspection report shall be addressed in the work write-up, scope of work or specifications in adequate detail to ensure that all substandard conditions are properly corrected.

(2) Final inspections must document that all substandard and health and safety issues identified in the initial inspection have been corrected.

(3) Administrators shall meet the applicable requirements of the TMCS. TMCS requirements may be waived only through the process provided in §20.16 of this Chapter.

(d) Requirements for all construction activities.

(1) Interim inspections of construction progress may be required to document a draw request, in the Program Rule, Program Manual, or NOFA.

(2) Final inspections are required for all single family new construction, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Activities. The inspection must document that Activity is complete; meets all applicable codes, requirements, zoning ordinances; and has no observed deficiencies related to health and safety standards.

(A) Third party certification of compliance with Chapter 21, Minimum Energy Efficiency Requirements for Single Family Construction Activities, of this Title is required as applicable.

(B) A copy of the final inspection report must be provided to the Department and to the Household.

(C) The Certificate of Occupancy may serve as the final inspection if available and acceptable in the Program Rule, Program Manual, or NOFA.

(D) All deficiencies noted on the inspector's report must be corrected prior to the final draw.

(3) Correction of cosmetic issues, such as paint, wall texture, etc., will not be required to be corrected if acceptable to the Program as outlined in the Program Rule, Program Manual, or NOFA; or if utilizing a Self-Help construction Program.

(e) Inspector Requirements.

(1) Inspectors hired to verify compliance with this Chapter must meet Program requirements as outlined in the Program Rule, Program Manual, or NOFA, as applicable.

(2) Within city limits and extraterritorial jurisdictions, municipal code inspectors shall conduct all inspections for local code requirements as applicable.

(3) All non-municipal code inspectors shall conduct inspections using applicable construction standards prescribed by the Department.

(4) All non-municipal code inspectors shall conduct inspections using approved and prescribed inspections forms and checklists, as applicable.

(f) The Department reserves the right to reject any inspection report if, in its sole determination, the report does not accurately represent the property conditions or if the inspector does not meet Program requirements. All related construction costs in a rejected inspection report may be disallowed until the deficiencies are adequately cured.

(g) Single Family Housing Units participating in the Colonia Self-Help Center Program and receiving utility connections only are exempt from compliance with this Chapter.

#### §20.11. Survey Requirements for Acquisition Activities.

(a) A survey sufficient to induce a Title Company to issue a Title Insurance policy without the standard survey exception is required for single family acquisition where the Department is a lien holder and the Program funds are used for construction or purchase because:

(1) the Rehabilitation project is enlarging the footprint; or

(2) the project is Reconstruction or new construction or purchase of an existing home.

(b) If allowed by the Program Rules or NOFA, existing surveys for acquisition only activities may be used if the Owner certifies that no changes were made to the footprint of any building or structure, or to any improvement on the Single Family Housing Unit, and the Title Company accepts the certification and survey.

(c) The Department reserves the right to determine the survey requirements on a per project basis if additional survey requirements would, at the sole discretion of the Department, benefit the project.

#### §20.12. Insurance Requirements for Acquisition Activities.

(a) Title Insurance requirements. A Mortgagee's Title Insurance Policy is required for all non-conforming Department Mortgage Loans as required by the Program Rules or NOFA, exclusive of Mortgage Loans financed with mortgage revenue bonds or through the Taxable Mortgage Program. The title insurance must be written by a title insurer licensed or authorized to do business in the jurisdiction where the Single Family Housing Unit is located. The policy must be in the amount of the Mortgage Loan. The mortgagee named shall be: "Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs."

(b) Title Reports.

(1) Title reports may be provided in lieu of title commitments only for grants when title insurance is not available. Title reports shall be required when the grant funds exceed \$20,000.

(2) The preliminary title report may not be older than allowed by the Program Rule or NOFA.

(3) Liens, or any other restriction or encumbrances that impair good and marketable title must be cleared on or before closing of the Department's transaction.

(c) Builder's Risk (non-reporting form only) is required where construction funds in excess of \$20,000.00 for a Single Family Housing Unit is being financed and/or advanced by the Department. At the end of the construction period, the binder must be endorsed to remove the "pending disbursements" clause.

(d) Hazard Insurance.

(1) The hazard insurance provisions are not applicable to HOME Program activities unless required in the Program Rule or NOFA.

(2) If Department funds are provided in the form of a Mortgage Loan, then:

(A) the Department requires property insurance for fire and extended coverage;

(B) Homeowner's policies or package policies that provide property and liability coverage are acceptable. All risk policies are acceptable;

(C) the amount of hazard insurance coverage at the time the Mortgage Loan is funded should be no less than 100 percent of the current insurable value of improvements; and

(D) the Department should be named as a loss payee and mortgagee on the hazard insurance policy.



(e) Flood insurance must be maintained for all structures located in special flood hazard areas as determined by the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

(1) A Household may elect to obtain flood insurance even though flood insurance is not required. However, the Household may not be coerced or required to obtain flood insurance unless it is required in accordance with this section.

(2) Evidence of insurance, as required in this Chapter, must be obtained prior to Mortgage Loan funding. A one year insurance policy must be paid and up to two (2) months of reserves may be collected at the closing of the Mortgage Loan. The Department must be named as loss payee on the policy.

#### §20.13. Loan, Lien and Mortgage Requirements for Activities with Acquisition.

(a) The requirements in this section shall apply to Nonconforming Mortgage Loans for Activities with acquisition of real property, unless otherwise provided in the Program Rule, NOFA or Program guidelines.

(b) The fee requirements described in paragraphs (1) - (3) of this subsection apply to Nonconforming Mortgage Loans:

(1) Allowable expenses are restricted to reasonable third party fees.

(2) Fees charged by third party Mortgage lenders are limited to the greater of 2 percent of the Mortgage Loan amount or \$3,500, including but not limited to origination, Application, and/or underwriting fees.

(3) Fees paid to other parties that are supported by an invoice and reflected on the HUD-1 will not be included in the limit.

(c) Maximum Debt Ratio. The total debt-to-income ratio may not exceed 45 percent. A borrower's spouse who does not apply for the Mortgage Loan will be required to execute the information disclosure form and the deed of trust as a "non-purchasing" spouse. The "non-purchasing" spouse will not be required to execute the note. For credit underwriting purposes all debts and obligations of both the borrower and the "non-purchasing" spouse will be considered in the borrower's total debt-to-income ratio.

(d) The Department reserves the right to deny assistance in the event that the senior lien conditions are not to the satisfaction of the Department, as outlined in the Program Rule or NOFA.

(e) Lien position requirements.

(1) A Mortgage Loan made by the Department shall be secured by a first (1st) lien on the real property if the Department's Mortgage Loan is the largest Mortgage Loan secured by the real property; or

(2) The Department may accept a Parity Lien position if the original principal amount of the leveraged Mortgage Loan is equal to or greater than the Department's Mortgage Loan; or

(3) The Department may accept a subordinate lien position if the original principal amount of the leveraged Mortgage Loan is at least \$1,000 or greater than the Department's Mortgage Loan. However liens related to other subsidized funds provided in the form of grants and non-amortizing Mortgage Loan, such as deferred payment or Forgivable Loans, must be subordinate to the Department's payable Mortgage Loan.

(4) A subordinate Mortgage Loan may be re-subordinated, at the discretion of the Department, and as provided in the Program Rules or NOFA.

(f) Escrow Accounts.

(1) An escrow account must be established if:

(A) the Department holds a first lien Mortgage Loan which is due and payable on a monthly basis to the Department; or

(B) the Department holds a subordinate Mortgage Loan and the first lien lender does not require an escrow account, the Department may require an escrow account to be established.

(2) If an escrow account held by the Department is required under one of the provisions described in this subsection, then the provisions described in subparagraphs (A) - (F) of this paragraph are applicable:

- (A) The borrower must contribute monthly payments to cover the anticipated costs of real estate taxes, hazard and flood insurance premiums, and other related costs as applicable;
- (B) Escrow reserves shall be calculated based on land and completed improvement values;
- (C) The Department may require up to two (2) months of reserves for hazard and/or flood insurance and property taxes to be collected at the time of closing to establish the required Escrow account;
- (D) In addition, the Department may also require that the property taxes be prorated at the time of closing and those funds be deposited with the Department;
- (E) The borrower will be required to deposit monthly funds to an escrow account with the Mortgage Loan servicer in order to pay the taxes and insurance. This will ensure that funds are available to pay for the cost of real estate taxes, insurance premiums, and other assessments when they come due; and
- (F) These funds are included in the borrower's monthly payment to the Department or to the servicer. The Department will establish and administer the escrow accounts in accordance with the Real Estate Settlement and Procedures Act of 1974 (RESPA) if applicable.
- (g) Requirements for Administrators and individuals originating Nonconforming loans for the Department.

(1) Any Administrator or staff member of an Administrator that is not exempt must be properly licensed as a Residential Mortgage Loan Originator.

(A) The Department reserves the right to reject any loan application originated by an Administrator or individual that is not properly licensed.

(B) The Department will not reimburse any expenses related to a rejected loan application received from an Administrator or individual that is not properly licensed.

(2) Only Administrators approved by the Department may issue Loan Estimates for loans made by the Department.

(A) The Department reserves the right to reject any Loan Application and Loan Estimate submitted by an Administrator that has not received Department approval because the loan product as disclosed is not offered or the borrower does not qualify for that loan product.

(B) The Department will not reimburse any expenses related to a Loan Estimate or Application received from an Administrator that does not have Department approval.

(3) Only Administrators approved by the Department may issue Closing Disclosures for loans made by the Department.

(A) The Department reserves the right to reject any Closing Disclosure issued by an Administrator or Title Company without Department approval.

(B) The Department reserves the right to refuse to fund a loan with a Closing Disclosure that does not have Department approval.

#### §20.14. Amendments and Modifications to Written Agreements and Contracts.

(a) The Department, acting by and through its Executive Director or his/her designee, may authorize, execute, and deliver amendments to any written Agreement or Contract that is not a Household Commitment Contract, provided that the requirements of this section are met.

(1) Time extensions. The Executive Director or his/her designee may grant up to a cumulative twelve (12) months extension to the end date of any Contract unless otherwise indicated in the Program Rules or NOFA. Any additional time extension granted by the Executive Director shall include a statement by the Executive Director identifying the unusual, non-foreseeable or extenuating circumstances justifying the extension. If more than a cumulative twelve (12) months of extension is requested and the Department determines there are no unusual, non-foreseeable, or extenuating circumstances, it will be presented to the Board for approval, approval with revisions, or denial of the requested extension.

(2) Award or Contract Reductions. The Department may decrease an award for any good cause including but not limited to the request of the Administrator, insufficient eligible costs to support the award, or failure to meet deadlines or benchmarks.

(3) Changes in Household. Reductions in Contractual deliverables and Households shall require an amendment to the Contract. Increases in Contractual deliverables and Households that do not shift funds, or cumulatively shift less than 10 percent of total award or Contract funds, shall be completed through an amendment to the Contract at the discretion of the Department.

(4) Increases in Award and Contract Amounts.

(A) For a specific single family Program's Contract, the Department can award a cumulative increase of funds up to the greater of 25 percent of the original award amount or \$50,000.

(B) Requests for increases in funding will be evaluated by the Department on a first-come, first-served basis to assess the capacity to manage additional funding, the demonstrated need for additional funding and the ability to expend the increase in funding within the Contract period.

(C) The requirements to approve an increase in funding shall include, at a minimum, Administrator's ability to continue to meet existing deadlines, benchmarks and reporting requirements.

(D) Funding may come from Program funds, Deobligated funds or Program income.

(E) Qualifying requests will be recommended to the Executive Director or his/her designee for approval.

(F) The Board must approve requests for increase in Program funds in excess of the cumulative 25 percent or \$50,000 threshold.

(5) The single family Program's Director may approve Contract budget modifications provided the guidelines described in paragraphs (1) - (4) of this subsection are met:

(A) funds must be available in a budget line item;

(B) the budget change(s) are less than 10 percent of the total Contract's budget;

(C) if units or activities are desired to be increased, but funds must be shifted from another budget line item in which units or activities from that budget line item have been completed, a Contract amendment will only be necessary if the cumulative budget changes exceed 10 percent of the Contract amount; and

(D) the cumulative total of all Contract's budget modifications cannot exceed 10 percent of the total Contract's budget amount.

(E) If these guidelines are not met, an amendment to the Contract will be required.

(b) The Department may terminate a Contract in whole or in part if the Administrator does not achieve performance benchmarks as outlined in the Contract or NOFA or for any other reason in the Department's reasonable discretion.

(c) In all instances noted in this section, where an expected Mortgage Loan transaction is involved, Mortgage Loan documents will be modified accordingly at the expense of the Administrator/borrower.

#### §20.15. Compliance and Monitoring.

(a) The Department will perform monitoring of single family Program Contracts and Activities in order to ensure that applicable requirements of federal laws and regulations, and state laws and rules have been met, and to provide Administrators with clear communication regarding the condition and operation of their Contracts and Activities so they understand clearly, with a documented record, how they are performing in meeting their obligations.

(1) The physical condition of assisted properties and Administrator's documented compliance with contractual and program requirements may be subject to monitoring.

(2) The Department may contract with an independent third party to monitor an Activity for compliance with any conditions imposed by the Department in connection with the award of any Department funds, and appropriate state and federal laws.

(b) If an Administrator has Contracts for more than one single family Program, or other programs through the Department or the State, the Department may, at its discretion, coordinate monitoring of those programs with monitoring of single family Contracts under this chapter.

(c) In general, Administrators will be scheduled for monitoring based on federal or state monitoring requirements, or a risk assessment process including but not limited to: the number of Contracts

administered by the Administrator, the amount of funds awarded and expended, the length of time since the last monitoring, findings identified during previous monitoring, issues identified through the submission or lack of submission of a single audit, complaints, and reports of fraud, waste and/or abuse. The risk assessment will also be used to determine which Administrators will have an onsite review and which may have a desk review.

(d) The Department will provide an Administrator with written notice of any upcoming onsite or desk monitoring review, and such notice will be given to the Administrator by email to the Administrator's chief executive officer at the email address most recently provided to the Department by the Administrator. In general, a thirty (30) day notice will be provided. However, if a credible complaint of fraud or other egregious noncompliance is received the Department reserves the right to conduct unannounced monitoring visits, or provide a shorter notice period. It is the responsibility of the Administrator to maintain current contact information with the Department for the organization, key staff members, and governing body.

(e) Upon request, Administrators must make available to the Department all books and records that the Department determines are reasonably relevant to the scope of the Department's review, along with access to assisted properties.

(f) Post Monitoring Procedures. After the review, a written monitoring report will be prepared for the Administrator describing the monitoring assessment and any corrective actions, if applicable. The monitoring report will be emailed to the Administrator. Issues of concern over which there is uncertainty or ambiguity may be discussed by the Department with the staff of cognizant agencies overseeing federal funding.

(g) Administrator Response. If there are any findings of noncompliance requiring corrective action, the Administrator will be provided a thirty (30) day corrective action period, which may be extended for good cause. In order to receive an extension, the Administrator must submit a written request to the Chief of Compliance within the corrective action period, stating the basis for good cause that the Administrator believes justifies the extension. In general, the Department will approve or deny the extension request within three (3) business days. Failure to timely respond to a corrective action notice and/or failure to correct all findings will be taken into consideration if the Administrator applies for additional funding and may result in suspension of the Contract, referral for administrative penalties, or other action under this Title.

(h) Monitoring Close Out. After the end of the corrective action period, a close out letter will be issued to the Administrator. If the Administrator supplies evidence establishing continual compliance that negates the finding of noncompliance, the issue of noncompliance will be rescinded. If the Administrator's response satisfies all findings and concerns noted in the monitoring letter, the issue of noncompliance will be noted as resolved. In some circumstances, the Administrator may be unable to secure documentation to resolve a finding. In those instances, if there are mitigating circumstances, the Department may note the finding is not resolved but may close the issue with no further action required. If the Administrator's response does not correct all findings noted, the close out letter will identify the documentation that must be submitted to correct the issue. Results of monitoring findings may be reported to the Executive Awards and Review Advisory Committee for consideration relating to previous participation.

(i) Options for Review. If, following the submission of corrective action documentation, Compliance staff continues to find the Administrator in noncompliance, the Administrator may request or initiate review of the matter using the following options, where applicable:

(1) If the issue is related to a program requirement or prohibition Administrators may contact an applicable federal program officer for guidance or request that the Department contact applicable federal program officer for guidance without identifying the Administrator.

(2) If the issue is related to application of a provision of the Contract or a requirement of the Texas Administrative Code, or the application of a provision of an OMB Circular, the Administrator may request review by the Department's Compliance Committee, as set out in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(3) Administrators may request Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). An Administrator may send a proposal to the Department's Dispute Resolution Coordinator to initiate ADR pursuant to §1.17 of this title.

(j) If Administrators do not respond to a monitoring letter or fail to provide acceptable evidence of timely compliance after notification of an issue, the matter will be reported to the Department's Enforcement Committee for consideration of administrative penalties, full or partial cost reimbursement, or suspension.

(k) Administrators must provide timely response to corrective action requirements imposed by other agencies. Administrator records may be reviewed during the course of monitoring or audit of the Department by HUD, the Office of the Inspector General, the State Auditor's Office or others. If a finding or concern is identified during the course of a monitoring or audit by another agency, the Administrator is required to provide timely action and response within the conditions imposed by that agency's notice.

(l) Compliance Committee.

(1) The Compliance Committee is a committee of three (3) to five (5) persons appointed by the Executive Director. The Compliance Committee is established to provide independent review of certain compliance issues as provided by this section. Staff from the Legal and the Compliance Divisions will not be appointed to the committee, but may be available as a resource to the Committee.

(2) Informal discussion with Compliance staff. If the Administrator has questions or disagreements regarding any compliance issues, they should first try to resolve them by discussing them with the Compliance staff, including, as needed, the Chief of Compliance.

(3) Informal discussion with the Compliance Committee. An Administrator may request an informal meeting with the Compliance Committee if the informal discussion with the Compliance staff did not resolve the issue.

(4) Compliance Committee Process and Timeline:

(A) At any time, the Administrator may call or request an informal conference with the Compliance staff and/or the Chief of Compliance.

(B) If a call or an informal conference with the Compliance staff does not result in a resolution of the issue, the Administrator may, within thirty (30) days of the call or informal conference with Compliance staff, request a meeting with the Compliance Committee.

(C) If timely requested in accordance with this section, the Compliance Committee will hold an informal conference with the Administrator. An Administrator should not offer evidence, documentation, or information to the Compliance Committee that was not presented to Compliance staff during the informal staff conference. If additional information is offered, the Compliance Committee may disallow the information or refer the matter back to Compliance staff to allow review of the additional information prior to any consideration by the Compliance Committee.

(D) If a meeting with the Compliance Committee does not result in a resolution, matters related to a compliance requirement, other than those required by federal regulation, may be appealed in accordance with appeal rights described in Chapter 1 of this Title.

#### §20.16. Waivers and Appeals.

(a) Appeal of Department staff decisions or actions will follow requirements in Program Rules, NOFA, and Chapter 1 or Chapter 2 of this Title, as applicable.

(b) Waiver of Texas Minimum Construction Standards.

(1) Waiver may be requested if a legal or factual reason makes compliance with provisions of TMCS impossible.

(2) Waivers must be approved prior to the commencement of Rehabilitation work.

(3) Lack of adequate initial inspection is not a valid basis for a waiver.

(4) Waiver requests must be made in writing, specifically identify the grounds for a waiver, and include all necessary documentation to support the request.

(5) Each request will be reviewed by Department staff with sufficient knowledge of the construction process to render an opinion on the validity of the request. The staff opinion will be provided to the Executive Director or his/her designee, along with the original request and the supporting documents.

(6) On or before the fourteenth business day after receipt of the request by the Department, the Executive Director or his/her designee will approve or disapprove the request, and provide written notice to the Administrator.

(7) Appeal of the Executive Director's decision will follow the Staff Appeal process provided in Chapter 1 of this Title.

DEC. 6, 2015