TOWNSHIP OF LUMBERTON
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Operating Manual
For the Administration of

RENTAL UNITS

In accordance with the
Uniform Housing Affordability Controls
N.J.A.C. 5:80 - 26.1 et seq.

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by:

CME ASSOCIATES

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION **1**
- What is affordable housing? 1
- Who qualifies for affordable housing? 2
- Local Affordable Housing Programs and Opportunities 2
- Other Affordable Housing Programs and Opportunities 2
- Fair Housing and Equal Housing Opportunities 3
- Overview of the Affordable Housing Administration Process 3

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES **4**
- Responsibilities of the Municipal Housing Liaison 4
- Responsibilities of an Administrative Agent 5
- Responsibilities of the Municipal Attorney 7
- Responsibilities of Developers 7
- Responsibilities of Owners of Rental Developments 7
- Responsibilities of Landlords and Property Managers 7

AFFIRMATIVE MARKETING **8**
- Overview of the Requirements of an Affirmative Marketing Plan 8
- Regional Preference 9
- Implementation of the Affirmative Marketing Plan 9
- Developer, Affordable Housing Sponsor, Landlord, Property Manager 10

RANDOM SELECTION & APPLICANT POOL(S) **12**

MATCHING HOUSEHOLDS TO AVAILABLE UNITS **14**

HOUSEHOLD CERTIFICATION **15**
- Procedure for Income-Eligibility Certification 15
- The Real Estate Asset Limit 17
- Income from Real Estate 18
- Maximum Monthly Payments 18
- Housing Counseling 19
- The Applicant Interview 19
- Records Documenting Household Composition and Circumstances 19
- Approving or Rejecting a Household 20
- Dismissal of Applications 20
- Appeals 21

DETERMINING AFFORDABLE RENTS **25**
- Development Considerations and Compliance Issues 25
- Determining Initial Rents 26
- Additional Regulations for a Rental Development 26
- Determining Rent Increases 26

LOCAL AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM **27**

VIOLATIONS, DEFAULTS, AND REMEDIES **28**

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS AND APPLICANT FILES **28**
- Files To Be Maintained on Every Applicant 28
- Files To Be Maintained on Every Unit 28
- Files to Be Maintained on Every Project 29
- Files To Be Maintained on the Applicant Pool 29
- Monitoring 29

INTRODUCTION

This Operating Manual has been prepared to assist in the administration of rental units in the Township of Lumberton Affordable Housing Program. It will serve as a guide to the program staff.

This manual describes the basic content and operation of the program, examines program purposes and provides the guidelines for implementing the program. It has been prepared with a flexible format allowing for periodic updates of its sections, when required, due to revisions in regulations and/or procedures.

This manual explains the steps in the initial rental process and in the re-rental process. It describes the eligibility requirements for participation in the program, record keeping, and overall program administration.

Implementation of any procedure, even if it is not included in this Operating Manual, shall be in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Act and Equal Opportunities laws[1], the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC) N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq.[2], the substantive rules of the Council on Affordable Housing N.J.A.C. 5:96[3] and 5:97[4], the substantive rules of the Fair Housing Act at N.J.A.C. 5:99, and the affordable housing regulations of Lumberton Township (hereafter referred to as the "Regulations").



In accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Act and Equal Opportunities laws it is unlawful to discriminate against any person making application to buy or rent a home with regard to age, race, religion, national origin, sex, handicapped or familial status.

What is affordable housing?

Affordable housing, unlike market rate housing, has affordability controls limiting the price for at least 30 years. Applicable New Jersey Affordable Housing regulations and statutes consider housing "affordable" if the household pays approximately 28% or less of the household's gross income on housing costs. Affordable housing is priced to be affordable to households earning up to 80% of the area median income for the region in which the affordable housing is located.

[1]

[3]

[4]

Who qualifies for affordable housing?

In order to be eligible for affordable housing in New Jersey, a household's income must be below the income limit for the region in which the affordable housing is located, either for low or moderate levels. A moderate-income household is classified as earning between 50% and 80% of the area median income. A low-income household is classified as earning less than 50% of area median income. There is a new category for very low-income households, which are classified as earning less than 30% of area median income. Municipalities are not required to provide affordable housing to very low-income households; however, at least 10% of all affordable rental units must be affordable to households earning 35% or less of median income.
There are six affordable housing regions within New Jersey, as summarized in the table below:

Regions	Counties
1	Bergen, Hudson, Passaic, Sussex
2	Essex, Morris, Union, Warren
3	Hunterdon, Middlesex, Somerset
4	Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean
5	Burlington, Camden, Gloucester
6	Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem

The Regional Income Limits Chart (Appendix B) provides information about income limits for each of the six housing regions. Each region has different calculated median incomes, which are adjusted annually. The Township of Lumberton is located within Region 5.

An applicant does not have to currently live in the region in which the applicant is interested in applying for an affordable unit. An applicant's income qualification is determined by the Region Income Limits for where the applicant wants to live.

Local Affordable Housing Programs and Opportunities

A copy of the Township of Lumberton Housing Element and Fair Share Plan is available to be viewed at the Township of Lumberton Clerk's Office at

Lumberton Township
35 Municipal Drive
Lumberton, NJ 08048

Please note that Article VII (Affordable Housing) of Chapter 188 of the Lumberton Township Code is hereby incorporated into this Manual by reference as if fully set forth at length. Should any requirement or policy set forth within this Operating Manual conflict with Article VII (Affordable Housing) of Chapter 188 of the Lumberton Township Code, then Article VII (Affordable Housing) of Chapter 188 of the Lumberton Township Code shall govern and supersede the requirement or policy set forth in this Operating Manual.

Other Affordable Housing Programs and Opportunities

Individuals interested in applying for affordable housing should contact the Municipal Housing Liaison in the municipality in which they are interested in living. Each municipality that is participating in the affordable housing compliance process has a Municipal Housing Liaison who is responsible for administering the municipality's affordable housing program. Some

municipalities administer their own affordable housing and have their own application process. If not, the Municipal Housing Liaison can direct applicants to developers, nonprofit agencies, State agencies, or consultants that may administer the affordable housing within the municipality.

The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency has established New Jersey's Housing Resource Center, an on-line, searchable database of affordable housing in the State. The Housing Resource Center provides a listing posted by developers, landlords, and municipalities of available affordable housing. Available units are listed with contact and application information. Look for the Housing Resource Center at www.njhrc.gov.

The New Jersey Guide to Affordable Housing is a listing compiled by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Division of Codes and Standards and can be found here https://www.nj.gov/dca/codes/publications/guide.shtml|.| It lists all types of affordable housing by county. The housing units on the list have a variety of qualification requirements, including age-restricted housing and housing for the developmentally disabled.

Applicants who do not have access to the Internet should call 211 for assistance.

Fair Housing and Equal Housing Opportunities

It is unlawful to discriminate against any person making application to buy or rent a home with regard to race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, familial status, disability, nationality, sex, gender identity or expression, or source of lawful income used for mortgage or rental payments.

For more information on discrimination, or if anyone feels they are a victim of discrimination, please contact the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights at 1-866-405-3050 or http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcr/index.html.

Overview of the Affordable Housing Administration Process

The Municipal Housing Liaison serves as an initial point of contact for unsolicited calls to the municipality about affordable housing and, where appropriate, directs applicants to an Administrative Agent, who may be developers, nonprofit agencies, State agencies, or consultants that may administer the affordable housing within the municipality.

- The Administrative Agent implements the municipality's Affirmative Marketing Plan.
- The Administrative Agent serves as the initial point of contact for all inquiries generated by the affirmative marketing efforts and sends out pre-applications to interested callers.
- The Administrative Agent, the developer, or the affordable housing sponsor will accept these returned pre-applications for a specific period of time, for example, 60 days. At the end of this time period, all applications will go to the Administrative Agent where these applications will be randomly selected through a lottery to create a pool of applicants.
- The Administrative Agent pre-qualifies applicants in the applicant pool for income eligibility and sends either a rejection letter to those over income or a preliminary approval letter to those who appear income-eligible.
- When a unit becomes available, the Administrative Agent will interview the applicant households and proceed with the income qualification process.

- The Administrative Agent must notify applicant households in writing of certification or denial within 20 days of the determination.
- Once certified, households are further screened to match household size to bedroom size.
- Certified households that are approved for a rental affordable housing unit will sign a Disclosure Statement (Appendix K) and any other applicable documents, which are held in the applicant file. Applicants then make an appointment with the leasing agent. Applicant households seeking rental units proceed with a credit check, which is generally conducted by the developer, affordable housing sponsor, or landlord. If approved, the applicant will sign the lease, pay the first month's rent and the security deposit, and receive the keys.
- The certified household moves into the affordable rental unit.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Municipal Housing Liaison

The Municipal Housing Liaison is responsible for coordinating all the activities of the municipal government as it relates to the creation and administration of affordable housing units, in conjunction with the Municipal Attorney, where appropriate (see *Responsibilities of the Municipal Attorney*). The primary purpose of the Municipal Housing Liaison is to ensure that all affordable housing projects are established and administered according to the Regulations as outlined in an Operating Manual. The duties of the Municipal Housing Liaison include the following duties, and may include the responsibilities for providing administrative services as described in the next Section under, *Responsibilities of an Administrative Agent.*

Monitor the status of all restricted units in the municipality's Fair Share Plan. Regardless of any arrangements the municipality may have with one or more Administrative Agents, it is the Municipal Housing Liaison's responsibility to know the status of all restricted units in their community.

Serve as the municipality's primary point of contact for all inquiries from the State, Administrative Agents, developers, affordable housing sponsors, owners, property managers, and interested households. The Municipal Housing Liaison serves as the municipality's primary point of contact on affordable housing issues. Interested applicants should be provided with information on the types of affordable units within the municipality and, where applicable, the name of the Administrative Agent that manages the units and the contact information for the Administrative Agent.

Compile, verify, and submit annual reporting. Administrative Agents are responsible for collecting much of the data that is ultimately included in an annual monitoring report. However, it is the Municipal Housing Liaison's responsibility to collect and verify this data and consolidate it into the annual report to its designated court master. Any requests from the court master for additional information or corrections will be directed to the Municipal Housing Liaison.

Coordinate meetings with Administrative Agents and Developers/Affordable Housing Sponsors/ Owners. When a new affordable unit or series of units is in the planning process, the Municipal Housing Liaison should coordinate a meeting between the Administrative Agent and the

developer, affordable housing sponsor, or owner. The developer, affordable housing sponsor, or owner may serve as their own Administrative Agent, if they meet the applicable requirements and are approved by the municipality and the court. The purpose of this initial meeting is to develop a clear division of labor between the parties and to transmit any components of the Operating Manual – including copies of all affordable housing-related local ordinances - that have already been adopted by the municipality.

It is the responsibility of the Municipal Housing Liaison, in conjunction with the Municipal Attorney, to have the affordable housing provisions of any Master Deed and Public Offering reviewed for consistency with applicable affordable housing, including the UHAC regulations, before they are recorded and submitted to DCA for approval.

Provide Administrative Services, unless those services are contracted out. The responsibilities for providing administrative services are described in the next Section under, *Responsibilities of an Administrative Agent*.

Responsibilities of an Administrative Agent

The primary responsibility of an Administrative Agent is to establish and enforce affordability controls and ensure that units in their portfolio are rented to eligible households. Administrative Agents must:

Secure written acknowledgement from all developers, affordable housing sponsors and owners that no restricted unit can be offered or in any other way committed to any person other than a household duly certified by the Administrative Agent.

Create and adhere to an Operating Manual. Administrative Agents are required to follow the policies and procedures of an Operating Manual, as applicable to the scope of services they have been contracted to perform.

Implement the Municipality's Affirmative Marketing Plan. The Administrative Agent, the developer, affordable housing sponsor or owner could be responsible for implementing the Affirmative Marketing Plan adopted by the municipality. At the first meeting with the Municipal Housing Liaison, Administrative Agent and the developer, affordable housing sponsor or owner, this responsibility should be discussed. Affirmative marketing includes conducting regional outreach and advertising for available affordable units. Advertising costs may also be delegated to the developer, but this must be established by ordinance and a condition of approval of the Planning Board or Zoning Board.

Accept applications from interested households. In response to marketing initiatives or by referral from the Municipal Housing Liaison, interested households will contact the Administrative Agent. The Administrative Agent will supply applicants with applications, provide additional information on available units and accept completed applications.

Conduct random selection of applicants for rental of restricted units. The Administrative Agent is responsible for conducting the random selection in accordance with the Affirmative Marketing Plan and any related local ordinances, and as described in the Operating Manual.

Create and maintain a pool of applicant households. This includes reaching out to households in the applicant pool to determine continued interest and/or changes in household size and income.

Determine eligibility of households. The task of collecting application materials and documentation from applicant households and analyzing it for eligibility is the responsibility of an Administrative Agent. A written determination on a household's eligibility must be provided within twenty (20) days of the Administrative Agent's determination of eligibility or non-eligibility. Whether or not the household is determined to be eligible for a unit, it is an Administrative Agent's responsibility to secure all information provided by the household in individual files and to maintain strict confidentiality of all information regarding that household. An Administrative Agent is required to ensure that all certified applicants execute a Disclosure Statement acknowledging the rights and requirements of renting an affordable unit, in the form of Appendix K of UHAC.

Establish and maintain effective communication with property managers and landlords. Property managers and landlords of restricted units should be instructed and regularly reminded that the Administrative Agent is their primary point of contact. The Administrative Agent must immediately inform all property managers and landlords of any changes to the Administrative Agent's contact information or business hours.
Property managers and landlords should be instructed to immediately contact the Administrative Agent:

- Immediately upon learning that an affordable rental unit will be vacated.
- For review and approval of annual rental increases.

Provide annual notification of maximum rents. Each year when the low- and moderate-income limits are released, rental households must be notified of the new maximum rent that may be charged for their unit. The Administrative Agent's contact information must be included on such notification in case the tenant is being overcharged.

Serve as the custodian of all legal documents. An Administrative Agent is responsible for maintaining originals of all legal instruments for the units in their portfolio. Throughout the duration of a control period, an Administrative Agent must maintain a file containing its affordability control documents. This includes, but is not limited to, the recorded Declarations of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, Deed Restrictions, Deeds, Recapture Mortgages, Recapture Mortgage Notes, and Appendices J and K.

Serve as point of contact on all matters relating to affordability controls. It is recommended that the Administrative Agent develop a system to be notified by lenders when a unit is at risk of foreclosure. In the event of a foreclosure, the Administrative Agent should work with the foreclosing institution to ensure that the affordability controls are maintained. The Administrative Agent should seek the counsel of the municipality's attorney on legal matters that threaten the durability of the affordability controls.

Provide annual activity reports to Municipal Housing Liaison for use in the annual affordable housing monitoring report. An Administrative Agent is responsible for collecting the reporting data on each unit in the Administrative Agent's portfolio.

Maintain and distribute information on HUD-approved Housing Counseling Programs.

Responsibilities of the Municipal Attorney

The Municipal Attorney assists the municipality with developing, administrating, and enforcing affordability controls, including but not limited to:

- Assisting the Municipal Housing Liaison with the review of the affordable housing provisions of any Master Deed and Public Offering for consistency with applicable affordable housing regulations, including UHAC regulations, before they are recorded and submitted to DCA for approval.
- Providing all reasonable and necessary assistance in support of the Administrative Agent's efforts to ensure compliance with the housing affordability controls, including reviewing legal documents and legal actions required on foreclosures and violations.

Responsibilities of Developers

When a new affordable unit or series of units is in the planning process, the developer of affordable housing should contact the Municipal Housing Liaison who shall coordinate a meeting with the Administrative Agent, where applicable, and the developer, affordable housing sponsor or owner.
The purpose of this initial meeting is to develop a clear division of labor between the parties and to transmit any components of the Operating Manual – including copies of all affordable housing-related local ordinances -- that have already been adopted by the municipality.

The Administrative Agent will secure from the developer written acknowledgement that no restricted unit can be offered or in any other way committed to any person other than a household duly certified by the Administrative Agent.

Responsibilities of Owners of Rental Developments

Open and direct communication between the Owners of rental developments, the Municipal Housing Liaison and the Administrative Agent is essential to ongoing administration of affordability controls. Although the Administrative Agent is required to serve as the primary point of contact with households, the Owner must provide the Municipal Housing Liaison and Administrative Agent with information on vacancies. Owners of rental developments are also responsible for working with the Administrative Agent to ensure that the Municipal Housing Liaison has all necessary information to complete the annual reporting.

Responsibilities of Landlords and Property Managers

Landlords and property managers must place a notice in all rental properties annually informing residents of the rent increase for the year and the contact information for the Administrative Agent.

AFFIRMATIVE MARKETING

Overview of the Requirements of an Affirmative Marketing Plan

All affordable units are required to be affirmatively marketed using the Township of Lumberton's Affirmative Marketing Plan. An Affirmative Marketing Plan is a regional marketing strategy designed to attract households of all majority and minority groups, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital or familial status, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, disability, age, or number of children to housing units which are being marketed by an Administrative Agent or a developer, sponsor, owner or property manager of affordable housing. The primary objectives of an Affirmative Marketing Plan are to target households who are least likely to apply for affordable housing, and to target households throughout the entire housing region in which the units are located.

The Township of Lumberton's Affirmative Marketing Plan can be found at the **Township of Lumberton Clerk's Office, 35 Municipal Drive, Lumberton**

The affirmative marketing plan shall describe the media to be used in advertising and publicizing the availability of housing. The plan shall include the following:

- Publication of at least one advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation within the housing region; and
- Broadcast of at least one advertisement by radio or television throughout the housing region.
- At least one additional regional marketing strategy such as a neighborhood newspaper, religious publication, organizational newsletter, advertisement(s) with major employer(s), or notification through community and regional organizations such as non-profit, religious and civic organizations.
-

For each affordable housing opportunity within the municipality, the Affirmative Marketing Plan must include the following information:

- The address of the project and development name, if any
- The number of rental units
- The price ranges of the rental units
- The name and contact information of the Municipal Housing Liaison, Administrative Agent, property manager or landlord
- A description of the Random Selection method that will be used to select applicants for affordable housing.
- Disclosure of required application fees, if any.

Advertisements must contain the following information for each affordable housing opportunity:

- The location of and directions to the units
- A range of prices for the housing units
- The bedroom size(s) of the units

- The maximum income permitted to qualify for the housing units
- The locations of applications for the housing units
- The business hours when interested households may obtain an application for a housing unit
- Application fees, if any

It is also recommended that the following information be included in the advertisements:

- Last date applications will be accepted
- Contact number of the Municipal Housing Liaison, Administrative Agent, property manager or landlord
- A statement concerning the availability of credit, budget and/or homeownership counseling services
- If already adopted by ordinance, a statement concerning regional preference.

UHAC recommends including the following statement on all advertisements:

"*Visit www.njhrc.gov for more affordable housing opportunities*."

Regional Preference

The Township of Lumberton has by ordinance provided that households that live or work in Housing Region 5 comprised of the following counties: Somerset, Hudson, Passaic, and Sussex shall be selected for an affordable housing unit before households from outside this region. Units that remain unoccupied after households who live or work in the region are exhausted, may be offered to the households outside the region.

Implementation of the Affirmative Marketing Plan

The affirmative marketing process for affordable units shall begin at least four months prior to expected occupancy. In implementing the marketing program, the Township of Lumberton shall undertake all of the strategies outlined in the Township of Lumberton Affirmative Marketing Plan. Advertising and outreach shall take place during the first four weeks of the marketing program. Applications for affordable housing shall be available in several locations in accordance with the Affirmative Marketing Plan. Applications shall be mailed to prospective applicants upon request.

An applicant pool will be maintained by the Township of Lumberton for re-rentals.

When a re-rental affordable unit becomes available, the Township of Lumberton applicants will be selected from the applicant pool and, if necessary, the unit will be affirmatively marketed as described above.

The selection of applicants from the applicant pool is described in more detail in this manual under *Random Selection & Applicant Pool(s).*

Developer, Affordable Housing Sponsor, Landlord, Property Manager

If permitted by the municipality, the developer, affordable housing sponsor, landlord or property manager may be responsible for advertising the affordable housing in accordance with the municipality's adopted Affirmative Marketing Plan. Proof of publication must be submitted, including a copy of the final advertisements with a copy of the paid bill. Public Service Announcements shall be submitted by the municipality.

Question: *How often should we advertise?*

Answer: Administrative Agents responsible for new developments, or newly hired Administrative Agents, must advertise initially to create an applicant pool. For new developments, advertising should begin four months prior to the anticipated occupancy of the units. Advertising should continue monthly until all units are sold or rented. Once all vacant units are filled with eligible households, the Administrative Agent can either close the applicant pool or keep it open. If the applicant pool has sufficient eligible households for approximately two years' worth of turnover, UHAC regulations recommends that the applicant pool be closed and applications no longer be accepted. In this case, advertising does not need to be conducted until four months before the applicant pool is to be reopened. If the Administrative Agent wishes to keep the applicant pool open, they must conduct some form of advertising on a monthly basis. However, all the components of the Affirmative Marketing Plan do not need to be implemented every month. One strategy can be implemented each month on a rotating basis. The next section provides more information on random selection and applicant pool maintenance to help determine how often advertising should be conducted.

Question: *My County doesn't have a library. How do I comply with the application availability rule?*

Answer: Only 11 of New Jersey's 21 counties have a county library. If one or more of the counties in a housing region do not have county libraries, applications must be made available at the county administration building.

Question: *Our affordable housing development is very small. It is unnecessary for us to conduct monthly marketing initiatives and the number of applicants in our existing pool already exceeds the two-year rule of thumb. Is there any way for us to maintain compliance without conducting monthly outreach initiatives?*

Answer: UHAC regulations suggest that you attempt to partner with other municipalities in your housing region to help defray time and cost or close the applicant pool and do not accept applications until the applicant pool contains fewer applicants and affirmative marketing is implemented.

Question: *We have moderate-income units available, but not low-income units. Can we keep only the moderate portion of the applicant pool open?*

Answer: Yes. In fact, if you regularly have a type of unit that is hard to fill, you may tailor marketing initiatives to fill that type of unit. However, households that submit applications and are not interested or eligible for the targeted unit type must be notified that they will not be placed in the applicant pool until it is reopened for their unit type.

Question: *Are all developments required to conduct affirmative marketing, or just those with a certain number of units, for example, more than five units?*

Answer: All affordable units governed by UHAC are required to be affirmatively marketed. If it is burdensome for a small development to conduct its own affirmative marketing, the municipality and Administrative Agent(s) should consider conducting the affirmative marketing for all the units within the municipality at the municipal level, not at the development level. An alternative is to contract with an Administrative Agent who will do the affirmative marketing for your units as well as other units they manage.

RANDOM SELECTION & APPLICANT POOL(S)

Initial Randomization

Applicants are selected at random before income-eligibility is determined, regardless of household size or desired number of bedrooms. The process is as follows:

- After advertising is implemented, applications are accepted for 60 days.
- At the end of the period, sealed applications are selected one-by-one through a lottery (unless fewer applications are received than the number of available units, then all eligible households will be placed in a unit).
- Households are informed of the date, time and location of the lottery and invited to attend.
- An applicant pool is created by listing applicants in the order selected.
- Applications are reviewed for income-eligibility. Ineligible households are informed that they are being removed from the applicant pool or given the opportunity to correct and/or update income and household information.
- Eligible households are matched to available units based upon the number of bedrooms needed (and any other special requirements, such as [regional preference or] the need for an accessible unit).
- If there are sufficient names remaining in the pool to fill future re-rental, the applicant pool shall be closed.
- When the applicant pool is close to being depleted, the Administrative Agent will re-open the pool and conduct a new random selection process after fulfilling the affirmative marketing requirements. The new applicant pool will be added to the remaining list of applicants.

Randomization after Certification

Random selection is conducted when a unit is available, and only certified households seeking the type and bedroom size of the available unit are placed in the lottery. The process is as follows:

- After advertising is implemented, applications are accepted for 60 days.
- All applications are reviewed and households are either certified or informed of non-eligibility. (The certification is valid for 180 days, and may be renewed by updating income-verification information.)
- Eligible households are placed in applicant pools based upon the number of bedrooms needed (and any other special requirements, such as [regional preference or] the need for an accessible unit)
- When a unit is available, only the certified households in need of that type of unit are selected for a lottery.
- Households are informed of the date, time, and location of the lottery and invited to attend.
- After the lottery is conducted, the first household selected is given 3 days to express interest or disinterest in the unit. (If the first household is not interested in the unit, this process continues until a certified household selects the unit.)

- Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, certified households are added to the pool for the appropriate household income and size categories, and advertising and outreach is ongoing, according to the Affirmative Marketing Plan.

MATCHING HOUSEHOLDS TO AVAILABLE UNITS

In referring certified households to specific restricted units, to the extent feasible, and without causing an undue delay in occupying the unit, the Administrative Agent shall strive to implement the following policies:

- Provide an occupant for each unit bedroom;
- Provide children of different sex with separate bedrooms;
- Prevent more than two persons from occupying a single bedroom;
- Require that all the bedrooms be used as bedrooms; and
- Require that a couple requesting a two-bedroom unit provide a doctor's note justifying such request.

The Administrative Agent cannot require an applicant household to take an affordable unit with a greater number of bedrooms, as long as overcrowding is not a factor.

A household can be eligible for more than one unit category, and should be placed in the applicant pool for all categories for which it is eligible.

Question: *What happens if a moderate-income household "walks in" (when the applicant pool is closed and no affirmative marketing is being conducted) and I have a moderate unit available with no eligible moderate-income households in the applicant pool?*

> **Answer:** If the Administrative Agent notices that a specific unit type is hard to fill and few eligible households are in the applicant pool, the Administrative Agent should conduct ongoing affirmative marketing for that unit type to ensure a steady stream of certified households and keep the list open for that unit type. The walk-in can be added to the list.

Question: *I am working with an applicant household that requires an accessible unit. Do they skip ahead on the list when an accessible unit becomes available?*

> **Answer:** UHAC does not provide any guidance on this situation. However, the Administrative Agent consider an accessible unit a unit type, just as a unit is defined by bedroom size. Therefore, if the Administrative Agent is using the initial randomization model, the first household on the randomized list that requires an accessible unit should be selected when an accessible unit becomes available. If the Administrative Agent is using the randomization after certification model, all households of the appropriate size who are in need of an accessible unit, would be selected, and randomized.

Question: *An applicant household has a daughter that has room and board at her college. Can they request a unit that is large enough for her to have a bedroom when she is at home?*

> **Answer:** Yes. If the household has a student away at college who is still claimed as a dependent and maintains the parents' address as a legal address, the student should be counted in the household size.

Question: *Do I have to place a one-person household in a two-bedroom unit if there is no one-bedroom units available or the applicant requests a two-bedroom unit?*

Answer: A household should not be placed in a unit where there is more than one bedroom per household member. If a development does not have any one-bedroom units, for example, the Administrative Agent should inform one-person households that they will not be offered a unit unless there are no eligible households with more than one person. The Administrative Agent should also refer one-bedroom households to other Administrative Agents within the municipality or region that offer one-bedroom units. The Administrative Agent must demonstrate that every effort has been made to find a household of the appropriate size and composition and that a hardship exists that would justify deviating from the established standard.

Question: *I am working with an applicant household that consists of two parents and five children. This household is applying for a three-bedroom unit. Should this household only be offered a four-bedroom unit?*

Answer: No. The administrator must *strive* to prevent more than two people from occupying one bedroom, as outlined in N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.4(c), but may not force a family to purchase or rent a larger unit as long as it does not violate municipal regulations for over-crowding.

HOUSEHOLD CERTIFICATION

Before any household can rent a restricted unit, the Administrative Agent must certify the household as eligible. Certification of a household involves the verification of two critical pieces of data: 1) Household size and composition, including gender; and 2) The total income and assets for all household members over 18 years of age. The certification process begins with the applicant completing an application in its entirety and providing the required backup documentation. Once eligibility documents and data have been collected, the Administrative Agent can begin the process of calculating the household's income.

Procedure for Income-Eligibility Certification

The Administrative Agent shall require each member of an applicant household who is 18 years of age or older to provide documentation to verify their income. Income verification documentation should include, but is not limited to the following for each and every member of a household who is 18 years of age or older:

- Four current consecutive pay stubs [including both the check and the stub], including bonuses, overtime or tips, or a letter from the employer stating the present annual income figure or if self-employed, a current Certified Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet.
- Copies of Federal and State income tax returns for each of the preceding three tax years. A Form 1040 Tax Summary for the past three tax years can be requested from the local Internal Revenue Service Center or by calling 1-800-829-1040.
- A letter or appropriate reporting form verifying monthly benefits such as:
    - Social Security or SSI - Current award letter or computer printout letter
    - Unemployment - verification of Unemployment Benefits

    - Welfare -TANF[1] current award letter
    - Disability - Worker's compensation letter or
    - Pension income (monthly or annually) - a pension letter
- A letter or appropriate reporting form verifying any other sources of income claimed by the applicant, such as alimony or child support – copy of court order or recent original letters from the court or education scholarship/stipends – current award letter.
- Current reports of savings and checking accounts (bank statements and passbooks) and income reports from banks or other financial institutions holding or managing trust funds, money market accounts, certificates of deposit, stocks or bonds (In brokerage accounts – most recent statements and/or in certificate form – photocopy of certificates).
- Evidence or reports of income from directly held assets, such as real estate or businesses.
- Interest in a corporation or partnership – Federal tax returns for each of the preceding three tax years.
- Current reports of assets – Market Value Appraisal or Realtor Comparative Market Analysis and Bank/Mortgage Co. Statement indicating Current Mortgage Balance. For rental property, attach copies of all leases.

The following is a list of various types of wages, payments, rebates and credits. Those that are considered as part of the household's income are listed under Income. Those that are not considered as part of the household's income are listed under Not Income. Restricted units constructed with Federal funds should consult the appropriate regulations, for example, HUD Section 42, to ensure compliance with applicable Federal regulations.

Income

1. Wages, salaries, tips, commissions
2. Alimony
3. Regularly scheduled overtime
4. Pensions
5. Social security
6. Unemployment compensation (verify the remaining number of weeks they are eligible to receive)
7. TANF
8. Verified regular child support
9. Disability
10. Net income from business or real estate
11. Interest income from assets such as savings, certificates of deposit, money market accounts, mutual funds, stocks, bonds

[1] TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

12. Imputed interest (using a current average annual rate of 2%) from non-income producing assets, such as equity in real estate. Rent from real estate is considered income, after deduction of any mortgage payments, real estate taxes, property owner's insurance.
13. Rent from real estate is considered income
14. Any other forms of regular income reported to the Internal Revenue Service

Not Income

1. Rebates or credits received under low-income energy assistance programs
2. Food stamps
3. Payments received for foster care
4. Relocation assistance benefits
5. Income of live-in attendants
6. Scholarships
7. Student loans
8. Personal property such as automobiles
9. Lump-sum additions to assets such as inheritances, lottery winnings, gifts, insurance settlements
10. Part-time income of persons enrolled as full-time students
11. Court ordered payments for alimony or child support paid to another household shall be deducted from gross annual income

To calculate income, the current gross income of the applicant is used to project that income over the next 12 months.

Student Income

Only full-time income of full-time students is included in the income calculation. A full-time student is a member of the household who is enrolled in a degree seeking program for 12 or more credit hours per semester; and part-time income is income earned on less than a 35-hour workweek.

The Real Estate Asset Limit

Except for federal programs, if an applicant's primary residence, which is to be sold upon purchase of an affordable unit, has no mortgage debt and is valued at or above the regional asset limit as published annually with the Annual Regional Income Limits Chart, the household must be determined ineligible for certification.

However, if the applicant's existing monthly housing costs including taxes, homeowner insurance, and condominium or homeowner association fees exceed 38% of the household's eligible monthly income, the household will be exempt from the asset limit.

An applicant must provide a recent, Market Value Appraisal, web-based market analysis, or Realtor Comparative Market Analysis, on the home they own unless the applicant has mortgage

debt on the home or can demonstrate that the existing monthly housing costs exceed 38% of the household's eligible monthly income, in which case the applicant is exempt from the asset limit.

Before obtaining a professional appraisal, the applicant should review the property's tax appraisal and the current market value and compare it to the asset limit to avoid any unnecessary expense. For instance, if homes are commonly selling in the applicant's neighborhood for over $250,000, it is unlikely that an appraisal will determine a value below the asset limit. The maximum asset limit for Region 5 in 2025, for example, is $300,000.

Income from Real Estate

If real estate owned by an applicant for affordable housing is a rental property, the rent is considered income. After deduction of any mortgage payments, real estate taxes, property owner insurance and reasonable property management expenses as reported to the Internal Revenue Service, the remaining amount shall be counted as income.

If an applicant owns real estate with mortgage debt, which is not to be used as rental housing, the Administrative Agent should determine the imputed interest from the value of the property. The Administrative Agent should deduct outstanding mortgage debt from the documented market value established by a market value appraisal. Based on current money market rates, interest will be imputed on the determined value of the real estate.

Maximum Monthly Payments

The percentage of funds that a household can contribute toward housing expenses is limited. However, an applicant may qualify for an exception based on the household's current housing cost (see below). The Administrative Agent will strive to place an applicant in a unit with a monthly housing cost equal to or less than the applicant's current housing cost.

UHAC states that a certified household is not permitted to lease a restricted rental unit that would require more than 35% of the verified household income (40% for age-restricted units) to pay rent and utilities. However, at the discretion of the Administrative Agent, this limit may be exceeded if:

- The household currently pays more than 35% (40% for households eligible for age-restricted units) of its gross household income for rent and the proposed rent will reduce the household's housing costs;
- The household has consistently paid more than 35% (40% for households eligible for age-restricted units) of eligible monthly income for rent in the past and has proven its ability to pay;
- The household is currently in substandard or overcrowded living conditions;
- The household documents the existence of assets, with which the household proposes to supplement the rent payments; or
- The household documents proposed third party assistance from an outside source such as a family member in a form acceptable to the Administrative Agent and the Owner of the unit; and
- The household receives budget counseling.

Housing Counseling

The Administrative Agent is responsible for providing housing counseling, or providing referrals for counseling, as a part of the Affirmative Marketing Plan and during the application process. Although housing counseling is recommended, a household is only required to attend counseling if their monthly housing expense exceeds UHAC standards. A HUD-approved housing counseling agency, or a counseling agency approved by the NJ Department of Banking and Insurance, meets UHAC's requirements for an experienced Housing Counseling Agency. If the Administrative Agent is not approved by HUD or by the NJ Department of Banking and Insurance, the Agent will make referrals to one of the HUD-approved housing counseling agencies in New Jersey. This counseling to low- and moderate-income housing applicants will focus on subjects such as budgeting, credit issues, and mortgage qualification, and is free of charge

The Applicant Interview

Ideally, the prospective applicant will be available to speak with the Administrative Agent to discuss the certification and random selection processes in detail and ask any questions they may have about the project or the process. As, scheduling time off from work may prove burdensome to the applicant and as applicants may also have mobility issues or special needs that also pose an obstacle to an in-person interview, the Administrative Agent is prepared to complete the certification process via telephone and mail. If a phone interview is to be conducted, the Administrative Agent will attempt to achieve the following objectives:

- Confirm and update all information provided on the application.
- Explain program requirements, procedures used to verify information, and penalties for providing false information. Ask the head of household, co-head, spouse and household members over age 18 to sign the Authorization for Release of Information forms and other verification requests.
- Review the applicant's identification and financial information and documentation, ask any questions to clarify information on the application, and obtain any additional information needed to verify the household's income.
- Make sure the applicant has reported all sources for earned and benefit income and assets (including assets disposed of for less than fair market value in the past two years). Require the applicant to give a written certification as to whether any household member did or did not dispose of any assets for less than fair market value during the past two years.

Records Documenting Household Composition and Circumstances

The following are various records for documenting household information:

- Social Security records or cards. Either individual Social Security card or letter from Social Security Administration
- Adoption papers, or legal documents showing adoption in process
- Income tax return
- Birth Certificate or Passport
- Alien Registration Card

Approving or Rejecting a Household

Administrative Agents must notify applicant households of their eligibility within twenty (20) days of the Administrative Agent's determination.

Households with a verified total household income that exceeds 80% of the regional income limit for the appropriate family size are ineligible for purchase or rental of restricted units. A letter rejecting the household's application shall be mailed to the household.

Similarly, households with a verified total household income that is within the income limits, but too low to afford any of the units administered by the Administrative Agent shall be sent a letter rejecting the household's application, and/or referring them to housing counseling at the local Affordability Assistance Program.

Households with a verified total household income of less than 80% shall be issued a letter certifying eligibility. This certification is valid for 180 days. If the Administrative Agent is unable to place the household in a restricted unit at the conclusion of 180 days, an extension may be granted once the household's eligibility is verified.

Once the applicant is certified and matched to an available unit, the Administrative Agent must secure from the applicant a signed and notarized acknowledgement of their requirements and responsibilities in renting a restricted unit. UHAC's Disclosure Statement (Appendix K) shall be forwarded to the applicants.

In addition to non-eligibility based on income, the Administrative Agent may deny a certification because of the household's failure or inability to document household composition, income, assets, sufficient funds for down payment, or any other required facts and information. A household may also be denied certification if the Administrative Agent determines that there was a willful or material misstatement of fact made by the applicant.

Dismissal of Applications

Applications can be dismissed for the following reasons:

1. The application is not signed or submitted on time.
2. The applicant commits fraud, or the application is not truthful or complete.
3. The applicant cannot or does not provide documentation to verify their income or other required information when due.
4. The household income does not meet the minimum or maximum income requirements for a particular property.
5. The applicant owns assets that exceed the Asset Limit.
6. The applicant fails to respond to any inquiry in a timely manner.
7. The applicant is non-cooperative or abusive with the staff, property manager or landlord.
8. The applicant changes address or other contact information without informing the Administrative Agent in writing.
9. The applicant does not meet the credit standard or other requirement set forth by managers of rental properties.

10. The applicant fails to verify attendance in a credit counseling program when required to do so by the program rules.
11. The applicant does not respond to periodic update inquiry in a timely fashion.
12. The applicant fails to sign the Compliance Certification, Certificate for Applicant, Lease Document, as may be required.
13. The applicant, once approved, fails to sign the lease in a timely manner.
14. Applicants will also be removed from all lists held by the Administrative Agent once they have been approved for an affordable unit. However, these applicants may re-apply for other opportunities in that municipality once they have occupied their unit.

Applicants who are dismissed must re-apply. A minimum time period of six months applies in most situations where the applicant has been withdrawn for fraud, poor credit, uncooperative behavior or other serious matters.

Applicants are not automatically removed from rental lists if they do not respond to a Notice of Availability.

Applications may be held in abeyance for a period not to exceed 60 days if there is an error on the credit report, so that the applicant can correct the error and re-apply. Units will not be held open for that applicant. However, once the credit report is corrected, the applicant will be given a priority for the next opportunity at that property.

Appeals

If an applicant for affordable housing is deemed ineligible by the Administrative Agent, the applicant may submit additional documentation for further review. The request for additional review shall be made by the applicant in writing within five (5) business days of receipt of the letter of denial.

All requests for appeals from the decisions of an Administrative Agent shall be mediated by the Municipal Housing Liaison. In the event that the Municipal Housing Liaison is unable to make a determination, the matter will be escalated to the Executive Director of the respective agency for further review.

Appeals from all decisions of an Administrative Agent shall be made in writing to the Executive Director of Department of Community Affairs, 101 South Broad Street, P.O. Box 813, Trenton, New Jersey 08615. The Executive Director's written decision, which shall be made within 15 days of receipt of an appeal, shall be a final administrative action of .Department of Community Affairs.

Question: Is it a requirement of UHAC that Administrative Agents meet with applicants in person?

Answer: Because an applicant interview could prove to be burdensome to many households it is not a pre-requisite to purchase or occupancy, although it is encouraged. Administrative Agents should be prepared to conduct the household certification via mail.

Question: With households filing taxes through e-filing, we are having trouble getting copies of tax returns. How can we get copies of e-filed tax returns?

Answer: According to the IRS website, transcripts of previously filed tax returns can be ordered by completing a Form 4506-T or calling (800) 829-1040 and following the prompts in the recorded message. There is no charge for the transcript and you should receive it in 10 business days from the time they receive your request. Tax return transcripts are generally available for the current and past three years.

Question: How can child support payments that are made in cash be documented?

Answer: If the applicant is depositing the cash child support payments into a bank account, a series of statements from that account should be used to establish a trend of payments. If not, a notarized statement from the former spouse should be obtained to document the income.

Question: Is it a requirement that the Administrative Agent always obtain a written statement from the household's employer(s) confirming their income and job status?

Answer: No. However, when evaluating overtime and other income trends, such as bonuses, working directly with the employer is typically much more efficient and reliable than simply evaluating pay stubs.

Question: Are there any potential issues with renting to a separated family that has a divorce pending?

Answer: Yes, until a divorce is finalized, a spouse can make claim on a residence rented by the other spouse. Until a divorce is finalized, it is suggested that Administrative Agents place these types of cases on hold.

Question: How can income eligibility be established for someone that may have been out of work for two years, but had a job during the most recent tax year?

Answer: As long as the applicant is currently employed, a series of consecutive pay stubs (at least 3 months) should be used to establish the income of an applicant in this or similar situations.

Question: Can an applicant for a rental unit be rejected solely because they have Section 8 rental assistance?

Answer: No. A household receiving Section 8 assistance cannot be rejected based on this status. Discrimination such as this is illegal.

Question: Can an applicant be required to attend and graduate from a Housing Counseling Program in order to rent a restricted unit?

Answer: No. A household is only required to attend housing counseling if their monthly housing expense exceeds UHAC standards. Administrative Agents, however, are required to provide housing counseling or refer applicants to an approved Housing Counseling Program.

Question: Do households with Section 8 vouchers automatically qualify for affordable housing under UHAC?

Answer: Yes, a Section 8 voucher is acceptable for income qualification, provided the applicant meets the criteria of the property manager or landlord. The Administrative Agent must still collect income verification documentation to match the household to an appropriately priced unit.

Question: Can an existing moderate-income tenant be moved to a low-income unit when they can substantiate that there has been a change in their income? If so, can they bypass the random selection process?

Answer: Yes, an existing tenant household may re-apply for a low-income unit within the same project if they can prove a change in their circumstances. If qualified, the tenant would be added to the applicant pool. The tenant should also be referred to the local Affordability Assistance Program, if available.

Question: Does the Administrative Agent need to impute the value of a household's stocks as an asset?

Answer: Only dividends from stock count towards a household's income. IRS Form-1099 from the previous year should be requested from the applicant if it was not part of their initial application.

Question: Is there a maximum cost for the credit check?

Answer: No, but the credit check is included in application fees which may total no more than five % of the monthly rent.

Question: In order to overcome inadequate or poor credit, can an applicant have a cosigner on a lease?

Answer: No one outside the household, as certified by the Administrative Agent, may cosign or otherwise be party to any financing or legal instruments.

Question: Does UHAC set a minimum income for eligibility for affordable housing?

Answer: No, UHAC does not specify a minimum income for affordable housing units. However, an applicant household must be able to afford the unit and must not pay more than 33% for sale units or 35% for rental units of its monthly income (or 40% for age-restricted units), unless they meet the exemption criteria set forth in N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.7(b) or N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.13(b).

Question: After I certify an applicant, how long is that certification valid?

Answer: Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.16(b), an initial certification is valid for 180 days and may be extended for an additional 180 days once the household's eligibility is verified.

Question: How do I document third-party assistance from a guarantor? For example, a relative is providing funds toward the applicant's monthly payments.

Answer: In the case of a rental unit, the applicant should demonstrate regular deposits from third party assistance, or a notarized letter from the third party documenting future assistance. The Administrative Agent must receive a copy of the policy regarding guarantors from the developer, affordable housing provider or owner, so as to assure the policy is applied consistently.

Question: If an applicant for affordable housing has a "reverse mortgage", how does an Administrative Agent count income from that mortgage?

Answer: An applicant for affordable housing with a "reverse mortgage" would not be eligible for affordable housing unless that mortgage was satisfied or, at a minimum, a contract for sale

of the market unit was in place. “Reverse mortgages” require that the mortgaged property remain the principal place of residence of the person taking the mortgage. Since this is also a requirement of affordable housing only one such residence can be owned or leased at any given time.

Question: For the purpose of income-qualification, what is considered part-time income of full-time students?

Answer: Under UHAC, part-time income of persons enrolled as fulltime students, who are reported as dependents to the IRS, is not included in income calculations for determining eligibility. UHAC recommends stipulating in the Operating Manual the following criteria in applying this rule:

- A full-time student is a member of the household who is enrolled in a degree seeking program for 12 or more credit hours per semester; and
- Part-time income is income earned on less than a 35-hour workweek.

Please note that full-time income of full-time students is included in the income calculation.

DETERMINING AFFORDABLE RENTS

To determine the affordable rents the Administrative Agent uses the affordable housing calculators located at https://nj.gov/dca/hmfa/about/uhac/.

Development Considerations and Compliance Issues

There are several regulations that must be considered from the *development perspective* before the rents of individual units can be calculated. These requirements should be discussed at the first meeting between the Municipal Housing Liaison, Administrative Agent and developer or affordable housing sponsor. The following is a summary of the requirements for ownership projects.

Bedroom Distribution. The standards on the distribution of unit sizes for affordable developments require that:

- The combined number of efficiency and one-bedroom units may be no greater than 20% of the total low- and moderate-income units;
- At least 30% of all low- and moderate-income units must be two-bedroom units;
- At least 20% of all low- and moderate-income units are three-bedroom units; and
- The remainder, if any, may be allocated at the discretion of the developer.

Age-restricted Units. Affordable age-restricted units are not held to these bedroom distribution standards. For affordable age-restricted units, the number of age-restricted low- and moderate-income bedrooms must be equal to or greater than the number of age-restricted units within the development. In other words, the average bedroom size in an age-restricted development must be equal to or greater than one bedroom per unit. For example, if the overall age-restricted development is 25% efficiencies, and 50% one-bedroom units, and 25% two-bedroom units, that equals an overall development bedroom size of exactly one bedroom per unit. An age-restricted development can meet this standard by creating all one-bedroom units or by creating a two-bedroom unit for each efficiency unit, or any other combination that will equal a minimum of one bedroom per unit.

Pricing by Household Size. Initial rents are based on targeted "model" household sizes for each size home as determined by the number of bedrooms. Initial rents must adhere to the following rules. These maximum sales prices and rents are based on the Annual Regional Income Limits Chart at the time of occupancy:

- A studio shall be affordable to a one-person household;
- A one-bedroom unit shall be affordable to a one- and one-half person household;
- A two-bedroom unit shall be affordable to a three-person household;
- A three-bedroom unit shall be affordable to a four- and one-half person household; and
- A four-bedroom unit shall be affordable to a six-person household.

Size of Unit	Household Size Used to Determine Max Rent
Studio/Efficiency	1
1 Bedroom	1.5
2 Bedrooms	3
3 Bedrooms	4.5
4 Bedrooms	6

The above rules are only to be used for setting initial rents. They are not guidelines for matching household sizes with unit sizes. The pricing of age-restricted units may not exceed affordability based on a two-person household.

Determining Initial Rents

To determine the initial rents the Administrative Agent uses the affordable housing calculators located at nj.gov/dca/hmfa/about/uhac.

Additional Regulations for a Rental Development

In addition to the regulations covered earlier in the Section *Development Considerations and Compliance Issues,* rental projects must also comply with the following regulations:

Split Between Low- and Moderate-income Rental Units. At least 50% (of the affordable units within each bedroom distribution (unit size) must be low-income units and at least 10% of the affordable units within each bedroom distribution must be affordable to households earning no more than 35% of the regional median income. The remainder of the affordable units must be affordable to moderate-income households.

Affordability Average. The average rent for all affordable units cannot exceed 52% of the regional median income. At least one rent for each bedroom type must be offered for both low-income and moderate-income units. Calculation of the affordability average is available on the Affordable Housing Professionals of New Jersey's website.

Maximum Rent. The maximum rent of restricted rental units within each affordable development shall be affordable to households earning no more than 60% of the regional median income.

Determining Rent Increases

Annual rent increases are permitted in affordable units. Rent increases are permitted at the anniversary of tenancy according to an Annual Regional Income Limits Chart available on the Affordable Housing Professionals of New Jersey's website. These increases must be filed with and approved by the Administrative Agent. Property managers or landlords who have charged less than the permissible increase may use the maximum allowable rent with the next tenant with permission of the Administrative Agent. The maximum allowable rent would be calculated by starting with the rent schedule approved as part of initial lease-up of the development, and calculating the annual approved increase from the initial lease-up year to the present. Rents may not be increased more than once a year, may not be increased by more than one approved increment at a time, and may not be increased at the time of new occupancy if this occurs less than one year from the last rental. No additional fees may be added to the approved rent without the express written approval of the Administrative Agent.

LOCAL AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

At least 30% of all development fees collected and interest earned shall be used to provide affordability assistance to low and moderate-income households in affordable units included in the Municipal Fair Share Plan. One-third of the affordability assistance portion of development fees collected shall be used to provide affordability assistance to those household earning 30% or less of median income by region.

Affordability assistance programs may include down payment assistance, security deposit assistance, low-interest loans, rental assistance, assistance with homeowners' association or condominium fees and special assessments, and assistance with emergency repairs.

Affordability assistance to households earning or less of median income may include buying down the cost of low- or moderate-income units in the Municipal Fair Share Plan to make them affordable to households earning 30% or less of median income.

VIOLATIONS, DEFAULTS, AND REMEDIES

In the event of a threatened breach of any of the regulations governing the affordable unit by an Owner of a rental development, the Administrative Agent shall have all the remedies provided at law or equity, including the right to seek injunctive relief or specific performance, it being recognized by both parties that it will cause irreparable harm to the municipality, in light of the public policies set forth in the Fair Housing Act and the obligation for the provision of low- and moderate-income housing.

Upon the occurrence of a breach of any of the regulations governing the affordable units by an Owner of a rental development, the municipality shall have all remedies provided at law or equity, including but not limited to foreclosure, acceleration of all sums due under a mortgage, recoupment of any funds from a sale in the violation of the regulations, injunctive relief to prevent further violation of the regulations, entry on the premises, and specific performance.

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS AND APPLICANT FILES

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.14(a)8, N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.15(c) and N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.17 current records must be maintained by the Administrative Agent and outdated records must be given to the municipality for safe-keeping. A file must be created and maintained on each restricted unit for its control period.

Administrative Agents maintain detailed records on all marketing initiatives.

Files To Be Maintained on Every Applicant

The Administrative Agent will maintain files on every applicant. All files will contain a preliminary application. If an applicant's preliminary application is approved, and the applicant files a formal application, the file will contain at a minimum:

- Application Form.
- Tenant Information Form
- Income Verification
- Letter of Certification of Eligibility or Letter of Determination of Ineligibility.

Individual files will be maintained throughout the process.

Files To Be Maintained on Every Unit

The Administrative Agent will maintain files on every unit for the length of the affordability controls. The unit file will contain at a minimum:

- Base rent
- Identification as low- or moderate-income
- Description of number of bedrooms and physical layout
- Floor plan

- Application materials, verifications and certifications of all present owners, pertinent correspondence
- Copy of lease
- Disclosure Statement (Appendix K)

Files to Be Maintained on Every Project

The Administrative Agent will maintain files on every project for the length of the affordability controls. The project file will contain at a minimum:

- Condominium Master Deed
- Condominium Public Offering
- Crediting Information
- Original deed restriction
- Affordability control documents, including Declarations of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, Deed Restrictions, Deeds, Recapture Mortgages, Recapture Mortgage Notes, Disclosure Statement (Appendix J)

Files To Be Maintained on the Applicant Pool

- Any changes to the applicant pool
- Any action taken with regard to the applicant pool
- Any activity that occurs that affects a particular applicant
- Current applications for all applicants whose status is active in the applicant pool
- The application, the initial rejection notice, the applicant's reply to the notice, a copy of the Administrative Agent's final response to the applicant, and all documentation of the reason the applicant's name was removed from the applicant pool.

Monitoring

A sample Deed must be submitted for each project. Additionally, the current annual monitoring information required to be maintained and reported annually to the Municipal Housing Liaison. The information required for each unit includes but is not limited to:

- A sample Deed for each project.
- Street Address
- Block/Lot/Qualifier/Unit Number
- Housing Type
- Income: Very Low/Low/Moderate
- Initial Rental Price
- Percent of affordability
- Bedroom Type

- Age-restricted
- Handicap accessible/adaptable
- Co #, date
- Effective date of affordability controls
- Length of affordability controls (yrs)
- Date Affordability controls removed

Question: *How long must the Administrative Agent keep files on applications for affordable housing units and certified Owners/tenants of affordable housing units?*

Answer: Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.14(a)8, N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.15(c) and N.J.A.C. 5:80- 26.17 current records must be maintained by the Administrative Agent and outdated records must be given to the municipality for safe-keeping. A file must be created and maintained on each restricted unit for its control period.