

## Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION

RULE NO.: RULE TITLE:

67-21.0025: Miscellaneous Criteria

67-21.003: Application and Selection Process for Developments

67-21.014: MMRB Credit Underwriting Procedures

67-21.026: HC Credit Underwriting Procedures

**PURPOSE AND EFFECT:** The purpose of this Rule Chapter is to establish the procedures by which the Corporation shall:

(1) Administer the Application process, determine bond allocation amounts and implement the provisions of the Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond (MMRB) Program authorized by Section 142 of the Code and Section 420.509, F.S.; and

(2) Administer the Application process, determine Non-Competitive Housing Credit amounts, and implement the provisions of the Housing Credit (HC) Program authorized by Section 42 of the IRC and Section 420.5099, F.S.

The intent of this Rule Chapter is to encourage public-private partnerships to invest in residential housing; to stimulate the construction and rehabilitation of residential housing which in turn will stimulate the job market in the construction and related industries; and to increase and improve the supply of affordable housing in the State of Florida.

**SUMMARY:** Prior to the opening of an Application process, the Corporation (1) researches the market need for affordable housing throughout the state of Florida and (2) evaluates prior Applications to determine what changes or additions should be added to the Rule and/or Application. The proposed amendments to the Rule and adopted reference material include changes that will create a formulated process for selecting Developments that will apply for Non-Competitive Housing Credits, or a combination of MMRB and Non-Competitive Housing Credits.

### **SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED REGULATORY COSTS AND LEGISLATIVE RATIFICATION:**

The Agency has determined that this will not have an adverse impact on small business or likely increase directly or indirectly regulatory costs in excess of \$200,000 in the aggregate within one year after the implementation of the rule. A SERC has not been prepared by the Agency.

The Agency has determined that the proposed rule is not expected to require legislative ratification based on the statement of estimated regulatory costs or if no SERC is required, the information expressly relied upon and described herein: The rule is not likely to have an adverse impact on economic growth, private sector job creation or employment, or private sector investment in excess of \$1 million in the aggregate within 5 years after the implementation of the rule. The rule is not likely to have an adverse impact on business competitiveness, including the ability of persons doing business in the state to compete with persons doing business in other states or domestic markets, productivity, or innovation in excess of \$1 million in the aggregate within 5 years after the implementation of the rule. In addition, the rule is not likely to increase regulatory costs, including any transactional costs, in excess of \$1 million in the aggregate within 5 years after the implementation of the rule.

Any person who wishes to provide information regarding a statement of estimated regulatory costs, or provide a proposal for a lower cost regulatory alternative must do so in writing within 21 days of this notice.

**RULEMAKING AUTHORITY:** 420.507(12), 420.508(3)(c), FS.

**LAW IMPLEMENTED:** 420.507(4), (13), (14), (18), (19), (20), (21), (24), (35), (48), 420.508, 420.509, 420.5099 FS.

**A HEARING WILL BE HELD AT THE DATE, TIME AND PLACE SHOWN BELOW:**

**DATE AND TIME:** July 23, 2024, beginning at 10:00 a.m., Eastern Time

PLACE: The hearing will take place by webinar and the instructions for accessing the webinar will be posted on the Corporation's website <https://www.floridahousing.org/programs/developers-multifamily-programs/competitive/current-rules-and-rule-development-process/2024-rule-development-process>. Interested parties may also attend in person at the offices of Florida Housing Finance Corporation, 227 N. Bronough Street, 6th Floor Seltzer Room, Tallahassee, Florida.

THE PERSON TO BE CONTACTED REGARDING THE PROPOSED RULE IS: Melissa Levy, Managing Director of Multifamily Programs, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, 227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000, Tallahassee, Florida 32031-1329, (850) 488-4197.

THE FULL TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RULE IS:

**67-21.0025 Miscellaneous Criteria.**

(1) through (6) No change.

(7) For all Applications, disclosure of the Principals of the Applicant must comply with paragraphs (a) and (b) below, and unless otherwise approved by the Corporation for Applicants requesting Non-Competitive Housing Credits only, all Applicants must also comply with paragraphs (c) and (d) below.

(a) The Applicant must disclose all of the Principals of the Applicant (first principal disclosure level). For Applicants seeking Housing Credits, the Housing Credit Syndicator/Housing Credit investor need only be disclosed at the first principal disclosure level and no other disclosure is required;

(b) The Applicant must disclose all of the Principals of all the entities identified in paragraph (a) above (second principal disclosure level);

(c) The Applicant must disclose all of the Principals of all of the entities identified in paragraph (b) above (third principal disclosure level). Unless the entity is a trust or a non-profit as defined in Section 42(h)(5)(C), subsection 501(c)(3) or subsection 501(c)(4) of the IRC, all of the Principals must be natural persons. A non-profit entity may be identified at the third principal disclosure level if the non-profit wholly owns a real estate development subsidiary identified at the second principal disclosure level; and

(d) If any of the entities identified in paragraph (c) above are a trust or a non-profit, the Applicant must disclose all of the Principals of the trust or a non-profit (fourth principal disclosure level), all of whom must be natural persons.

(e) Applicants requesting Non-Competitive Housing Credits only that request approval from the Corporation to allow for disclosure of natural person Principals below the third disclosure level must send written request to the Corporation which details the reason for the request, including any substantial hardship which prevents the Applicant from complying with paragraphs (c) and (d) of this subsection.

(f) Applicants requesting Non-Competitive Housing Credits shall be relieved of the principal disclosures required in paragraphs (c) through (e) of this subsection if the following criteria are met:

1. The Applicant has no entities at any principal disclosure level that own more than a 10 percent direct or indirect interest in the Applicant where any natural person Principal owns more than a 10 percent interest in the entity;

2. The Applicant, its Affiliate entities, or its disclosed Principals collectively have a net worth of at least \$250 million;

3. The Applicant, its Affiliate entities, or its disclosed Principals collectively own or have owned a controlling interest in at least 25 affordable housing projects where:

a. At least 50 percent of the total units are Low Income units and financed in whole or in part utilizing Tax-exempt Bonds or Housing Credits; or

b. At least 50 percent of the total households receive federal, state, or local rental subsidies; and

4. The Applicant discloses:

a. All non-natural person Principals of all entities at all Principal disclosure levels; provided, that, such disclosure shall not be required for entities that own less than a 10 percent indirect non-controlling interest in the Applicant;

b. Each officer, director, and executive director of the entity that controls day-to-day management and decisions of the Applicant; and

c. A natural person Principal who possesses the authority to legally bind each entity.

(8) No change.

*Rulemaking Authority 420.507(12), 420.508(3)(c), FS. Law Implemented 420.509, 420.5099 FS. History—New 7-16-13, Amended 2-2-15, 9-15-16, Repromulgated 5-24-17, Amended 7-8-18, 7-11-19, Repromulgated 6-23-20, 5-18-21, 7-6-22, Amended 6-28-23, \_\_\_\_\_.*

### **67-21.003 Application and Selection Process for Developments.**

(1) Unless otherwise set forth in a competitive solicitation pursuant to rule Chapter 67-60, F.A.C., Applicants shall apply for Non-Competitive HC or a combination of MMRB and Non-Competitive HC as set forth below. For purposes of this subsection only, the term NC Award shall refer to Non-Competitive HC or a combination of MMRB and Non-Competitive HC, and funding from the Predevelopment Loan Program (PLP) will not be considered to be other Corporation funding.

(a) If the NC Award will be made available, with or without other Corporation funding, through the competitive solicitation funding process outlined in rule Chapter 67-60, F.A.C., the Applicant shall apply for the NC Award using the forms and procedures specified in the applicable competitive solicitation for such other funding. Unless otherwise specifically provided in the solicitation, all of the substantive provisions of this chapter will continue to apply to the NC Award. Any references in this chapter to "Application" shall mean the application or response submitted for such other funding.

(b) If the NC Award will not be made available through the competitive solicitation funding process outlined in rule Chapter 67-60, F.A.C., the Applicant shall utilize the Non-Competitive Application Package. The Non-Competitive Application Package or NCA (~~Rev. 06-2024~~ ~~(Rev. 06-2023)~~) is adopted and incorporated herein by reference and consists of the forms and instructions available, without charge, on the Corporation's website under the Multifamily Programs link labeled Non-Competitive Programs or from \_\_\_\_\_ <http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-15428>, which shall be completed and submitted to the Corporation in accordance with this rule chapter.

(c) All Applications must be complete, legible and timely when submitted, except as described below. Corporation staff may not assist any Applicant by copying, collating, or adding documents to an Application nor shall any Applicant be permitted to use the Corporation's facilities or equipment for purposes of compiling or completing an Application.

(2) through (13) No change.

*Rulemaking Authority 420.507(12), 420.508(3)(c) FS. Law Implemented ~~420.502~~, 420.507(4), (13), (14), (18), (19), (20), (21), (24), (35), 420.508, 420.509, 420.5099 FS. History--New 12-3-86, Amended 12-4-90, 11-23-94, 9-25-96, 1-7-98, Formerly 91-21.003, Amended 1-26-99, 11-14-99, 2-11-01, 3-17-02, 4-6-03, 3-21-04, 2-7-05, 1-29-06, 4-1-07, 3-30-08, 8-6-09, 11-7-11, 7-16-13, 2-2-15, 10-6-15, 9-15-16, 5-24-17, 7-8-18, 7-11-19, 6-23-20, 5-18-21, 7-6-22, 6-28-23,\_\_\_\_\_.*

### **67-21.014 MMRB Credit Underwriting Procedures.**

Credit Underwriting is a de novo review of all information supplied, received or discovered during or after any application scoring process, prior to the closing on funding. The success of an Applicant in being selected for funding is not an indication that the Applicant will receive a positive recommendation from the Credit Underwriter or that the Development team's experience, past performance or financial capacity is satisfactory.

(1) No change.

(2) The Credit Underwriter shall in Credit Underwriting analyze and review all information in the Application, or any proposed changes made subsequent thereto, in order to make a recommendation to the Board of Directors on the feasibility of the Development, without taking into account the willingness of a Credit Enhancer to provide Credit Enhancement. Credit Underwriting services shall include a comprehensive analysis of the Applicant, the real estate, the economics of the Development, the ability of the Applicant and the Development team to proceed, and the evidence of need for affordable housing in order to determine that the Development meets the MMRB Program requirements. The Credit Underwriter shall determine a recommended Bond amount that should be made to a Development, whether an initial loan or a refunding.

(a) No change.

(b) The Credit Underwriter shall review the proposed financing structure to determine whether the MMRB Loan is feasible. The Credit Underwriter shall also request and review such other information as it deems appropriate to determine whether or not to provide a positive recommendation in connection with a proposed Development. In making that determination the Credit Underwriter will consider the prior and recent performance history of the Applicant, Developer, any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer, and the General Contractor in connection with any other ~~affordable housing~~ development. The performance history shall consider instances involving a foreclosure, deed in lieu of foreclosure, financial arrearage, or other event of material default in connection with any ~~affordable housing~~ development or the documents governing financing or operation of any such development.

(c) Unless the Credit Underwriter determines that mitigating factors exist, or that underwriting conditions can be

imposed, sufficient to mitigate or offset the risk, the existence of the following shall result in a negative recommendation of the proposed Development by the Credit Underwriter:

1. Considering all ~~affordable housing~~ developments in which any party named above has been involved, if:

a. During the period prior to August 1, 2010, 5 percent or more of that party's developments have been the subject of a foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure, or in financial arrearage or other material default and such arrearage or material default remained uncured for a period of 60 days or more, or

b. During the period beginning on or after August 1, 2010, any of that party's developments have been the subject of a foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure, or in financial arrearage or other material default and such arrearage or material default is uncured at the present or, if cured, remained uncured for a period of 60 days or more.

2. Mitigating factors to be considered by the Credit Underwriter, to the extent such information is reasonably available and verifiable, shall include the extent to which the party funded the operations of the development from that party's own funds in an attempt to keep the development afloat, the election by a party to forego financial participation in a development in an attempt to keep the development afloat, the party's satisfactory performance history over the last ten (10) years in connection with that party's ~~affordable housing~~ developments, and any other extenuating circumstances deemed relevant by the Credit Underwriter in connection with the party's involvement in a development.

3. A negative recommendation may also result from the review of:

a. An Applicant, Developer, any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer, and the General Contractor in connection with any other ~~affordable housing~~ development,

b. Financial capacity of an Applicant, Developer, any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer, and the General Contractor, and for Housing Credits, the Housing Credit Syndicator, or

c. Any other relevant matters relating to an Applicant, Developer, any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer, and the General Contractor if, in the Credit Underwriter's opinion, one or more members of the Development team do not possess the ability to proceed.

(d) No change.

(e) At a minimum, each general partner (whether individual or entity) or each manager/managing member (whether individual or entity), as applicable, of the Applicant shall provide a guarantee for completion of construction. In addition, one or more entities or individuals (other than a general partner or manager/managing member) having an ownership interest, either directly or indirectly, in the Applicant or in the general partner or managing member of the Applicant shall be required to provide guarantees or personal guarantees, as applicable, for completion of construction as recommended by the Credit Underwriter or as otherwise required by the Corporation. The Corporation shall consider the following when determining the need for additional construction completion guarantees based on the recommendations of the Credit Underwriter:

1. Liquidity of any guarantee provider.

2. If applicable, Applicant's, Developer's and General Contractor's history in successfully completing Developments ~~of similar nature~~.

3. If applicable, the past performance of the Applicant, Developer, General Contractor, or any other guarantee provider, in developing or constructing Developments financed by the Corporation or its predecessor.

4. Percentage of the Corporation's funds utilized compared to Total Development Costs. If, after evaluation of subparagraphs 1. through 4. above, by the Corporation and the Credit Underwriter, it is determined that additional surety is needed, the Applicant will be required to provide a letter of credit or payment and performance bond.

(f) through (r) No change.

(3) through (5) No change.

*Rulemaking Authority 420.507(12), 420.508(6), FS. Law Implemented 420.507(13),(19),(24),(35),(48), 420.508, ~~420.508(3)(b)3,~~ 420.509 FS. History—New 1-7-98, Formerly 91-21.014, Amended 1-26-99, 11-14-99, 1-26-00, 2-11-01, 3-17-02, 4-6-03, 3-21-04, 2-7-05, 1-29-06, 4-1-07, 3-30-08, 8-6-09, 11-7-11, 7-16-13, 2-2-15, 9-15-16, 5-24-17, 7-8-18, 7-11-19, 6-23-20, 5-18-21, 7-6-22, 6-28-23,*

#### **67-21.026 HC Credit Underwriting Procedures.**

Credit Underwriting is a de novo review of all information supplied, received or discovered during or after any application scoring process, prior to the closing on funding, including the issuance of IRS Forms 8609 for Housing Credits. The success of an Applicant in being selected for funding is not an indication that the Applicant will receive a positive

recommendation from the Credit Underwriter or that the Development team's experience, past performance or financial capacity is satisfactory. The Credit Underwriting review shall include a comprehensive analysis of the Applicant, the real estate, the economics of the Development, the ability of the Applicant and the Development team to proceed, the evidence of need for affordable housing in order to determine that the Development meets the program requirements and determine a recommended Housing Credit Allocation amount, if any; and for any Development that has rehabilitation with or without acquisition, a capital needs assessment ('CNA') prepared in accordance with generally accepted industry investment grade standards shall be ordered by the Credit Underwriter, and its findings shall be used to determine rehabilitation that will be carried out and to set replacement reserves as outlined in paragraph (11)(b), below. Corporation funding will be based on appraisals of comparable developments, cost benefit analysis, and other documents evidencing justification of costs. As part of the Credit Underwriting review, the Credit Underwriter will consider the applicable provisions of this rule chapter.

(1) through (4) No change.

(5) In determining whether or not to provide a positive recommendation in connection with a proposed Development, the Credit Underwriter will consider the prior and recent performance history of the Applicant, Developer, and any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer in connection with any other ~~affordable housing~~ development. The performance history shall consider instances involving a foreclosure, deed in lieu of foreclosure, financial arrearage, or other event of material default in connection with any ~~affordable housing~~ development or the documents governing financing or operation of any such development.

(a) Unless the Credit Underwriter determines that mitigating factors exist, or that underwriting conditions can be imposed, sufficient to mitigate or offset the risk, the existence of the following shall result in a negative recommendation of the proposed Development by the Credit Underwriter:

1. Considering all ~~affordable housing~~ developments in which any party named above has been involved, if:

a. During the period prior to August 1, 2010, 5 percent or more of that party's developments have been the subject of a foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure, or in financial arrearage or other material default and such arrearage or material default remained uncured for a period of 60 days or more, or

b. During the period beginning on or after August 1, 2010, any of that party's developments have been the subject of a foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure, or in financial arrearage or other material default and such arrearage or material default is uncured at the present or, if cured, remained uncured for a period of 60 days or more.

2. Mitigating factors to be considered by the Credit Underwriter, to the extent such information is reasonably available and verifiable, shall include the extent to which the party funded the operations of the development from that party's own funds in an attempt to keep the development afloat, the election by a party to forego financial participation in a development in an attempt to keep the development afloat, the party's satisfactory performance history over the last 10 years in connection with that party's ~~affordable housing~~ developments, and any other extenuating circumstances deemed relevant by the Credit Underwriter in connection with the party's involvement in a development.

(b) A negative recommendation may also result from the review of:

1. An Applicant, Developer, and any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer in connection with any other ~~affordable housing~~ development,

2. Financial capacity of an Applicant, Developer, and any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer, or

3. Any other relevant matters relating to an Applicant, Developer, and any Financial Beneficiary of the Applicant or Developer if, in the Credit Underwriter's opinion, one or more members of the Development team do not possess the ability to proceed.

(6) through (19) No change.

*Rulemaking Authority 420.507(12), 420.508(3)(c) FS. Law Implemented 420.507(48), 420.5099 FS. History--New 7-16-13, Amended 2-2-15, 9-15-16, 5-24-17, 7-8-18, 7-11-19, 6-23-20, 5-18-21, 7-6-22, 6-28-23, \_\_\_\_\_.*

NAME OF PERSON ORIGINATING PROPOSED RULE: Melissa Levy, Managing Director of Multifamily Programs, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, 227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000, Tallahassee, Florida 32031-1329, (850) 488-4197

NAME OF AGENCY HEAD WHO APPROVED THE PROPOSED RULE: Ryan Benson, Chairman of the Board, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, 227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000, Tallahassee, Florida 32031-1329, (850) 488-4197

DATE PROPOSED RULE APPROVED BY AGENCY HEAD: June 28, 2024

DATE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE DEVELOPMENT PUBLISHED IN FAR: Volume 50, Number 95, May 14, 2024