

FREQUENTLY ASKED SHIP QUESTIONS

State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program

Q. I understand that the Florida Legislature made some changes to the SHIP statute this year. What are the changes?

A. Senate Bill 1534 made changes to the SHIP statute. First, the SHIP program may now provide up to 12 months of rental assistance to some types of SHIP households. This significant policy change is detailed in Susan Pourciau’s article on page 11. Furthermore, although SHIP has always been permitted to pay a tenant’s past due rent as part of eviction prevention, the SHIP statute now includes clarification that paying for up to 6 months of eviction prevention is an eligible expense.

The special needs requirement—which SHIP staff have become familiar with in the past three years—has now been codified in the SHIP statute. It requires dedicating 20% of the SHIP allocation to assist applicants with special needs, as defined in Section 420.0004 of the Florida Statutes.

Other SHIP changes address rental housing. The SHIP statute requires that all rental units constructed or repaired with SHIP funds must be monitored for at least 15 years, with a minimum SHIP investment exemption to the requirement. The amount of money invested in a rental property must now be more than \$10,000 per property—rather than \$3,000 previously—before monitoring requirements are triggered. Another change to this section improves a SHIP administrator’s ability to rely on monitoring reports from other entities that are investing additional subsidy in the same rental housing units. The SHIP statute notes that those “assisting rental developments shall annually monitor and determine tenant eligibility or, to the extent another governmental entity or corporation program provides

periodic monitoring and determination, a municipality, county, or local housing financing authority may rely on such monitoring and determination of tenant eligibility.” The word “periodic” is added to the text, which allows SHIP staff to fulfill monitoring requirements by relying on periodic monitor reports, some of which are issued less frequently than once a year.

Florida’s legislators have focused significant attention on the prevention of homelessness. In SB 1534, they encourage each SHIP jurisdiction to “develop a strategy within its local housing assistance plan which provides program funds for reducing homelessness.” The legislation also includes a requirement that SHIP cities and

counties include in their annual reports a description of efforts to reduce homelessness. The SHIP Statute is updated to clarify that “local governments may create regional partnerships across jurisdictional boundaries through the pooling of appropriated funds to address homeless housing needs identified in local housing assistance plans.” Finally, while the SHIP program has always encouraged

the involvement of appropriate public sector and private sector entities, the legislators updated the list of community partners to include lead agencies of local homeless assistance continuums of care. These CoC groups are dedicated to assisting homeless individuals, so their input if valuable, especially to inform SHIP homeless prevention efforts.

The responsibilities of the affordable housing advisory committee (AHAC) are detailed in the SHIP statute, and this was also updated in a manner that make it easier to recruit committee members and get the committee’s work started. The AHAC is no longer required to be appointed by resolution, and fewer members are required.



The AHAC committee must now be composed of at least 8 members but not more than 11 members. The SHIP statute has always includes descriptions of 11 distinct categories of AHAC membership, and now the committee must consist of 1 representative from at least 6 of the 11 categories.

Q. I recently received a SHIP Technical Bulletin by email. Are there other previously issued technical bulletins that I should review?

A. Yes, you may access the bulletins on Florida Housing’s website, www.floridahousing.org in the ‘Housing Partners’ section under ‘Local Governments-(SHIP)’. The login link is <http://www.floridahousing.org/webboard/>. Technical bulletins have been issued recently on the subjects of record retention, NOFA advertisements, audit and monitoring requirements, and more.

Q. The Florida Housing Finance Corporation recently issued a technical bulletin regarding sub recipients. I know that we must list these sub recipients on Form 4 of the SHIP annual report, and I do not want to include groups that I should not. SHIP defines a sub recipient as “a person or non-state organization contracted by a SHIP eligible local government”, but my office does not have a contract with the title company we work with.

Also, our county hired a loan servicer through a bid document, which serves as a contract although the county does not actually sign it. The same is true for the nonprofit agency that offers pre-purchase classes to applicants in our purchase assistance strategy. Conversely, in our rehabilitation program, we do sign contracts with local rehab contractors and also for lead based paint testing. Are any of these professionals considered SHIP sub recipients?

A. These are not sub recipients, and should more appropriately be considered vendors providing assistance to the staff that are implementing a SHIP strategy. By contrast, a sub recipient is compensated with SHIP funds to provide administration of a portion of the SHIP program, and it is tasked to complete a majority of what is needed to administer one or more SHIP strategies. You mention a title company, a nonprofit that teaches classes, and a loan servicer. All are involved with aspects of your purchase assistance strategy, but none implement most of this strategy. They do not identify buyers, help complete applications, calculate and document eligibility, and many other administrative tasks. The same is true for your rehabilitation strategy, where neither the rehab contractors nor paint testing professionals complete a majority of the SHIP administrative tasks. **HNN**



MICHAEL CHANEY

Michael Chaney is a Technical Advisor for the Florida Housing Coalition. Chaney’s responsibilities include providing training and technical assistance through workshops, on-site visits, and telephone consultation on a variety of affordable housing topics, including capacity building for housing nonprofits; financial tracking of housing funds; fair housing; compliance with housing program requirements (SHIP, HOME, CDBG); operational/administrative procedures, housing rehabilitation strategies, and energy efficiency topics. Throughout the years, he has provided technical assistance to local government, nonprofit housing professionals and consumers throughout Florida. In addition, he provided assistance to HUD Section 8 tenants through the Federal OTAG program. Chaney’s technical assistance experience includes monitoring nonprofit sponsors, enhancing rehabilitation strategies, and general housing program administration. He has also served as an adjunct faculty member of the housing department at Florida State University.



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THE SHIP PROGRAM?

Free telephone technical assistance is available to help you successfully implement your SHIP funded work.

Call the Florida Housing Coalition’s SHIP hotline at (800) 677-4548, Mon.-Fri. 8:30-5:00.