

## MODEL FORM

### Use Checklist to Ensure Household Files Are Complete

To make sure your files contain all the necessary documents and information that HUD requires—and reviewers will look for—you can use the following checklist.

Items are grouped by categories of information and documents, and include Handbook references as appropriate.

#### HOUSEHOLD FILE CHECKLIST

##### APPLICATION PROCESS

- Application and pre-application.** The file should include the completed application for the household and any pre-application you use, such as a briefer application form with minimum information if the household is placed on a waiting list. The application should be “certified” with the applicant’s signature to verify the accuracy and completeness of the information provided. If you sent the applicant household a letter to say that it was placed on the waiting list, be sure a copy of that letter is included in the file [Handbook 4350.3, par. 4-14].
- Rejection documentation, if applicable.** If you reject an applicant household, you must do so in writing and that written notification must be included in the household file. A file reviewer could look over the notification to be sure it includes the specific reason for rejection, any documentation that supports your decision to reject, and your offer to the applicant household to meet with you to dispute the rejection. If there is additional communication between you and the applicant household, such as an appeal of the rejection, it too should be part of the file [Handbook 4350.3, par. 4-9C].

##### HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

- Screening documents.** HUD requires that you screen applicant household members for certain drug-related and criminal history, including sex offender history. You also are permitted (but not required) to screen for credit and rental history. The household file should include proof that you conducted the required screenings and proof of any optional screenings [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 4-7 and 4-27].
- Social Security number verification.** Your file should include a copy of the documentation you used to verify the Social Security number of each household member over the age of 6. If an applicant household member was not issued a Social Security number, the file should include a signed statement to that effect [Handbook 4350.3, par. 3-9]. If you have questions about what documents can be used to verify Social Security numbers, check Appendix 3 of Handbook 4350.3.
- Citizenship declaration or eligible noncitizen documentation.** By law, only U.S. citizens and eligible noncitizens may receive rental assistance from federal programs. To show that you complied with

## HOUSEHOLD FILE CHECKLIST (continued)

- the noncitizen rule, your file should include signed statements for all household members in which they certify their U.S. citizenship. For eligible noncitizens, include their signed statement of that status, their signed consent for you to verify that status, and the Department of Homeland Security documents you secured to verify that status. If there are any documents related to an appeal of immigration status, be sure to include those in the household file [Handbook 4350.3, par. 3-12 and App. 3].
- **Consent and verification forms.** Your file should include copies of two HUD-required consent and release forms, signed by the head of the household, spouse, any co-head, and all household members over the age of 18. These forms are required at the initial certification and each annual recertification. The forms are HUD-9887, "Notice and Consent to the Release of Information," which is valid for 15 months from the date of signature, and HUD-9887-A, "Applicant/Tenant's Consent to the Release of Information." For both forms, the original goes into the household file and a copy goes to the household [Handbook 4350.3, par. 5-15].
- **Preferences verification, as applicable.** If your site adopted any preferences for applicants, mandatory or optional, your files should include proof that you verified these preferences. For example, if your site adopted a preference for veterans and your household selection plan states that you will accept a letter from the Veterans Administration (VA) or discharge papers as proof of that status, the file for that resident should include a copy of the documentation you accepted. In this example, if you sent a verification form to the VA, the file should contain proof that you mailed the form [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 4-6 and 4-16].
- **Acknowledgement of receipt of lead-based paint pamphlet and disclosure form, where required.** In general, managers of sites built before Jan. 1, 1978, must have a signed acknowledgement that residents of their site received a "Lead Hazard Information" pamphlet and disclosure form [Handbook 4350.3, par. 6-8C]. Some sites are exempt from this requirement; check Chapter 6 of Handbook 4350.3.
- **Acknowledgement of "Resident Rights and Responsibilities" brochure and HUD Fact Sheet.** HUD requires that you provide residents with the HUD-9887 Fact Sheet that describes verification requirements and protections that are part of the verification process. You also are required to provide the Resident Rights and Responsibilities brochure at move-in and annually at each recertification. Include proof that your residents received these documents, such as a signed form acknowledging that they did [Handbook 4350.3, par. 5-15].
- **Self-certification of race and ethnic data.** Applicants and household members may complete form HUD-27061-H to self-certify race and ethnic data. Completing the form is optional; owners and managers should not complete the form on behalf of the applicant or resident. If the form is completed, it should be included in the household file. If an applicant or resident chooses not to complete the form, you should place a note to that effect in the file [Handbook 4350.3, par. 4-14A].
- ### LEASING DOCUMENTS
- **Lease and lease amendments or addenda.** Your household files should include a copy of the signed lease and any lease amendment and lease addenda. And they should be signed by the head of the household, spouse, any co-head, and all other adult members of the household. Be sure that you are using the correct lease for your site, and a current version, as those are things a file reviewer might check [Handbook 4350.3, par. 6-5B].
- **House rules and pet rules acknowledgement.** Include proof that the household received a copy of your site's house rules, along with any pet rules that apply at your site [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 6-9 and 6-10].
- **Security deposit documentation.** If your site charges a security deposit, it is recommended that you collect it at the time of the initial lease execution. You should include documentation in the household file that shows you collected the security deposit [Handbook 4350.3, par. 6-15].
- **Move-in inspection report.** Include in the file documentation of the unit inspection at move-in. Be sure the move-in inspection report has been signed by both site management staff and the household. The move-in inspection report is completed in addition to annual unit inspections, reports of which also should be included in the household file [Handbook 4350.3, par. 6-29].
- ### CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION
- **Certification/recertification notices.** Household files should include a copy of the initial notice telling households of their responsibility to provide you with the information you need to certify them for housing assistance, as well as copies of all recer-

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## HOUSEHOLD FILE CHECKLIST (continued)

- tification notices you send. Include recertification notices for every year that a household lives at your site. Be sure the notices are signed by the appropriate household representative [Handbook 4350.3, par. 7-7].
- Rent calculation fact sheet.** Your household files should include proof that the household received a copy of the HUD rent calculation fact sheet. This is provided at both the initial certification and recertification, and proof should be in the file for each of those events [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 4-24B, 12 and 7-4A].
  - Rent increases notices.** Notice of any upcoming rent increases must be given to households at least 30 days in advance of the effective date of the increase. Proof that you abided by this requirement should be included in household files for every rent increase [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 7-8 and 7-13].
  - Income and asset verification.** You must include appropriate proof that you verified the household income and assets in the household file. Such proof may include third-party verification forms, notes about oral third-party verification, notarized statements, and household member affidavits. Include proof for each year that you certified or recertified the household. If there is household information that you attempted to verify in the preferred manner—third-party verification—but could not, include detailed notes in the file about your efforts to obtain verification [Handbook 4350.3, App. 3].
  - Allowances verification.** For any allowances that the household claimed at the initial certification and each recertification, the file should include proof that you verified the household met the requirements for those allowances. For example, if the household claims it is entitled to a disability assistance allowance in the amount of \$500, the file should include proof of the household member's disability and the related expenses in that amount. Your efforts to obtain that proof should be documented [Handbook 4350.3, par. 5-23].
  - Data requirements printout.** Household files must include printouts of the HUD Form 50059-A, which contains the household's certification or recertification information. These printouts are usually referred to as a "59 printout" and must be signed by site management staff as well as the household head, spouse, any co-head, and all other adult members of the household. In examining the 59 printout, file reviewers often check for whether household members are identified correctly and income is calculated correctly [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 9-5A and 5-31]. For a recertification, reviewers would check to see that the 59 printout was signed 35 days before the annual recertification, as required by HUD [Handbook 4350.3, par. 7-6].
  - Disposal of assets form.** If a household disposed of assets for less than fair market value during the two years before the certification or recertification, its file must include verification of that. The disposal of assets form must be signed by the household head, spouse, or co-head [Handbook 4350.3, pars. 4-24B and 5-7G].
  - Household correspondence and payment plans.** Copies of any correspondence between you and the household should be included in the household file. If the household has committed to any payment plans with your site and/or HUD, include the specifics of those plans in the file as well.