

ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF
THE CITY OF TAHOKA, TEXAS
WITH RESPECT TO
WEST GATE APARTMENTS
(HOME FILE # 535259 / CMTS # 2702)

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BEFORE THE
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

AGREED FINAL ORDER

General Remarks and official action taken:

On this 28th day of April, 2016, the Governing Board (“Board”) of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (“TDHCA”) considered the matter of whether enforcement action should be taken against **THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TAHOKA, TEXAS**, a public housing authority (“Respondent”).

This Agreed Order is executed pursuant to the authority of the Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”), Tex. Gov’t Code §2001.056, which authorizes the informal disposition of contested cases. In a desire to conclude this matter without further delay and expense, the Board and Respondent agree to resolve this matter by this Agreed Final Order. The Respondent agrees to this Order for the purpose of resolving this proceeding only and without admitting or denying the findings of fact and conclusions of law set out in this Order.

Upon recommendation of the Enforcement Committee, the Board makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law and enters this Order:

WAIVER

Respondent acknowledges the existence of their right to request a hearing as provided by TEX. GOV’T CODE § 2306.044, and to seek judicial review, in the District Court of Travis County, Texas, of any order as provided by TEX. GOV’T CODE § 2306.047. Pursuant to this compromise and settlement, the Respondent waives those rights and acknowledges the jurisdiction of the Board over Respondent.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Jurisdiction:

1. During 1999, Respondent was awarded an allocation of HOME funds by the Board, in the total amount of \$360,000 to rehabilitate and operate West Gate Apartments (“Property”) (HTC file No. 535259 / CMTS No. 2702 / LDLD No. 237).

2. Respondent signed a land use restriction agreement (“LURA”) regarding the Property. The LURA was effective January 25, 1999, and filed of record at Volume 237, Page 109 of the Official Public Records of Real Property of Lynn County, Texas (“Records”).
3. Respondent is a public housing authority that is qualified to own, construct, acquire, rehabilitate, operate, manage, or maintain a housing development that is subject to the regulatory authority of TDHCA.

Compliance Violations¹:

4. An on-site monitoring review was conducted on May 19, 2015, to determine whether Respondent was in compliance with LURA requirements to lease units to low income households and maintain records demonstrating eligibility. The monitoring review found violations of the LURA and TDHCA rules. Notifications of noncompliance were sent and an October 22, 2015, corrective action deadline was set, however, the following violations were not corrected before the deadline:
 - a. Respondent failed to provide an affirmative marketing plan, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.617 (Affirmative Marketing), which requires developments to maintain an affirmative marketing plan and to distribute marketing materials to selected marketing organizations that reach groups identified as least likely to apply and to the disabled. An affirmative marketing plan was received in response to an administrative penalty informal conference notice, but the plan omitted the required marketing materials to prove that the development was carrying out marketing to the disabled. The violation was corrected on January 25, 2016, 95 days past the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee;
 - b. Respondent failed to post a laminated copy of the Tenant Rights and Resources Guide in a common area of the leasing office, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 (Lease Requirements), which requires owners to post a laminated copy of the Guide in a common area of the leasing office and provide a copy to each household during the application process and upon any subsequent change to common amenities, unit amenities, or services. The violation was corrected on January 25, 2016, 95 days past the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee;
 - c. Respondent failed to provide a Notice of Amenities and Services to units 2109, 2112, 2117, and 2120, violations of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 (Lease Requirements), which, at the time of move-in for these units during 2014, required owners to provide to each household, at the time of execution of an initial lease and whenever there was a subsequent change in amenities and services, a notice describing those amenities and services. This form has since been combined with the Fair Housing Disclosure Notice into a replacement document called a “Tenant Rights and

¹ Within this Agreed Final Order, all references to violations of TDHCA Compliance Monitoring rules at 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE, CHAPTERS 10 AND 60 refer to the versions of the code in effect at the time of the compliance monitoring reviews and/or inspections that resulted in recording each violation. All past violations remain violations under the current code and all interim amendments.

Resources Guide”. The violation was corrected on January 13, 2016, 83 days past the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee;

- d. Respondent failed to provide the Fair Housing Disclosure Notice for units 2117 and 2121, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.612, which, at the time of move-in for each unit during 2014, required all developments to provide prospective households with a fair housing disclosure notice within a certain time period. This form has since been combined with the Notice of Amenities and Services into a replacement document called a “Tenant Rights and Resources Guide”. The violation was corrected on January 13, 2016, 83 days past the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee;
 - e. Respondent failed to provide a tenant income recertification for unit 2103, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.612 (Tenant File Requirements), which requires recertifications. The violation was corrected on January 13, 2016, 83 days past the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee;
 - f. Respondent failed to properly calculate the utility allowance for the property, a violation of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.614 (Utility Allowances), which requires all developments to establish a utility allowance. The violation was corrected on January 27, 2016, 97 days past the deadline, after intervention by the Enforcement Committee.
5. All of the above violations have been resolved.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Department has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code §§2306.041-.0503, 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 1.14 and 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE Chapter 60, both of which were replaced by 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §2 as of November 19, 2014.
2. Respondent is a “housing sponsor” as that term is defined in Tex. Gov’t Code §2306.004(14).
3. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.617 in 2015, by failing to provide a complete affirmative marketing plan.
4. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 in 2015, by failing to post a laminated copy of the Tenant Rights and Resources Guide in a common area of the leasing office;
5. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 in 2014, by failing to execute the Notice of Amenities and Services for four units;
6. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.612 in 2014, by failing to execute the Fair Housing Disclosure Notice during the appropriate time frame for two units;
7. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.613 in 2014, by failing to execute the Notice of Amenities and Services for units 2109,2112, 2117, 2120;

8. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.612 in 2015 by failing to provide a tenant income recertification to ensure qualification for the program;
9. Respondent violated 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.614 in 2015 by failing to properly calculate a utility allowance;
10. Because Respondent is a housing sponsor with respect to the Property, and has violated TDHCA rules and agreements, the Board has personal and subject matter jurisdiction over Respondent pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE §2306.041 and §2306.267.
11. Because Respondent is a housing sponsor, TDHCA may order Respondent to perform or refrain from performing certain acts in order to comply with the law, TDHCA rules, or the terms of a contract or agreement to which Respondent and TDHCA are parties, pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE §2306.267.
12. Because Respondent has violated rules promulgated pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE Chapter 2306 and has violated agreements with the Agency to which Respondent is a party, the Agency may impose an administrative penalty pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE §2306.041.
13. An administrative penalty of \$0 is an appropriate penalty in accordance with 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §2, which became effective on November 19, 2014.

Based upon the foregoing findings of fact and conclusions of law, and an assessment of the factors set forth in TEX. GOV'T CODE §2306.042 to be considered in assessing such penalties as applied specifically to the facts and circumstances present in this case, the Board of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs orders the following:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Respondent is assessed an administrative penalty in the amount of \$0.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall follow the requirements of 10 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §10.406, a copy of which is included at Attachment 1, and obtain approval from the Department prior to consummating a sale of the property, if contemplated.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the terms of this Agreed Final Order shall be published on the TDHCA website.

Attachment 1:

Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 10	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PART 1	TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
CHAPTER 10	UNIFORM MULTIFAMILY RULES
SUBCHAPTER E	POST AWARD AND ASSET MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS
RULE §10.406	Ownership Transfers (§2306.6713)

(a) Ownership Transfer Notification. All multifamily Development Owners must provide written notice to the Department at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to any sale, transfer, or exchange of the Development or any portion of or Controlling interest in the Development. Transfers that are the result of an involuntary removal of the general partner by the investment limited partner must be reported to the Department, as soon as possible due to the sensitive timing and nature of this decision. If the Department determines that the transfer, involuntary removal, or replacement was due to a default by the General Partner under the Limited Partnership Agreement, or other detrimental action that put the Development at risk of failure, staff may make a recommendation to the Board for the debarment of the entity and/or its Principals and Affiliates pursuant to the Department's debarment rule. In addition, a record of transfer involving Principals in new proposed awards will be reported and may be taken into consideration by the Executive Award and Review Committee, in accordance with §1.5 of this title (relating to Previous Participation Reviews), prior to recommending any new financing or allocation of credits.

(b) Requirement. Department approval must be requested for any new member to join in the ownership of a Development. Exceptions include changes to the investment limited partner, non-controlling limited partner, or other partners affiliated with the investment limited partner, or changes resulting from foreclosure wherein the lender or financial institution involved in the transaction is the resulting owner. Any subsequent transfer of the Development will be required to adhere to the process in this section. Furthermore, a Development Owner may not transfer an allocation of tax credits or ownership of a Development supported with an allocation of tax credits to any Person or entity unless the Development Owner obtains the Executive Director's prior, written approval of the transfer. The Executive Director may not unreasonably withhold approval of the transfer requested in compliance with this section. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Development Owner shall be required to notify the Department but shall not be required to obtain Executive Director approval when the transferee is an Affiliate of the Development Owner with no new members or the transferee is a Related Party who does not Control the Development and the transfer is being made for estate planning purposes.

(c) Transfers Prior to 8609 Issuance or Construction Completion. Transfers (other than those that do not require Executive Director approval, as set forth in subsection (b) of this section) will not be approved prior to the issuance of IRS Form(s) 8609 (for Housing Tax Credits) or the completion of construction (for all Developments funded through other Department programs) unless the Development Owner can provide evidence that the need for the transfer is due to a hardship (ex. potential bankruptcy, removal by a partner, etc.). The Development Owner must provide the Department with a written explanation describing the hardship and a copy of any applicable agreement between the parties to the transfer, including any Third-Party agreement.

(d) Non-Profit Organizations. If the ownership transfer request is to replace a non-profit organization within the Development ownership entity, the replacement non-profit entity must adhere to the requirements in paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection.

(1) If the LURA requires ownership or material participation in ownership by a Qualified Non-Profit Organization, and the Development received Tax Credits pursuant to §42(h)(5) of the Code, the transferee must be a Qualified Non-Profit Organization that meets the requirements of §42(h)(5) of the Code and Texas Government Code §2306.6706.

(2) If the LURA requires ownership or material participation in ownership by a qualified non-profit organization, but the Development did not receive Tax Credits pursuant to §42(h)(5) of the Code, the

Development Owner must show that the transferee is a non-profit organization that complies with the LURA.

(e) Historically Underutilized Business ("HUB") Organizations. If a HUB is the general partner of a Development Owner and it (i) is being removed as the result of a default under the organizational documents of the Development Owner or (ii) determines to sell its ownership interest, in either case, after the issuance of 8609s, the purchaser of that general partnership interest is not required to be a HUB as long as the LURA does not require such continual ownership or a material LURA amendment is approved. Such approval can be obtained concurrent with Board approval described herein. All such transfers must be approved by the Board and require that the Board find that:

(1) the selling HUB is acting of its own volition or is being removed as the result of a default under the organizational documents of the Development Owner;

(2) the participation by the HUB has been substantive and meaningful, or would have been substantial and meaningful had the HUB not defaulted under the organizational documents of the Development Owner, enabling it to realize not only financial benefit but to acquire skills relating to the ownership and operation of affordable housing; and

(3) the proposed purchaser meets the Department's standards for ownership transfers

(f) Documentation Required. A Development Owner must submit documentation requested by the Department to enable the Department to understand fully the facts and circumstances that gave rise to the need for the transfer and the effects of approval or denial. Documentation includes but is not limited to:

(1) a written explanation outlining the reason for the request;

(2) a list of the names of transferees and Related Parties;

(3) detailed information describing the experience and financial capacity of transferees and related parties holding an ownership interest of 10 percent or greater in any Principal or Controlling entity;

(4) evidence and certification that the tenants in the Development have been notified in writing of the proposed transfer at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date the transfer is approved by the Department. The ownership transfer approval letter will not be issued until this 30 day period has expired.

(g) Within five (5) business days after the date the Department receives all necessary information under this section, staff shall initiate a qualifications review of a transferee, in accordance with §1.5 of this title, to determine the transferee's past compliance with all aspects of the Department's programs, LURAs and eligibility under this chapter.

(h) Credit Limitation. As it relates to the Housing Tax Credit amount further described in §11.4(a) of this title (relating to Tax Credit Request and Award Limits), the credit amount will not be applied in circumstances described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection:

(1) in cases of transfers in which the syndicator, investor or limited partner is taking over ownership of the Development and not merely replacing the general partner; or

(2) in cases where the general partner is being replaced if the award of credits was made at least five (5) years prior to the transfer request date.

(i) Penalties. The Development Owner must comply with any additional documentation requirements as stated in Subchapter F of this chapter (relating to Compliance Monitoring). The Development Owner, as on record with the Department, will be liable for any penalties imposed by the Department even if such penalty can be attributable to the new Development Owner unless such ownership transfer is approved by the Department.

(j) Ownership Transfer Processing Fee. The ownership transfer request must be accompanied by corresponding ownership transfer fee as outlined in §10.901 of this chapter (relating to Fee Schedule).

Source Note: The provisions of this §10.406 adopted to be effective December 9, 2014, 39 TexReg 9518