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MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
LANSING

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TO: Owners & Management Agents of Tax Credit Properties
FROM: Sherri Davio, Compliance Manager
SUBJECT: Utility Allowance Updates

MSHDA has updated its PHA Utility Allowances effective January 1, 2006. All LIHTC developments that use MSHDA's PHA allowances must implement rent and allowance changes no later than 90 days from the January 1st effective date, per the Internal Revenue Code Section 1.42-10 (copy attached).

MSHDA's PHA utility allowances can be downloaded from our web site at the following link.

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda_li_ca_31_tab_v_utility_allowances_78909_7.pdf

If you have questions regarding the utility changes, please contact the Compliance staff at (517) 241-2560.

Federal Regulations

Reg § 1.42-10. Utility allowances.

(a) Inclusion of utility allowances in gross rent. If the cost of any utilities (other than telephone) for a residential rental unit are paid directly by the tenant(s), the gross rent for that unit includes the applicable utility allowance determined under this section. This section only applies for purposes of determining gross rent under section 42(g)(2)(B)(ii) as to rent-restricted units.

(b) Applicable utility allowances.

(1) FmHA-assisted buildings. If a building receives assistance from the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA-assisted building), the applicable utility allowance for all rent-restricted units in the building is the utility allowance determined under the method prescribed by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) for the building. For example, if a building receives assistance under FmHA's section 515 program (whether or not the building or its tenants also receive other state or federal assistance), the applicable utility allowance for all rent-restricted units in the building is determined using Exhibit A-6 of 7 CFR part 1944, subpart E (or a successor method of determining utility allowances).

(2) Buildings with FmHA assisted tenants. If any tenant in a building receives FmHA rental assistance payments (FmHA tenant assistance), the applicable utility allowance for all rent-restricted units in the building (including any units occupied by tenants receiving HUD rental assistance payments) is the applicable FmHA utility allowance.

(3) HUD-regulated buildings. If neither a building nor any tenant in the building receives FmHA housing assistance, and the rents and utility allowances of the building are reviewed by HUD on an annual basis (HUD-regulated building), the applicable utility allowance for all rent-restricted units in the building is the applicable HUD utility allowance.

(4) Other buildings. If a building is neither an FmHA-assisted nor a HUD-regulated building, and no tenant in the building receives FmHA tenant assistance, the applicable utility allowance for rent-restricted units in the building is determined under the following methods.

(i) Tenants receiving HUD rental assistance. The applicable utility allowance for any rent-restricted units occupied by tenants receiving HUD rental assistance payments (HUD tenant assistance) is the applicable Public Housing Authority (PHA) utility allowance established for the Section 8 Existing Housing Program.

(ii) Other tenants.

(A) General rule. If none of the rules of paragraphs (b)(1), (2), (3), and (4)(i) of this section apply to any rent-restricted units in a building, the appropriate utility allowance for the units is the applicable PHA utility allowance. However, if a local utility company estimate is obtained for any unit in the building in accordance with paragraph (b)(4)(ii)(B) of this section, that estimate becomes the appropriate utility allowance for all rent-restricted units of similar size and construction in the building. This local utility company estimate procedure is not available for and does not apply to units to which the rules of paragraph (b)(1), (2), (3), or (4)(i) of this section apply.

(B) Utility company estimate. Any interested party (including a low-income tenant, a building owner, or an Agency) may obtain a local utility company estimate for a unit. The estimate is obtained when the interested party receives, in writing, information from a local utility company providing the estimated cost of that utility for a unit of similar size and construction for the geographic area in which the building containing the unit is located. The local utility company estimate may be obtained by an interested party at any time during the building's extended use period (see section 42(h)(6)(D)) or, if the building does not have an extended use period, during the building's compliance period (see section 42(i)(1)). Unless the parties agree otherwise, costs incurred in obtaining the estimate are borne by the initiating party. The interested party that obtains the local utility company estimate (the initiating party) must retain the original of the utility company estimate and must furnish a copy of the local utility company estimate to the owner of the building (where the initiating party is not the owner), and the Agency that allocated credit to the building (where the initiating party is not the Agency). The owner of the building must make available copies of the utility company estimate to the tenants in the building.

(c) Changes in applicable utility allowance. If at any time during the building's extended use period (or, if the building does not have an extended use period, the building's compliance period), the applicable utility allowance for a unit changes, the new utility allowance must be used to compute gross rents of rent-restricted units due 90 days after the change. For example, if rent must be lowered because

a local utility company estimate is obtained that shows a higher utility cost than the otherwise applicable PHA utility allowance, the lower rent must be in effect for rent due more than 90 days after the date of the local utility company estimate.

T.D. 8520, 3/2/94.
