

RESIDENTIAL RELOCATION UNIFORM RELOCATION ACT (URA) REQUIREMENT AND BEST PRACTICES

SUMMARY (NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF REQUIREMENTS)

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1. RELOCATION PLANNING

Requirement: Planning is required Per 49 CFR Part 24 (24.205). Planning means, from the book,

- a. Shall be done before displacement/relocation is caused;
- b. Include survey or study including # of households, family characteristics, and special consideration to impact to large families, elderly, minorities, and persons with disabilities;
- c. Estimate of comparable dwelling units available and price/rents; and
- d. Description of the agencies advisory services program

Best Practice: 1) Seek assistance scoping and preparing the plan; 2) Conduct individual household interviews to attain necessary and required information to plan the project to include the needs of all households; 3) Develop the plan at the very beginning of your project - planning before applications for funding are made (typically you will have to submit a plan with the application anyway). Depending on the number of households involved, a plan may take 3 to 8 weeks to prepare [or longer]. Start early; and 4) By doing a thorough and detailed plan it will meet both URA requirements and serve as an Action Plan that includes processes, procedures, schedules, and cost estimates for the relocation team.

2. SERVICE OF GENERAL INFORMATION NOTICE

Requirement: Service of General Information Notice (GIN) as soon as possible in the planning stage of the project. Must document that the notice was served to each household i.e. proof of service. NOTE: Proving service is not a check mark on the rent roll.

Best Practice: 1) Use the HUD sample notice as a baseline; should add details specific to your project; 2) Individually address the notice to each Head of Household and all Other Occupants; 3) Have each household sign an acknowledgment of receipt on the notice they receive; 4) Provide an update to the notice if significant time has passed since the original notice was served (for example, notice served in 2018, but project is delayed and won't start until 2021...serve update in mid-2019 and early 2021 or other reasonable timeline based on project schedule).

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3. DOCUMENTING RELOCATION ACTIVITY

Requirement: YES! Must be able to document conversations, notices, benefits calculations ect.

Best Practice: Develop a relocation case file check list with all required forms and notices. Prepare a file for each household. Assign a manager to review those files routinely during the relocation process. Correct any mistakes as they are discovered.

4. NOTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE RELOCATION ASSISTANCE (NOE)

Requirement: Must provide, in writing, the specific assistance the household is eligible for. Must be explained to them.

Best Practice: Meet with each household individually to explain what they will receive and how assistance will be provided. Have the household sign an acknowledgement that they received the written notice on the written notice. Record the meeting with the household in the relocation case file.

5. NOTICE TO VACATE

Requirement: Minimum of 90-days. Per HUD Handbook 1378, 30-day notice can be given for a temporary relocation less than 6-months if the household is not responsible to locate their temporary housing themselves. Must be able to prove service.

Best Practice: 1) Address to head of household and all other occupants; 2) Like all notices include an acknowledgment block on the notice the household receives; 3) Provide follow-up interim notices leading up to the move date i.e 60, 30, 10/7 or other reasonable period to ensure the household remains informed of their move date.

6. PAYMENT OF ASSISTANCE

Requirement and Best Practice: Document the specific payment purpose (housing assistance/moving assistance), amount, and disposition method on a claim the household and the agency signs. Use as many claims as needed to ensure the specific payments made are adequately documented. Have household sign a receipt of payment.

What About RAD?: RAD carries unique requirements. Many are modeled on the URA's implementing guidelines found in HUD Handbook 1378. Best approach is to develop a specific action plan or outline, and then discuss the requirements with the transaction manager and the party you select to assist you in designing the relocation program for your conversion. A relocation plan is required and due with your financing plan; best advise is not to wait until you are preparing the financing plan.

Disclaimer: The above statements are a summary of key requirements under the URA. This is not a comprehensive analysis of what is necessary, is not a relocation plan, and will not get you off the hook if you make errors in the relocation process. This should not be construed as the only requirements for relocation. Different or additional requirements from specific funding sources and programs involved may exist i.e. Section 18. EVERY project is different, seek the assistance of HUD or a third party with expertise in this area before you proceed with relocation activity. NOTE: specific requirements for the relocation of businesses and not for profit organizations are not included here nor are the requirements for property acquisition under the URA such as appraisals for parcels an agency may acquire with federal funds.

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