

SUBCHAPTER A—ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS

PART 1202—FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Sec.

- 1202.1 Why did FHFA issue this regulation?
1202.2 What do the terms in this regulation mean?
1202.3 What information can I obtain through FOIA?
1202.4 What information is exempt from disclosure?
1202.5 How do I request information from FHFA or FHFA-OIG under FOIA?
1202.6 What if my request does not have all the information FHFA or FHFA-OIG requires?
1202.7 How will FHFA or FHFA-OIG respond to my FOIA request?
1202.8 If the requested records contain confidential commercial information, what procedures will FHFA or FHFA-OIG follow?
1202.9 How do I appeal a response denying my FOIA request?
1202.10 Will FHFA or FHFA-OIG expedite my request or appeal?
1202.11 What will it cost to get the records I requested?
1202.12 Is there anything else I need to know about FOIA procedures?

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§ 1202.1 Why did FHFA issue this regulation?

(a) The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), is a federal law that requires FHFA and other Federal Government agencies to disclose certain Federal Government records to the public.

(b) This regulation explains the rules that FHFA and the FHFA Office of Inspector General (FHFA-OIG) both follow when processing and responding to requests for records under FOIA. It also explains what you must do to request records from FHFA or FHFA-OIG under FOIA. You should read this regulation together with FOIA, which explains in more detail your rights and the records FHFA or FHFA-OIG may release to you.

(c) If you want to request information about yourself under the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a), you should file your request using FHFA's Privacy Act regulations at part 1204 of this title. If you file a FOIA request for information about yourself, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will process it as a request under the Privacy Act regulation.

(d) FHFA and FHFA-OIG may make public information that they routinely publish or disclose when performing their activities without following these procedures.

(e) This regulation applies to both FHFA and FHFA-OIG.

§ 1202.2 What do the terms in this regulation mean?

Some of the terms you need to understand while reading this regulation are—

Appeals Officer or FOIA Appeals Officer means a person designated by the FHFA Director to process appeals of denials of requests for FHFA records under FOIA. For appeals pertaining to FHFA-OIG records, *Appeals Officer or FOIA Appeals Officer* means a person designated by the FHFA Inspector General to process appeals of denials of requests for FHFA-OIG records under FOIA.

Confidential commercial information means records provided to the Federal Government by a submitter that contain material exempt from release under Exemption 4 of FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4), because disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause substantial competitive harm.

Days, unless stated as “calendar days,” are working days and do not include Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays. If the last day of any period prescribed herein falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, the last day of the period will be the next working day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday.

Direct costs means the expenses, including contract services, incurred by FHFA or FHFA-OIG, in searching for, reviewing and/or duplicating records to respond to a request for information.

§ 1202.3

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

In the case of a commercial use request, the term also means those expenditures FHFA or FHFA–OIG actually incurs in reviewing records to respond to the request. Direct costs include the cost of the time of the employee performing the work, the cost of any computer searches, and the cost of operating duplication equipment. Direct costs do not include overhead expenses such as costs of space, and heating or lighting the facility in which the records are stored.

Employee, for the purposes of this regulation, means any person holding an appointment to a position of employment with FHFA or FHFA–OIG, or any person who formerly held such an appointment; any conservator appointed by FHFA; or any agent or independent contractor acting on behalf of FHFA or FHFA–OIG, even though the appointment or contract has terminated.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency and includes its predecessor agencies, the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight (OFHEO) and the Federal Housing Finance Board (FHFB).

FHFA–OIG means the Office of Inspector General for FHFA.

FOIA Officer and Chief FOIA Officer are persons designated by the FHFA Director to process and respond to requests for FHFA records under FOIA.

FOIA Official is a person designated by the FHFA Inspector General to process requests for FHFA–OIG records under FOIA.

Office of Finance means the Office of Finance of the Federal Home Loan Bank System or any successor thereto.

Readily reproducible means that the requested record or records exist in electronic format and can be downloaded or transferred intact to a computer disk, tape, or another electronic medium with equipment and software currently in use by FHFA or FHFA–OIG.

Record means information or documentary material FHFA or FHFA–OIG maintains in any form or format, including electronic, which FHFA or FHFA–OIG—

(1) Created or received under federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business;

(2) Preserved or determined is appropriate for preservation as evidence of operations or activities of FHFA or FHFA–OIG, or because of the value of the information it contains; and

(3) Controls at the time it receives a request for disclosure.

Regulated entities means the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and any affiliate thereof, the Federal National Mortgage Association and any affiliate thereof, and the Federal Home Loan Banks.

Requester means any person seeking access to FHFA or FHFA–OIG records under FOIA.

Search time means the amount of time spent by or on behalf of FHFA or FHFA–OIG in attempting to locate records responsive to a request, whether manually or by electronic means, including but not limited to page-by-page or line-by-line identification of responsive material within a record or extraction of electronic information from electronic storage media.

Submitter means any person or entity providing confidential information to the Federal Government. The term “submitter” includes, but is not limited to corporations, state governments, and foreign governments.

Unusual circumstances means the need to—

(1) Search for and/or collect records from agencies, offices, facilities, or locations that are separate from the office processing the request;

(2) Search, review, and/or duplicate a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records in order to process a single request; or

(3) Consult with another agency or among two or more components of FHFA or FHFA–OIG that have a substantial interest in the determination of a request.

§ 1202.3 What information can I obtain through FOIA?

(a) *General.* FHFA and FHFA–OIG prohibit employees from releasing or disclosing confidential or otherwise non-public information that FHFA or FHFA–OIG possesses, except as authorized by this regulation, by the Director of FHFA for FHFA records, or by the FHFA Inspector General for FHFA–OIG

records, when the disclosure is necessary for the performance of official duties.

(b) *Records.* You may request that FHFA or FHFA-OIG disclose to you its records on a subject of interest to you. FOIA only requires the disclosure of records. It does not require FHFA or FHFA-OIG to create compilations of information or to provide narrative responses to questions or queries. Some information is exempt from disclosure.

(c) *Reading rooms.* (1) FHFA maintains electronic and physical reading rooms. FHFA's physical reading room is located at 1700 G Street, NW., Fourth Floor, Washington, DC 20552, and is open to the public by appointment from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each business day. For an appointment, contact the FOIA Officer by calling (202) 414-6425 or by e-mail at foia@fhfa.gov. The electronic reading room is part of the FHFA Web site at <http://www.fhfa.gov>. FHFA-OIG also maintains electronic and physical reading rooms. FHFA-OIG's physical reading room is located at 1625 Eye Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006, and is open to the public by appointment from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each business day. For an appointment, contact FHFA-OIG by calling (202) 408-2577 or by e-mail at bryan.saddler@fhfa.gov. The electronic reading room is part of the FHFA-OIG Web site at <http://www.fhfaig.gov>.

(2) Each reading room has the following records created after November 1, 1996, by FHFA or its predecessor agencies, or by FHFA-OIG, and current indices to the following records created by FHFA or its predecessor agencies or FHFA-OIG before or after November 1, 1996:

- (i) Final opinions or orders issued in adjudication;
- (ii) Statements of policy and interpretation that are not published in the FEDERAL REGISTER;
- (iii) Administrative staff manuals and instructions to staff that affect a member of the public and are not exempt from disclosure under FOIA; and
- (iv) Copies of records released under FOIA that FHFA or FHFA-OIG determines have become or are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially similar records.

§ 1202.4 What information is exempt from disclosure?

(a) *General.* Unless the Director of FHFA or his or her designee for FHFA records, the FHFA Inspector General or his or her designee for FHFA-OIG records, or any regulation or statute specifically authorizes disclosure, neither FHFA nor FHFA-OIG will release records that are—

(1) Specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, and in fact is properly classified pursuant to such Executive Order;

(2) Related solely to FHFA's or FHFA-OIG's internal personnel rules and practices;

(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 U.S.C. 552a), provided that such statute—

(i) Requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or

(ii) Establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(4) Trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;

(5) Contained in inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters that would not be available by law to a private party in litigation with FHFA or FHFA-OIG;

(6) Contained in personnel, medical or similar files (including financial files) the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(7) Compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information—

(i) Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings;

(ii) Would deprive a person of a right to fair trial or an impartial adjudication;

(iii) Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(iv) Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential

§ 1202.5

source, including a state, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution or an entity that is regulated and examined by FHFA that furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of a record compiled by FHFA-OIG or a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source;

(v) Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or

(vi) Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual.

(8) Contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports that are prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or

(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

(b) *Discretion to apply exemptions.* Although records or parts of them may be exempt from disclosure, FHFA or FHFA-OIG may elect under the circumstances of any particular request not to apply an exemption. This election does not generally waive the exemption and it does not have precedential effect. FHFA or FHFA-OIG may still apply an exemption to any other records or portions of records, regardless of when the request is received.

(c) *Redacted portion.* If a requested record contains exempt information and information that can be disclosed and the portions can reasonably be segregated from each other, the disclosable portion of the record will be released to the requester after FHFA or FHFA-OIG deletes the exempt portions. If it is technically feasible, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will indicate the amount of the information deleted at the place in the record where the deletion is made and include a notation identifying the exemption that was ap-

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

plied, unless including that indication would harm an interest protected by an exemption.

(d) *Exempt and redacted material.* FHFA and FHFA-OIG are not required to provide an itemized index correlating each withheld document (or redacted portion) with a specific exemption justification.

(e) *Disclosure to Congress.* This section does not allow FHFA or FHFA-OIG to withhold any information from, or to prohibit the disclosure of any information to, Congress or any Congressional committee or subcommittee.

§ 1202.5 How do I request information from FHFA or FHFA-OIG under FOIA?

(a) *Where to send your request.* FOIA requests must be in writing. You may make a request for FHFA or FHFA-OIG records by writing directly to FHFA's FOIA Office through electronic mail, mail, delivery service, or facsimile. The electronic mail address is: foia@fhfa.gov. For mail or delivery service, the mailing address is: FOIA Officer, Federal Housing Finance Agency, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552. The facsimile number is: (202) 414-8917. Requests for FHFA-OIG records will be forwarded to FHFA-OIG for processing and direct response. You can help FHFA and FHFA-OIG process your request by marking electronic mail, letters, or facsimiles and the subject line, envelope, or facsimile cover sheet with "FOIA Request." FHFA's "Freedom of Information Act Reference Guide," which is available on FHFA's Web site, <http://www.fhfa.gov>, provides additional information to assist you in making your request.

(b) *Provide your name and address.* Your request must include your full name, your address and, if different, the address at which FHFA or FHFA-OIG is to notify you about your request, a telephone number at which you can be reached during normal business hours, and an electronic mail address, if any.

(c) *Request is under FOIA.* Your request must have a statement identifying it as being made under FOIA.

(d) *Your FOIA status.* If you are submitting your request as a "commercial

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1202.7

use” requester, an “educational institution” requester, a “non-commercial scientific institution” requester, or a “representative of the news media” for the purposes of the fee provisions of FOIA, your request must include a statement specifically identifying your status.

(e) *Describing the records you request.* You must describe the records that you seek in enough detail to enable FHFA or FHFA-OIG personnel to locate them with a reasonable amount of effort. Your request should include as much specific information as possible that you know about each record you request, such as the date, title, name, author, recipient, subject matter, or file designations, or the description of the record.

(f) *How you want the records produced to you.* Your request must tell FHFA or FHFA-OIG whether you will inspect the records before duplication or want them duplicated and furnished without inspection.

(g) *Agreement to pay fees.* In your FOIA request you must agree to pay all applicable fees charged under §1202.11, up to \$100.00, unless you seek a fee waiver. When making a request, you may specify a higher or lower amount you will pay without consultation. Your inability to pay a fee does not justify granting a fee waiver.

(h) *Valid requests.* FHFA and FHFA-OIG will only process valid requests. A valid request must meet all the requirements of this part.

§ 1202.6 What if my request does not have all the information FHFA or FHFA-OIG requires?

If FHFA or FHFA-OIG determines that your request does not reasonably describe the records you seek, is overly broad, cannot yet be processed for reasons related to fees, or lacks required information, you will be informed in writing why your request cannot be processed. You will be given 15 calendar days to modify your request to meet all requirements. This request for additional information tolls the time period for FHFA or FHFA-OIG to respond to your request under §1202.7.

(a) If you respond with the necessary information, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will process that response as a new request

and the time period for FHFA or FHFA-OIG to respond to your request will start from the date the additional information is actually received by FHFA or FHFA-OIG.

(b) If you do not respond or provide additional information within the time allowed, or if the additional information you provide is still incomplete or insufficient, FHFA and FHFA-OIG will consider your request withdrawn and will notify you that it will not be processed.

§ 1202.7 How will FHFA and FHFA-OIG respond to my FOIA request?

(a) *Authority to grant or deny requests.* The FOIA Officer and the Chief FOIA Officer are authorized to grant or deny any request for FHFA records. For FHFA-OIG records, the designated FHFA-OIG FOIA Official is authorized to grant or deny any request for FHFA-OIG records.

(b) *Multi-Track request processing.* FHFA and FHFA-OIG use a multi-track system to process FOIA requests. This means that a FOIA request is processed based on its complexity. When FHFA or FHFA-OIG receives your request, it is assigned to a Standard Track or Complex Track. FHFA or FHFA-OIG will notify you if your request is assigned to the Complex Track as described in paragraph (f) of this section.

(1) *Standard Track.* FHFA and FHFA-OIG assign FOIA requests that are routine and require little or no search time, review, or analysis to the Standard Track. FHFA and FHFA-OIG respond to these requests within 20 days after receipt, in the order in which they are received. If FHFA or FHFA-OIG determines while processing your Standard Track request, that it is more appropriately a Complex Track request, it will be reassigned to the Complex Track and you will be notified as described in paragraph (f) of this section.

(2) *Complex Track.* (i) FHFA and FHFA-OIG assign requests that are non-routine to the Complex Track. Complex Track requests are those to which FHFA or FHFA-OIG determines that the request and/or response may—

(A) Be voluminous;

§ 1202.8

(B) Involve two or more FHFA or FHFA-OIG units;

(C) Require consultation with other agencies or entities;

(D) Require searches of archived documents;

(E) Seek confidential commercial information as described in §1202.8;

(F) Require an unusually high level of effort to search for, review and/or duplicate records;

(G) Cause undue disruption to the day-to-day activities of FHFA in regulating and supervising the regulated entities; or

(H) Cause undue disruption to the day-to-day activities of FHFA-OIG in carrying out its statutory responsibilities.

(ii) FHFA or FHFA-OIG will respond to Complex Track requests as soon as reasonably possible, regardless of the date of receipt.

(c) *Referrals to other agencies.* When FHFA or FHFA-OIG receives a request seeking records that originated in another Federal Government agency, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will refer the request to the other agency for response. You will be notified if your request is referred to another agency.

(d) *Responses to FOIA requests.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will respond to your request by granting or denying it in full, or by granting and denying it in part. The response will be in writing. In determining which records are responsive to your request, FHFA and FHFA-OIG will conduct searches for records FHFA or FHFA-OIG possesses as of the date of your request.

(1) *Requests that FHFA or FHFA-OIG grants.* If FHFA or FHFA-OIG grants your request, the response will include the requested records or details about how FHFA or FHFA-OIG will provide them to you and the amount of any fees charged.

(2) *Requests that FHFA or FHFA-OIG denies, or grants and denies in part.* If FHFA or FHFA-OIG denies your request in whole or in part because a requested record does not exist or cannot be located, is not readily reproducible in the form or format you sought, is not subject to FOIA, or is exempt from disclosure, the written response will include the requested releasable records, if any, the amount of any fees charged,

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

the reasons for denial, and a notice and description of your right to file an administrative appeal under §1202.9.

(e) *Format and delivery of disclosed records.* If FHFA or FHFA-OIG grants, in whole or in part, your request for disclosure of records under FOIA, the records may be made available to you in the form or format you requested, if they are readily reproducible in that form or format. The records will be sent to the address you provided by regular U.S. Mail or by electronic mail unless alternate arrangements are made by mutual agreement, such as your agreement to pay express or expedited delivery service fees or to pick up records at FHFA or FHFA-OIG offices.

(f) *Extensions of time.* (1) In unusual circumstances, FHFA or FHFA-OIG may extend the Standard Track time limit in paragraph (b)(1) of this section for no more than 10 days and notify you of—

(i) The reason for the extension; and

(ii) The date on which the determination is expected.

(2) For requests in the Complex Track, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will provide you with an opportunity to modify or reformulate your request so that it may be processed on the Standard Track. If the request cannot be modified or reformulated to permit processing on the Standard Track, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will notify you regarding an alternative time period for processing the request.

§ 1202.8 If the requested records contain confidential information, what procedures will FHFA or FHFA-OIG follow?

(a) *General.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will not disclose confidential commercial information in response to your FOIA request except as described in this section.

(b) *Designation of confidential commercial information.* Submitters of commercial information must use good-faith efforts to designate, by appropriate markings, either at the time of submission or at a reasonable time thereafter, those portions of the information they deem to be protected under 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) and §1202.4(a)(4). Any such designation will expire 10 years after the records are submitted to the Federal

Government, unless the submitter requests, and provides reasonable justification for, a designation period of longer duration.

(c) *Pre-disclosure notification.* Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, if your FOIA request encompasses confidential commercial information, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will, prior to disclosure of the information and to the extent permitted by law, provide prompt written notice to a submitter that confidential commercial information was requested when—

(1) The submitter has in good faith designated the information as confidential commercial information protected from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) and §1202.4(a)(4); or

(2) FHFA or FHFA-OIG has reason to believe that the request seeks confidential commercial information, the disclosure of which may result in substantial competitive harm to the submitter.

(d) *Content of pre-disclosure notification.* When FHFA or FHFA-OIG sends a pre-disclosure notification to a submitter, it will contain—

(1) A description of the confidential commercial information requested or copies of the records or portions thereof containing the confidential business information; and

(2) An opportunity to object to disclosure within 10 days or such other time period that FHFA or FHFA-OIG may allow, by providing to FHFA or FHFA-OIG a detailed written statement demonstrating all reasons the submitter opposes disclosure.

(e) *Exceptions to pre-disclosure notification.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG is not required to send a pre-disclosure notification if—

(1) FHFA or FHFA-OIG determines that information should not be disclosed;

(2) The information has been published lawfully or has been made officially available to the public;

(3) Disclosure of the information is required by law, other than FOIA;

(4) The information requested is not designated by the submitter as confidential commercial information pursuant to this section; or

(5) The submitter's designation, under paragraph (b) of this section, ap-

pears on its face to be frivolous; except that FHFA or FHFA-OIG will provide the submitter with written notice of any final decision to disclose the designated confidential commercial information within a reasonable number of days prior to a specified disclosure date.

(f) *Submitter's objection to disclosure.* A submitter may object to disclosure within 10 days after date of the Pre-disclosure Notification, or such other time period that FHFA or FHFA-OIG may allow, by delivering to FHFA or FHFA-OIG a statement demonstrating all grounds on which it opposes disclosure, and all reasons supporting its contention that the information should not be disclosed. The submitter's objection must contain a certification by the submitter, or an officer or authorized representative of the submitter, that the grounds and reasons presented are true and correct to the best of the submitter's knowledge. The submitter's objection may itself be subject to disclosure under FOIA.

(g) *Notice of intent to disclose information.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will carefully consider all grounds and reasons provided by a submitter objecting to disclosure. If FHFA or FHFA-OIG decides to disclose the information over the submitter's objection, the submitter will be provided with a written notice of intent to disclose at least 10 days before the date of disclosure. The written notice will contain—

(1) A statement of the reasons why the information will be disclosed;

(2) A description of the information to be disclosed; and

(3) A specific disclosure date.

(h) *Notice to requester.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will give a requester whose request encompasses confidential commercial information—

(1) A written notice that the request encompasses confidential commercial information that may be exempt from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) and §1202.4(a)(4) and that the submitter of the information has been given a pre-disclosure notification with the opportunity to comment on the proposed disclosure of the information; and

(2) A written notice that a notice of intent to disclose has been provided to the submitter, and that the submitter

§ 1202.9

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

has 10 days, or such other time period that FHFA or FHFA–OIG may allow, to respond.

(i) *Notice of FOIA lawsuit.* FHFA or FHFA–OIG will promptly notify the submitter whenever a requester files suit seeking to compel disclosure of the submitter’s confidential commercial information. FHFA or FHFA–OIG will promptly notify the requester whenever a submitter files suit seeking to prevent disclosure of information.

§ 1202.9 How do I appeal a response denying my FOIA request?

(a) *Right of appeal.* If FHFA or FHFA–OIG denied your request in whole or in part, you may appeal the denial by writing directly to the FOIA Appeals Officer through electronic mail, mail, delivery service, or facsimile. The electronic mail address is: foia@fhfa.gov. For mail or delivery service, the mailing address is: FOIA Appeals Officer, Federal Housing Finance Agency, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552. The facsimile number is: (202) 414–8917. You can help FHFA and FHFA–OIG process your appeal by marking electronic mail, letters, or facsimiles and the subject line, envelope, or facsimile cover sheet with “FOIA Appeal.” For appeals of denials, whether in whole or in part, made by FHFA–OIG, the appeal must be clearly marked by adding “FHFA–OIG” after “FOIA Appeal.” All appeals from denials, in whole or in part, made by FHFA–OIG will be forwarded to the FHFA–OIG FOIA Appeals Officer for processing and direct response. FHFA’s “Freedom of Information Act Reference Guide,” which is available on FHFA’s Web site, <http://www.fhfa.gov>, provides additional information to assist you in making your appeal.

(b) *Timing, form, content, and receipt of an appeal.* Your appeal must be written and submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the decision by FHFA or FHFA–OIG denying, in whole or in part, your request. Your appeal must include a copy of the initial request, a copy of the letter denying the request in whole or in part, and a statement of the circumstances, reasons, or arguments you believe support disclosure of the requested record(s). FHFA and FHFA–OIG will not consider an im-

properly addressed appeal to have been received for the purposes of the 20-day time period of paragraph (d) of this section until it is actually received by FHFA.

(c) *Extensions of time to appeal.* If you need more time to file your appeal, you may request, in writing, an extension of time of no more than 10 calendar days in which to file your appeal, but only if your request is made within the original 30-calendar day time period for filing the appeal. Granting such an extension is in the sole discretion of the FHFA or FHFA–OIG FOIA Appeals Officer.

(d) *Final action on appeal.* FHFA’s or FHFA–OIG’s determination on your appeal will be in writing, signed by the FHFA or FHFA–OIG FOIA Appeals Officer, and sent to you within 20 days after the appeal is received, or by the last day of the last extension under paragraph (e) of this section. The determination of an appeal is the final action of FHFA or FHFA–OIG on a FOIA request. A determination may—

(1) Affirm, in whole or in part, the initial denial of the request and may include a brief statement of the reason or reasons for the decision, including each FOIA exemption relied upon;

(2) Reverse, in whole or in part, the denial of a request in whole or in part, and require the request to be processed promptly in accordance with the decision; or

(3) Remand a request to FHFA or FHFA–OIG, as appropriate, for re-processing, stating the time limits for responding to the remanded request.

(e) *Notice of delayed determinations on appeal.* If FHFA or FHFA–OIG cannot send a determination on your appeal within the 20-day time limit, the designated Appeals Officer will continue to process the appeal and upon expiration of the time limit, will inform you of the reason(s) for the delay and the date on which a determination may be expected. In this notice of delay, the FHFA or FHFA–OIG FOIA Appeals Officer may request that you forebear seeking judicial review until a final determination is made.

(f) *Judicial review.* If the denial of your request for records is upheld in whole or in part, or if a determination on your appeal has not been sent at the

end of the 20-day period in paragraph (d) of this section, or the last extension thereof, you may seek judicial review under 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4).

§ 1202.10 Will FHFA or FHFA-OIG expedite my request or appeal?

(a) *Request for expedited processing.* You may request, in writing, expedited processing of an initial request or of an appeal. FHFA or FHFA-OIG may grant expedited processing, and give your request or appeal priority if your request for expedited processing demonstrates a compelling need by establishing one or more of the following—

(1) Circumstances in which the lack of expedited treatment could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual;

(2) An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal Government activity if you are a person primarily engaged in disseminating information;

(3) The loss of substantial due process or rights;

(4) A matter of widespread and exceptional media interest in which there exists possible questions about the Federal Government's integrity, affecting public confidence; or

(5) Humanitarian need.

(b) *Certification of compelling need.* Your request for expedited processing must include a statement certifying that the reason(s) you present demonstrate a compelling need are true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

(c) *Determination on request.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will notify you within 10 days of receipt of your request whether expedited processing has been granted. If a request for expedited treatment is granted, the request will be given priority and will be processed as soon as practicable. If a request for expedited processing is denied, any appeal under § 1202.9 of that decision will be acted on expeditiously.

§ 1202.11 What will it cost to get the records I requested?

(a) *Assessment of fees, generally.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will assess you for fees covering the direct costs of responding to your request and costs for dupli-

cating records, except as otherwise provided in a statute with respect to the determination of fees that may be assessed for disclosure, search time, or review of particular records.

(b) *Assessment of fees, categories of requesters.* The fees that FHFA or FHFA-OIG may assess vary depending on the type of request or the type of requester you are—

(1) *Commercial use.* If you request records for a commercial use, the fees that FHFA or FHFA-OIG may assess are limited to FHFA's or FHFA-OIG's operating costs incurred for document search, review, and duplication.

(2) *Educational institution, noncommercial scientific institution, or representative of the news media.* If you are not requesting records for commercial use and you are an educational institution or a noncommercial scientific institution, whose purpose is scholarly or scientific research, or a representative of the news media, the fees that may be assessed are limited to standard reasonable charges for duplication in excess of 100 pages or an electronic equivalent of 100 pages.

(3) *Other.* If neither paragraph (b)(1) nor paragraph (b)(2) of this section applies, the fees assessed are limited to the costs for document searching in excess of two hours and duplication in excess of 100 pages, or an electronic equivalent of 100 pages.

(c) *Fee schedule.* The current schedule of fees is maintained on FHFA's Web site at: <http://www.fhfa.gov>.

(d) *Notice of anticipated fees in excess of \$100.00.* When FHFA or FHFA-OIG determines or estimates that the fees chargeable to you will exceed \$100.00, you will be notified of the actual or estimated amount of fees you will incur, unless you earlier indicated your willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. When you are notified that the actual or estimated fees exceed \$100.00, your FOIA request will not be considered received by FHFA or FHFA-OIG until you agree to pay the anticipated total fee.

(e) *Advance payment of fees.* FHFA or FHFA-OIG may request that you pay estimated fees or a deposit in advance of responding to your request. If FHFA or FHFA-OIG requests advance payment or a deposit, your request will

§ 1202.12

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

not be considered received by FHFA or FHFA–OIG until the advance payment or deposit is received. FHFA or FHFA–OIG will request advance payment or a deposit if—

(1) The fees are likely to exceed \$500.00. FHFA or FHFA–OIG will notify you of the likely cost and obtain from you satisfactory assurance of full payment if you have a history of prompt payment of FOIA fees to FHFA or FHFA–OIG;

(2) You do not have a history of payment, or if the estimate of fees exceeds \$1,000.00, FHFA or FHFA–OIG may require an advance payment of fees in an amount up to the full estimated charge that will be incurred;

(3) You previously failed to pay a fee to FHFA or FHFA–OIG in a timely fashion, *i.e.*, within 30 calendar days of the date of a billing, FHFA or FHFA–OIG may require you to make advance payment of the full amount of the fees anticipated before processing a new request or finishing processing of a pending request; or

(4) You have an outstanding balance due from a prior request. FHFA or FHFA–OIG may require you to pay the full amount owed plus any applicable interest, as provided in paragraph (f) of this section, or demonstrate that the fee owed has been paid, as well as payment of the full amount of anticipated fees before processing your request.

(f) *Interest.* FHFA or FHFA–OIG may charge you interest on an unpaid bill starting on the 31st calendar day following the day on which the bill was sent. Once a fee payment has been received by FHFA or FHFA–OIG, even if not processed, FHFA or FHFA–OIG will stay the accrual of interest. Interest charges will be assessed at the rate prescribed by 31 U.S.C. 3717 and will accrue from the date of the billing.

(g) *FHFA or FHFA–OIG assistance to reduce costs.* If FHFA or FHFA–OIG notifies you of estimated fees exceeding \$100.00 or requests advance payment or a deposit, you will have an opportunity to consult with FHFA or FHFA–OIG FOIA staff to modify or reformulate your request to meet your needs at a lower cost.

(h) *Fee waiver requests.* You may request a fee waiver in accordance with FOIA and this regulation. FHFA or

FHFA–OIG may grant your fee waiver request if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the Federal Government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. In submitting a fee waiver request, you must address the following six factors—

(1) Whether the subject of the requested records concerns the operations or activities of the Federal Government;

(2) Whether the disclosure is likely to contribute to an understanding of Federal Government operations or activities;

(3) Whether disclosure of the requested information will contribute to public understanding;

(4) Whether the disclosure is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of Federal Government operations or activities;

(5) Whether the requester has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure; and

(6) Whether the magnitude of the identified commercial interest of the requester is sufficiently large, in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(i) *Determination on request.* FHFA or FHFA–OIG will notify you within 20 days of receipt of your request whether the fee waiver has been granted. A request for fee waiver that is denied may only be appealed when a final decision has been made on the initial FOIA request.

§ 1202.12 Is there anything else I need to know about FOIA procedures?

This FOIA regulation does not and shall not be construed to create any right or to entitle any person, as of right, to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which such person is not entitled under FOIA. This regulation only provides procedures for requesting records under FOIA.

**PART 1203—EQUAL ACCESS TO
JUSTICE ACT**

Subpart A—General Provisions

- Sec.
1203.1 Purpose and scope.
1203.2 Definitions.
1203.3 Eligible parties.
1203.4 Standards for awards.
1203.5 Allowable fees and expenses.
1203.6 Rulemaking on maximum rate for fees.
1203.7 Awards against other agencies.
1203.8–1203.9 [Reserved]

**Subpart B—Information Required From
Applicants**

- 1203.10 Contents of the application for award.
1203.11 Confidentiality of net worth exhibit.
1203.12 Documentation for fees and expenses.
1203.13–1203.19 [Reserved]

**Subpart C—Procedures for Filing and
Consideration of the Application for Award**

- 1203.20 Filing and service of the application for award and related papers.
1203.21 Response to the application for award.
1203.22 Reply to the response.
1203.23 Comments by other parties.
1203.24 Settlement.
1203.25 Further proceedings on the application for award.
1203.26 Decision of the adjudicative officer.
1203.27 Review by FHFA.
1203.28 Judicial review.
1203.29 Payment of award.

AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 4526, 5 U.S.C. 504.

SOURCE: 75 FR 65219, Oct. 22, 2010, unless otherwise noted..

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 1203.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) This part implements the Equal Access to Justice Act, 5 U.S.C. 504, by establishing procedures for the filing and consideration of applications for awards of fees and other expenses to eligible individuals and entities who are parties to adversary adjudications before FHFA.

(b) This part applies to the award of fees and other expenses in connection with adversary adjudications before FHFA. However, if a court reviews the underlying decision of the adversary adjudication, an award for fees and

other expenses may be made only pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 2412(d)(3).

§ 1203.2 Definitions.

As used in this part:

Adjudicative officer means the official who presided at the underlying adversary adjudication, without regard to whether the official is designated as a hearing examiner, administrative law judge, administrative judge, or otherwise.

Adversary adjudication means an administrative proceeding conducted by FHFA under 5 U.S.C. 554 in which the position of FHFA or any other agency of the United States is represented by counsel or otherwise, including but not limited to an adjudication conducted under the Safety and Soundness Act, as amended, and any implementing regulations. Any issue as to whether an administrative proceeding is an adversary adjudication for purposes of this part will be an issue for resolution in the proceeding on the application for award.

Affiliate means an individual, corporation, or other entity that directly or indirectly controls or owns a majority of the voting shares or other interests of the party, or any corporation or other entity of which the party directly or indirectly owns or controls a majority of the voting shares or other interest, unless the adjudicative officer determines that it would be unjust and contrary to the purpose of the Equal Access to Justice Act in light of the actual relationship between the affiliated entities to consider them to be affiliates for purposes of this part.

Agency counsel means the attorney or attorneys designated by the General Counsel of FHFA to represent FHFA in an adversary adjudication covered by this part.

Demand of FHFA means the express demand of FHFA that led to the adversary adjudication, but does not include a recitation by FHFA of the maximum statutory penalty when accompanied by an express demand for a lesser amount.

Director means the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Fees and other expenses means reasonable attorney or agent fees, the reasonable expenses of expert witnesses, and

§ 1203.3

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

the reasonable cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, or test, which the agency finds necessary for the preparation of the eligible party's case.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Final disposition date means the date on which a decision or order disposing of the merits of the adversary adjudication or any other complete resolution of the adversary adjudication, such as a settlement or voluntary dismissal, becomes final and unappealable, both within the agency and to the courts.

Party means an individual, partnership, corporation, association, or public or private organization that is named or admitted as a party, that is admitted as a party for limited purposes, or that is properly seeking and entitled as of right to be admitted as a party in an adversary adjudication.

Position of FHFA means the position taken by FHFA in the adversary adjudication, including the action or failure to act by FHFA upon which the adversary adjudication was based.

§ 1203.3 Eligible parties.

(a) To be eligible for an award of fees and other expenses under the Equal Access to Justice Act, the applicant must show that it meets all conditions of eligibility set out in this paragraph and has complied with all the requirements in Subpart B of this part. The applicant must also be a party to the adversary adjudication for which it seeks an award.

(b) To be eligible for an award of fees and other expenses for prevailing parties, a party must be one of the following:

(1) An individual who has a net worth of not more than \$2 million;

(2) The sole owner of an unincorporated business who has a net worth of not more than \$7 million, including both personal and business interest, and not more than 500 employees; however, a party who owns an unincorporated business will be considered to be an "individual" rather than the "sole owner of an unincorporated business" if the issues on which the party prevails are related primarily to personal interests rather than to business interests;

(3) A charitable or other tax-exempt organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), with not more than 500 employees;

(4) A cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act, 12 U.S.C. 1141j(a), with not more than 500 employees;

(5) Any other partnership, corporation, association, unit of local government, or organization that has a net worth of not more than \$7 million and not more than 500 employees; or

(6) For the purposes of an application filed pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 504(a)(4), a small entity as defined in 5 U.S.C. 601.

(c) For purposes of eligibility under this section:

(1) The employees of a party must include all persons who regularly perform services for remuneration for the party, under the party's direction and control. Part-time employees must be included on a proportional basis.

(2) The net worth and number of employees of the party and its affiliates must be aggregated to determine eligibility.

(3) The net worth and number of employees of a party will be determined as of the date the underlying adversary adjudication was initiated.

(4) A party that participates in an adversary adjudication primarily on behalf of one or more entities that would be ineligible for an award is not itself eligible for an award.

§ 1203.4 Standards for awards.

(a) An eligible party that files an application for award of fees and other expenses in accordance with this part will receive an award of fees and other expenses related to defending against a demand of FHFA if the demand was in excess of the decision in the underlying adversary adjudication and was unreasonable when compared with the decision under the facts and circumstances of the case, unless the party has committed a willful violation of law or otherwise acted in bad faith, or unless special circumstances make an award unjust. The burden of proof that the demand of FHFA was substantially in excess of the decision and is unreasonable when compared with the decision is on the eligible party.

(b) An eligible party that submits an application for award in accordance with this part will receive an award of fees and other expenses incurred in connection with an adversary adjudication in which it prevailed or in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the adversary adjudication in which it prevailed, unless the position of FHFA in the adversary adjudication was substantially justified or special circumstances make an award unjust. FHFA has the burden of proof to show that its position was substantially justified and may do so by showing that its position was reasonable in law and in fact.

§ 1203.5 Allowable fees and expenses.

(a) Awards of fees and other expenses will be based on rates customarily charged by persons engaged in the business of acting as attorneys, agents, and expert witnesses, even if the services were made available without charge or at a reduced rate to the party. However, except as provided in § 1203.6, an award for the fee of an attorney or agent may not exceed \$125 per hour and an award to compensate an expert witness may not exceed the highest rate at which FHFA pays expert witnesses. However, an award may also include the reasonable expenses of the attorney, agent, or expert witness as a separate item if he or she ordinarily charges clients separately for such expenses.

(b) In determining the reasonableness of the fee sought for an attorney, agent, or expert witness, the adjudicative officer will consider the following:

(1) If the attorney, agent, or expert witness is in private practice, his or her customary fees for similar services; or, if the attorney, agent, or expert witness is an employee of the eligible party, the fully allocated costs of the services;

(2) The prevailing rate for similar services in the community in which the attorney, agent, or expert witness ordinarily performs services;

(3) The time actually spent in the representation of the eligible party;

(4) The time reasonably spent in light of the difficulty or complexity of the issues in the adversary adjudication; and

(5) Such other factors as may bear on the value of the services provided.

(c) In determining the reasonable cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test, project, or similar matter prepared on behalf of a party, the adjudicative officer will consider the prevailing rate for similar services in the community in which the services were performed.

(d) Fees and other expenses incurred before the date on which an adversary adjudication was initiated will be awarded only if the eligible party can demonstrate that they were reasonably incurred in preparation for the adversary adjudication.

§ 1203.6 Rulemaking on maximum rate for fees.

If warranted by an increase in the cost of living or by special circumstances, FHFA may adopt regulations providing for an award of attorney or agent fees at a rate higher than \$125 per hour in adversary adjudications covered by this part. Special circumstances include the limited availability of attorneys or agents who are qualified to handle certain types of adversary adjudications. FHFA will conduct any rulemaking proceedings for this purpose under the informal rulemaking procedures of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 553.

§ 1203.7 Awards against other agencies.

If another agency of the United States participates in an adversary adjudication before FHFA and takes a position that was not substantially justified, the award or appropriate portion of the award to an eligible party that prevailed over that agency will be made against that agency.

§§ 1203.8–1203.9 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Information Required From Applicants

§ 1203.10 Contents of the application for award.

(a) An application for award of fees and other expenses under either § 1203.4(a) and § 1203.4(b) must:

§ 1203.11

(1) Identify the applicant and the adversary adjudication for which an award is sought;

(2) State the amount of fees and other expenses for which an award is sought;

(3) Provide the statements and documentation required by paragraph (b) or (c) of this section and §1203.12 and any additional information required by the adjudicative officer; and

(4) Be signed by the applicant or an authorized officer or attorney of the applicant and contain or be accompanied by a written verification under oath or under penalty of perjury that the information provided in the application is true and correct.

(b) An application for award under §1203.4(a) must show that the demand of FHFA was substantially in excess of, and was unreasonable when compared to, the decision in the underlying adversary adjudication under the facts and circumstances of the case. It must also show that the applicant is a small entity as defined in 5 U.S.C. 601.

(c) An application for award under §1203.4(b) must:

(1) Show that the applicant has prevailed in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the underlying adversary adjudication and identify the position of FHFA in the adversary adjudication that the applicant alleges was not substantially justified;

(2) State the number of employees of the applicant and describe briefly the type and purposes of its organization or business (if the applicant is not an individual);

(3) State that the net worth of the applicant does not exceed \$2 million, if the applicant is an individual; or for all other applicants, state that the net worth of the applicant and its affiliates, if any, does not exceed \$7 million; and

(4) Include one of the following:

(i) A detailed exhibit showing the net worth (net worth exhibit) of the applicant and its affiliates, if any, when the underlying adversary adjudication was initiated. The net worth exhibit may be in any form convenient to the applicant as long as the net worth exhibit provides full disclosure of the assets and liabilities of the applicant and its

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

affiliates, if any, and is sufficient to determine whether the applicant qualifies as an eligible party;

(ii) A copy of a ruling by the Internal Revenue Service that shows that the applicant qualifies as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3); or in the case of a tax-exempt organization not required to obtain a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service on its exempt status, a statement that describes the basis for the belief that the applicant qualifies under such section; or

(iii) A statement that the applicant is a cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act, 12 U.S.C. 1141j(a).

§ 1203.11 Confidentiality of net worth exhibit.

Unless otherwise ordered by the Director, or required by law, the statement of net worth will be for the confidential use of the adjudicative officer, the Director, and agency counsel.

§ 1203.12 Documentation for fees and expenses.

(a) The application for award must be accompanied by full and itemized documentation of the fees and other expenses for which an award is sought. The adjudicative officer may require the applicant to provide vouchers, receipts, logs, or other documentation for any fees or expenses claimed.

(b) A separate itemized statement must be submitted for each entity or individual whose services are covered by the application. Each itemized statement must include:

(1) The hours spent by each entity or individual;

(2) A description of the specific services performed and the rates at which each fee has been computed; and

(3) Any expenses for which reimbursement is sought, the total amount claimed, and the total amount paid or payable by the applicant or by any other person or entity.

§§ 1203.13–1203.19 [Reserved]

Subpart C—Procedures for Filing and Consideration of the Application for Award

§ 1203.20 Filing and service of the application for award and related papers.

(a) An application for an award of fees and other expenses must be filed no later than 30 days after the final disposition of the underlying adversary adjudication.

(b) An application for award and other papers related to the proceedings on the application for award must be filed and served on all parties in the same manner as papers are filed and served in the underlying adversary adjudication, except as otherwise provided in this part.

(c) The computation of time for filing and service of the application of award and other papers must be computed in the same manner as in the underlying adversary adjudication.

§ 1203.21 Response to the application for award.

(a) Agency counsel must file a response within 30 days after service of an application for award of fees and other expenses except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section. In the response, agency counsel must explain any objections to the award requested and identify the facts relied upon to support the objections. If any of the alleged facts are not already in the record of the underlying adversary adjudication, agency counsel must include with the response either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 1203.25.

(b) If agency counsel and the applicant believe that the issues in the application for award can be settled, they may jointly file a statement of their intent to negotiate a settlement. The filing of this statement will extend the time for filing a response for an additional 30 days. Upon request by agency counsel and the applicant, the adjudicative officer may grant for good cause further time extensions.

(c) Agency counsel may request that the adjudicative officer extend the time period for filing a response. If

agency counsel does not respond or otherwise does not contest or settle the application for award within the 30-day period or the extended time period, the adjudicative officer may make an award of fees and other expenses upon a satisfactory showing of entitlement by the applicant.

§ 1203.22 Reply to the response.

Within 15 days after service of a response, the applicant may file a reply. If the reply is based on any alleged facts not already in the record of the underlying adversary adjudication, the applicant must include with the reply either supporting affidavits or a request for further proceedings under § 1203.25.

§ 1203.23 Comments by other parties.

Any party to the underlying adversary adjudication other than the applicant and agency counsel may file comments on an application for award within 30 calendar days after it is served, or on a response within 15 calendar days after it is served. A commenting party may not participate further in proceedings on the application unless the adjudicative officer determines that the public interest requires such participation in order to permit full exploration of matters raised in the comments.

§ 1203.24 Settlement.

The applicant and agency counsel may agree on a proposed settlement of an award before the final decision on the application for award is made, either in connection with a settlement of the underlying adversary adjudication or after the underlying adversary adjudication has been concluded. If the eligible party and agency counsel agree on a proposed settlement of an award before an application for award has been filed, the application must be filed with the proposed settlement.

§ 1203.25 Further proceedings on the application for award.

(a) On request of either the applicant or agency counsel, on the adjudicative officer's own initiative, or as requested by the Director under § 1203.27, the adjudicative officer may order further

§ 1203.26

proceedings, such as an informal conference, oral argument, additional written submissions, or, as to issues other than substantial justification (such as the applicant's eligibility or substantiation of fees and expenses), pertinent discovery or an evidential hearing. Such further proceedings will be held only when necessary for full and fair resolution of the issues arising from the application for award and will be conducted as promptly as possible. The issue as to whether the position of FHFA in the underlying adversary adjudication was substantially justified will be determined on the basis of the whole administrative record that was made in the underlying adversary adjudication.

(b) A request that the adjudicative officer order further proceedings under this section must specifically identify the information sought on the disputed issues and must explain why the additional proceedings are necessary to resolve the issues.

§ 1203.26 Decision of the adjudicative officer.

(a) The adjudicative officer must make the initial decision on the basis of the written record, except if further proceedings are ordered under § 1203.25.

(b) The adjudicative officer must issue a written initial decision on the application for award within 30 days after completion of proceedings on the application. The initial decision will become the final decision of FHFA after 30 days from the day it was issued, unless review is ordered under § 1203.27.

(c) In all initial decisions, the adjudicative officer must include findings and conclusions with respect to the applicant's eligibility and an explanation of the reasons for any difference between the amount requested by the applicant and the amount awarded. If the applicant has sought an award against more than one agency, the adjudicative officer must also include findings and conclusions with respect to the allocation of payment of any award made.

(d) In initial decisions on applications filed pursuant to § 1203.4(a), the adjudicative officer must include findings and conclusions as to whether FHFA made a demand that was sub-

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

stantially in excess of the decision in the underlying adversary adjudication and that was unreasonable when compared with that decision; and, if at issue, whether the applicant has committed a willful violation of the law or otherwise acted in bad faith, or whether special circumstances would make the award unjust.

(e) In decisions on applications filed pursuant to § 1203.4(b), the adjudicative officer must include written findings and conclusions as to whether the applicant is a prevailing party and whether the position of FHFA was substantially justified; and, if at issue, whether the applicant unduly protracted or delayed the underlying adversary adjudication or whether special circumstance make the award unjust.

§ 1203.27 Review by FHFA.

Within 30 days after the adjudicative officer issues an initial decision under § 1203.26, either the applicant or agency counsel may request the Director to review the initial decision of the adjudicative officer. The Director may also decide, at his or her discretion, to review the initial decision. If review is ordered, the Director must issue a final decision on the application for award or remand the application for award to the adjudicative officer for further proceedings under § 1203.25.

§ 1203.28 Judicial review.

Any party, other than the United States, that is dissatisfied with the final decision on an application for award of fees and expenses under this part may seek judicial review as provided in 5 U.S.C. 504(c)(2).

§ 1203.29 Payment of award.

To receive payment of an award of fees and other expenses granted under this part, the applicant must submit a copy of the final decision that grants the award and a certification that the applicant will not seek review of the decision in the United States courts to the Director, Federal Housing Finance Agency, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552. FHFA must pay the amount awarded to the applicant within 60 days of receipt of the submission of the copy of the final decision and the certification, unless judicial review of

the award has been sought by any party to the proceedings.

PART 1204—PRIVACY ACT IMPLEMENTATION

Sec.

- 1204.1 Why did FHFA issue this part?
 1204.2 What do the terms in this part mean?
 1204.3 How do I make a Privacy Act request?
 1204.4 How will FHFA or FHFA-OIG respond to my Privacy Act request?
 1204.5 What if I am dissatisfied with the response to my Privacy Act request?
 1204.6 What does it cost to get records under the Privacy Act?
 1204.7 Are there any exemptions from the Privacy Act?
 1204.8 How are records secured?
 1204.9 Does FHFA or FHFA-OIG collect and use Social Security numbers?
 1204.10 What are FHFA and FHFA-OIG employee responsibilities under the Privacy Act?
 1204.11 May FHFA-OIG obtain Privacy Act records from other Federal agencies for law enforcement purposes?

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552a.

SOURCE: 76 FR 51871, Aug. 19, 2011, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1204.1 Why did FHFA issue this part?

The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) issued this part to—

- (a) Implement the Privacy Act, a Federal law that helps protect private information about individuals that Federal agencies collect or maintain. You should read this part together with the Privacy Act, which provides additional information about records maintained on individuals;
- (b) Establish rules that apply to all FHFA and FHFA Office of Inspector General (FHFA-OIG) maintained systems of records retrievable by an individual's name or other personal identifier;
- (c) Describe procedures through which you may request access to records, request amendment or correction of those records, or request an accounting of disclosures of those records by FHFA or FHFA-OIG;
- (d) Inform you, that when it is appropriate to do so, FHFA or FHFA-OIG automatically processes a Privacy Act request for access to records under both the Privacy Act and FOIA, following the rules contained in this part

and in FHFA's Freedom of Information Act regulation at part 1202 of this title so that you will receive the maximum amount of information available to you by law;

(e) Notify you that this part does not entitle you to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which you are not entitled under the Privacy Act. It also does not, and may not be relied upon, to create any substantive or procedural right or benefit enforceable against FHFA or FHFA-OIG; and

(f) Notify you that this part applies to both FHFA and FHFA-OIG.

§ 1204.2 What do the terms in this part mean?

The following definitions apply to the terms used in this part—

Access means making a record available to a subject individual.

Amendment means any correction of, addition to, or deletion from a record.

Court means any entity conducting a legal proceeding.

Days, unless stated as “calendar days,” are working days and do not include Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays. If the last day of any period prescribed herein falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, the last day of the period will be the next working day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency and includes its predecessor agencies, the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight (OFHEO) and the Federal Housing Finance Board (FHFB).

FHFA-OIG means the Office of Inspector General for FHFA.

FOIA means the Freedom of Information Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552).

Individual means a natural person who is either a citizen of the United States of America or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

Maintain includes collect, use, disseminate, or control.

Privacy Act means the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a).

Privacy Act Appeals Officer means a person designated by the FHFA Director to process appeals of denials of requests for or seeking amendment of records maintained by FHFA under the Privacy Act. For appeals pertaining to

§ 1204.3

records maintained by FHFA-OIG, *Privacy Act Appeals Officer* means a person designated by the FHFA Inspector General to process appeals of denials of requests for or seeking amendment of records maintained by FHFA-OIG under the Privacy Act.

Privacy Act Officer means a person designated by the FHFA Director who has primary responsibility for privacy and data protection policy and is authorized to process requests for or amendment of records maintained by FHFA under the Privacy Act. For requests pertaining to records maintained by FHFA-OIG, *Privacy Act Officer* means a person designated by the FHFA Inspector General to process requests for or amendment of records maintained by FHFA-OIG under the Privacy Act.

Record means any item, collection, or grouping of information about an individual that FHFA or FHFA-OIG maintains within a system of records, including, but not limited to, the individual's name, an identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual, such as a finger or voice print, or photograph.

Routine use means the purposes for which records and information contained in a system of records may be disclosed by FHFA or FHFA-OIG without the consent of the subject of the record. Routine uses for records are identified in each system of records notice. Routine use does not include disclosure that subsection (b) of the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a(b)) otherwise permits.

Senior Agency Official for Privacy means a person designated by the FHFA Director who has the authority and responsibility to oversee and supervise the FHFA privacy program and implementation of the Privacy Act.

System of Records means a group of records FHFA or FHFA-OIG maintains or controls from which information is retrieved by the name of an individual or by some identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual. Single records or groups of records that are not retrieved by a personal identifier are not part of a system of records.

System of Records Notice means a notice published in the FEDERAL REG-

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

ISTER which announces the creation, deletion, or amendment of one or more system of records. System of records notices are also used to identify a system of records' routine uses.

§ 1204.3 How do I make a Privacy Act request?

(a) *What is a valid request?* In general, a Privacy Act request can be made on your own behalf for records or information about you. You can make a Privacy Act request on behalf of another individual as the parent or guardian of a minor, or as the guardian of someone determined by a court to be incompetent. You also may request access to another individual's record or information if you have that individual's written consent, unless other conditions of disclosure apply.

(b) *How and where do I make a request?* Your request must be in writing. Regardless of whether your request seeks records from FHFA, FHFA-OIG, or both, you may appear in person to submit your written request to the FHFA Privacy Act Officer, or send your written request to the FHFA Privacy Act Officer by electronic mail, mail, delivery service, or facsimile. The electronic mail address is: privacy@fhfa.gov. For mail or delivery service, the address is: FHFA Privacy Act Officer, Federal Housing Finance Agency, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552. The facsimile number is (202) 414-6425. Requests for FHFA-OIG maintained records will be forwarded to FHFA-OIG for processing and direct response. You can help FHFA and FHFA-OIG process your request by marking electronic mail, letters, or facsimiles and the subject line, envelope, or facsimile cover sheet with "Privacy Act Request." FHFA's "Privacy Act Reference Guide," which is available on FHFA's Web site, <http://www.fhfa.gov>, provides additional information to assist you in making your request.

(c) *What must the request include?* You must describe the record that you want in enough detail to enable either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer to locate the system of records containing it with a reasonable amount of effort. Include specific information about each record sought, such as the

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1204.4

time period in which you believe it was compiled, the name or identifying number of each system of records in which you believe it is kept, and the date, title or name, author, recipient, or subject matter of the record. As a general rule, the more specific you are about the record that you want, the more likely FHFA or FHFA-OIG will be able to locate it in response to your request.

(d) *How do I request amendment or correction of a record?* If you are requesting an amendment or correction of any FHFA or FHFA-OIG record, identify each particular record in question and the system of records in which the record is located, describe the amendment or correction that you want, and state why you believe that the record is not accurate, relevant, timely, or complete. You may submit any documentation that you think would be helpful, including an annotated copy of the record.

(e) *How do I request for an accounting of disclosures?* If you are requesting an accounting of disclosures by FHFA or FHFA-OIG of a record to another person, organization, or Federal agency, you must identify each particular record in question. An accounting generally includes the date, nature, and purpose of each disclosure, as well as the name and address of the person, organization, or Federal agency to which the disclosure was made, subject to §1204.7.

(f) *Must I verify my identity?* Yes. When making requests under the Privacy Act, your request must verify your identity to protect your privacy or the privacy of the individual on whose behalf you are acting. If you make a Privacy Act request and you do not follow these identity verification procedures, FHFA or FHFA-OIG cannot and will not process your request.

(1) *How do I verify my identity?* To verify your identity, you must state your full name, current address, and date and place of birth. In order to help identify and locate the records you request, you also may, at your option, include your Social Security number. If you make your request in person and your identity is not known to either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer, you must provide either two

forms of unexpired identification with photographs issued by a federal, state, or local government agency or entity (*i.e.* passport, passport card, driver's license, ID card, etc.), or one form of unexpired identification with a photograph issued by a federal, state, or local government agency or entity (*i.e.* passport, passport card, driver's license, ID card, etc.) and a properly authenticated birth certificate. If you make your request by mail, your signature either must be notarized or submitted under 28 U.S.C. 1746, a law that permits statements to be made under penalty of perjury as a substitute for notarization. You may fulfill this requirement by having your signature on your request letter witnessed by a notary or by including the following statement just before the signature on your request letter: "I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on [date]. [Signature]."

(2) *How do I verify parentage or guardianship?* If you make a Privacy Act request as the parent or guardian of a minor, or as the guardian of someone determined by a court to be incompetent, with respect to records or information about that individual, you must establish—

(i) The identity of the individual who is the subject of the record, by stating the individual's name, current address, date and place of birth, and, at your option, the Social Security number of the individual;

(ii) Your own identity, as required in paragraph (f)(1) of this section;

(iii) That you are the parent or guardian of the individual, which you may prove by providing a properly authenticated copy of the individual's birth certificate showing your parentage or a properly authenticated court order establishing your guardianship; and

(iv) That you are acting on behalf of the individual in making the request.

§ 1204.4 How will FHFA or FHFA-OIG respond to my Privacy Act request?

(a) *How will FHFA or FHFA-OIG locate the requested records?* FHFA or FHFA-OIG will search to determine if requested records exist in the system

§ 1204.5

of records it owns or controls. You can find FHFA and FHFA-OIG system of records notices on our Web site at <http://www.fhfa.gov>. You can also find descriptions of OFHEO and FHFBS system of records that have not yet been superseded on the FHFA Web site. A description of the system of records also is available in the "Privacy Act Issuances" compilation published by the Office of the Federal Register of the National Archives and Records Administration. You can access the "Privacy Act Issuances" compilation in most large reference and university libraries or electronically at the Government Printing Office Web site at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/privacyact/index.html>. You also can request a copy of FHFA or FHFA-OIG system of records from the Privacy Act Officer.

(b) *How long does FHFA or FHFA-OIG have to respond?* Either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer generally will respond to your request in writing within 20 days after receiving it, if it meets the §1204.3 requirements. For requests to amend a record, either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer will respond within 10 days after receipt of the request to amend. FHFA or FHFA-OIG may extend the response time in unusual circumstances, such as when consultation is needed with another Federal agency (if that agency is subject to the Privacy Act) about a record or to retrieve a record shipped offsite for storage. If you submit your written request in person, either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer may disclose records or information to you directly and create a written record of the grant of the request. If you are to be accompanied by another person when accessing your record or any information pertaining to you, FHFA or FHFA-OIG may require your written authorization before permitting access or discussing the record in the presence of the other person.

(c) *What will the FHFA or FHFA-OIG response include?* The written response will include a determination to grant or deny your request in whole or in part, a brief explanation of the reasons for the determination, and the amount of the fee charged, if any, under §1204.6. If you are granted a request to access a

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

record, FHFA or FHFA-OIG will make the record available to you. If you are granted a request to amend or correct a record, the response will describe any amendments or corrections made and advise you of your right to obtain a copy of the amended or corrected record.

(d) *What is an adverse determination?* An adverse determination is a determination on a Privacy Act request that—

(1) Withholds any requested record in whole or in part;

(2) Denies a request for an amendment or correction of a record in whole or in part;

(3) Declines to provide a requested accounting of disclosures;

(4) Advises that a requested record does not exist or cannot be located; or

(5) Finds what has been requested is not a record subject to the Privacy Act.

(e) *What will be stated in a response that includes an adverse determination?* If an adverse determination is made with respect to your request, either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer's written response under this section will identify the person responsible for the adverse determination, state that the adverse determination is not a final action of FHFA or FHFA-OIG, and state that you may appeal the adverse determination under §1204.5.

§ 1204.5 What if I am dissatisfied with the response to my Privacy Act request?

(a) *May I appeal the response?* You may appeal any adverse determination made in response to your Privacy Act request. If you wish to seek review by a court of any adverse determination or denial of a request, you must first appeal it under this section.

(b) *How do I appeal the response?*—(1) You may appeal by submitting in writing, a statement of the reasons you believe the adverse determination should be overturned. FHFA or FHFA-OIG must receive your written appeal within 30 calendar days of the date of the adverse determination under §1204.4. Your written appeal may include as much or as little related information as you wish, as long as it clearly identifies the determination (including the

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1204.5

request number, if known) that you are appealing.

(2) If FHFA or FHFA-OIG denied your request in whole or in part, you may appeal the denial by writing directly to the FHFA Privacy Act Appeals Officer through electronic mail, mail, delivery service, or facsimile. The electronic mail address is: privacy@fhfa.gov. For mail or express mail, the address is: FHFA Privacy Act Appeals Officer, Federal Housing Finance Agency, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552. The facsimile number is: (202) 414-8917. For appeals of FHFA-OIG denials, whether in whole or in part, the appeal must be clearly marked by adding “FHFA-OIG” after “Privacy Act Appeal.” All appeals from denials, in whole or part, made by FHFA-OIG will be forwarded to the FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer for processing and direct response. You can help FHFA and FHFA-OIG process your appeal by marking electronic mail, letters, or facsimiles and the subject line, envelope, or facsimile cover sheet with “Privacy Act Appeal.” FHFA’s “Privacy Act Reference Guide,” which is available on FHFA’s Web site, <http://www.fhfa.gov>, provides additional information to assist you in making your appeal. FHFA or FHFA-OIG ordinarily will not act on an appeal if the Privacy Act request becomes a matter of litigation.

(3) If you need more time to file your appeal, you may request an extension of time of no more than ten (10) calendar days in which to file your appeal, but only if your request is made within the original 30-calendar day time period for filing the appeal. Granting an extension is in the sole discretion of either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer.

(c) *Who has the authority to grant or deny appeals?* For appeals from the FHFA Privacy Act Officer, the FHFA Privacy Act Appeals Officer is authorized to act on your appeal. For appeals from the FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer, the FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer is authorized to act on your appeal.

(d) *When will FHFA or FHFA-OIG respond to my appeal?* FHFA or FHFA-OIG generally will respond to you in writing within 30 days of receipt of an

appeal that meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, unless for good cause shown, the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer extends the response time.

(e) *What will the FHFA or FHFA-OIG response include?* The written response will include the determination of either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer, whether to grant or deny your appeal in whole or in part, a brief explanation of the reasons for the determination, and information about the Privacy Act provisions for court review of the determination.

(1) If your appeal concerns a request for access to records or information and the appeal determination grants your access, the records or information, if any, will be made available to you.

(2)(i) If your appeal concerns an amendment or correction of a record and the appeal determination grants your request for an amendment or correction, the response will describe any amendment or correction made to the record and advise you of your right to obtain a copy of the amended or corrected record under this part. FHFA or FHFA-OIG will notify all persons, organizations, or Federal agencies to which it previously disclosed the record, if an accounting of that disclosure was made, that the record has been amended or corrected. Whenever the record is subsequently disclosed, the record will be disclosed as amended or corrected.

(ii) If the response to your appeal denies your request for an amendment or correction to a record, the response will advise you of your right to file a Statement of Disagreement under paragraph (f) of this section.

(f) *What is a Statement of Disagreement?*—(1) A Statement of Disagreement is a concise written statement in which you clearly identify each part of any record that you dispute and explain your reason(s) for disagreeing with either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer’s denial, in whole or in part, of your appeal requesting amendment or correction. Your Statement of Disagreement must be received by either the FHFA or FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Officer within 30 calendar days of either the FHFA or

§ 1204.6

FHFA-OIG Privacy Act Appeals Officer's denial, in whole or in part, of your appeal concerning amendment or correction of a record. FHFA and FHFA-OIG will place your Statement of Disagreement in the system of records in which the disputed record is maintained. FHFA and FHFA-OIG may also append a concise statement of its reason(s) for denying the request for an amendment or correction of the record.

(2) FHFA and FHFA-OIG will notify all persons, organizations, and Federal agencies to which it previously disclosed the disputed record, if an accounting of that disclosure was made, that the record is disputed and provide your Statement of Disagreement and the FHFA or FHFA-OIG concise statement, if any. Whenever the disputed record is subsequently disclosed, a copy of your Statement of Disagreement and the FHFA or FHFA-OIG concise statement, if any, will also be disclosed.

§ 1204.6 What does it cost to get records under the Privacy Act?

(a) *Must I agree to pay fees?* Your Privacy Act request is your agreement to pay all applicable fees, unless you specify a limit on the amount of fees you agree to pay. FHFA or FHFA-OIG will not exceed the specified limit without your written agreement.

(b) *How does FHFA or FHFA-OIG calculate fees?* FHFA and FHFA-OIG will charge a fee for duplication of a record under the Privacy Act in the same way it charges for duplication of records under FOIA in 12 CFR 1202.11. There are no fees to search for or review records.

§ 1204.7 Are there any exemptions from the Privacy Act?

(a) *What is a Privacy Act exemption?* The Privacy Act authorizes the Director and the FHFA Inspector General to exempt records or information in a system of records from some of the Privacy Act requirements, if the Director or the FHFA Inspector General, as appropriate, determines that the exemption is necessary.

(b) *How do I know if the records or information I want are exempt?*—(1) Each system of records notice will advise you if the Director or the FHFA Inspector General has determined records or information in records are exempt

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

from Privacy Act requirements. If the Director or the FHFA Inspector General has claimed an exemption for a system of records, the system of records notice will identify the exemption and the provisions of the Privacy Act from which the system is exempt.

(2) Until superseded by FHFA or FHFA-OIG systems of records, the following OFHEO and FHFBS systems of records are, under 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2) or (k)(5), exempt from the Privacy Act requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3), (d), (e)(1), (e)(4)(G), (e)(4)(H), (e)(4)(I), and (f)—

(i) OFHEO-11 Litigation and Enforcement Information System; and

(ii) FHFBS-5 Agency Personnel Investigative Records.

(c) *What exemptions potentially apply to FHFA-OIG records?* Unless the FHFA Inspector General, his or her designee, or a statute specifically authorizes disclosure, FHFA-OIG will not release records of matters that are subject to the following exemptions—

(1) To the extent that the systems of records entitled “FHFA-OIG Audit Files Database,” “FHFA-OIG Investigative & Evaluative Files Database,” “FHFA-OIG Investigative & Evaluative MIS Database,” “FHFA-OIG Hotline Database,” and “FHFA-OIG Correspondence Database” contain any information compiled by FHFA-OIG for the purpose of criminal law enforcement investigations, such information falls within the scope of exemption (j)(2) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2), and therefore these systems of records are exempt from the requirements of the following subsections of the Privacy Act to that extent, for the reasons stated in paragraphs (1)(i) through (vi) of this section.

(i) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3), because release of an accounting of disclosures to an individual who is the subject of an investigation or evaluation could reveal the nature and scope of the investigation or evaluation and could result in the altering or destruction of evidence, improper influencing of witnesses, and other evasive actions that could impede or compromise the investigation or evaluation.

(ii) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(1), because release of investigative or evaluative

records to an individual who is the subject of an investigation or evaluation could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties, reveal the identity of confidential sources, or reveal sensitive investigative or evaluative techniques and procedures.

(iii) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(2), because amendment or correction of investigative or evaluative records could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, or could impose an impossible administrative and investigative or evaluative burden by requiring FHFA-OIG to continuously retrograde its investigations or evaluations attempting to resolve questions of accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and completeness.

(iv) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(1), because it is often impossible to determine relevance or necessity of information in the early stages of an investigation or evaluation. The value of such information is a question of judgment and timing; what appears relevant and necessary when collected may ultimately be evaluated and viewed as irrelevant and unnecessary to an investigation or evaluation. In addition, FHFA-OIG may obtain information concerning the violation of laws other than those within the scope of its jurisdiction. In the interest of effective law enforcement, FHFA-OIG should retain this information because it may aid in establishing patterns of unlawful activity and provide leads for other law enforcement agencies. Further, in obtaining evidence during an investigation or evaluation, information may be provided to FHFA-OIG that relates to matters incidental to the main purpose of the investigation or evaluation, but which may be pertinent to the investigative or evaluative jurisdiction of another agency. Such information cannot readily be identified.

(v) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(2), because in a law enforcement investigation or an evaluation it is usually counterproductive to collect information to the greatest extent practicable directly from the subject thereof. It is not always feasible to rely upon the subject of an investigation or evaluation as a

source for information which may implicate him or her in illegal activities. In addition, collecting information directly from the subject could seriously compromise an investigation or evaluation by prematurely revealing its nature and scope, or could provide the subject with an opportunity to conceal criminal activities, or intimidate potential sources, in order to avoid apprehension.

(vi) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(3), because providing such notice to the subject of an investigation or evaluation, or to other individual sources, could seriously compromise the investigation or evaluation by prematurely revealing its nature and scope, or could inhibit cooperation, permit the subject to evade apprehension, or cause interference with undercover activities.

(2) To the extent that the systems of records entitled "FHFA-OIG Audit Files Database," "FHFA-OIG Investigative & Evaluative Files Database," "FHFA-OIG Investigative & Evaluative MIS Database," "FHFA-OIG Hotline Database," and "FHFA-OIG Correspondence Database," contain information compiled by FHFA-OIG for the purpose of criminal law enforcement investigations, such information falls within the scope of exemption (k)(2) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2), and therefore these systems of records are exempt from the requirements of the following subsections of the Privacy Act to that extent, for the reasons stated in paragraphs (c)(2)(i) through (iv) of this section.

(i) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3), because release of an accounting of disclosures to an individual who is the subject of an investigation or evaluation could reveal the nature and scope of the investigation or evaluation and could result in the altering or destruction of evidence, improper influencing of witnesses, and other evasive actions that could impede or compromise the investigation or evaluation.

(ii) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(1), because release of investigative or evaluative records to an individual who is the subject of an investigation or evaluation could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties,

§ 1204.8

reveal the identity of confidential sources, or reveal sensitive investigative or evaluative techniques and procedures.

(iii) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(2), because amendment or correction of investigative or evaluative records could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, or could impose an impossible administrative and investigative or evaluative burden by requiring FHFA-OIG to continuously retrograde its investigations or evaluations attempting to resolve questions of accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and completeness.

(iv) From 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(1), because it is often impossible to determine relevance or necessity of information in the early stages of an investigation or evaluation. The value of such information is a question of judgment and timing; what appears relevant and necessary when collected may ultimately be evaluated and viewed as irrelevant and unnecessary to an investigation or evaluation. In addition, FHFA-OIG may obtain information concerning the violation of laws other than those within the scope of its jurisdiction. In the interest of effective law enforcement, FHFA-OIG should retain this information because it may aid in establishing patterns of unlawful activity and provide leads for other law enforcement agencies. Further, in obtaining evidence during an investigation or evaluation, information may be provided to FHFA-OIG that relates to matters incidental to the main purpose of the investigation or evaluation but which may be pertinent to the investigative or evaluative jurisdiction of another agency. Such information cannot readily be identified.

(3) To the extent that the systems of records entitled "FHFA-OIG Audit Files Database," "FHFA-OIG Investigative & Evaluative Files Database," "FHFA-OIG Investigative & Evaluative MIS Database," "FHFA-OIG Hotline Database," and "FHFA-OIG Correspondence Database" contain any investigatory material compiled by FHFA-OIG for the purpose of determining suitability, eligibility, or qualifications for Federal civilian employment or Federal contracts, the release of which would reveal the identity of a

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

source who furnished information to the Government under an express promise that the identity of the source would be held in confidence, such information falls within the scope of exemption (k)(5) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5), and therefore these systems of records are exempt from the requirements of subsection (d)(1) of the Privacy Act to that extent, because release would reveal the identity of a source who furnished information to the Government under an express promise of confidentiality. Revealing the identity of a confidential source could impede future cooperation by sources, and could result in harassment or harm to such sources.

§ 1204.8 How are records secured?

(a) *What controls must FHFA and FHFA-OIG have in place?* FHFA and FHFA-OIG must establish administrative and physical controls to prevent unauthorized access to their systems of records, unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure of records, and physical damage to or destruction of records. The stringency of these controls corresponds to the sensitivity of the records that the controls protect. At a minimum, the administrative and physical controls must ensure that—

(1) Records are protected from public view;

(2) The area in which records are kept is supervised during business hours to prevent unauthorized persons from having access to them;

(3) Records are inaccessible to unauthorized persons outside of business hours; and

(4) Records are not disclosed to unauthorized persons or under unauthorized circumstances in either oral or written form.

(b) *Is access to records restricted?* Access to records is restricted to authorized employees who require access in order to perform their official duties.

§ 1204.9 Does FHFA or FHFA-OIG collect and use Social Security numbers?

FHFA and FHFA-OIG collect Social Security numbers only when it is necessary and authorized. At least annually, the FHFA Privacy Act Officer or the Senior Agency Official for Privacy

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1204.11

will inform employees who are authorized to collect information that—

(a) Individuals may not be denied any right, benefit, or privilege as a result of refusing to provide their Social Security numbers, unless the collection is authorized either by a statute or by a regulation issued prior to 1975; and

(b) They must inform individuals who are asked to provide their Social Security numbers—

(1) If providing a Social Security number is mandatory or voluntary;

(2) If any statutory or regulatory authority authorizes collection of a Social Security number; and

(3) The uses that will be made of the Social Security number.

§ 1204.10 What are FHFA and FHFA-OIG employee responsibilities under the Privacy Act?

At least annually, the FHFA Privacy Act Officer or the Senior Agency Official for Privacy will inform employees about the provisions of the Privacy Act, including the Privacy Act's civil liability and criminal penalty provisions. Unless otherwise permitted by law, an authorized FHFA or FHFA-OIG employee shall—

(a) Collect from individuals only information that is relevant and necessary to discharge FHFA or FHFA-OIG responsibilities;

(b) Collect information about an individual directly from that individual whenever practicable;

(c) Inform each individual from whom information is collected of—

(1) The legal authority to collect the information and whether providing it is mandatory or voluntary;

(2) The principal purpose for which FHFA or FHFA-OIG intends to use the information;

(3) The routine uses FHFA or FHFA-OIG may make of the information; and

(4) The effects on the individual, if any, of not providing the information.

(d) Ensure that the employee's office does not maintain a system of records without public notice and notify appropriate officials of the existence or development of any system of records that is not the subject of a current or planned public notice;

(e) Maintain all records that are used in making any determination about an

individual with such accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and completeness as is reasonably necessary to ensure fairness to the individual in the determination;

(f) Except for disclosures made under FOIA, make reasonable efforts, prior to disseminating any record about an individual, to ensure that the record is accurate, relevant, timely, and complete;

(g) When required by the Privacy Act, maintain an accounting in the specified form of all disclosures of records by FHFA or FHFA-OIG to persons, organizations, or Federal agencies;

(h) Maintain and use records with care to prevent the unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure of a record to anyone; and

(i) Notify the appropriate official of any record that contains information that the Privacy Act does not permit FHFA or FHFA-OIG to maintain.

§ 1204.11 May FHFA-OIG obtain Privacy Act records from other Federal agencies for law enforcement purposes?

(a) The FHFA Inspector General is authorized under the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to make written requests under 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(7) for transfer of records maintained by other Federal agencies which are necessary to carry out an authorized law enforcement activity under the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.

(b) The FHFA Inspector General delegates the authority under paragraph (a) of this section to the following FHFA-OIG officials—

(1) Principal Deputy Inspector General;

(2) Deputy Inspector General for Audits;

(3) Deputy Inspector General for Investigations;

(4) Deputy Inspector General for Evaluations; and

(5) Deputy Inspector General for Administration.

(c) The officials listed in paragraph (b) of this section may not further delegate or re-delegate the authority described in paragraph (a) of this section.

PART 1206—ASSESSMENTS

Sec.

- 1206.1 Purpose.
- 1206.2 Definitions.
- 1206.3 Annual assessments.
- 1206.4 Increased costs of regulation.
- 1206.5 Working capital fund.
- 1206.6 Notice and review.
- 1206.7 Delinquent payment.
- 1206.8 Enforcement of payment.

AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 4516.

SOURCE: 73 FR 56713, Sept. 30, 2008, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1206.1 Purpose.

This part sets forth the policy and procedures of the FHFA with respect to the establishment and collection of the assessments of the Regulated Entities under 12 U.S.C. 4516.

§ 1206.2 Definitions.

As used in this part:

Act means the Federal Housing Finance Regulatory Reform Act of 2008.

Adequately capitalized means the adequately capitalized capital classification under 12 U.S.C. 1364 and related regulations.

Director means the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency or his or her designee.

Enterprise means the Federal National Mortgage Association or the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation; and “Enterprises” means, collectively, the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation.

Federal Home Loan Bank, or *Bank*, means a Federal Home Loan Bank established under section 12 of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1432).

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Minimum required regulatory capital means the highest amount of capital necessary for a Bank to comply with any of the capital requirements established by the Director and applicable to it.

Regulated Entity means the Federal National Mortgage Association, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, or any of the Federal Home Loan Banks.

Surplus funds means any amounts that are not obligated as of September 30 of the fiscal year for which the assessment was made.

Total exposure means the sum, as of the most recent June quarterly minimum capital report of the Enterprise, of the amounts of the following assets and off-balance sheet obligations that are used to calculate the quarterly minimum capital requirement of the Enterprise under 12 CFR part 1750:

- (1) On-balance sheet assets;
- (2) Guaranteed mortgage-backed securities; and
- (3) Other off-balance sheet obligations as determined by the Director.

Working capital fund means an account for amounts collected from the Regulated Entities to establish an operating reserve that is intended to provide for the payment of large or multiyear capital and operating expenditures, as well as unanticipated expenses.

§ 1206.3 Annual assessments.

(a) *Establishing assessments.* The Director shall establish annual assessments on the Regulated Entities in an amount sufficient to maintain a working capital fund and provide for the payment of the FHFA’s costs and expenses, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Expenses of any examinations under 12 U.S.C. 4517 and section 20 of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1440);
- (2) Expenses of obtaining any reviews and credit assessments under 12 U.S.C. 4519;
- (3) Expenses of any enforcement activities under 12 U.S.C. 3645;
- (4) Expenses of other FHFA litigation under 12 U.S.C. 4513;
- (5) Expenses relating to the maintenance of the FHFA records relating to examinations and other reviews of the Regulated Entities;
- (6) Such amounts in excess of actual expenses for any given year deemed necessary to maintain a working capital fund;
- (7) Expenses relating to monitoring and ensuring compliance with housing goals;
- (8) Expenses relating to conducting reviews of new products;

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1206.5

(9) Expenses related to affordable housing and community programs;

(10) Other administrative expenses of the FHFA;

(11) Expenses related to preparing reports and studies;

(12) Expenses relating to the collection of data and development of systems to calculate the House Price Index (HPI) and the conforming loan limit;

(13) Amounts deemed necessary by the Director to wind up the affairs of the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight and the Federal Housing Finance Board; and

(14) Expenses relating to other responsibilities of the FHFA under the Safety and Soundness Act, the Federal Home Loan Bank Act and the Act.

(b) *Allocating assessments.* The Director shall allocate the annual assessments as follows:

(1) *Enterprises.* Assessments collected from the Enterprises shall not exceed amounts sufficient to provide for payment of the costs and expenses relating to the Enterprises as determined by the Director. Each Enterprise shall pay a proportional share that bears the same ratio to the total portion of the annual assessment allocated to the Enterprises that the total exposure of each Enterprise bears to the total exposure of both Enterprises.

(2) *Federal Home Loan Banks.* Assessments collected from the Banks shall not exceed amounts sufficient to provide for payment of the costs and expenses relating to the Banks as determined by the Director. Each Bank shall pay a *pro rata* share of the annual assessments based on the ratio between its minimum required regulatory capital and the aggregate minimum required regulatory capital of every Bank.

(c) *Timing and amount of semiannual payment.* Each Regulated Entity shall pay on or before October 1 and April 1 an amount equal to one-half of its annual assessment.

(d) *Surplus funds.* Surplus funds shall be credited to the annual assessment by reducing the amount collected in the following semiannual period by the amount of the surplus funds. Surplus funds shall be allocated to all Regulated Entities in the same proportion

in which they were collected, except as determined by the Director.

§ 1206.4 Increased costs of regulation.

(a) *Increase for inadequate capitalization.* The Director may, at his or her discretion, increase the amount of a semiannual payment allocated to a Regulated Entity that is not classified as adequately capitalized to pay additional estimated costs of regulation of that Regulated Entity.

(b) *Increase for enforcement activities.* The Director may, at his or her discretion, adjust the amount of a semiannual payment allocated to a Regulated Entity to ensure that the Regulated Entity bears the estimated costs of enforcement activities under the Act related to that Regulated Entity.

(c) *Additional assessment for deficiencies.* At any time, the Director may make and collect from any Regulated Entity an assessment, payable immediately or through increased semiannual payments, to cover the estimated amount of any deficiency for the semiannual period as a result of increased costs of regulation of a Regulated Entity due to its classification as other than adequately capitalized, or as a result of enforcement activities related to that Regulated Entity. Any amount remaining from such additional assessment and the semiannual payments at the end of any semiannual period during which such an additional assessment is made shall be deducted *pro rata* (based upon the amount of the additional assessments) from the assessment for the following semiannual period for that Regulated Entity.

§ 1206.5 Working capital fund.

(a) *Assessments.* The Director shall establish and collect from the Regulated Entities such assessments he or she deems necessary to maintain a working capital fund.

(b) *Purposes.* Assessments collected to maintain the working capital fund shall be used to establish an operating reserve and to provide for the payment of large or multiyear capital and operating expenditures as well as unanticipated expenses.

(c) *Remittance of excess assessed funds.* At the end of each year for which an assessment under this section is made,

§ 1206.6

the Director shall remit to each Regulated Entity any amount of assessed and collected funds in excess of the amount the Director deems necessary to maintain a working capital fund in the same proportions as paid under the most recent annual assessment.

§ 1206.6 Notice and review.

(a) *Written notice of budget.* The Director shall provide to each Regulated Entity written notice of the projected budget for the Agency for the upcoming fiscal year. Such notice shall be provided at least 30 days before the beginning of the applicable fiscal year.

(b) *Written notice of assessments.* The Director shall provide each Regulated Entity with written notice of assessments as follows:

(1) *Annual assessments.* The Director shall provide each Regulated Entity with written notice of the annual assessment and the semiannual payments to be collected under this part. Notice of the annual assessment and semiannual payments shall be provided before the start of the new fiscal year.

(2) *Immediate assessments.* The Director shall provide each Regulated Entity with written notice of any immediate assessments to be collected under §1206.4 of this chapter. Notice of any immediate assessment and the required payments shall be provided at such reasonable time as determined by the Director.

(3) *Changes to assessments.* The Director shall provide each Regulated Entity with written notice of any changes in the assessment procedures that the Director, in his or her sole discretion, deems necessary under the circumstances.

(c) *Request for review.* At the written request of a Regulated Entity, the Director, in his or her discretion, may review the calculation of the proportional share of the annual assessment, the semiannual payments, and any partial payments to be collected under this part. The determination of the Director upon such review is final. Except as provided by the Director, review by the Director does not suspend the requirement that the Regulated Entity make the semiannual payment or partial payment on or before the date it is due. Any adjustments determined ap-

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

propriate shall be credited or otherwise addressed by the following year's assessment for that entity.

§ 1206.7 Delinquent payment.

The Director may assess interest and penalties on any delinquent semiannual payment or other payment assessed under this part in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717 (interest and penalty on claims) and part 1704 of this title (debt collection).

§ 1206.8 Enforcement of payment.

The Director may enforce the payment of any assessment under 12 U.S.C. 4631 (cease-and-desist proceedings), 12 U.S.C. 4632 (temporary cease-and-desist orders), and 12 U.S.C. 4626 (civil money penalties).

PART 1207—MINORITY AND WOMEN INCLUSION

Subpart A—General

Sec.

- 1207.1 Definitions.
- 1207.2 Policy, purpose, and scope.
- 1207.3 Limitations.
- 1207.4–1207.9 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Minority and Women Inclusion and Diversity at the Federal Housing Finance Agency

1207.10–1207.19 [Reserved]

Subpart C—Minority and Women Inclusion and Diversity at Regulated Entities and the Office of Finance

- 1207.20 Office of Minority and Women Inclusion.
- 1207.21 Equal opportunity in employment and contracting.
- 1207.22 Regulated entity and Office of Finance Reports.
- 1207.23 Annual reports—format and contents.
- 1207.24 Enforcement.

AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 4520 and 4526; 12 U.S.C. 1833e; E.O. 11478.

SOURCE: 75 FR 81402, Dec. 28, 2010, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 1207.1 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to the terms used in this part:

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1207.2

Business and activities means operational, commercial, and economic endeavors of any kind, whether for profit or not for profit and whether regularly or irregularly engaged in by a regulated entity or the Office of Finance, and includes, but is not limited to, management of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance, employment, procurement, insurance, and all types of contracts, including contracts for the issuance or guarantee of any debt, equity, or mortgage-related securities, the management of mortgage and securities portfolios, the making of equity investments, the purchase, sale and servicing of single- and multi-family mortgage loans, and the implementation of affordable housing or community investment programs and initiatives.

Director means the Director of FHFA or his or her designee.

Disability has the same meaning as defined in 29 CFR 1630.2(g) and 1630.3 and Appendix to Part 1630—Interpretive Guidance on Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Disabled-owned business means a business, and includes financial institutions, mortgage banking firms, investment banking firms, investment consultants or advisors, financial services entities, asset management entities, underwriters, accountants, brokers, brokers-dealers, and providers of legal services—

(1) Qualified as a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Concern as defined in 13 CFR 125.8 through 125.13; or

(2) More than fifty percent (50%) of the ownership or control of which is held by one or more persons with a disability; and

(3) More than fifty percent (50%) of the net profit or loss of which accrues to one or more persons with a disability.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Minority means any Black (or African) American, Native American (or American Indian), Hispanic (or Latino) American, or Asian American.

Minority-owned business means a business, and includes financial institutions, mortgage banking firms, investment banking firms, investment con-

sultants or advisors, financial services entities, asset management entities, underwriters, accountants, brokers, brokers-dealers and providers of legal services—

(1) More than fifty percent (50%) of the ownership or control of which is held by one or more minority individuals; and

(2) More than fifty percent (50%) of the net profit or loss of which accrues to one or more minority individuals.

Office of Finance means the Office of Finance of the Federal Home Loan Bank System.

Reasonable accommodation has the same meaning as defined in 29 CFR 1630.2(o) and Appendix to Part 1630—Interpretive Guidance on Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Regulated entity means the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, the Federal National Mortgage Association, any Federal Home Loan Bank and/or any affiliate thereof that is subject to the regulatory authority of FHFA. The term “*regulated entities*” means (collectively) the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, the Federal National Mortgage Association, and/or any affiliate Federal Home Loan Bank and/or any affiliate thereof that is subject to the regulatory authority of FHFA.

Women-owned business means a business, and includes financial institutions, mortgage banking firms, investment banking firms, investment consultants or advisors, financial services entities, asset management entities, underwriters, accountants, brokers, brokers-dealers and providers of legal services—

(1) More than fifty percent (50%) of the ownership or control of which is held by one or more women;

(2) More than fifty percent (50%) of the net profit or loss of which accrues to one or more women; and

(3) A significant percentage of senior management positions of which are held by women.

§ 1207.2 Policy, purpose, and scope.

(a) *General policy.* FHFA’s policy is to promote non-discrimination, diversity and, at a minimum, the inclusion of women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities in its own activities

§ 1207.3

and in the business and activities of the regulated entities and the Office of Finance.

(b) *Purpose.* This part establishes minimum standards and requirements for the regulated entities and the Office of Finance to promote diversity and ensure, to the maximum extent possible in balance with financially safe and sound business practices, the inclusion and utilization of minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and minority-, women-, and disabled-owned businesses at all levels, in management and employment, in all business and activities, and in all contracts for services of any kind, including services that require the services of investment banking, asset management entities, broker-dealers, financial services entities, underwriters, accountants, investment consultants, and providers of legal services.

(c) *Scope.* This part applies to each regulated entity's and the Office of Finance's implementation of and adherence to diversity, inclusion and non-discrimination policies, practices and principles.

§ 1207.3 Limitations.

(a) Except as expressly provided herein for enforcement by FHFPA, the regulations in this part do not, are not intended to, and should not be construed to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law, in equity, or through administrative proceeding, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, a regulated entity or the Office of Finance, their officers, employees or agents, or any other person.

(b) The contract clause required by section 1207.21(b)(6) and the itemized data reporting on numbers of contracts and amounts involved required under §§ 1207.22 and 1207.23(b)(11) through § 1207.23(b)(13) apply only to contracts for services in any amount and to contracts for goods that equal or exceed \$10,000 in annual value, whether in a single contract, multiple contracts, a series of contracts or renewals of contracts, with a single vendor.

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

§§ 1207.4 through 1207.9 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Minority and Women Inclusion and Diversity at the Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1207.10 through 1207.19 [Reserved]

Subpart C—Minority and Women Inclusion and Diversity at Regulated Entities and the Office of Finance

§ 1207.20 Office of Minority and Women Inclusion.

(a) *Establishment.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall establish and maintain an Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, or designate and maintain an office to perform the responsibilities of this part, under the direction of an officer of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance who reports directly to either the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Operating Officer, or the equivalent. Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall notify the Director within thirty (30) days after any change in the designation of the office performing the responsibilities of this part.

(b) *Adequate resources.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance will ensure that its Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, or the office designated to perform the responsibilities of this part, is provided human, technological, and financial resources sufficient to fulfill the requirements of this part.

(c) *Responsibilities.* Each Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, or the office designated to perform the responsibilities of this part, is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of this part, 12 U.S.C. 1833e(b) and 4520, and such standards and requirements as the Director may issue hereunder.

§ 1207.21 Equal opportunity in employment and contracting.

(a) *Equal opportunity notice.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall publish a statement, endorsed by

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1207.21

its Chief Executive Officer and approved by its Board of Directors, confirming its commitment to the principles of equal opportunity in employment and in contracting, at a minimum regardless of color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability status, or genetic information. The notice also shall confirm commitment against retaliation or reprisal. Publication shall include, at a minimum, conspicuous posting in all regulated entity and Office of Finance physical facilities, including through alternative media formats, as necessary, and accessible posting on the regulated entity's and the Office of Finance's Web site. The notice shall be updated and re-published, re-endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer and re-approved by the Board of Directors annually.

(b) *Policies and procedures.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall develop, implement, and maintain policies and procedures to ensure, to the maximum extent possible in balance with financially safe and sound business practices, the inclusion and utilization of minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and minority-, women-, and disabled-owned businesses in all business and activities and at all levels of the regulated entity and the Office of Finance, including in management, employment, procurement, insurance, and all types of contracts. The policies and procedures of each regulated entity and the Office of Finance at a minimum shall:

(1) Confirm its adherence to the principles of equal opportunity and non-discrimination in employment and in contracting;

(2) Describe its policy against discrimination in employment and contracting;

(3) Establish internal procedures to receive and attempt to resolve complaints of discrimination in employment and in contracting. Publication will include at a minimum making the procedure conspicuously accessible to employees and applicants through print, electronic, or alternative media formats, as necessary, and through the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's Web site;

(4) Establish an effective procedure for accepting, reviewing and granting

or denying requests for reasonable accommodations of disabilities from employees or applicants for employment;

(5) Encourage the consideration of diversity in nominating or soliciting nominees for positions on boards of directors and engage in recruiting and outreach directed at encouraging individuals who are minorities, women and individuals with disabilities to seek or apply for employment with the regulated entity or the Office of Finance;

(6) Except as limited by §1207.3(b), require that each contract it enters contains a material clause committing the contractor to practice the principles of equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination in all its business activities and requiring each such contractor to include the clause in each subcontract it enters for services or goods provided to the regulated entity or the Office of Finance;

(7) Identify the types of contracts the regulated entity considers exempt under §1207.3(b) and any commercially reasonable thresholds, exceptions, and limitations the regulated entity establishes for the implementation of §1207.21(c)(2). The policies and procedures must address the rationale and need for implementing the thresholds, exceptions, or limitations;

(8) Be published and accessible to employees, applicants for employment, contractors, potential contractors, and members of the public through print, electronic, or alternative media formats, as necessary, and through the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's Web site; and

(9) Be reviewed at the direction of the officer immediately responsible for directing the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, or other office designated to perform the responsibilities of this part, at least annually to assess their effectiveness and to incorporate appropriate changes.

(c) *Outreach for contracting.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall establish a program for outreach designed to ensure to the maximum extent possible the inclusion in contracting opportunities of minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and minority-, women-, and disabled-owned businesses. The program at a minimum shall:

§ 1207.22

(1) Apply to all contracts entered into by the regulated entity or the Office of Finance, including contracts with financial institutions, investment banking firms, investment consultants or advisors, financial services entities, mortgage banking firms, asset management entities, underwriters, accountants, brokers, brokers-dealers, and providers of legal services;

(2) Establish policies, procedures and standards requiring the publication of contracting opportunities designed to encourage contractors that are minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and minority-, women-, and disabled-owned businesses to submit offers or bid for the award of such contracts; and

(3) Ensure the consideration of the diversity of a contractor when the regulated entity or the Office of Finance reviews and evaluates offers from contractors.

§ 1207.22 Regulated entity and Office of Finance reports.

(a) *General.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance, through its Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, or other office designated to perform the responsibilities of this part, shall report in writing, in such format as the Director may require, to the Director describing its efforts to promote diversity and ensure the inclusion and utilization of minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and minority-, women-, and disabled-owned businesses at all levels, in management and employment, in all business and activities, and in all contracts for services and the results of such efforts.

(1) Within 180 days after the effective date of this regulation each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall submit to the Director or his or her designee a preliminary status report describing actions taken, plans for and progress toward implementing the provisions of 12 U.S.C. 4520 and this part; and including to the extent available the data and information required by this part to be included in an annual report.

(2) FHFA intends to use the preliminary status report solely for the purpose of examining the submitting regulated entity or the Office of Finance

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

and reporting to the institution on its operations and the condition of its program.

(b) *FHFA use of reports.* The data and information reported to FHFA under this part (except for the initial report under paragraph (a)(1) of this section) are intended to be used for any permissible supervisory and regulatory purpose, including examinations, enforcement actions, identification of matters requiring attention, and production of FHFA examination, operating and condition reports related to one or more of the regulated entities and the Office of Finance. FHFA may use the information and data submitted to issue aggregate reports and data summaries that each regulated entity and the Office of Finance may use to assess its own progress and accomplishments, or to the public as it deems necessary. FHFA is not requiring, and does not desire, that reports under this part contain personally identifiable information.

(c) *Frequency of reports.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall submit an annual report on or before March 1 of each year, beginning in 2012, reporting on the period of January 1 through December 31 of the preceding year, and such other reports as the Director may require. If the date for submission falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the report is due no later than the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday.

(d) *Annual summary.* Each regulated entity and the Office of Finance shall include in its annual report to the Director (pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 1723a(k), 1456(c), or 1440, with respect to the regulated entities) a summary of its activities under this part during the previous year, including at a minimum, detailed information describing the actions taken by the regulated entity or the Office of Finance pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 4520 and a statement of the total amounts paid by the regulated entity or the Office of Finance to contractors during the previous year and the percentage of such amounts paid to contractors that are minorities or minority-owned businesses, women or women-owned businesses, and individuals with disabilities and disabled-

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1207.23

owned businesses respectively, as limited by § 1207.3(b).

§ 1207.23 Annual reports—format and contents.

(a) *Format.* Each annual report shall consist of a detailed summary of the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's activities during the reporting year to carry out the requirements of this part, which report may also be made a part of the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's annual report to the Director. The report shall contain a table of contents and conclude with a certification by the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's officer responsible for the annual report that the data and information presented in the report are accurate, and are approved for submission.

(b) *Contents.* The annual report shall contain the information provided in the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's annual summary pursuant to § 1207.22(d) and, in addition to any other information or data the Director may require, shall include:

(1) The EEO-1 Employer Information Report (Form EEO-1 used by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) to collect certain demographic information) or similar reports filed by the regulated entity or the Office of Finance during the reporting year. If the regulated entity or the Office of Finance does not file Form EEO-1 or similar reports, the regulated entity or the Office of Finance shall submit to FHFA a completed Form EEO-1;

(2) All other reports or plans the regulated entity or the Office of Finance submitted to the EEOC, the Department of Labor, OFCCP or Congress ("reports or plans" is not intended to include separate complaints or charges of discrimination or responses thereto) during the reporting year;

(3) Data showing by minority and gender the number of individuals applying for employment with the regulated entity or the Office of Finance in each occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1 during the reporting year;

(4) Data showing by minority and gender the number of individuals hired

for employment with the regulated entity or the Office of Finance in each occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1 during the reporting year;

(5) Data showing by minority, gender and disability classification, and categorized as voluntary or involuntary, the number of separations from employment with the regulated entity or the Office of Finance in each occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1 during the reporting year;

(6) Data showing the number of requests for reasonable accommodation received from employees and applicants for employment, the number of requests granted, and the disabilities accommodated and the types of accommodation granted during the reporting year;

(7) Data showing for the reporting year by minority, gender, and disability classification the number of individuals applying for promotion at the regulated entity or the Office of Finance—

(i) Within each occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1; and

(ii) From one such occupational or job category to another;

(8) Data showing by minority, gender, and disability classification the number of individuals—

(i) Promoted at the regulated entity or the Office of Finance within each occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1, after applying for such a promotion;

(ii) Promoted at the regulated entity or the Office of Finance within each occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1, without applying for such a promotion; and

(iii) Promoted at the regulated entity or the Office of Finance from one occupational or job category identified on the Form EEO-1 to another such category, after applying for such a promotion;

(9) A comparison of the data reported under paragraphs (b)(1) through (b)(8) of this section to such data as reported in the previous year together with a narrative analysis;

§ 1207.24

(10) Descriptions of all regulated entity or Office of Finance outreach activity during the reporting year to recruit individuals who are minorities, women, or persons with disabilities for employment, to solicit or advertise for minority or minority-owned, women or women-owned, and disabled-owned contractors or contractors who are individuals with disabilities to offer proposals or bids to enter into business with the regulated entity or Office of Finance, or to inform such contractors of the regulated entity's or Office of Finance's contracting process, including the identification of any partners, organizations, or government offices with which the regulated entity or the Office of Finance participated in such outreach activity;

(11) Cumulative data separately showing the number of contracts entered with minorities or minority-owned businesses, women or women-owned businesses and individuals with disabilities or disabled-owned businesses during the reporting year;

(12) Cumulative data separately showing for the reporting year the total amount the regulated entity or the Office of Finance paid to contractors that are minorities or minority-owned businesses, women or women-owned and individuals with disabilities or disabled-owned businesses;

(13) The annual total of amounts paid to contractors and the percentage of which was paid separately to minorities or minority-owned businesses, women or women-owned businesses and individuals with disabilities or disabled-owned businesses during the reporting year;

(14) Certification of compliance with §§ 1207.20 and 1207.21, together with sufficient documentation to verify compliance;

(15) Data for the reporting year showing, separately, the number of equal opportunity complaints (including administrative agency charges or complaints, arbitral or judicial claims) against the regulated entity or the Office of Finance that—

(i) Claim employment discrimination, by basis or kind of the alleged discrimination (race, sex, disability, *etc.*) and by result (settlement, favorable, or unfavorable outcome);

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

(ii) Claim discrimination in any aspect of the contracting process or administration of contracts, by basis of the alleged discrimination and by result; and

(iii) Were resolved through the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's internal processes;

(16) Data showing for the reporting year amounts paid to claimants by the regulated entity or the Office of Finance for settlements or judgments on discrimination complaints—

(i) In employment, by basis of the alleged discrimination; and

(ii) In any aspect of the contracting process or in the administration of contracts, by basis of the alleged discrimination;

(17) A comparison of the data reported under paragraphs (b)(12) and (b)(13) of this section with the same information reported for the previous year;

(18) A narrative identification and analysis of the reporting year's activities the regulated entity or the Office of Finance considers successful and unsuccessful in achieving the purpose and policy of regulations in this part and a description of progress made from the previous year; and

(19) A narrative identification and analysis of business activities, levels, and areas in which the regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's efforts need to improve with respect to achieving the purpose and policy of regulations in this part, together with a description of anticipated efforts and results the regulated entity or the Office of Finance expects in the succeeding year.

§ 1207.24 Enforcement.

The Director may enforce this regulation and standards issued under it in any manner and through any means within his or her authority, including through identifying matters requiring attention, corrective action orders, directives, or enforcement actions under 12 U.S.C. 4513b and 4514. The Director may conduct examinations of a regulated entity's or the Office of Finance's activities under and in compliance with this part pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 4517.

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.1

PART 1208—DEBT COLLECTION

Subpart A—General

Sec.

- 1208.1 Authority and scope.
- 1208.2 Definitions.
- 1208.3 Referrals to the Department of the Treasury, collection services, and use of credit bureaus.
- 1208.4 Reporting delinquent debts to credit bureaus.
- 1208.5–1208.19 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Salary Offset

- 1208.20 Authority and scope.
- 1208.21 Notice requirements before salary offset where FHFA is the creditor agency.
- 1208.22 Review of FHFA records related to the debt.
- 1208.23 Opportunity for a hearing where FHFA is the creditor agency.
- 1208.24 Certification where FHFA is the creditor agency.
- 1208.25 Voluntary repayment agreements as alternative to salary offset where FHFA is the creditor agency.
- 1208.26 Special review where FHFA is the creditor agency.
- 1208.27 Notice of salary offset where FHFA is the paying agency.
- 1208.28 Procedures for salary offset where FHFA is the paying agency.
- 1208.29 Coordinating salary offset with other agencies.
- 1208.30 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.
- 1208.31 Refunds.
- 1208.32 Request from a creditor agency for the services of a hearing official.
- 1208.33 Non-waiver of rights by payments.

Subpart C—Administrative Offset

- 1208.40 Authority and scope.
- 1208.41 Collection.
- 1208.42 Administrative offset prior to completion of procedures.
- 1208.43 Procedures.
- 1208.44 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.
- 1208.45 Refunds.
- 1208.46 No requirement for duplicate notice.
- 1208.47 Requests for administrative offset to other Federal agencies.
- 1208.48 Requests for administrative offset from other Federal agencies.
- 1208.49 Administrative offset against amounts payable from Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund.

Subpart D—Tax Refund Offset

- 1208.50 Authority and scope.
- 1208.51 Definitions.

- 1208.52 Procedures.
- 1208.53 No requirement for duplicate notice.
- 1208.54–1208.59 [Reserved]

Subpart E—Administrative Wage Garnishment

- 1208.60 Scope and purpose.
- 1208.61 Notice.
- 1208.62 Debtor's rights.
- 1208.63 Form of hearing.
- 1208.64 Effect of timely request.
- 1208.65 Failure to timely request a hearing.
- 1208.66 Hearing official.
- 1208.67 Procedure.
- 1208.68 Format of hearing.
- 1208.69 Date of decision.
- 1208.70 Content of decision.
- 1208.71 Finality of agency action.
- 1208.72 Failure to appear.
- 1208.73 Wage garnishment order.
- 1208.74 Certification by employer.
- 1208.75 Amounts withheld.
- 1208.76 Exclusions from garnishment.
- 1208.77 Financial hardship.
- 1208.78 Ending garnishment.
- 1208.79 Prohibited actions by employer.
- 1208.80 Refunds.
- 1208.81 Right of action.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 5514; 12 U.S.C. 4526; 26 U.S.C. 6402(d); 31 U.S.C. 3701–3720D; 31 CFR 285.2; 31 CFR Chapter IX.

Subpart A—General

SOURCE: 75 FR 68958, Nov. 10, 2010, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1208.1 Authority and scope.

(a) *Authority.* FHFA issues this part 1208 under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5514 and 31 U.S.C. 3701–3720D, and in conformity with the Federal Claims Collection Standards (FCCS) at 31 CFR chapter IX; the regulations on salary offset issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 5 CFR part 550, subpart K; the regulations on tax refund offset issued by the United States Department of the Treasury (Treasury) at 31 CFR 285.2; and the regulations on administrative wage garnishment issued by Treasury at 31 CFR 285.11.

(b) *Scope.*—(1) This part applies to debts that are owed to the Federal Government by Federal employees; other persons, organizations, or entities that are indebted to FHFA; and by Federal employees of FHFA who are indebted to other agencies, except for those debts listed in paragraph (b)(2) of this section.

§ 1208.2

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

(2) Subparts B and C of this part 1208 do not apply to—

(i) Debts or claims arising under the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*), the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*) or the tariff laws of the United States;

(ii) Any case to which the Contract Disputes Act (41 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) applies;

(iii) Any case where collection of a debt is explicitly provided for or provided by another statute, *e.g.* travel advances under 5 U.S.C. 5705 and employee training expenses under 5 U.S.C. 4108, or, as provided for by title 11 of the United States Code, when the claims involve bankruptcy;

(iv) Any debt based in whole or in part on conduct in violation of the antitrust laws or involving fraud, the presentation of a false claim, or misrepresentation on the part of the debtor or any party having an interest in the claim, unless the Department of Justice authorizes FHFA to handle the collection; or

(v) Claims between agencies.

(3) Nothing in this part precludes the compromise, suspension, or termination of collection actions, where appropriate, under standards implementing the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) (31 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*), the FCCS (31 CFR chapter IX) or the use of alternative dispute resolution methods if they are not inconsistent with applicable law and regulations.

(4) Nothing in this part precludes an employee from requesting waiver of an erroneous payment under 5 U.S.C. 5584, 10 U.S.C. 2774, or 32 U.S.C. 716, or from questioning the amount or validity of a debt, in the manner set forth in this part.

§ 1208.2 Definitions.

The following terms apply to this part, unless defined otherwise elsewhere—

Administrative offset means an action, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3716, in which the Federal Government withholds funds payable to, or held by the Federal Government for a person, organization, or other entity in order to collect a debt from that person, organization, or other entity. Such funds include funds

payable by the Federal Government on behalf of a State Government.

Agency means an executive department or agency; a military department; the United States Postal Service; the Postal Regulatory Commission; any nonappropriated fund instrumentality described in 5 U.S.C. 2105(c); the United States Senate; the United States House of Representatives; any court, court administrative office, or instrumentality in the judicial or legislative branches of the Government; or a Government corporation. If an agency under this definition is a component of an agency, the broader definition of agency may be used in applying the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5514(b) (concerning the authority to prescribe regulations).

Centralized administrative offset means the mandatory referral to the Secretary of the Treasury by a creditor agency of a past due debt which is more than 180 days delinquent, for the purpose of collection under the Treasury's centralized offset program.

Certification means a written statement received by a paying agency from a creditor agency that requests the paying agency to institute salary offset of an employee, to the Financial Management Service (FMS) for offset or to the Secretary of the Treasury for centralized administrative offset, and specifies that required procedural protections have been afforded the debtor. Where the debtor requests a hearing on a claimed debt, the decision by a hearing official or administrative law judge constitutes a certification.

Claim or debt (used interchangeably in this part) means any amount of funds or property that has been determined by an agency official to be due the Federal Government by a person, organization, or entity, except another agency. It also means any amount of money, funds, or property owed by a person to a State, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. For purposes of this part, a debt owed to FHFA constitutes a debt owed to the Federal Government. A claim or debt includes:

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.2

(1) Funds owed on account of loans made, insured, or guaranteed by the Federal Government, including any deficiency or any difference between the price obtained by the Federal Government in the sale of a property and the amount owed to the Federal Government on a mortgage on the property;

(2) Unauthorized expenditures of agency funds;

(3) Overpayments, including payments disallowed by audits performed by the Inspector General of the agency administering the program;

(4) Any amount the Federal Government is authorized by statute to collect for the benefit of any person;

(5) The unpaid share of any non-Federal partner in a program involving a Federal payment, and a matching or cost-sharing payment by the non-Federal partner;

(6) Any fine or penalty assessed by an agency; and

(7) Other amounts of money or property owed to the Federal Government.

Compromise means the settlement or forgiveness of a debt under 31 U.S.C. 3711, in accordance with standards set forth in the FCCS and applicable Federal law.

Creditor agency means the agency to which the debt is owed, including a debt collection center when acting on behalf of a creditor agency in matters pertaining to the collection of a debt.

Debt See the definition of the terms "Claim or debt" of this section.

Debt collection center means the Department of the Treasury or any other agency or division designated by the Secretary of the Treasury with authority to collect debts on behalf of creditor agencies in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(g).

Debtor means the person, organization, or entity owing money to the Federal Government.

Delinquent debt means a debt that has not been paid by the date specified in the agency's initial written demand for payment or applicable agreement or instrument (including a post-delinquency payment agreement) unless other satisfactory payment arrangements have been made.

Director means the Director of FHFA or Director's designee.

Disposable pay means that part of current basic pay, special pay, incentive pay, retired pay, or retainer pay (or in the case of an employee not entitled to basic pay, other authorized pay) remaining after the deduction of any amount required by law to be withheld (other than deductions to execute garnishment orders in accordance with 5 CFR parts 581 and 582). FHFA will apply the order of precedence contained in OPM guidance (PPM-2008-01; Order Of Precedence When Gross Pay Is Not Sufficient To Permit All Deductions), as follows—

(1) Retirement deductions for defined benefit plan (including Civil Service Retirement System, Federal Employees Retirement System, or other similar defined benefit plan);

(2) Social security (OASDI) tax;

(3) Medicare tax;

(4) Federal income tax;

(5) Basic health insurance premium (including Federal Employees Health Benefits premium, pre-tax or post-tax, or premium for similar benefit under another authority but not including amounts deducted for supplementary coverage);

(6) Basic life insurance premium (including Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance—FEGLI—Basic premium or premium for similar benefit under another authority);

(7) State income tax;

(8) Local income tax;

(9) Collection of debts owed to the U.S. Government (e.g., tax debt, salary overpayment, failure to withhold proper amount of deductions, advance of salary or travel expenses, etc.; debts which may or may not be delinquent; debts which may be collected through the Treasury's Financial Management Services Treasury Offset Program, an automated centralized debt collection program for collecting Federal debt from Federal payments):

(i) Continuous levy means the Federal Payment Levy Program (tax debt); and

(ii) Salary offsets (whether involuntary under 5 U.S.C. 5514 or similar authority or required by a voluntarily signed written agreement; if multiple debts are subject to salary offset, the order is based on when each offset commenced—with earliest commencing offset at the top of the order—unless

there are special circumstances, as determined by the paying agency).

(10) Court-Ordered collection/debt:

(i) Child support (may include attorney and other fees as provided for in 5 CFR 581.102(d)). If there are multiple child support orders, the priority of orders is governed by 42 U.S.C. 666(b) and implementing regulations, as required by 42 U.S.C. 659(d)(2);

(ii) Alimony (may include attorney and other fees as provided for in 5 CFR 581.102(d)). If there are multiple alimony orders, they are prioritized on a first-come, first-served basis, as required by 42 U.S.C. 659(d)(3);

(iii) Bankruptcy; and

(iv) Commercial garnishments.

(11) Optional benefits:

(i) Health care/limited-expense health care flexible spending accounts (pre-tax benefit under FedFlex or equivalent cafeteria plan);

(ii) Dental (pre-tax benefit under FedFlex or equivalent cafeteria plan);

(iii) Vision (pre-tax benefit under FedFlex or equivalent cafeteria plan);

(iv) Health Savings Account (pre-tax benefit under FedFlex or equivalent cafeteria plan);

(v) Optional life insurance premiums (FEGLI optional benefits or similar benefits under other authority);

(vi) Long-term care insurance premiums;

(vii) Dependent-care flexible spending accounts (pre-tax benefit under FedFlex or equivalent cafeteria plan);

(viii) Thrift Savings Plan (TSP):

(A) Loan payments;

(B) Basic contributions; and

(C) Catch-up contributions; and

(ix) Other optional benefits.

(12) Other voluntary deductions/allotments:

(i) Military service deposits;

(ii) Professional associations;

(iii) Union dues;

(iv) Charities;

(v) Bonds;

(vi) Personal account allotments (*e.g.*, to savings or checking account); and

(vii) Additional voluntary deductions (on first-come, first-served basis); and

(13) IRS paper levies.

Employee means a current employee of FHFA or other agency, including a current member of the Armed Forces

or a Reserve of the Armed Forces of the United States.

Federal Claims Collection Standards (FCCS) means standards published at 31 CFR chapter IX.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Garnishment means the process of withholding amounts from the disposable pay of a person employed outside the Federal Government, and the paying of those amounts to a creditor in satisfaction of a withholding order.

Hearing official means an individual who is responsible for conducting any hearing with respect to the existence or amount of a debt claimed and for rendering a final decision on the basis of such hearing. A hearing official may not be under the supervision or control of the Director of FHFA when FHFA is the creditor agency but may be an administrative law judge.

Notice of intent means a written notice of a creditor agency to a debtor that states that the debtor owes a debt to the creditor agency and appraises the debtor of the applicable procedural rights.

Notice of salary offset means a written notice from the paying agency to an employee after a certification has been issued by a creditor agency that informs the employee that salary offset will begin at the next officially established pay interval.

Paying agency means an agency of the Federal Government that employs the individual who owes a debt to an agency of the Federal Government and transmits payment requests in the form of certified payment vouchers, or other similar forms, to a disbursing official for disbursement. The same agency may be both the creditor agency and the paying agency.

Salary offset means an administrative offset to collect a debt under 5 U.S.C. 5514 by deductions at one or more officially established pay intervals from the current pay account of an employee without his or her consent.

Waiver means the cancellation, remission, forgiveness, or non-recovery of a debt allegedly owed by an employee to FHFA or another agency as permitted or required by 5 U.S.C. 5584 or 8346(b), 10 U.S.C. 2774, 32 U.S.C. 716, or any other law.

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.4

Withholding order means any order for withholding or garnishment of pay issued by an agency, or judicial, or administrative body. For purposes of administrative wage garnishment, the terms “wage garnishment order” and “garnishment order” have the same meaning as “withholding order.”

§ 1208.3 Referrals to the Department of the Treasury, collection services, and use of credit bureaus.

(a) *Referral of delinquent debts.*—(1) FHFA shall transfer to the Secretary of the Department of the Treasury any past due, legally enforceable nontax debt that has been delinquent for a period of 180 days or more so that the Secretary may take appropriate action to collect the debt or terminate collection action in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3716, 5 U.S.C. 5514, 5 CFR 550.1108, 31 CFR part 285, and the FCCS.

(2) FHFA may transfer any past due, legally enforceable nontax debt that has been delinquent for less than a period of 180 days to a debt collection center for collection in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3716, 5 U.S.C. 5514, 5 CFR 550.1108, 31 CFR part 285, and the FCCS.

(b) *Collection Services.* Section 13 of the Debt Collection Act (31 U.S.C. 3718) authorizes agencies to enter into contracts for collection services to recover debts owed the Federal Government. The Debt Collection Act requires that certain provisions be contained in such contracts, including:

(1) The agency retains the authority to resolve a dispute, including the authority to terminate a collection action or refer the matter to the Attorney General for civil remedies; and

(2) The contractor is subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, as it applies to private contractors, as well as subject to State and Federal laws governing debt collection practices.

(c) *Referrals to collection agencies.*—(1) FHFA has authority to contract for collection services to recover delinquent debts in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3718(a) and the FCCS (31 CFR 901.5).

(2) FHFA may use private collection agencies where it determines that their use is in the best interest of the Federal Government. Where FHFA determines that there is a need to contract

for collection services, the contract will provide that:

(i) The authority to resolve disputes, compromise claims, suspend or terminate collection action, or refer the matter to the Department of Justice for litigation or to take any other action under this part will be retained by FHFA;

(ii) Contractors are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, to the extent specified in 5 U.S.C. 552a(m) and to applicable Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to debt collection practices, such as the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. 1692;

(iii) The contractor is required to strictly account for all amounts collected;

(iv) The contractor must agree that uncollectible accounts shall be returned with appropriate documentation to enable FHFA to determine whether to pursue collection through litigation or to terminate collection; and

(v) The contractor must agree to provide any data in its files requested by FHFA upon returning the account to FHFA for subsequent referral to the Department of Justice for litigation.

§ 1208.4 Reporting delinquent debts to credit bureaus.

(a) FHFA may report delinquent debts to consumer reporting agencies (31 U.S.C. 3701(a)(3), 3711). Sixty calendar days prior to release of information to a consumer reporting agency, the debtor shall be notified, in writing, of the intent to disclose the existence of the debt to a consumer reporting agency. Such notice of intent may be a separate correspondence or included in correspondence demanding direct payment. The notice shall be in conformance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(e) and the FCCS. In the notice, FHFA shall provide the debtor with:

(1) An opportunity to inspect and copy agency records pertaining to the debt;

(2) An opportunity for an administrative review of the legal enforceability or past due status of the debt;

(3) An opportunity to enter into a repayment agreement on terms satisfactory to FHFA to prevent FHFA from

reporting the debt as overdue to consumer reporting agencies, and provide deadlines and method for requesting this relief;

(4) An explanation of the rate of interest that will accrue on the debt, that all costs incurred to collect the debt will be charged to the debtor, the authority for assessing these costs, and the manner in which FHFA will calculate the amount of these costs;

(5) An explanation that FHFA will report the debt to the consumer reporting agencies to the detriment of the debtor's credit rating; and

(6) A description of the collection actions that the agency may take in the future if those presently proposed actions do not result in repayment of the debt, including the filing of a lawsuit against the borrower by the agency and assignment of the debt for collection by offset against Federal income tax refunds or the filing of a lawsuit against the debtor by the Federal Government.

(b) The information that may be disclosed to the consumer reporting agency is limited to:

(1) The debtor's name, address, social security number or taxpayer identification number, and any other information necessary to establish the identity of the individual;

(2) The amount, status, and history of the claim; and

(3) FHFA program or activity under which the claim arose.

(c) *Subsequent reports.* FHFA may update its report to the credit bureau whenever it has knowledge of events that substantially change the status of the amount of liability.

(d) *Subsequent reports of delinquent debts.* Pursuant to 31 CFR 901.4, FHFA will report delinquent debt to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Credit Alert Interactive Voice Response System (CAIVRS).

(e) *Privacy Act considerations.* A delinquent debt may not be reported under this section unless a notice issued pursuant to the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(4), authorizes the disclosure of information about the debtor to a credit bureau or CAIVRS.

§§ 1208.5–1208.19 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Salary Offset

§ 1208.20 Authority and scope.

(a) *Authority.* FHFA may collect debts owed by employees to the Federal Government by means of salary offset under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5514; 5 CFR part 550, subpart K; and this subpart B.

(b) *Scope.*—(1) The procedures set forth in this subpart B apply to situations where FHFA is attempting to collect a debt by salary offset that is owed to it by an individual employed by FHFA or by another agency; or where FHFA employs an individual who owes a debt to another agency.

(2) The procedures set forth in this subpart B do not apply to:

(i) Any routine intra-agency adjustment of pay that is attributable to clerical or administrative error or delay in processing pay documents that have occurred within the four pay periods preceding the adjustment, or any adjustment to collect a debt amounting to \$50 or less. However, at the time of any such adjustment, or as soon thereafter as possible, FHFA or its designated payroll agent shall provide the employee with a written notice of the nature and the amount of the adjustment and a point of contact for contesting such adjustment.

(ii) Any negative adjustment to pay that arises from an employee's election of coverage or a change in coverage under a Federal benefits program that requires periodic deductions from pay, if the amount to be recovered was accumulated over four pay periods or less. However, at the time such adjustment is made, FHFA or its payroll agent shall provide in the employee's earnings statement a clear and concise statement that informs the employee of the previous overpayment.

§ 1208.21 Notice requirements before salary offset where FHFA is the creditor agency.

(a) *Notice of Intent.* Deductions from an employee's salary may not be made unless FHFA provides the employee with a Notice of Intent at least 30 calendar days before the salary offset is initiated.

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.21

(b) *Contents of Notice of Intent.* The Notice of Intent shall advise the employee of the following:

(1) That FHFA has reviewed the records relating to the claim and has determined that the employee owes the debt;

(2) That FHFA intends to collect the debt by deductions from the employee's current disposable pay account;

(3) The amount of the debt and the facts giving rise to the debt;

(4) The frequency and amount of the intended deduction (stated as a fixed dollar amount or as a percentage of pay not to exceed 15 percent of disposable pay), and the intention to continue the deductions until the debt and all accumulated interest are paid in full or otherwise resolved;

(5) The name, address, and telephone number of the person to whom the employee may propose a written alternative schedule for voluntary repayment, in lieu of salary offset. The employee shall include a justification for the alternative schedule in his or her proposal. If the terms of the alternative schedule are agreed upon by the employee and FHFA, the alternative written schedule shall be signed by both the employee and FHFA;

(6) An explanation of FHFA's policy concerning interest, penalties, and administrative costs, the date by which payment should be made to avoid such costs, and a statement that such assessments must be made unless excused in accordance with the FCCS;

(7) The employee's right to inspect and copy all records of FHFA pertaining to his or her debt that are not exempt from disclosure or to receive copies of such records if he or she is unable personally to inspect the records as the result of geographical or other constraints;

(8) The name, address, and telephone number of the FHFA employee to whom requests for access to records relating to the debt must be sent;

(9) The employee's right to a hearing conducted by an impartial hearing official with respect to the existence and amount of the debt claimed or the repayment schedule *i.e.*, the percentage of disposable pay to be deducted each pay period, so long as a request is filed by the employee as prescribed in

§1208.23; the name and address of the office to which the request for a hearing should be sent; and the name, address, and telephone number of a person whom the employee may contact concerning procedures for requesting a hearing;

(10) The filing of a request for a hearing on or before the 30th calendar day following receipt of the Notice of Intent will stay the commencement of collection proceedings and a final decision on whether a hearing will be held (if a hearing is requested) or will be issued at the earliest practical date, but not later than 60 calendar days after the request for the hearing;

(11) FHFA shall initiate certification procedures to implement a salary offset unless the employee files a request for a hearing on or before the 30th calendar day following receipt of the Notice of Intent;

(12) Any knowingly false or frivolous statement, representations, or evidence may subject the employee to:

(i) Disciplinary procedures appropriate under 5 U.S.C. chapter 75, 5 CFR part 752, or any other applicable statutes or regulations;

(ii) Penalties under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. 3729 through 3731, or under any other applicable statutory authority; or

(iii) Criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. 286, 287, 1001, and 1002, or under any other applicable statutory authority;

(13) That the employee also has the right to request waiver of overpayment pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5584 and may exercise any other rights and remedies available to the employee under statutes or regulations governing the program for which the collection is being made;

(14) Unless there are applicable contractual or statutory provisions to the contrary, amounts paid on or deducted from debts that are later waived or found not to be owed to the Federal Government shall be promptly refunded to the employee; and

(15) Proceedings with respect to the debt are governed by 5 U.S.C. 5514.

§ 1208.22 Review of FHFA records related to the debt.

(a) *Request for review.* An employee who desires to inspect or copy FHFA records related to a debt owed by the employee to FHFA must send a letter to the individual designated in the Notice of Intent requesting access to the relevant records. The letter must be received in the office of that individual within 15 calendar days after the employee's receipt of the Notice of Intent.

(b) *Review location and time.* In response to a timely request submitted by the employee, the employee shall be notified of the location and time when the employee may inspect and copy records related to his or her debt that are not exempt from disclosure. If the employee is unable personally to inspect such records as the result of geographical or other constraints, FHFA shall arrange to send copies of such records to the employee. The debtor shall pay copying costs unless they are waived by FHFA. Copying costs shall be assessed pursuant to FHFA's Freedom of Information Act Regulation, 12 CFR part 1202.

§ 1208.23 Opportunity for a hearing where FHFA is the creditor agency.

(a) *Request for a hearing.*—(1) *Time-period for submission.* An employee who requests a hearing on the existence or amount of the debt held by FHFA or on the salary-offset schedule proposed by FHFA, must send a written request to FHFA. The request for a hearing must be received by FHFA on or before the 30th calendar day following receipt by the employee of the Notice of Intent.

(2) *Failure to submit timely.* If the employee files a request for a hearing after the expiration of the 30th calendar day, the employee shall not be entitled to a hearing. However, FHFA may accept the request if the employee can show that the delay was the result of circumstances beyond his or her control or that he or she failed to receive actual notice of the filing deadline.

(3) *Contents of request.* The request for a hearing must be signed by the employee and must fully identify and explain with reasonable specificity all the facts, evidence, and witnesses, if any, that the employee believes support his or her position. The employee

must also specify whether he or she requests an oral hearing. If an oral hearing is requested, the employee should explain why a hearing by examination of the documents without an oral hearing would not resolve the matter.

(4) *Failure to request a hearing.* The failure of an employee to request a hearing will be considered an admission by the employee that the debt exists in the amount specified in the Notice of Intent that was provided to the employee under § 1208.21(b).

(b) *Obtaining the services of a hearing official.*—(1) *Debtor is not an FHFA employee.* When the debtor is not an FHFA employee and FHFA cannot provide a prompt and appropriate hearing before an administrative law judge or other hearing official, FHFA may request a hearing official from an agent of the paying agency, as designated in 5 CFR part 581, appendix A, or as otherwise designated by the paying agency. The paying agency must cooperate with FHFA to provide a hearing official, as required by the FCCS.

(2) *Debtor is an FHFA employee.* When the debtor is an FHFA employee, FHFA may contact any agent of another agency, as designated in 5 CFR part 581, appendix A, or as otherwise designated by the agency, to request a hearing official.

(c) *Procedure.*—(1) *Notice of hearing.* After the employee requests a hearing, the hearing official shall notify the employee of the form of the hearing to be provided. If the hearing will be oral, the notice shall set forth the date, time, and location of the hearing, which must occur no more than 30 calendar days after the request is received, unless the employee requests that the hearing be delayed. If the hearing will be conducted by an examination of documents, the employee shall be notified within 30 calendar days that he or she should submit evidence and arguments in writing to the hearing official within 30 calendar days.

(2) *Oral hearing.*—(i) An employee who requests an oral hearing shall be provided an oral hearing if the hearing official determines that the matter cannot be resolved by an examination of the documents alone, as for example, when an issue of credibility or veracity

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.25

is involved. The oral hearing need not be an adversarial adjudication; and rules of evidence need not apply. Witnesses who testify in an oral hearing shall do so under oath or affirmation.

(ii) Oral hearings may take the form of, but are not limited to:

(A) Informal conferences with the hearing official in which the employee and agency representative are given full opportunity to present evidence, witnesses, and argument;

(B) Informal meetings in which the hearing examiner interviews the employee; or

(C) Formal written submissions followed by an opportunity for oral presentation.

(3) *Hearing by examination of documents.* If the hearing official determines that an oral hearing is not necessary, he or she shall make the determination based upon an examination of the documents.

(d) *Record.* The hearing official shall maintain a summary record of any hearing conducted under this section.

(e) *Decision.*—(1) The hearing official shall issue a written opinion stating his or her decision, based upon all evidence and information developed during the hearing, as soon as practicable after the hearing, but not later than 60 calendar days after the date on which the request was received by FHFA, unless the hearing was delayed at the request of the employee, in which case the 60-day decision period shall be extended by the number of days by which the hearing was postponed.

(2) The decision of the hearing official shall be final and is considered to be an official certification regarding the existence and the amount of the debt for purposes of executing salary offset under 5 U.S.C. 5514. If the hearing official determines that a debt may not be collected by salary offset, but FHFA finds that the debt is still valid, FHFA may seek collection of the debt through other means in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

(f) *Content of decision.* The written decision shall include:

(1) A summary of the facts concerning the origin, nature, and amount of the debt;

(2) The hearing official's findings, analysis, and conclusions; and

(3) The terms of any repayment schedules, if applicable.

(g) *Failure to appear.* If, in the absence of good cause shown, such as illness, the employee or the representative of FHFA fails to appear, the hearing official shall proceed with the hearing as scheduled, and make his or her decision based upon the oral testimony presented and the documentation submitted by both parties. At the request of both parties, the hearing official may schedule a new hearing date. Both parties shall be given reasonable notice of the time and place of the new hearing.

§ 1208.24 Certification where FHFA is the creditor agency.

(a) *Issuance.* FHFA shall issue a certification in all cases where the hearing official determines that a debt exists or the employee admits the existence and amount of the debt, as for example, by failing to request a hearing.

(b) *Contents.* The certification must be in writing and state:

(1) That the employee owes the debt;

(2) The amount and basis of the debt;

(3) The date the Federal Government's right to collect the debt first accrued;

(4) The date the employee was notified of the debt, the action(s) taken pursuant to FHFA's regulations, and the dates such actions were taken;

(5) If the collection is to be made by lump-sum payment, the amount and date such payment will be collected;

(6) If the collection is to be made in installments through salary offset, the amount or percentage of disposable pay to be collected in each installment and, if FHFA wishes, the desired commencing date of the first installment, if a date other than the next officially established pay period; and

(7) A statement that FHFA's regulation on salary offset has been approved by OPM pursuant to 5 CFR part 550, subpart K.

§ 1208.25 Voluntary repayment agreements as alternative to salary offset where FHFA is the creditor agency.

(a) *Proposed repayment schedule.* In response to a Notice of Intent, an employee may propose to repay the debt voluntarily in lieu of salary offset by

§ 1208.26

submitting a written proposed repayment schedule to FHFA. Any proposal under this section must be received by FHFA within 30 calendar days after receipt of the Notice of Intent.

(b) *Notification of decision.* In response to a timely proposal by the employee, FHFA shall notify the employee whether the employee's proposed repayment schedule is acceptable. FHFA has the discretion to accept, reject, or propose to the employee a modification of the proposed repayment schedule.

(1) If FHFA decides that the proposed repayment schedule is unacceptable, the employee shall have 30 calendar days from the date he or she received notice of the decision in which to file a request for a hearing.

(2) If FHFA decides that the proposed repayment schedule is acceptable or the employee agrees to a modification proposed by FHFA, an agreement shall be put in writing and signed by both the employee and FHFA.

§ 1208.26 Special review where FHFA is the creditor agency.

(a) *Request for review.*—(1) An employee subject to salary offset or a voluntary repayment agreement may, at any time, request a special review by FHFA of the amount of the salary offset or voluntary repayment, based on materially changed circumstances, including, but not limited to, catastrophic illness, divorce, death, or disability.

(2) The request for special review must include an alternative proposed offset or payment schedule and a detailed statement, with supporting documents, that shows why the current salary offset or payments result in extreme financial hardship to the employee and his or her spouse and dependents. The detailed statement must indicate:

- (i) Income from all sources;
- (ii) Assets;
- (iii) Liabilities;
- (iv) Number of dependents;
- (v) Expenses for food, housing, clothing, and transportation;
- (vi) Medical expenses; and
- (vii) Exceptional expenses, if any.

(b) *Evaluation of request.* FHFA shall evaluate the statement and supporting documents and determine whether the

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

original offset or repayment schedule imposes extreme financial hardship on the employee, for example, by preventing the employee from meeting essential subsistence expenses such as food, housing, clothing, transportation, and medical care. FHFA shall notify the employee in writing within 30 calendar days of such determination, including, if appropriate, a revised offset or payment schedule. If the special review results in a revised offset or repayment schedule, FHFA shall provide a new certification to the paying agency.

§ 1208.27 Notice of salary offset where FHFA is the paying agency.

(a) *Notice.* Upon issuance of a proper certification by FHFA (for debts owed to FHFA) or upon receipt of a proper certification from another creditor agency, FHFA shall send the employee a written notice of salary offset.

(b) *Content of notice.* Such written notice of salary offset shall advise the employee of the:

(1) Certification that has been issued by FHFA or received from another creditor agency;

(2) Amount of the debt and of the deductions to be made; and

(3) Date and pay period when the salary offset will begin.

(c) If FHFA is not the creditor agency, FHFA shall provide a copy of the notice of salary offset to the creditor agency and advise the creditor agency of the dollar amount to be offset and the pay period when the offset will begin.

§ 1208.28 Procedures for salary offset where FHFA is the paying agency.

(a) *Generally.* FHFA shall coordinate salary deductions under this section and shall determine the amount of an employee's disposable pay and the amount of the salary offset subject to the requirements in this section. Deductions shall begin the pay period following the issuance of the certification by FHFA or the receipt by FHFA of the certification from another agency, or as soon thereafter as possible.

(b) Upon issuance of a proper certification by FHFA for debts owed to FHFA, or upon receipt of a proper certification from a creditor agency,

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.29

FHFA shall send the employee a written notice of salary offset. Such notice shall advise the employee:

(1) That certification has been issued by FHFA or received from another creditor agency;

(2) Of the amount of the debt and of the deductions to be made; and provided for in the certification, and

(3) Of the initiation of salary offset at the next officially established pay interval or as otherwise provided for in the certification.

(c) Where appropriate, FHFA shall provide a copy of the notice to the creditor agency and advise such agency of the dollar amount to be offset and the pay period when the offset will begin.

(d) *Types of collection.*—(1) *Lump-sum payment.* If the amount of the debt is equal to or less than 15 percent of the employee's disposable pay, such debt ordinarily will be collected in one lump-sum payment.

(2) *Installment deductions.* Installment deductions will be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of employment. The size and frequency of installment deductions will bear a reasonable relation to the size of the debt and the employee's ability to pay. However, the amount deducted for any pay period will not exceed 15 percent of the disposable pay from which the deduction is made unless the employee has agreed in writing to the deduction of a greater amount. The installment payment should normally be sufficient in size and frequency to liquidate the debt in no more than three years. Installment payments of less than \$50 should be accepted only in the most unusual circumstances.

(3) *Lump-sum deductions from final check.* In order to liquidate a debt, a lump-sum deduction exceeding 15 percent of disposable pay may be made pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3716 from any final salary payment due a former employee, whether the former employee was separated voluntarily or involuntarily.

(4) *Lump-sum deductions from other sources.* Whenever an employee subject to salary offset is separated from FHFA, and the balance of the debt cannot be liquidated by offset of the final salary check, FHFA may offset any

later payments of any kind to the former employee to collect the balance of the debt pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3716.

(e) *Multiple debts.*—(1) Where two or more creditor agencies are seeking salary offset, or where two or more debts are owed to a single creditor agency, FHFA may, at its discretion, determine whether one or more debts should be offset simultaneously within the 15 percent limitation.

(2) In the event that a debt owed FHFA is certified while an employee is subject to salary offset to repay another agency, FHFA may, at its discretion, determine whether the debt to FHFA should be repaid before the debt to the other agency is repaid, repaid simultaneously with the other debt, or repaid after the debt to the other agency.

(3) A levy pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall take precedence over other deductions under this section, as provided in 5 U.S.C. 5514(d).

§ 1208.29 Coordinating salary offset with other agencies.

(a) *Responsibility of FHFA as the creditor agency.*—(1) FHFA shall be responsible for:

(i) Arranging for a hearing upon proper request by a Federal employee;

(ii) Preparing the Notice of Intent consistent with the requirements of § 1208.21;

(iii) Obtaining hearing officials from other agencies pursuant to § 1208.23(b); and

(iv) Ensuring that each certification of debt pursuant to § 1208.24(b) is sent to a paying agency.

(2) Upon completion of the procedures set forth in §§ 1208.24 through 1208.26, FHFA shall submit to the employee's paying agency, if applicable, a certified debt claim and an installment agreement or other instruction on the payment schedule.

(i) If the employee is in the process of separating from the Federal Government, FHFA shall submit its debt claim to the employee's paying agency for collection by lump-sum deduction from the employee's final check. The paying agency shall certify the total amount of its collection and furnish a copy of the certification to FHFA and to the employee.

§ 1208.30

(ii) If the employee is already separated and all payments due from his or her former paying agency have been paid, FHFA may, unless otherwise prohibited, request that money due and payable to the employee from the Federal Government, including payments from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (5 CFR 831.1801) or other similar funds, be administratively offset to collect the debt.

(iii) When an employee transfers to another paying agency, FHFA shall not repeat the procedures described in §§ 1208.24 through 1208.26. Upon receiving notice of the employee's transfer, FHFA shall review the debt to ensure that collection is resumed by the new paying agency.

(b) *Responsibility of FHFA as the paying agency.*—(1) *Complete claim.* When FHFA receives a certified claim from a creditor agency, the employee shall be given written notice of the certification, the date salary offset will begin, and the amount of the periodic deductions. Deductions shall be scheduled to begin at the next officially established pay interval or as otherwise provided for in the certification.

(2) *Incomplete claim.* When FHFA receives an incomplete certification of debt from a creditor agency, FHFA shall return the claim with notice that procedures under 5 U.S.C. 5514 and 5 CFR 550.1104 must be followed, and that a properly certified claim must be received before FHFA will take action to collect the debt from the employee's current pay account.

(3) *Review.* FHFA is not authorized to review the merits of the creditor agency's determination with respect to the amount or validity of the debt certified by the creditor agency.

(4) *Employees who transfer from one paying agency to another agency.* If, after the creditor agency has submitted the debt claim to FHFA, the employee transfers to another agency before the debt is collected in full, FHFA must certify the total amount collected on the debt as required by 5 CFR 550.1109. One copy of the certification shall be furnished to the employee and one copy shall be sent to the creditor agency along with notice of the employee's transfer. If FHFA is aware that the employee is entitled to

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

payments from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or other similar payments, it must provide written notification to the agency responsible for making such payments that the debtor owes a debt (including the amount) and that the requirements set forth herein and in 5 CFR part 550, subpart K, have been met. FHFA must submit a properly certified claim to the new payment agency before a collection can be made.

§ 1208.30 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

Where FHFA is the creditor agency, FHFA shall assess interest, penalties, and administrative costs pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3717 and the FCCS, 31 CFR chapter IX.

§ 1208.31 Refunds.

(a) Where FHFA is the creditor agency, FHFA shall promptly refund any amount deducted under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5514 when:

(1) FHFA receives notice that the debt has been waived or otherwise found not to be owing to the Federal Government; or

(2) An administrative or judicial order directs FHFA to make a refund.

(b) Unless required by law or contract, refunds under this section shall not bear interest.

§ 1208.32 Request from a creditor agency for the services of a hearing official.

(a) FHFA may provide qualified personnel to serve as hearing officials upon request of a creditor agency when:

(1) The debtor is employed by FHFA and the creditor agency cannot provide a prompt and appropriate hearing before a hearing official furnished pursuant to another lawful arrangement; or

(2) The debtor is employed by the creditor agency and that agency cannot arrange for a hearing official.

(b) Services provided by FHFA to creditor agencies under this section shall be provided on a fully reimbursable basis pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1535, or other applicable authority.

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.42

§ 1208.33 Non-waiver of rights by payments.

A debtor's payment, whether voluntary or involuntary, of all or any portion of a debt being collected pursuant to this subpart B shall not be construed as a waiver of any rights that the debtor may have under any statute, regulation, or contract, except as otherwise provided by law or contract.

Subpart C—Administrative Offset

§ 1208.40 Authority and scope.

(a) The provisions of this subpart C apply to the collection of debts owed to the Federal Government arising from transactions with FHFA. Administrative offset is authorized under the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA). This subpart C is consistent with the Federal Claims Collection Standards (FCCS) on administrative offset issued by the Department of Justice.

(b) FHFA may collect a debt owed to the Federal Government from a person, organization, or other entity by administrative offset, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3716, where:

- (1) The debt is certain in amount;
- (2) Administrative offset is feasible, desirable, and not otherwise prohibited;
- (3) The applicable statute of limitations has not expired; and
- (4) Administrative offset is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

§ 1208.41 Collection.

(a) FHFA may collect a claim from a person, organization, or other entity by administrative offset of monies payable by the Federal Government only after:

- (1) Providing the debtor with due process required under this part; and
- (2) Providing the paying agency with written certification that the debtor owes the debt in the amount stated and that FHFA, as creditor agency, has complied with this part.

(b) Prior to initiating collection by administrative offset, FHFA should determine that the proposed offset is within the scope of this remedy, as set forth in 31 CFR 901.3(a). Administrative

offset under 31 U.S.C. 3716 may not be used to collect debts more than 10 years after the Federal Government's right to collect the debt first accrued, except as otherwise provided by law. In addition, administrative offset may not be used when a statute explicitly prohibits its use to collect the claim or type of claim involved.

(c) Unless otherwise provided, debts or payments not subject to administrative offset under 31 U.S.C. 3716 may be collected by administrative offset under common law, or any other applicable statutory authority.

§ 1208.42 Administrative offset prior to completion of procedures.

FHFA shall not be required to follow the procedures described in § 1208.43 where:

(a) Prior to the completion of the procedures described in § 1208.43, FHFA may effect administrative offset if failure to offset would substantially prejudice its ability to collect the debt, and if the time before the payment is to be made does not reasonably permit completion of the procedures described in § 1208.43. Such prior administrative offset shall be followed promptly by the completion of the procedures described in § 1208.43. Amounts recovered by administrative offset but later found not to be owed to FHFA shall be promptly refunded. This section applies only to administrative offset pursuant to 31 CFR 901.3(c), and does not apply when debts are referred to the Department of the Treasury for mandatory centralized administrative offset under 31 CFR 901.3(b)(1).

(b) The administrative offset is in the nature of a recoupment (*i.e.*, FHFA may offset a payment due to the debtor when both the payment due to the debtor and the debt owed to FHFA arose from the same transaction); or

(c) In the case of non-centralized administrative offsets, FHFA first learns of the existence of a debt due when there would be insufficient time to afford the debtor due process under these procedures before the paying agency makes payment to the debtor; in such cases, the Director shall give the debtor notice and an opportunity for review as soon as practical and shall refund

§ 1208.43

any money ultimately found not to be due to the Federal Government.

§ 1208.43 Procedures.

Unless the procedures described in § 1208.42 are used, prior to collecting any debt by administrative offset or referring such claim to another agency for collection through administrative offset, FHFA shall provide the debtor with the following:

(a) Written notification of the nature and amount of the debt, the intention of FHFA to collect the debt through administrative offset, and a statement of the rights of the debtor under this section;

(b) An opportunity to inspect and copy the records of FHFA related to the debt that are not exempt from disclosure;

(c) An opportunity for review within FHFA of the determination of indebtedness. Any request for review by the debtor shall be in writing and shall be submitted to FHFA within 30 calendar days of the date of the notice of the offset. FHFA may waive the time limits for requesting review for good cause shown by the debtor. FHFA shall provide the debtor with a reasonable opportunity for an oral hearing when:

(1) An applicable statute authorizes or requires FHFA to consider waiver of the indebtedness involved, the debtor requests waiver of the indebtedness, and the waiver determination turns on an issue of credibility or veracity; or

(2) The debtor requests reconsideration of the debt and FHFA determines that the question of the indebtedness cannot be resolved by review of the documentary evidence, as for example, when the validity of the debt turns on an issue of credibility or veracity. Unless otherwise required by law, an oral hearing under this subpart C is not required to be a formal evidentiary hearing, although FHFA shall document all significant matters discussed at the hearing. In those cases where an oral hearing is not required by this subpart C, FHFA shall make its determination on the request for waiver or reconsideration based upon a review of the written record; and

(d) An opportunity to enter into a written agreement for the voluntary

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

repayment of the amount of the claim at the discretion of FHFA.

§ 1208.44 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

FHFA shall assess interest, penalties, and administrative costs on debts owed to the Federal Government, in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717 and the FCCS. FHFA may also assess interest and related charges on debts that are not subject to 31 U.S.C. 3717 and the FCCS to the extent authorized under the common law or other applicable statutory authority.

§ 1208.45 Refunds.

FHFA shall refund promptly those amounts recovered by administrative offset but later found not to be owed to the Federal Government. Unless required by law or contract, such refunds shall not bear interest.

§ 1208.46 No requirement for duplicate notice.

Where FHFA has previously given a debtor any of the required notice and review opportunities with respect to a particular debt, FHFA is not required to duplicate such notice and review opportunities prior to initiating administrative offset.

§ 1208.47 Requests for administrative offset to other Federal agencies.

(a) FHFA may request that a debt owed to FHFA be collected by administrative offset against funds due and payable to a debtor by another agency.

(b) In requesting administrative offset, FHFA, as creditor, shall certify in writing to the agency holding funds of the debtor:

(1) That the debtor owes the debt;

(2) The amount and basis of the debt; and

(3) That FHFA has complied with the requirements of its own administrative offset regulations and the applicable provisions of the FCCS with respect to providing the debtor with due process, unless otherwise provided.

§ 1208.48 Requests for administrative offset from other Federal agencies.

(a) Any agency may request that funds due and payable to a debtor by FHFA be administratively offset in

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.51

order to collect a debt owed to such agency by the debtor.

(b) FHFA shall initiate the requested administrative offset only upon:

(1) Receipt of written certification from the creditor agency that:

(i) The debtor owes the debt, including the amount and basis of the debt;

(ii) The agency has prescribed regulations for the exercise of administrative offset; and

(iii) The agency has complied with its own administrative offset regulations and with the applicable provisions of the FCCS, including providing any required hearing or review.

(2) A determination by FHFA that collection by administrative offset against funds payable by FHFA would be in the best interest of the Federal Government as determined by the facts and circumstances of the particular case and that such administrative offset would not otherwise be contrary to law.

§ 1208.49 Administrative offset against amounts payable from Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund.

(a) *Request for administrative offset.* Unless otherwise prohibited by law, FHFA may request that monies that are due and payable to a debtor from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (Fund) be offset administratively in reasonable amounts in order to collect in one full payment or in a minimal number of payments debt owed to FHFA by the debtor. Such requests shall be made to the appropriate officials of OPM in accordance with such regulations as may be prescribed by FHFA or OPM.

(b) *Contents of certification.* When making a request for administrative offset under paragraph (a) of this section, FHFA shall provide OPM with a written certification that:

(1) The debtor owes FHFA a debt, including the amount of the debt;

(2) FHFA has complied with the applicable statutes, regulations, and procedures of OPM; and

(3) FHFA has complied with the requirements of the FCCS, including any required hearing or review.

(c) If FHFA decides to request administrative offset under paragraph (a) of this section, it shall make the request

as soon as practicable after completion of the applicable procedures. This will satisfy any requirement that administrative offset be initiated prior to the expiration of the applicable statute of limitations. At such time as the debtor makes a claim for payments from the Fund, if at least one year has elapsed since the administrative offset request was originally made, the debtor shall be permitted to offer a satisfactory repayment plan in lieu of administrative offset if he or she establishes that changed financial circumstances would render the administrative offset unjust.

(d) If FHFA collects part or all of the debt by other means before deductions are made or completed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, FHFA shall act promptly to modify or terminate its request for administrative offset under paragraph (a) of this section.

Subpart D—Tax Refund Offset

§ 1208.50 Authority and scope.

The provisions of 26 U.S.C. 6402(d) and 31 U.S.C. 3720A authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to offset a delinquent debt owed the Federal Government from the tax refund due a taxpayer when other collection efforts have failed to recover the amount due. In addition, FHFA is authorized to collect debts by means of administrative offset under 31 U.S.C. 3716 and, as part of the debt collection process, to notify the United States Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service of the amount of such debt for collection by tax refund offset.

§ 1208.51 Definitions.

The following terms apply to this subpart D—

Debt or claim means an amount of money, funds or property which has been determined by FHFA to be due to the Federal Government from any person, organization, or entity, except another Federal agency.

(1) A debt becomes eligible for tax refund offset procedures if:

(i) It cannot currently be collected pursuant to the salary offset procedures of 5 U.S.C. 5514(a)(1);

§ 1208.52

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

(ii) The debt is ineligible for administrative offset or cannot be collected currently by administrative offset; and

(iii) The requirements of this section are otherwise satisfied.

(2) All judgment debts are past due for purposes of this subpart D. Judgment debts remain past due until paid in full.

Debtor means a person who owes a debt or a claim. The term “person” includes any individual, organization or entity, except another Federal agency.

Dispute means a written statement supported by documentation or other evidence that all or part of an alleged debt is not past due or legally enforceable, that the amount is not the amount currently owed, that the outstanding debt has been satisfied, or in the case of a debt reduced to judgment, that the judgment has been satisfied or stayed.

Notice means the information sent to the debtor pursuant to §1208.53. The date of the notice is that date shown on the notice letter as its date of issuance.

Tax refund offset means withholding or reducing a tax refund payment by an amount necessary to satisfy a debt owed by the payee(s) of a tax refund payment.

Tax refund payment means any overpayment of Federal taxes to be refunded to the person making the overpayment after the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) makes the appropriate credits.

§ 1208.52 Procedures.

(a) *Referral to the Department of the Treasury.*—(1) FHFA may refer any past due, legally enforceable nonjudgment debt of an individual, organization, or entity to the Department of the Treasury for tax refund offset if FHFA’s or the referring agency’s rights of action accrued more than three months but less than 10 years before the offset is made.

(2) Debts reduced to judgment may be referred at any time.

(3) Debts in amounts lower than \$25 are not subject to referral.

(4) In the event that more than one debt is owed, the tax refund offset procedures shall be applied in the order in which the debts became past due.

(5) FHFA shall notify the Department of the Treasury of any change in the amount due promptly after receipt of payment or notice of other reductions.

(b) *Notice.* FHFA shall provide the debtor with written notice of its intent to offset before initiating the offset. Notice shall be mailed to the debtor at the current address of the debtor, as determined from information obtained from the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 6103(m)(2), (4), (5) or maintained by FHFA. The notice sent to the debtor shall state the amount of the debt and inform the debtor that:

(1) The debt is past due;

(2) FHFA intends to refer the debt to the Department of the Treasury for offset from tax refunds that may be due to the taxpayer;

(3) FHFA intends to provide information concerning the delinquent debt exceeding \$100 to a consumer reporting bureau unless such debt has already been disclosed; and

(4) Before the debt is reported to a consumer reporting agency, if applicable, and referred to the Department of the Treasury for offset from tax refunds, the debtor has 65 calendar days from the date of notice to request a review under paragraph (d) of this section.

(c) *Report to consumer reporting agency.* If the debtor neither pays the amount due nor presents evidence that the amount is not past due or is satisfied or stayed, FHFA will report the debt to a consumer reporting agency at the end of the notice period, if applicable, and refer the debt to the Department of the Treasury for offset from the taxpayer’s Federal tax refund. FHFA shall certify to the Department of the Treasury that reasonable efforts have been made by FHFA to obtain payment of such debt.

(d) *Request for review.* A debtor may request a review by FHFA if he or she believes that all or part of the debt is not past due or is not legally enforceable, or in the case of a judgment debt, that the debt has been stayed or the amount satisfied, as follows:

(1) The debtor must send a written request for review to FHFA at the address provided in the notice.

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.61

(2) The request must state the amount disputed and reasons why the debtor believes that the debt is not past due, is not legally enforceable, has been satisfied, or if a judgment debt, has been satisfied or stayed.

(3) The request must include any documents that the debtor wishes to be considered or state that additional information will be submitted within the time permitted.

(4) If the debtor wishes to inspect records establishing the nature and amount of the debt, the debtor must make a written request to FHFA for an opportunity for such an inspection. The office holding the relevant records not exempt from disclosure shall make them available for inspection during normal business hours within one week from the date of receipt of the request.

(5) The request for review and any additional information submitted pursuant to the request must be received by FHFA at the address stated in the notice within 65 calendar days of the date of issuance of the notice.

(6) In reaching its decision, FHFA shall review the dispute and shall consider its records and any documentation and arguments submitted by the debtor. FHFA shall send a written notice of its decision to the debtor. There is no administrative appeal of this decision.

(7) If the evidence presented by the debtor is considered by a non-FHFA agent or other entities or persons acting on behalf of FHFA, the debtor shall be accorded at least 30 calendar days from the date the agent or other entity or person determines that all or part of the debt is past due and legally enforceable to request review by FHFA of any unresolved dispute.

(8) Any debt that previously has been reviewed pursuant to this section or any other section of this part, or that has been reduced to a judgment, may not be disputed except on the grounds of payments made or events occurring subsequent to the previous review or judgment.

(9) To the extent that a debt owed has not been established by judicial or administrative order, a debtor may dispute the existence or amount of the debt or the terms of repayment. With respect to debts established by a judi-

cial or administrative order, FHFA review will be limited to issues concerning the payment or other discharge of the debt.

§ 1208.53 No requirement for duplicate notice.

Where FHFA has previously given a debtor any of the required notice and review opportunities with respect to a particular debt, FHFA is not required to duplicate such notice and review opportunities prior to initiating tax refund offset.

§ 1208.54–1208.59 [Reserved]

Subpart E—Administrative Wage Garnishment

§ 1208.60 Scope and purpose.

These administrative wage garnishment procedures are issued in compliance with 31 U.S.C. 3720D and 31 CFR 285.11(f). This subpart E provides procedures for FHFA to collect money from a debtor's disposable pay by means of administrative wage garnishment. The receipt of payments pursuant to this subpart E does not preclude FHFA from pursuing other debt collection remedies, including the offset of Federal payments. FHFA may pursue such debt collection remedies separately or in conjunction with administrative wage garnishment. This subpart E does not apply to the collection of delinquent debts from the wages of Federal employees from their Federal employment. Federal pay is subject to the Federal salary offset procedures set forth in 5 U.S.C. 5514 and other applicable laws.

§ 1208.61 Notice.

At least 30 days before the initiation of garnishment proceedings, FHFA will send, by first class mail to the debtor's last known address, a written notice informing the debtor of:

(a) The nature and amount of the debt;

(b) FHFA's intention to initiate proceedings to collect the debt through deductions from the debtor's pay until the debt and all accumulated interest penalties and administrative costs are paid in full;

§ 1208.62

(c) An explanation of the debtor's rights as set forth in § 1208.62(c); and

(d) The time frame within which the debtor may exercise these rights. FHFA shall retain a stamped copy of the notice indicating the date the notice was mailed.

§ 1208.62 Debtor's rights.

FHFA shall afford the debtor the opportunity:

(a) To inspect and copy records related to the debt;

(b) To enter into a written repayment agreement with FHFA, under terms agreeable to FHFA; and

(c) To the extent that a debt owed has not been established by judicial or administrative order, to request a hearing concerning the existence or amount of the debt or the terms of the repayment schedule. With respect to debts established by a judicial or administrative order, a debtor may request a hearing concerning the payment or other discharge of the debt. The debtor is not entitled to a hearing concerning the terms of the proposed repayment schedule if these terms have been established by written agreement.

§ 1208.63 Form of hearing.

(a) If the debtor submits a timely written request for a hearing as provided in § 1208.62(c), FHFA will afford the debtor a hearing, which at FHFA's option may be oral or written. FHFA will provide the debtor with a reasonable opportunity for an oral hearing when FHFA determines that the issues in dispute cannot be resolved by review of the documentary evidence, for example, when the validity of the claim turns on the issue of credibility or veracity.

(b) If FHFA determines that an oral hearing is appropriate, the time and location of the hearing shall be established by FHFA. An oral hearing may, at the debtor's option, be conducted either in person or by telephone conference. All travel expenses incurred by the debtor in connection with an in-person hearing will be borne by the debtor. All telephonic charges incurred during the hearing will be the responsibility of the agency.

(c) In cases when it is determined that an oral hearing is not required by

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

this section, FHFA will accord the debtor a "paper hearing," that is, FHFA will decide the issues in dispute based upon a review of the written record.

§ 1208.64 Effect of timely request.

If FHFA receives a debtor's written request for a hearing within 15 business days of the date FHFA mailed its notice of intent to seek garnishment, FHFA shall not issue a withholding order until the debtor has been provided the requested hearing, and a decision in accordance with § 1208.68 and § 1208.69 has been rendered.

§ 1208.65 Failure to timely request a hearing.

If FHFA receives a debtor's written request for a hearing after 15 business days of the date FHFA mailed its notice of intent to seek garnishment, FHFA shall provide a hearing to the debtor. However, FHFA will not delay issuance of a withholding order unless it determines that the untimely filing of the request was caused by factors over which the debtor had no control, or FHFA receives information that FHFA believes justifies a delay or cancellation of the withholding order.

§ 1208.66 Hearing official.

A hearing official may be any qualified individual, as determined by FHFA, including an administrative law judge.

§ 1208.67 Procedure.

After the debtor requests a hearing, the hearing official shall notify the debtor of:

(a) The date and time of a telephonic hearing;

(b) The date, time, and location of an in-person oral hearing; or

(c) The deadline for the submission of evidence for a written hearing.

§ 1208.68 Format of hearing.

FHFA will have the burden of proof to establish the existence or amount of the debt. Thereafter, if the debtor disputes the existence or amount of the debt, the debtor must prove by a preponderance of the evidence that no debt exists, or that the amount of the

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1208.75

debt is incorrect. In addition, the debtor may present evidence that the terms of the repayment schedule are unlawful, would cause a financial hardship to the debtor, or that collection of the debt may not be pursued due to operation of law. The hearing official shall maintain a record of any hearing held under this section. Hearings are not required to be formal, and evidence may be offered without regard to formal rules of evidence. Witnesses who testify in oral hearings shall do so under oath or affirmation.

§ 1208.69 Date of decision.

The hearing official shall issue a written opinion stating his or her decision as soon as practicable, but not later than 60 days after the date on which the request for such hearing was received by FHFA. If FHFA is unable to provide the debtor with a hearing and decision within 60 days after the receipt of the request for such hearing:

(a) FHFA may not issue a withholding order until the hearing is held and a decision rendered; or

(b) If FHFA had previously issued a withholding order to the debtor's employer, the withholding order will be suspended beginning on the 61st day after the date FHFA received the hearing request and continuing until a hearing is held and a decision is rendered.

§ 1208.70 Content of decision.

The written decision shall include:

(a) A summary of the facts presented;

(b) The hearing official's findings, analysis and conclusions; and

(c) The terms of any repayment schedule, if applicable.

§ 1208.71 Finality of agency action.

A decision by a hearing official shall become the final decision of FHFA for the purpose of judicial review under the Administrative Procedure Act.

§ 1208.72 Failure to appear.

In the absence of good cause shown, a debtor who fails to appear at a scheduled hearing will be deemed as not having timely filed a request for a hearing.

§ 1208.73 Wage garnishment order.

(a) Unless FHFA receives information that it believes justifies a delay or cancellation of the withholding order, FHFA will send by first class mail a withholding order to the debtor's employer within 30 calendar days after the debtor fails to make a timely request for a hearing (*i.e.*, within 15 business days after the mailing of the notice of FHFA's intent to seek garnishment) or, if a timely request for a hearing is made by the debtor, within 30 calendar days after a decision to issue a withholding order becomes final.

(b) The withholding order sent to the employer will be in the form prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, on FHFA's letterhead, and signed by the head of the agency or delegate. The order will contain all information necessary for the employer to comply with the withholding order, including the debtor's name, address, and social security number, as well as instructions for withholding and information as to where payments should be sent.

(c) FHFA will keep a stamped copy of the order indicating the date it was mailed.

§ 1208.74 Certification by employer.

Along with the withholding order, FHFA will send to the employer a certification in a form prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. The employer shall complete and return the certification to FHFA within the time frame prescribed in the instructions to the form. The certification will address matters such as information about the debtor's employment status and disposable pay available for withholding.

§ 1208.75 Amounts withheld.

(a) Upon receipt of the garnishment order issued under this section, the employer shall deduct from all disposable pay paid to the debtor during each pay period the amount of garnishment described in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section.

(b) Subject to the provisions of paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section, the amount of garnishment shall be the lesser of:

(1) The amount indicated on the garnishment order up to 15 percent of the debtor's disposable pay; or

§ 1208.76

(2) The amount set forth in 15 U.S.C. 1673(a)(2). The amount set forth at 15 U.S.C. 1673(a)(2) is the amount by which the debtor's disposable pay exceeds an amount equivalent to thirty times the minimum wage.

(c) When a debtor's pay is subject to withholding orders with priority, the following shall apply:

(1) Unless otherwise provided by Federal law, withholding orders issued under this section shall be paid in the amounts set forth under paragraph (b) of this section and shall have priority over other withholding orders which are served later in time. However, withholding orders for family support shall have priority over withholding orders issued under this section.

(2) If amounts are being withheld from a debtor's pay pursuant to a withholding order served on an employer before a withholding order issued pursuant to this section, or if a withholding order for family support is served on an employer at any time, the amounts withheld pursuant to the withholding order issued under this section shall be the lesser of:

(i) The amount calculated under paragraph (b) of this section; or

(ii) An amount equal to 25 percent of the debtor's disposable pay less the amount(s) withheld under the withholding order(s) with priority.

(3) If a debtor owes more than one debt to FHFA, FHFA may issue multiple withholding orders. The total amount garnished from the debtor's pay for such orders will not exceed the amount set forth in paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) An amount greater than that set forth in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section may be withheld upon the written consent of the debtor.

(e) The employer shall promptly pay to FHFA all amounts withheld in accordance with the withholding order issued pursuant to this section.

(f) An employer shall not be required to vary its normal pay and disbursement cycles in order to comply with the withholding order.

(g) Any assignment or allotment by the employee of the employee's earnings shall be void to the extent it interferes with or prohibits execution of the withholding order under this section,

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

except for any assignment or allotment made pursuant to a family support judgment or order.

(h) The employer shall withhold the appropriate amount from the debtor's wages for each pay period until the employer receives notification from FHFA to discontinue wage withholding. The garnishment order shall indicate a reasonable period of time within which the employer is required to commence wage withholding.

§ 1208.76 Exclusions from garnishment.

FHFA will not garnish the wages of a debtor it knows has been involuntarily separated from employment until the debtor has been re-employed continuously for at least 12 months. The debtor has the burden of informing FHFA of the circumstances surrounding an involuntary separation from employment.

§ 1208.77 Financial hardship.

(a) A debtor whose wages are subject to a wage withholding order under this section, may, at any time, request a review by FHFA of the amount garnished, based on materially changed circumstances such as disability, divorce, or catastrophic illness which result in financial hardship.

(b) A debtor requesting a review under this section shall submit the basis for claiming that the current amount of garnishment results in a financial hardship to the debtor, along with supporting documentation.

(c) If a financial hardship is found, FHFA will downwardly adjust, by an amount and for a period of time agreeable to FHFA, the amount garnished to reflect the debtor's financial condition. FHFA will notify the employer of any adjustments to the amounts to be withheld.

§ 1208.78 Ending garnishment.

(a) Once FHFA has fully recovered the amounts owed by the debtor, including interest, penalties, and administrative costs consistent with the Federal Claims Collection Standards, FHFA will send the debtor's employer notification to discontinue wage withholding.

(b) At least annually, FHFA will review its debtors' accounts to ensure that garnishment has been terminated for accounts that have been paid in full.

§ 1208.79 Prohibited actions by employer.

The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 prohibits an employer from discharging, refusing to employ, or taking disciplinary action against the debtor due to the issuance of a withholding order under this subpart E.

§ 1208.80 Refunds.

(a) If a hearing official determines that a debt is not legally due and owing to the United States, FHFA shall promptly refund any amount collected by means of administrative wage garnishment.

(b) Unless required by Federal law or contract, refunds under this section shall not bear interest.

§ 1208.81 Right of action.

FHFA may sue any employer for any amount that the employer fails to withhold from wages owed and payable to its employee in accordance with this subpart E. However, a suit will not be filed before the termination of the collection action involving a particular debtor, unless earlier filing is necessary to avoid expiration of any applicable statute of limitations. For purposes of this subpart E, "termination of the collection action" occurs when the agency has terminated collection action in accordance with the FCCS or other applicable standards. In any event, termination of the collection action will have been deemed to occur if FHFA has not received any payments to satisfy the debt from the particular debtor whose wages were subject to garnishment, in whole or in part, for a period of one (1) year.

PART 1209—RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Subpart A—Scope and Authority

Sec.

- 1209.1 Scope.
1209.2 Rules of construction.

1209.3 Definitions.

Subpart B—Enforcement Proceedings Under Sections 1371 Through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act

- 1209.4 Scope and authority.
1209.5 Cease and desist proceedings.
1209.6 Temporary cease and desist orders.
1209.7 Civil money penalties.
1209.8 Removal and prohibition proceedings.
1209.9 Supervisory actions not affected.

Subpart C—Rules of Practice and Procedure

- 1209.10 Authority of the Director.
1209.11 Authority of the Presiding Officer.
1209.12 Public hearings; closed hearings.
1209.13 Good faith certification.
1209.14 Ex parte communications.
1209.15 Filing of papers.
1209.16 Service of papers.
1209.17 Time computations.
1209.18 Change of time limits.
1209.19 Witness fees and expenses.
1209.20 Opportunity for informal settlement.
1209.21 Conduct of examination.
1209.22 Collateral attacks on adjudicatory proceeding.
1209.23 Commencement of proceeding and contents of notice of charges.
1209.24 Answer.
1209.25 Amended pleadings.
1209.26 Failure to appear.
1209.27 Consolidation and severance of actions.
1209.28 Motions.
1209.29 Discovery.
1209.30 Request for document discovery from parties.
1209.31 Document discovery subpoenas to non-parties.
1209.32 Deposition of witness unavailable for hearing.
1209.33 Interlocutory review.
1209.34 Summary disposition.
1209.35 Partial summary disposition.
1209.36 Scheduling and pre-hearing conferences.
1209.37 Pre-hearing submissions.
1209.38 Hearing subpoenas.
1209.39–1209.49 [Reserved]
1209.50 Conduct of hearings.
1209.51 Evidence.
1209.52 Post-hearing filings.
1209.53 Recommended decision and filing of record.
1209.54 Exceptions to recommended decision.
1209.55 Review by Director.
1209.56 Exhaustion of administrative remedies.
1209.57 Judicial review; no automatic stay.

§ 1209.1

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

1209.58–1209.69 [Reserved]

Subpart D—Parties and Representational Practice Before the Federal Housing Finance Agency; Standards of Conduct

- 1209.70 Scope.
- 1209.71 Definitions.
- 1209.72 Appearance and practice in adjudicatory proceedings.
- 1209.73 Conflicts of interest.
- 1209.74 Sanctions.
- 1209.75 Censure, suspension, disbarment, and reinstatement.
- 1209.76–1209.79 [Reserved]

Subpart E—Civil Money Penalty Inflation Adjustments

- 1209.80 Inflation adjustments.
- 1209.81 Applicability.
- 1209.82–1209.99 [Reserved]

Subpart F—Suspension or Removal of an Entity-Affiliated Party Charged With Felony

- 1209.100 Scope.
- 1209.101 Suspension, removal, or prohibition.
- 1209.102 Hearing on removal or suspension.
- 1209.103 Recommended and final decisions.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 554, 556, 557, and 701 *et seq.*; 12 U.S.C. 4501, 4503, 4511, 4513, 4513b, 4517, 4526, 4531, 4535, 4536, 4581, 4585, 4631–4641; and 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

SOURCE: 76 FR 53607, Aug. 26, 2011, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Scope and Authority

§ 1209.1 Scope.

(a) *Authority.* This part sets forth the Rules of Practice and Procedure for hearings on the record in administrative enforcement proceedings in accordance with the Federal Housing Enterprises Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992, Title XIII of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, Public Law 102–550, sections 1301 *et seq.*, codified at 12 U.S.C. 4501 *et seq.*, as amended (the “Safety and Soundness Act”), as stated in § 1209.4 of this part.¹

¹As used in this part, the “Safety and Soundness Act” means the Federal Housing Enterprise Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992, as amended. See § 1209.3. The Safety and Soundness Act was amended by the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, Public Law No. 110–289, sections 1101 *et seq.*, 122 Stat. 2654 (July 30, 2008) (HERA).

(b) *Enforcement Proceedings.* Subpart B of this part (Enforcement Proceedings Under sections 1371 through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act) sets forth the statutory authority for enforcement proceedings under sections 1371 through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631 through 4641) (Enforcement Proceedings).

(c) *Rules of Practice and Procedure.* Subpart C of this part (Rules of Practice and Procedure) prescribes the general rules of practice and procedure applicable to adjudicatory proceedings that the Director is required by statute to conduct on the record after opportunity for a hearing under the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 554, 556, and 557, under the following statutory provisions:

(1) Enforcement proceedings under sections 1371 through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act, as amended (12 U.S.C. 4631 through 4641);

(2) Removal, prohibition, and civil money penalty proceedings for violations of post-employment restrictions imposed by applicable law; and

(3) Proceedings under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4012a) to assess civil money penalties.

(d) *Representation and conduct.* Subpart D of this part (Parties and Representational Practice before the Federal Housing Finance Agency; Standards of Conduct) sets out the rules of representation and conduct that shall govern any appearance by any person, party, or representative of any person or party, before a presiding officer, the Director of FHFA, or a designated representative of the Director or FHFA staff, in any proceeding or matter pending before the Director.

(e) *Civil money penalty inflation adjustments.* Subpart E of this part (Civil Money Penalty Inflation Adjustments) sets out the requirements for the periodic adjustment of maximum civil money penalty amounts under the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended (Inflation

Specifically, sections 1151 through 1158 of HERA amended sections 1371 through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act, (codified at 12 U.S.C. 4631 through 4641) (hereafter, “Enforcement Proceedings”).

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.3

Adjustment Act) on a recurring four-year cycle.²

(f) *Informal proceedings.* Subpart F of this part (Suspension or Removal of an Entity-Affiliated Party Charged with Felony) sets out the scope and procedures for the suspension or removal of an entity-affiliated party charged with a felony under section 1377(h) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)), which provides for an informal hearing before the Director.

§ 1209.2 Rules of construction.

For purposes of this part:

(a) Any term in the singular includes the plural and the plural includes the singular, if such use would be appropriate;

(b) Any use of a masculine, feminine, or neuter gender encompasses all three, if such use would be appropriate; and

(c) Unless the context requires otherwise, a party's representative of record, if any, on behalf of that party, may take any action required to be taken by the party.

§ 1209.3 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, unless explicitly stated to the contrary:

Adjudicatory proceeding means a proceeding conducted pursuant to these rules, on the record, and leading to the formulation of a final order other than a regulation.

Agency has the meaning defined in section 1303(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(2)).

Associated with the regulated entity means, for purposes of section 1379 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4637), any direct or indirect involvement or participation in the conduct of operations or business affairs of a regulated entity, including engaging in activities related to the operations or management of, providing advice or services to, consulting or contracting with, serving as agent for, or in any other way affecting the operations or business affairs of a regulated entity—

with or without regard to—any direct or indirect payment, promise to make payment, or receipt of any compensation or thing of value, such as money, notes, stock, stock options, or other securities, or other benefit or remuneration of any kind, by or on behalf of the regulated entity, except any payment made pursuant to a retirement plan or deferred compensation plan, which is determined by the Director to be permissible under section 1318(e) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4518(e)), or by reason of the death or disability of the party, in the form and manner commonly paid or provided to retirees of the regulated entity, unless such payment, compensation, or such benefit is promised or provided to or for the benefit of said party for the provision of services or other benefit to the regulated entity.

Authorizing statutes has the meaning defined in section 1303(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(3)).

Bank Act means the Federal Home Loan Bank Act, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1421 *et seq.*).

Board or Board of Directors means the board of directors of any Enterprise or Federal Home Loan Bank (Bank), as provided for in the respective authorizing statutes.

Decisional employee means any member of the Director's or the presiding officer's staff who has not engaged in an investigative or prosecutorial role in a proceeding and who may assist the Director or the presiding officer, respectively, in preparing orders, recommended decisions, decisions, and other documents under subpart C of this part.

Director has the meaning defined in section 1303(9) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(9)); except, as the context requires in this part, "director" may refer to a member of the Board of Directors or any Board committee of an Enterprise, a Federal Home Loan Bank, or the Office of Finance.

Enterprise has the meaning defined in section 1303(10) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(10)).

Entity-affiliated party has the meaning defined in section 1303(11) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(11)), and may include an executive

²Public Law 101-410, 104 Stat. 890, as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, Public Law 104-134, Title III, sec. 31001(s)(1), Apr. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. 1321-373; Public Law 105-362, Title XIII, sec. 1301(a), Nov. 10, 1998, 112 Stat. 3293 (28 U.S.C. 2461 note).

§ 1209.4

officer, any director, or management of the Office of Finance, as applicable under relevant provisions of the Safety and Soundness Act or FHFA regulations.

Executive officer has the meaning defined in section 1303(12) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(12)), and may include an executive officer of the Office of Finance, as applicable under relevant provisions of the Safety and Soundness Act or FHFA regulations.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency as defined in section 1303(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(2)).

Notice of charges means the charging document served by FHFA to commence an enforcement proceeding under this part for the issuance of a cease and desist order; removal, suspension, or prohibition order; or an order to assess a civil money penalty, under 12 U.S.C. 4631 through 4641 and §1209.23. A “notice of charges,” as used or referred to as such in this part, is not an “effective notice” under section 1375(a) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4635(a)).

Office of Finance has the meaning defined in section 1303(19) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(19)).

Party means any person named as a respondent in any notice of charges, or FHFA, as the context requires in this part.

Person means an individual, sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, unincorporated association, trust, joint venture, pool, syndicate, organization, regulated entity, entity-affiliated party, or other entity.

Presiding officer means an administrative law judge or any other person appointed by or at the request of the Director under applicable law to conduct an adjudicatory proceeding under this part.

Regulated entity has the meaning defined in section 1303(20) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(20)).

Representative of record means an individual who is authorized to represent a person or is representing himself and who has filed a notice of appearance and otherwise has complied with the requirements under §1209.72. FHFA’s representative of record may be re-

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

ferred to as FHFA counsel of record, agency counsel or enforcement counsel.

Respondent means any party that is the subject of a notice of charges under this part.

Safety and Soundness Act means Title XIII of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, Public Law 102–550, known as the Federal Housing Enterprises Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992, as amended (12 U.S.C. 4501 *et seq.*)

Violation has the meaning defined in section 1303(25) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4502(25)).

Subpart B—Enforcement Proceedings Under Sections 1371 Through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act

§ 1209.4 Scope and authority.

The rules of practice and procedure set forth in Subpart C (Rules of Practice and Procedure) of this part shall be applicable to any hearing on the record conducted by FHFA in accordance with sections 1371 through 1379D of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631 through 4641), as follows:

(a) Cease-and-desist proceedings under sections 1371 and 1373 of the Safety and Soundness Act, (12 U.S.C. 4631, 4633);

(b) Civil money penalty assessment proceedings under sections 1373 and 1376 of the Safety and Soundness Act, (12 U.S.C. 4633, 4636); and

(c) Removal and prohibition proceedings under sections 1373 and 1377 of the Safety and Soundness Act, (12 U.S.C. 4633, 4636a), except removal proceedings under section 1377(h) of the Safety and Soundness Act, (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)).

§ 1209.5 Cease and desist proceedings.

(a) *Cease and desist proceedings*—(1) *Authority*—(i) *In general*. As prescribed by section 1371(a) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(a)), if in the opinion of the Director, a regulated entity or any entity-affiliated party is engaging or has engaged, or the Director has reasonable cause to believe that the regulated entity or any entity-affiliated party is about to engage,

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.5

in an unsafe or unsound practice in conducting the business of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance, or is violating or has violated, or the Director has reasonable cause to believe is about to violate, a law, rule, regulation, or order, or any condition imposed in writing by the Director in connection with the granting of any application or other request by the regulated entity or the Office of Finance or any written agreement entered into with the Director, the Director may issue and serve upon the regulated entity or entity-affiliated party a notice of charges (as described in §1209.23) to institute cease and desist proceedings, except with regard to the enforcement of any housing goal that must be addressed under sections 1341 and 1345 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4581, 4585).

(ii) *Hearing on the record.* In accordance with section 1373 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4633), a hearing on the record shall be held in the District of Columbia. Subpart C of this part shall govern the hearing procedures.

(iii) *Consent to order.* Unless the party served with a notice of charges shall appear at the hearing personally or through an authorized representative of record, the party shall be deemed to have consented to the issuance of the cease and desist order.

(2) *Unsatisfactory rating.* In accordance with section 1371(b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(b)), if a regulated entity receives, in its most recent report of examination, a less-than-satisfactory rating for asset quality, management, earnings, or liquidity, the Director may deem the regulated entity to be engaging in an unsafe or unsound practice within the meaning of section 1371(a) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(a)), if any such deficiency has not been corrected.

(3) *Order.* As provided by section 1371(c)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(c)(2)), if the Director finds on the record made at a hearing in accordance with section 1373 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4633) that any practice or violation specified in the notice of charges has been established (or the regulated enti-

ty or entity-affiliated party consents pursuant to section 1373(a)(4) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4633(a)(4)), the Director may issue and serve upon the regulated entity, executive officer, director, or entity-affiliated party, an order (as set forth in §1209.55) requiring such party to cease and desist from any such practice or violation and to take affirmative action to correct or remedy the conditions resulting from any such practice or violation.

(b) *Affirmative action to correct conditions resulting from violations or activities.* The authority to issue a cease and desist order or a temporary cease and desist order requiring a regulated entity, executive officer, director, or entity-affiliated party to take affirmative action to correct or remedy any condition resulting from any practice or violation with respect to which such cease and desist order or temporary cease and desist order is set forth in section 1371(a), (c)(2), and (d) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(a), (c)(2), and (d)), and includes the authority to:

(1) Require the regulated entity or entity-affiliated party to make restitution, or to provide reimbursement, indemnification, or guarantee against loss, if—

(i) Such entity or party or finance facility was unjustly enriched in connection with such practice or violation, or

(ii) The violation or practice involved a reckless disregard for the law or any applicable regulations, or prior order of the Director;

(2) Require the regulated entity to seek restitution, or to obtain reimbursement, indemnification, or guarantee against loss; as

(3) Restrict asset or liability growth of the regulated entity;

(4) Require the regulated entity to obtain new capital;

(5) Require the regulated entity to dispose of any loan or asset involved;

(6) Require the regulated entity to rescind agreements or contracts;

(7) Require the regulated entity to employ qualified officers or employees (who may be subject to approval by the Director at the direction of the Director); and

(8) Require the regulated entity to take such other action, as the Director

§ 1209.6

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

determines appropriate, including limiting activities.

(c) *Authority to limit activities.* As provided by section 1371(e) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(e)), the authority of the Director to issue a cease and desist order under section 1371 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631) or a temporary cease and desist order under section 1372 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632), includes the authority to place limitations on the activities or functions of the regulated entity or entity-affiliated party or any executive officer or director of the regulated entity or entity-affiliated party.

(d) *Effective date of order; judicial review—(1) Effective date.* The effective date of an order is as set forth in section 1371(f) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(f)).

(2) *Judicial review.* Judicial review is governed by section 1374 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4634).

§ 1209.6 Temporary cease and desist orders.

(a) *Temporary cease and desist orders—(1) Grounds for issuance.* The grounds for issuance of a temporary cease and desist order are set forth in section 1372(a) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(a)). In accordance with section 1372(a) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(a)), the Director may:

(i) Issue a temporary order requiring that regulated entity or entity-affiliated party to cease and desist from any violation or practice specified in the notice of charges; and

(ii) Require that regulated entity or entity-affiliated party to take affirmative action to prevent or remedy any insolvency, dissipation, condition, or prejudice, pending completion of the proceedings.

(2) *Additional requirements.* As provided by section 1372(a)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(a)(2)), an order issued under section 1372(a)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(a)(1)) may include any requirement authorized under section 1371(d) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(d)).

(b) *Effective date of temporary order.* The effective date of a temporary order

is as provided by section 1372(b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(b)). And, unless set aside, limited, or suspended by a court in proceedings pursuant to the judicial review provisions of section 1372(d) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(d)), shall remain in effect and enforceable pending the completion of the proceedings pursuant to such notice of charges, and shall remain effective until the Director dismisses the charges specified in the notice or until superseded by a cease-and-desist order issued pursuant to section 1371 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631).

(c) *Incomplete or inaccurate records—(1) Temporary order.* As provided by section 1372(c) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(c)), if a notice of charges served under section 1371(a) or (b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631(a), (b)), specifies on the basis of particular facts and circumstances that the books and records of the regulated entity served are so incomplete or inaccurate that the Director is unable, through the normal supervisory process, to determine the financial condition of the regulated entity or the details or the purpose of any transaction or transactions that may have a material effect on the financial condition of that regulated entity, the Director may issue a temporary order requiring:

(i) The cessation of any activity or practice that gave rise, whether in whole or in part, to the incomplete or inaccurate state of the books or records; or

(ii) Affirmative action to restore the books or records to a complete and accurate state.

(2) *Effective period.* Any temporary order issued under section 1372(c)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(c)(1)) shall become effective upon service, and remain in effect and enforceable unless set aside, limited, or suspended in accordance with section 1372(d) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(d)), as provided by section 1372(c)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(c)(2)).

(d) *Judicial review.* Section 1372(d) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(d)), authorizes a regulated

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.7

entity, executive officer, director, or entity-affiliated party that has been served with a temporary order pursuant to section 1372(a) or (b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(a), (b)) to apply to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia within 10 days after service of the temporary order for an injunction setting aside, limiting, or suspending the enforcement, operation, or effectiveness of the temporary order, pending the completion of the administrative enforcement proceeding. The district court has jurisdiction to issue such injunction.

(e) *Enforcement of temporary order.* As provided by section 1372(e) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(e)), in the case of any violation, threatened violation, or failure to obey a temporary order issued pursuant to this section, the Director may bring an action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for an injunction to enforce a temporary order, and the district court is to issue such injunction upon a finding made in accordance with section 1372(e) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4632(e)).

§ 1209.7 Civil money penalties.

(a) *Civil money penalty proceedings*—(1) *In general.* Section 1376 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636) governs the imposition of civil money penalties. Upon written notice, which shall conform to the requirements of § 1209.23 of this part, and a hearing on the record to be conducted in accordance with subpart C of this part, the Director may impose a civil money penalty on any regulated entity or any entity-affiliated party as provided by section 1376 of the Safety and Soundness Act for any violation, practice, or breach addressed under sections 1371, 1372, or 1376 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631, 4632, 4636), except with regard to the enforcement of housing goals that are addressed separately under sections 1341 and 1345 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4581, 4585).

(2) *Amount of penalty*—(i) *First Tier.* Section 1376(b)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(1)) prescribes the civil penalty for violations

as stated therein, in the amount of \$10,000 for each day during which a violation continues.

(ii) *Second Tier.* Section 1376(b)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(2)) provides that notwithstanding paragraph (b)(1) thereof, a regulated entity or entity-affiliated party shall forfeit and pay a civil penalty of not more than \$50,000 for each day during which a violation, practice, or breach continues, if the regulated entity or entity-affiliated party commits any violation described in (b)(1) thereof, recklessly engages in an unsafe or unsound practice, or breaches any fiduciary duty, and the violation, practice, or breach is part of a pattern of misconduct; causes or is likely to cause more than a minimal loss to the regulated entity; or results in pecuniary gain or other benefit to such party.

(iii) *Third Tier.* Section 1376(b)(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(3)) provides that, notwithstanding paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) thereof, any regulated entity or entity-affiliated party shall forfeit and pay a civil penalty, in accordance with section 1376(b)(4) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(4)), for each day during which such violation, practice, or breach continues, if such regulated entity or entity-affiliated party:

(A) Knowingly—

(1) Commits any violation described in any subparagraph of section 1376(b)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act;

(2) Engages in any unsafe or unsound practice in conducting the affairs of the regulated entity; or

(3) Breaches any fiduciary duty; and

(B) Knowingly or recklessly causes a substantial loss to the regulated entity or a substantial pecuniary gain or other benefit to such party by reason of such violation, practice, or breach.

(b) *Maximum amounts*—(1) *Maximum daily penalty.* Section 1376(b)(4) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(4)), prescribes the maximum daily amount of a civil penalty that may be assessed for any violation, practice, or breach pursuant to section 1376(b)(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(3)), in the case of

§ 1209.8

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

any entity-affiliated party (not to exceed \$2,000,000.00), and in the case of any regulated entity (\$2,000,000.00).

(2) *Inflation Adjustment Act.* The maximum civil penalty amounts are subject to periodic adjustment under the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended (28 U.S.C. 2461 note), as provided in subpart E of this part.

(c) *Factors in determining amount of penalty.* In accordance with section 1376(c)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(c)(2)), in assessing civil money penalties on a regulated entity or an entity-affiliated party in amounts as provided in section 1376(b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(b)), the Director shall give consideration to such factors as:

- (1) The gravity of the violation, practice, or breach;
- (2) Any history of prior violations or supervisory actions, or any attempts at concealment;
- (3) The effect of the penalty on the safety and soundness of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance;
- (4) Any loss or risk of loss to the regulated entity or to the Office of Finance;
- (5) Any benefits received or derived, whether directly or indirectly, by the respondent(s);
- (6) Any injury to the public;
- (7) Any deterrent effect on future violations, practices, or breaches;
- (8) The financial capacity of the respondent(s), or any unusual circumstance(s) of hardship upon an executive officer, director, or other individual;
- (9) The promptness, cost, and effectiveness of any effort to remedy or ameliorate the consequences of the violation, practice, or breach;
- (10) The candor and cooperation, if any, of the respondent(s); and
- (11) Any other factors the Director may determine by regulation to be appropriate.

(d) *Review of imposition of penalty.* Section 1376(c)(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636(c)(3)) governs judicial review of a penalty order under section 1374 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4634).

§ 1209.8 Removal and prohibition proceedings.

(a) *Removal and prohibition proceedings—(1) Authority to issue order.* As provided by section 1377(a)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(a)(1)), the Director may serve upon a party described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, or any officer, director, or management of the Office of Finance, a notice of the intention of the Director to suspend or remove such party from office, or to prohibit any further participation by such party in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance.

(2) *Applicability.* As provided by section 1377(a)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(a)(2)), a party described in this paragraph is an entity-affiliated party or any officer, director, or management of the Office of Finance, if the Director determines that:

- (i) That party, officer, or director has, directly or indirectly—
 - (A) Violated—
 - (1) Any law or regulation;
 - (2) Any cease and desist order that has become final;
 - (3) Any condition imposed in writing by the Director in connection with an application, notice, or other request by a regulated entity; or
 - (4) Any written agreement between such regulated entity and the Director;
 - (B) Engaged or participated in any unsafe or unsound practice in connection with any regulated entity or business institution; or
 - (C) Committed or engaged in any act, omission, or practice which constitutes a breach of such party's fiduciary duty;
 - (i) By reason of such violation, practice, or breach—
 - (A) Such regulated entity or business institution has suffered or likely will suffer financial loss or other damage; or
 - (B) Such party directly or indirectly received financial gain or other benefit; and
 - (ii) The violation, practice, or breach described in subparagraph (i) of this section—
 - (A) Involves personal dishonesty on the part of such party; or
 - (B) Demonstrates willful or continuing disregard by such party for the

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.8

safety or soundness of such regulated entity or business institution.

(3) *Applicability to business entities.* Under section 1377(f) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(f)), this remedy applies only to a person who is an individual, unless the Director specifically finds that it should apply to a corporation, firm, or other business entity.

(b) *Suspension order*—(1) *Suspension or prohibition authorized.* If the Director serves written notice under section 1377(a) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(a)) upon a party subject to that section, the Director may, by order, suspend or remove such party from office, or prohibit such party from further participation in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance, if the Director:

(i) Determines that such action is necessary for the protection of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance; and

(ii) Serves such party with written notice of the order.

(2) *Effective period.* The effective period of any order under section 1377(b)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(b)(1)) is specified in section 1377(b)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(b)(2)). An order of suspension shall become effective upon service and, absent a court-ordered stay, remains effective and enforceable until the date the Director dismisses the charges or the effective date of an order issued by the Director under section 1377(c)(4) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(c)(4),(5)).

(3) *Copy of order to be served on regulated entity.* In accordance with section 1377(b)(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(b)(3)), the Director will serve a copy of any order to suspend, remove, or prohibit participation in the conduct of the affairs on the Office of Finance or any regulated entity with which such party is affiliated at the time such order is issued.

(c) *Notice; hearing and order*—(1) *Written notice.* A notice of the intention of the Director to issue an order under sections 1377(a) and (c) of the Safety and Soundness Act, (12 U.S.C. 4636a(a), (c)), shall conform with §1209.23, and

may include any such additional information as the Director may require.

(2) *Hearing.* A hearing on the record shall be held in the District of Columbia in accordance with sections 1373(a)(1) and 1377(c)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act. *See* 12 U.S.C. 4633(a)(1), 4636a(c)(2).

(3) *Consent.* As provided by section 1377(c)(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(c)(3)), unless the party that is the subject of a notice delivered under paragraph (a) of this section appears in person or by a duly authorized representative of record, in the adjudicatory proceeding, such party shall be deemed to have consented to the issuance of an order under this section.

(4) *Issuance of order of suspension or removal.* As provided by section 1377(c)(4) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(c)(4)), the Director may issue an order under this part, as the Director may deem appropriate, if:

(i) A party is deemed to have consented to the issuance of an order under paragraph (d); or

(ii) Upon the record made at the hearing, the Director finds that any of the grounds specified in the notice have been established.

(5) *Effectiveness of order.* As provided by section 1377(c)(5) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(c)(5)), any order issued and served upon a party in accordance with this section shall become effective at the expiration of 30 days after the date of service upon such party and any regulated entity or entity-affiliated party. An order issued upon consent under paragraph (c)(3) of this section, however, shall become effective at the time specified therein. Any such order shall remain effective and enforceable except to such extent as it is stayed, modified, terminated, or set aside by action of the Director or a reviewing court.

(d) *Prohibition of certain activities and industry-wide prohibition*—(1) *Prohibition of certain activities.* As provided by section 1377(d) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(d)), any person subject to an order issued under subpart B of this part shall not—

(i) Participate in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of any regulated entity or the Office of Finance;

(ii) Solicit, procure, transfer, attempt to transfer, vote, or attempt to vote any proxy, consent, or authorization with respect to any voting rights in any regulated entity;

(iii) Violate any voting agreement previously approved by the Director; or

(iv) Vote for a director, or serve or act as an entity-affiliated party of a regulated entity or as an officer or director of the Office of Finance.

(2) *Industry-wide prohibition.* As provided by section 1377(e)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(e)(1)), except as provided in section 1377(e)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(e)(2)), any person who, pursuant to an order issued under section 1377 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a), has been removed or suspended from office in a regulated entity or the Office of Finance, or prohibited from participating in the conduct of the affairs of a regulated entity or the Office of Finance, may not, while such order is in effect, continue or commence to hold any office in, or participate in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of, any regulated entity or the Office of Finance.

(3) *Relief from industry-wide prohibition at the discretion of the Director—(i) Relief from order.* As provided by section 1377(e)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(e)(2)), if, on or after the date on which an order has been issued under section 1377 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a) that removes or suspends from office any party, or prohibits such party from participating in the conduct of the affairs of a regulated entity or the Office of Finance, such party receives the written consent of the Director, the order shall cease to apply to such party with respect to the regulated entity or the Office of Finance to the extent described in the written consent. Such written consent shall be on such terms and conditions as the Director therein may specify in his discretion. Any such consent shall be publicly disclosed.

(ii) *No private right of action; no final agency action.* Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require the Director to entertain or to provide such written consent, or to confer any rights to such consideration or consent

upon any party, regulated entity, entity-affiliated party, or the Office of Finance. Additionally, whether the Director consents to relief from an outstanding order under this part is committed wholly to the discretion of the Director, and such determination shall not be a final agency action for purposes of seeking judicial review.

(4) *Violation of industry-wide prohibition.* As provided by section 1377(e)(3) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(e)(3)), any violation of section 1377(e)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(e)(1)) by any person who is subject to an order issued under section 1377(h) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)) (suspension or removal of entity-affiliated party charged with felony) shall be treated as a violation of the order.

(e) *Stay of suspension or prohibition of entity-affiliated party.* As provided by section 1377(g) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(g)), not later than 10 days after the date on which any entity-affiliated party has been suspended from office or prohibited from participation in the conduct of the affairs of a regulated entity, such party may apply to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, or the United States district court for the judicial district in which the headquarters of the regulated entity is located, for a stay of such suspension or prohibition pending the completion of the administrative enforcement proceeding pursuant to section 1377(c) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(c)). The court shall have jurisdiction to stay such suspension or prohibition, but such jurisdiction does not extend to the administrative enforcement proceeding.

§ 1209.9 Supervisory actions not affected.

As provided by section 1311(c) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4511(c)), the authority of the Director to take action under subtitle A of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4611 *et seq.*) (e.g., the appointment of a conservator or receiver for a regulated

entity; entering into a written agreement or pursuing an informal agreement with a regulated entity as the Director deems appropriate; and undertaking other such actions as may be applicable to undercapitalized, significantly undercapitalized or critically undercapitalized regulated entities), or to initiate enforcement proceedings under subtitle C of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4631 *et seq.*), shall not in any way limit the general supervisory or regulatory authority granted the Director under section 1311(b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4511(b)). The selection and form of regulatory or supervisory action under the Safety and Soundness Act is committed to the discretion of the Director, and the selection of one form of action or a combination of actions does not foreclose the Director from pursuing any other supervisory action authorized by law.

Subpart C—Rules of Practice and Procedure

§ 1209.10 Authority of the Director.

The Director may, at any time during the pendency of a proceeding, perform, direct the performance of, or waive performance of any act that could be done or ordered by the presiding officer.

§ 1209.11 Authority of the Presiding Officer.

(a) *General rule.* All proceedings governed by subpart C of this part shall be conducted consistent with the provisions of chapter 5 of Title 5 of the United States Code. The presiding officer shall have complete charge of the adjudicative proceeding, conduct a fair and impartial hearing, avoid unnecessary delay, and assure that a complete record of the proceeding is made.

(b) *Powers.* The presiding officer shall have all powers necessary to conduct the proceeding in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section and 5 U.S.C. 556(c). The presiding officer is authorized to:

(1) *Control the proceedings.* (i) Upon reasonable notice to the parties, not earlier than 30 days or later than 60 days after service of a notice of charges under the Safety and Soundness Act,

set a date, time, and place for an evidentiary hearing on the record, within the District of Columbia, as provided in section 1373 of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4633), in a scheduling order that may be issued in conjunction with the initial scheduling conference set under § 1209.36, or otherwise as the presiding officer finds in the best interest of justice, in accordance with this part; and

(ii) Upon reasonable notice to the parties, reset or change the date, time, or place (within the District of Columbia) of an evidentiary hearing;

(2) Continue or recess the hearing in whole or in part for a reasonable period of time;

(3) Hold conferences to address legal or factual issues, or evidentiary matters materially relevant to the charges or allowable defenses; to regulate the timing and scope of discovery and rule on discovery plans; or otherwise to consider matters that may facilitate an effective, fair, and expeditious disposition of the proceeding;

(4) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(5) Issue and enforce subpoenas, subpoenas *duces tecum*, discovery and protective orders, as authorized by this part, and to revoke, quash, or modify such subpoenas issued by the presiding officer;

(6) Take and preserve testimony under oath;

(7) Rule on motions and other procedural matters appropriate in an adjudicatory proceeding, except that only the Director shall have the power to grant summary disposition or any motion to dismiss the proceeding or to make a final determination of the merits of the proceeding;

(8) Take all actions authorized under this part to regulate the scope, timing, and completion of discovery of any non-privileged documents that are materially relevant to the charges or allowable defenses;

(9) Regulate the course of the hearing and the conduct of representatives and parties;

(10) Examine witnesses;

(11) Receive materially relevant evidence, and rule upon the admissibility of evidence or exclude, limit, or otherwise rule on offers of proof;

§ 1209.12

(12) Upon motion of a party, take official notice of facts;

(13) Recuse himself upon his own motion or upon motion made by a party;

(14) Prepare and present to the Director a recommended decision as provided in this part;

(15) Establish time, place, and manner limitations on the attendance of the public and the media for any public hearing; and

(16) Do all other things necessary or appropriate to discharge the duties of a presiding officer.

§ 1209.12 Public hearings; closed hearings.

(a) *General rule.* As provided in section 1379B(b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4639(b)), all hearings shall be open to the public, except that the Director, in his discretion, may determine that holding an open hearing would be contrary to the public interest. The Director may make such determination *sua sponte* at any time by written notice to all parties, or as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

(b) *Motion for closed hearing.* Within 20 days of service of the notice of charges, any party may file with the presiding officer a motion for a private hearing and any party may file a pleading in reply to the motion. The presiding officer shall forward the motion and any reply, together with a recommended decision on the motion, to the Director, who shall make a final determination. Such motions and replies are governed by §1209.28 of this part. A determination under this section is committed to the discretion of the Director and is not a reviewable final agency action.

(c) *Filing documents under seal.* FHFA counsel of record, in his discretion, may file or require the filing of any document or part of a document under seal, if such counsel makes a written determination that disclosure of the document would be contrary to the public interest. The presiding officer shall issue an order to govern confidential information, and take all appropriate steps to preserve the confidentiality of such documents in whole or in part, including closing any portion of a hearing to the public or issuing a

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

protective order under such terms as may be acceptable to FHFA counsel of record.

(d) *Procedures for closed hearing.* An evidentiary hearing, or any part thereof, that is closed for the purpose of offering into evidence testimony or documents filed under seal as provided in paragraph (c) of this section shall be conducted under procedures that may include: prior notification to the submitter of confidential information; provisions for sealing portions of the record, briefs, and decisions; *in camera* arguments, offers of proof, and testimony; and limitations on representatives of record or other participants, as the presiding officer may designate. Additionally, at such proceedings the presiding officer may make an opening statement as to the confidentiality and limitations and deliver an oath to the parties, representatives of record, or other approved participants as to the confidentiality of the proceedings.

§ 1209.13 Good faith certification.

(a) *General requirement.* Every filing or submission of record following the issuance of a notice of charges by the Director shall be signed by at least one representative of record in his individual name and shall state that representative's business contact information, which shall include his address, electronic mail address, and telephone number; and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all other representatives of record for the person making the filing or submission.

(b) *Effect of signature.* (1) By signing a document, a representative of record or party appearing *pro se* certifies that:

(i) The representative of record or party has read the filing or submission of record;

(ii) To the best of his knowledge, information and belief formed after reasonable inquiry, the filing or submission of record is well-grounded in fact and is warranted by existing law or a good faith, non-frivolous argument for the extension, modification, or reversal of existing law, regulation, or FHFA order or policy; and

(iii) The filing or submission of record is not made for any improper purpose, such as to harass or to cause

unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of litigation.

(2) If a filing or submission of record is not signed, the presiding officer shall strike the filing or submission of record, unless it is signed promptly after the omission is called to the attention of the pleader or movant.

(c) *Effect of making oral motion or argument.* The act of making any oral motion or oral argument by any representative or party shall constitute a certification that to the best of his knowledge, information, and belief, formed after reasonable inquiry, his statements are well-grounded in fact and are warranted by existing law or a good faith, non-frivolous argument for the extension, modification, or reversal of existing law, regulation, or FHFA order or policy, and are not made for any improper purpose, such as to harass or to cause unnecessary delay or to needlessly increase litigation-related costs.

§ 1209.14 Ex parte communications.

(a) *Definition.* (1) *Ex parte* communication means any material oral or written communication relevant to an adjudication of the merits of any proceeding under this subpart that was neither on the record nor on reasonable prior notice to all parties that takes place between:

(i) An interested person outside FHFA (including the person's representative of record); and

(ii) The presiding officer handling that proceeding, the Director, a decisional employee assigned to that proceeding, or any other person who is or may be reasonably expected to be involved in the decisional process.

(2) A communication that is procedural in that it does not concern the merits of an adjudicatory proceeding, such as a request for status of the proceeding, does not constitute an *ex parte* communication.

(b) *Prohibition of ex parte communications.* From the time a notice of charges commencing a proceeding under this part is issued by the Director until the date that the Director issues his final decision pursuant to § 1209.55 of this part, no person referred to in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section shall knowingly make or cause to be

made an *ex parte* communication with the Director or the presiding officer. The Director, presiding officer, or a decisional employee shall not knowingly make or cause to be made an *ex parte* communication.

(c) *Procedure upon occurrence of ex parte communication.* If an *ex parte* communication is received by any person identified in paragraph (a) of this section, that person shall cause all such written communications (or, if the communication is oral, a memorandum stating the substance of the communication) to be placed on the record of the proceeding and served on all parties. All parties to the proceeding shall have an opportunity within 10 days of receipt of service of the *ex parte* communication to file responses thereto, and to recommend sanctions that they believe to be appropriate under the circumstances, in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) *Sanctions.* Any party or representative for a party who makes an *ex parte* communication, or who encourages or solicits another to make an *ex parte* communication, may be subject to any appropriate sanction or sanctions imposed by the Director or the presiding officer, including, but not limited to, exclusion from the proceedings, an adverse ruling on the issue that is the subject of the prohibited communication, or other appropriate and commensurate action(s).

(e) *Consultations by presiding officer.* Except to the extent required for the disposition of *ex parte* matters as authorized by law, the presiding officer may not consult a person or party on any matter relevant to the merits of the adjudication, unless upon notice to and opportunity for all parties to participate.

(f) *Separation of functions.* An employee or agent engaged in the performance of any investigative or prosecuting function for FHFA in a case may not, in that or in a factually related case, participate or advise in the recommended decision, the Director's review under § 1209.55 of the recommended decision, or the Director's final determination on the merits

§ 1209.15

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

based upon his review of the recommended decision, except as a witness or counsel in the adjudicatory proceedings. This section shall not prohibit FHFA counsel of record from providing necessary and appropriate legal advice to the Director on supervisory (including information or legal advice as to settlement issues) or regulatory matters.

§ 1209.15 Filing of papers.

(a) *Filing.* All pleadings, motions, memoranda, and any other submissions or papers required to be filed in the proceeding shall be addressed to the presiding officer and filed with FHFA, 1700 G Street, NW., Fourth Floor, Washington, DC 20552, in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

(b) *Manner of filing.* Unless otherwise specified by the Director or the presiding officer, filing shall be accomplished by:

(1) *Overnight delivery.* Overnight U.S. Postal Service delivery or delivery by a reliable commercial delivery service for same day or overnight delivery to the address stated above; or

(2) *U.S. Mail.* First class, registered, or certified mail via the U.S. Postal Service; and

(3) *Electronic media.* Transmission by electronic media shall be required by and upon any conditions specified by the Director or the presiding officer. FHFA shall provide a designated site for the electronic filing of all papers in a proceeding in accordance with any conditions specified by the presiding officer. All papers filed by electronic media shall be filed concurrently in a manner set out above and in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) *Formal requirements as to papers filed—(1) Form.* To be filed, all papers must set forth the name, address, telephone number, and electronic mail address of the representative or party seeking to make the filing. Additionally, all such papers must be accompanied by a certification setting forth when and how service has been made on all other parties. All papers filed must be double-spaced on 8½ x 11-inch paper and must be clear, legible, and formatted as required by paragraph (c)(5) of this section.

(2) *Signature.* All papers filed must be dated and signed as provided in § 1209.13.

(3) *Caption.* All papers filed must include at the head thereof, or on a title page, the FHFA caption, title and docket number of the proceeding, the name of the filing party, and the subject of the particular paper.

(4) *Number of copies.* Unless otherwise specified by the Director or the presiding officer, an original and one copy of all pleadings, motions and memoranda, or other such papers shall be filed, except that only one copy of transcripts of testimony and exhibits shall be filed.

(5) *Content format.* All papers filed shall be formatted in such program(s) (e.g., MS WORD®, MS Excel®, or WordPerfect®) as the presiding officer or Director shall specify.

§ 1209.16 Service of papers.

(a) Except as otherwise provided, a party filing papers or serving a subpoena shall serve a copy upon the representative of record for each party to the proceeding so represented, and upon any party who is not so represented, in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(b) Except as provided in paragraphs (c)(2) and (d) of this section, a serving party shall use one or more of the following methods of service:

(1) Personal service;

(2) Overnight U.S. Postal Service delivery or delivery by a reliable commercial delivery service for same day or overnight delivery to the parties' respective street addresses; or

(3) First class, registered, or certified mail via the U.S. Postal Service; and

(4) For transmission by electronic media, each party shall promptly provide the presiding officer and all parties, in writing, an active electronic mail address where service will be accepted on behalf of such party. Any document transmitted via electronic mail for service on a party shall comply in all respects with the requirements of § 1209.15(c).

(5) Service of pleadings or other papers made by facsimile may not exceed a total page count of 30 pages. Any paper served by facsimile transmission

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.17

shall meet the requirements of §1209.15(c).

(6) Any party serving a pleading or other paper by electronic media under paragraph (4) of this section also shall concurrently serve that pleading or paper by one of the methods specified in paragraphs (1) through (5) of this section.

(c) *By the Director or the presiding officer.* (1) All papers required to be served by the Director or the presiding officer upon a party who has appeared in the proceeding in accordance with §1209.72 shall be served by the means specified in paragraph (b) of this section.

(2) If a notice of appearance has not been filed in the proceeding for a party in accordance with §1209.72, the Director or the presiding officer shall make service upon the party by any of the following methods:

(i) By personal service;

(ii) If the person to be served is an individual, by delivery to a person of suitable age and discretion at the physical location where the individual resides or works;

(iii) If the person to be served is a corporation or other association, by delivery to an officer, managing or general agent, or to any other agent authorized by appointment or by law to receive service and, if the agent is one authorized by statute to receive service and the statute so requires, by also mailing a copy to the party;

(iv) By registered or certified mail addressed to the person's last known address; or

(v) By any other method reasonably calculated to give actual notice.

(d) *Subpoenas.* Service of a subpoena may be made:

(1) By personal service;

(2) If the person to be served is an individual, by delivery to a person of suitable age and discretion at the physical location where the individual resides or works;

(3) If the person to be served is a corporation or other association, by delivery to an officer, managing or general agent, or to any other agent authorized by appointment or by law to receive service and, if the agent is one authorized by statute to receive service and the statute so requires, by also mailing a copy to the party;

(4) By registered or certified mail addressed to the person's last known address; or

(5) By any other method reasonably calculated to give actual notice.

(e) *Area of service.* Service in any State or the District of Columbia, or any commonwealth, possession, territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, or on any person doing business in any State or the District of Columbia, or any commonwealth, possession, territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, or on any person as otherwise permitted by law, is effective without regard to the place where the hearing is held.

(f) *Proof of service.* Proof of service of papers filed by a party shall be filed before action is taken thereon. The proof of service, which shall serve as prima facie evidence of the fact and date of service, shall show the date and manner of service and may be by written acknowledgment of service, by declaration of the person making service, or by certificate of a representative of record. However, failure to file proof of service contemporaneously with the papers shall not affect the validity of actual service. The presiding officer may allow the proof to be amended or supplied, unless to do so would result in material prejudice to a party.

§ 1209.17 Time computations.

(a) *General rule.* In computing any period of time prescribed or allowed under this part, the date of the act or event that commences the designated period of time is not included. Computations shall include the last day of the time period, unless the day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday. When the last day is a Saturday, Sunday or Federal holiday, the period of time shall run until the end of the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday. Intermediate Saturdays, Sundays and Federal holidays are included in the computation of time. However, when the time period within which an act is to be performed is 10 days or less, not including any additional time allowed for in paragraph (c) of this section, intermediate Saturdays, Sundays and Federal holidays are not included.

§ 1209.18

(b) *When papers are deemed to be filed or served.* (1) Filing or service are deemed to be effective:

(i) In the case of personal service or same day reliable commercial delivery service, upon actual service;

(ii) In the case of U.S. Postal Service or reliable commercial overnight delivery service, or first class, registered, or certified mail, upon deposit in or delivery to an appropriate point of collection;

(iii) In the case of transmission by electronic media, as specified by the authority receiving the filing, in the case of filing; or

(iv) In the case of transmission by electronic media or facsimile, when the device through which the document was sent provides a reliable indicator that the document has been received by the opposing party, in the case of service.

(2) The effective filing and service dates specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section may be modified by the Director or the presiding officer, or by agreement of the parties in the case of service.

(c) *Calculation of time for service and filing of responsive papers.* Whenever a time limit is measured by a prescribed period from the service of any notice, pleading or paper, the applicable time limits shall be calculated as follows:

(1) If service was made by delivery to the U.S. Postal Service for longer than overnight delivery service by first class, registered, or certified mail, add three calendar days to the prescribed period for the responsive pleading or other filing.

(2) If service was personal, or was made by delivery to the U.S. Postal Service or any reliable commercial delivery service for overnight delivery, add one calendar-day to the prescribed period for the responsive pleading or other filing.

(3) If service was made by electronic media transmission or facsimile, add one calendar-day to the prescribed period for the responsive pleading or other filing—unless otherwise determined by the Director or the presiding officer *sua sponte*, or upon motion of a party in the case of filing or by prior agreement among the parties in the case of service.

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

§ 1209.18 Change of time limits.

Except as otherwise by law required, the presiding officer may extend any time limit that is prescribed above or in any notice or order issued in the proceedings. After the referral of the case to the Director pursuant to § 1209.53, the Director may grant extensions of the time limits for good cause shown. Extensions may be granted on the motion of a party after notice and opportunity to respond is afforded all nonmoving parties, or on the Director's or the presiding officer's own motion.

§ 1209.19 Witness fees and expenses.

Witnesses (other than parties) subpoenaed for testimony (or for a deposition in lieu of personal appearance at a hearing) shall be paid the same fees for attendance and mileage as are paid in the United States district courts in proceedings in which the United States is a party, provided that, in the case of a discovery subpoena addressed to a party, no witness fees or mileage shall be paid. Fees for witnesses shall be tendered in advance by the party requesting the subpoena, except that fees and mileage need not be tendered in advance where FHFA is the party requesting the subpoena. FHFA shall not be required to pay any fees to or expenses of any witness who was not subpoenaed by FHFA.

§ 1209.20 Opportunity for informal settlement.

Any respondent may, at any time in the proceeding, unilaterally submit to FHFA's counsel of record written offers or proposals for settlement of a proceeding without prejudice to the rights of any of the parties. No such offer or proposal shall be made to any FHFA representative other than FHFA counsel of record. Submission of a written settlement offer does not provide a basis for adjourning, deferring or otherwise delaying all or any portion of a proceeding under this part. No settlement offer or proposal, or any subsequent negotiation or resolution, is admissible as evidence in any proceeding.

§ 1209.21 Conduct of examination.

Nothing in this part limits or constrains in any manner any duty, authority, or right of FHFA to conduct or

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.25

to continue any examination, investigation, inspection, or visitation of any regulated entity or entity-affiliated party.

§ 1209.22 Collateral attacks on adjudicatory proceeding.

If an interlocutory appeal or collateral attack is brought in any court concerning all or any part of an adjudicatory proceeding, the challenged adjudicatory proceeding shall continue without regard to the pendency of that court proceeding. No default or other failure to act as directed in the adjudicatory proceeding within the times prescribed in subpart C of this part shall be excused based on the pendency before any court of any interlocutory appeal or collateral attack.

§ 1209.23 Commencement of proceeding and contents of notice of charges.

Proceedings under subpart C of this part are commenced by the Director by the issuance of a notice of charges, as defined in §1209.3(p), that must be served upon a respondent. A notice of charges shall state all of the following:

- (a) The legal authority for the proceeding and for FHFA's jurisdiction over the proceeding;
- (b) A statement of the matters of fact or law showing that FHFA is entitled to relief;
- (c) A proposed order or prayer for an order granting the requested relief;
- (d) Information concerning the nature of the proceeding and pertinent procedural matters, including: the requirement that the hearing shall be held in the District of Columbia; the presiding officer will set the date and location for an evidentiary hearing in a scheduling order to be issued not less than 30 days or more than 60 days after service of the notice of charges; contact information for FHFA enforcement counsel and the presiding officer, if known; submission information for filings and appearances, the time within which to request a hearing, and citation to FHFA Rules of Practice and Procedure; and
- (e) Information concerning proper filing of the answer, including the time within which to file the answer as required by law or regulation, a state-

ment that the answer shall be filed with the presiding officer or with FHFA as specified therein, and the address for filing the answer (and request for a hearing, if applicable).

§ 1209.24 Answer.

(a) *Filing deadline.* Unless otherwise specified by the Director in the notice, respondent shall file an answer within 20 days of service of the notice of charges initiating the enforcement action.

(b) *Content of answer.* An answer must respond specifically to each paragraph or allegation of fact contained in the notice of charges and must admit, deny, or state that the party lacks sufficient information to admit or deny each allegation of fact. A statement of lack of information has the effect of a denial. Denials must fairly meet the substance of each allegation of fact denied; general denials are not permitted. When a respondent denies part of an allegation, that part must be denied and the remainder specifically admitted. Any allegation of fact in the notice that is not denied in the answer is deemed admitted for purposes of the proceeding. A respondent is not required to respond to the portion of a notice that constitutes the prayer for relief or proposed order. The answer must set forth affirmative defenses, if any, asserted by the respondent.

(c) *Default.* Failure of a respondent to file an answer required by this section within the time provided constitutes a waiver of such respondent's right to appear and contest the allegations in the notice. If no timely answer is filed, FHFA counsel of record may file a motion for entry of an order of default. Upon a finding that no good cause has been shown for the failure to file a timely answer, the presiding officer shall file with the Director a recommended decision containing the findings and the relief sought in the notice. Any final order issued by the Director based upon a respondent's failure to answer is deemed to be an order issued upon consent.

§ 1209.25 Amended pleadings.

(a) *Amendments.* The notice or answer may be amended or supplemented at

§ 1209.26

any stage of the proceeding. The respondent must answer an amended notice within the time remaining for the respondent's answer to the original notice, or within 10 days after service of the amended notice, whichever period is longer, unless the Director or presiding officer orders otherwise for good cause shown.

(b) *Amendments to conform to the evidence.* When issues not raised in the notice or answer are tried at the hearing by express or implied consent of the parties, or as the presiding officer may allow for good cause shown, such issues will be treated in all respects as if they had been raised in the notice or answer, and no formal amendments are required. If evidence is objected to at the hearing on the ground that it is not within the issues raised by the notice or answer, the presiding officer may admit the evidence when admission is likely to assist in adjudicating the merits of the action. The presiding officer will do so freely when the determination of the merits of the action is served thereby and the objecting party fails to satisfy the presiding officer that the admission of such evidence would unfairly prejudice that party's action or defense upon the merits. The presiding officer may grant a continuance to enable the objecting party to meet such evidence.

§ 1209.26 Failure to appear.

Failure of a respondent to appear in person at the hearing or by a duly authorized representative of record constitutes a waiver of respondent's right to a hearing and is deemed an admission of the facts as alleged and consent to the relief sought in the notice. Without further proceedings or notice to the respondent, the presiding officer shall file with the Director a recommended decision containing the Agency's findings and the relief sought in the notice.

§ 1209.27 Consolidation and severance of actions.

(a) *Consolidation.* On the motion of any party, or on the presiding officer's own motion, the presiding officer may consolidate, for some or all purposes, any two or more proceedings, if each such proceeding involves or arises out

12 CFR Ch. XII (1-1-12 Edition)

of the same transaction, occurrence or series of transactions or occurrences, or involves at least one common respondent or a material common question of law or fact, unless such consolidation would cause unreasonable delay or injustice. In the event of consolidation under this section, appropriate adjustment to the pre-hearing schedule must be made to avoid unnecessary expense, inconvenience, or delay.

(b) *Severance.* The presiding officer may, upon the motion of any party, sever the proceeding for separate resolution of the matter as to any respondent only if the presiding officer finds that undue prejudice or injustice to the moving party would result from not severing the proceeding and such undue prejudice or injustice would outweigh the interests of judicial economy and expedition in the complete and final resolution of the proceeding.

§ 1209.28 Motions.

(a) *In writing.* (1) Except as otherwise provided herein, an application or request for an order or ruling must be made by written motion.

(2) All written motions must state with particularity the relief sought and must be accompanied by a proposed order.

(3) No oral argument may be held on written motions except as otherwise directed by the presiding officer. Written memoranda, briefs, affidavits, or other relevant material or documents may be filed in support of or in opposition to a motion.

(b) *Oral motions.* A motion may be made orally on the record, unless the presiding officer directs that such motion be reduced to writing, in which case the motion will be subject to the requirements of this section.

(c) *Filing of motions.* Motions must be filed with the presiding officer and served on all parties; except that following the filing of a recommended decision, motions must be filed with the Director. Motions for pre-trial relief such as motions *in limine* or objections to offers of proof or experts shall be filed not less than 10 days prior to the date of the evidentiary hearing, except as provided with the consent of the presiding officer for good cause shown.

(d) *Responses and replies.* (1) Except as otherwise provided herein, any party may file a written response to a non-dispositive motion within 10 days after service of any written motion, or within such other period of time as may be established by the presiding officer or the Director; and the moving party may file a written reply to a written response to a non-dispositive motion within five days after the service of the response, unless some other period is ordered by the presiding officer or the Director. The presiding officer shall not rule on any oral or written motion before each party with an interest in the motion has had an opportunity to respond as provided in this section.

(2) The failure of a party to oppose a written motion or an oral motion made on the record is deemed as consent by that party to the entry of an order substantially in the form of the order accompanying the motion.

(e) *Dilatory motions.* Frivolous, dilatory, or substantively repetitive motions are prohibited. The filing of such motions may form the basis for sanctions.

(f) *Dispositive motions.* Dispositive motions are governed by §§ 1209.34 and 1209.35 of this part.

§ 1209.29 Discovery.

(a) *General rule*—(1) *Limits on discovery.* Subject to the limitations set out in paragraphs (a)(2), (b), (d), and (e) of this section, a party to a proceeding under this part may obtain document discovery by serving upon any other party in the proceeding a written request to produce documents. For purposes of such requests, the term “documents” may be defined to include records, drawings, graphs, charts, photographs, recordings, or data stored in electronic form or other data compilations from which information can be obtained or translated, if necessary, by the parties through detection devices into reasonably usable form (*e.g.*, electronically stored information), as well as written material of all kinds.

(2) *Discovery plan.* (i) In the initial scheduling conference held in accordance with § 1209.36, or otherwise at the earliest practicable time, the presiding officer shall require the parties to confer in good faith to develop and submit

a joint discovery plan for the timely, cost-effective management of document discovery (including, if applicable, electronically stored information). The discovery plan should provide for the coordination of similar discovery requests by multiple parties, if any, and specify how costs are to be apportioned among those parties. The discovery plan shall specify the form of electronic productions, if any. Documents are to be produced in accordance with the technical specifications described in the discovery plan.

(ii) Discovery in the proceeding may commence upon the approval of the discovery plan by the presiding officer. Thereafter, the presiding officer may interpret or modify the discovery plan for good cause shown or in his or her discretion due to changed circumstances.

(iii) Nothing in paragraph (a)(2) of this section shall be interpreted or deemed to require the production of documents that are privileged or not reasonably accessible because of undue burden or cost, or to require any document production otherwise inconsistent with the limitations on discovery set forth in this part.

(b) *Relevance and scope.* (1) A party may obtain document discovery regarding any matter not privileged that is materially relevant to the charges or allowable defenses raised in the pending proceeding.

(2) The scope of available discovery shall be limited in accordance with subpart C of this part. Any request for the production of documents that seeks to obtain privileged information or documents not materially relevant under paragraph (b)(1) of this section, or that is unreasonable, oppressive, excessive in scope, unduly burdensome, cumulative, or repetitive of any prior discovery requests, shall be denied or modified.

(3) A request for document discovery is unreasonable, oppressive, excessive in scope, or unduly burdensome—and shall be denied or modified—if, among other things, the request:

(i) Fails to specify justifiable limitations on the relevant subject matter, time period covered, search parameters, or the geographic location(s) or data repositories to be searched;

§ 1209.30

(ii) Fails to identify documents with sufficient specificity;

(iii) Seeks material that is duplicative, cumulative, or obtainable from another source that is more accessible, cost-effective, or less burdensome;

(iv) Calls for the production of documents to be delivered to the requesting party or his or her designee and fails to provide a written agreement by the requestor to pay in advance for the costs of production in accordance with § 1209.30, or otherwise fails to take into account costs associated with processing electronically stored information or any cost-sharing agreements between the parties;

(v) Fails to afford the responding party adequate time to respond; or

(vi) Fails to take into account retention policies or security protocols with respect to Federal information systems.

(c) *Forms of discovery.* Discovery shall be limited to requests for production of documents for inspection and copying. No other form of discovery shall be allowed. Discovery by use of interrogatories is not permitted. This paragraph shall not be interpreted to require the creation of a document.

(d) *Privileged matter*—(1) *Privileged documents are not discoverable.* (i) Privileges include the attorney-client privilege, work-product privilege, any government's or government agency's deliberative process privilege, and any other privileges provided by the Constitution, any applicable act of Congress, or the principles of common law.

(ii) The parties may enter into a written agreement to permit a producing party to assert applicable privileges of a document even after its production and to request the return or destruction of privileged matter (claw back agreement). The parties shall file the claw back agreement with the presiding officer. To ensure the enforceability of the terms of any such claw back agreement, the presiding officer shall enter an order. Any party may petition the presiding officer for an order specifying claw back procedures for good cause shown.

(2) *No effect on examination authority.* The limitations on discoverable matter provided for in this part are not intended and shall not be construed to

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

limit or otherwise affect the examination, regulatory or supervisory authority of FHFA.

(e) *Time limits.* All discovery matters, including all responses to discovery requests, shall be completed at least 20 days prior to the date scheduled for the commencement of the testimonial phase of the hearing. No exception to this discovery time limit shall be permitted, unless the presiding officer finds on the record that good cause exists for waiving the 20-day requirement of this paragraph.

(f) *Production.* Documents must be produced as they are kept in the usual course of business, or labeled and organized to correspond with the categories in the request, or otherwise produced in a manner determined by mutual agreement between the requesting party and the party or non-party to whom the request is directed in accordance with this part.

§ 1209.30 Request for document discovery from parties.

(a) *General rule.* Each request for the production of documents must conform to the requirements of this part.

(1) *Limitations.* Subject to applicable limitations on discovery in this part, a party may serve (requesting party) a request on another party (responding party) for the production of any non-privileged, discoverable documents in the possession, custody, or control of the responding party. A requesting party shall serve a copy of any such document request on all other parties. Each request for the production of documents must, with reasonable particularity, identify or describe the documents to be produced, either by individual item or by category, with sufficient specificity to enable the responding party to respond consistent with the requirements of this part.

(2) *Discovery plan.* Document discovery under subpart C of this part shall be consistent with any discovery plan approved by the presiding officer under § 1209.29.

(b) *Production and costs*—(1) *General rule.* Subject to the applicable limitations on discovery in this part and the discovery plan, the requesting party shall specify a reasonable time, place,

and manner for the production of documents and the performance of any related acts. The responding party shall produce documents to the requesting party in a manner consistent with the discovery plan.

(2) *Costs.* All costs associated with document productions—including, without limitation, photocopying (as specified in paragraph (b)(4) of this section) or electronic processing (as specified in paragraph (b)(5) of this section)—shall be born by the requesting party, or otherwise in accordance with any discovery plan approved by the presiding officer that may require such costs be apportioned between parties, or as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer. If consistent with the discovery plan approved by the presiding officer, the responding party may require receipt of payment of any such document production costs in advance before any such production of responsive documents.

(3) *Organization.* Unless otherwise provided for in any discovery plan approved by the presiding officer under § 1209.29 of this part, or by order of the presiding officer, documents must be produced as they are kept in the usual course of business or they shall be labeled and organized to correspond with the categories in the document request.

(4) *Photocopying charges.* Photocopying charges are to be set at the current rate per page imposed by FHFA under the fee schedule pursuant to § 1202.11(c) of this part for requests for documents filed under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

(5) *Electronic processing.* In the event that any party seeks the production of electronically stored information (*i.e.*, information created, stored, communicated, or used in digital format requiring the use of computer hardware and software), the parties shall confer in good faith to resolve common discovery issues related to electronically stored information, such as preservation, search methodology, collection, and need for such information; the suitability of alternative means to obtain it; and the format of production. Consistent with the discovery plan approved by the presiding officer under § 1209.29, costs associated with the proc-

essing of such electronic information (*i.e.*, imaging; scanning; conversion of “native” files to images that are viewable and searchable; indexing; coding; database or Web-based hosting; searches; branding of endorsements, such as “confidential” or document control numbering; privilege reviews; and copies of production discs) and delivery of any such document production, shall be born by the requesting party, apportioned among the parties, or as otherwise ordered by the presiding officer. Nothing in this part shall be deemed to require FHFA to produce privileged documents or any electronic records in violation of applicable Federal law or security protocols.

(c) *Obligation to update responses.* A party who has responded to a discovery request is not required to supplement the response, unless:

(1) The responding party learns that in some material respect the information disclosed is incomplete or incorrect, and

(2) The additional or corrective information has not otherwise been made known to the other parties during the discovery process or in writing.

(d) *Motions to strike or limit discovery requests.* (1) Any party served with a document discovery request may object within 30 days of service of the request by filing a motion to strike or limit the request in accordance with the provisions of § 1209.28 of this part. No other party may file an objection. If an objection is made only to a portion of an item or category in a request, the objection shall specify that portion. Any objections not made in accordance with this paragraph and § 1209.28 are waived.

(2) The party who served the request that is the subject of a motion to strike or limit may file a written response in accordance with the provisions of § 1209.28. A reply by the moving party, if any, shall be governed by § 1209.28. No other party may file a response.

(e) *Privilege.* At the time other documents are produced, all documents withheld on a claim of privilege must be reasonably identified, together with a statement of the basis for the assertion of privilege on a privilege log.

§ 1209.30

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

When similar documents that are protected by the government's deliberative process, investigative or examination privilege, the attorney work-product doctrine, or the attorney-client privilege are voluminous, such documents may be identified on the log by category instead of by individual document. The presiding officer has discretion to permit submission of a privilege log subsequent to the document production(s), which may occur on a rolling basis if agreed to by the parties in the discovery plan, and to determine whether an identification by category is sufficient to provide notice of withheld documents.

(f) *Motions to compel production.* (1) If a party withholds any document as privileged or fails to comply fully with a document discovery request, the requesting party may, within 10 days of the assertion of privilege or of the time the failure to comply becomes known to the requesting party, file a motion in accordance with the provisions of §1209.28 for the issuance of a subpoena compelling the production of any such document.

(2) The party who asserted the privilege or failed to comply with the request may, within five days of service of a motion for the issuance of a subpoena compelling production, file a written response to the motion. No other party may file a response.

(g) *Ruling on motions—(1) Appropriate protective orders.* After the time for filing a response to a motion to compel pursuant to this section has expired, the presiding officer shall rule promptly on any such motion. The presiding officer may deny, grant in part, or otherwise modify any request for the production of documents, if he determines that a discovery request, or any one or more of its terms, seeks to obtain the production of documents that are privileged or otherwise not within the scope of permissible discovery under §1209.29(b), and may issue appropriate protective orders, upon such conditions as justice may require.

(2) *No stay.* The pendency of a motion to strike or limit discovery, or to compel the production of any document, shall not stay or continue the proceeding, unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer. Notwithstanding

any other provision in this part, the presiding officer may not release, or order any party to produce, any document withheld on the basis of privilege, if the withholding party has stated to the presiding officer its intention to file with the Director a timely motion for interlocutory review of the presiding officer's privilege determination or order to produce the documents, until the Director has rendered a decision on the motion for interlocutory review.

(3) *Interlocutory review by the Director.* Interlocutory review of a privilege determination or document discovery subpoena of the presiding officer shall be in accordance with §1209.33. To the extent necessary to rule promptly on such matters, the Director may request that the presiding officer provide additional information from the record. As provided by §1209.33 of this part, a pending interlocutory review of a privilege determination or document discovery subpoena shall not stay the proceedings, unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer or the Director.

(h) *Enforcement of document discovery subpoenas—(1) Authority.* If the presiding officer or Director issues a subpoena compelling production of documents by a party in a proceeding under this part, in the event of noncompliance with the subpoena and to the extent authorized by section 1379D(c)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4641(c)(1)), the Director or the subpoenaing party may apply to the appropriate United States district court for an order requiring compliance with the subpoena.

(2) *United States district court jurisdiction.* As provided by section 1379D(c)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4641(c)(2)), the appropriate United States district court has the jurisdiction and power to order and to require compliance with any discovery subpoena issued under this part.

(3) *No stay; sanctions.* The judicial enforcement of a discovery subpoena shall not operate as a stay of the proceedings, unless the presiding officer or the Director orders a stay of such duration as the presiding officer or Director may find reasonable and in the best interest of the parties or as justice may require. A party's right to seek judicial

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.31

enforcement of a subpoena shall not in any manner limit the sanctions that may be imposed by the presiding officer or Director against a party who fails to produce or induces another to fail to produce subpoenaed documents.

§ 1209.31 Document discovery subpoenas to non-parties.

(a) *General rules*—(1) *Application for subpoena*. As provided under this part, any party may apply to the presiding officer for the issuance of a document discovery subpoena addressed to any person who is not a party to the proceeding. The application must contain the proposed document subpoena, and a brief statement of facts demonstrating that the documents are materially relevant to the charges and issues presented in the proceeding and the reasonableness of the scope of the document request. The subpoenaing party shall specify a reasonable time, place, and manner for production in response to the subpoena, and state its unequivocal intention to pay for the production of the documents as provided in this part.

(2) *Service of subpoena*. A party shall apply for a document subpoena under this section only within the time period during which such party could serve a discovery request under §1209.30 of this part. The party obtaining the document subpoena is responsible for serving it on the subpoenaed person and for serving copies on all other parties. Document subpoenas may be served in the District of Columbia, or any State, Territory, possession, or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, or as otherwise provided by law.

(3) *Presiding officer's discretion*. The presiding officer shall issue promptly any document subpoena applied for under this section subject to the application conditions set forth in this section and his or her discretion. If the presiding officer determines that the application does not set forth a valid basis for the issuance of the requested document subpoena, or that any of its terms are unreasonable, oppressive, excessive in scope, unduly burdensome, or otherwise objectionable under §1209.29(b), he may refuse to issue the requested document subpoena or may

issue it in a modified form upon such additional conditions as may be determined by the presiding officer.

(b) *Motion to quash or modify*—(1) *Limited appearance*. Any non-party to a pending proceeding to whom a document subpoena is directed may enter a limited appearance, through a representative or on his or her own behalf, before the presiding officer to file with the presiding officer a motion to quash or modify such subpoena, accompanied by a statement of the basis for quashing or modifying the subpoena.

(2) *Objections*. Any motion to quash or modify a document subpoena must be filed on the same basis, including the assertion of any privileges, upon which a party could object to a discovery document request under §1209.30 and during the same time limits during which such an objection could be filed.

(3) *Responses and replies*. The party who obtained the subpoena may respond to such motion within 10 days of service of the motion; the response shall be served on the non-party in accordance with this part. Absent express leave of the presiding officer, no other party may respond to the non-party's motion. The non-party may file a reply within five days of service of a response.

(4) *No stay*. A non-party's right to seek to quash or modify a document subpoena shall not stay the proceeding, or limit in any manner the sanctions that may be imposed by the presiding officer against a party who induces another to fail to produce any such subpoenaed documents. No party may rely upon the pendency of a non-party's motion to quash or modify a document subpoena to excuse performance of any action required of that party under this part.

(c) *Enforcing document subpoenas to non-parties*—(1) *Application for enforcement of subpoena*. If a non-party fails to comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this section or with any order of the presiding officer that directs compliance with all or any portion of a document subpoena issued pursuant to this section, the subpoenaing party or any other aggrieved party to the proceeding may, to the extent authorized by section 1379D(c) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4641(c)), apply

to an appropriate United States district court for an order requiring compliance with the subpoena.

(2) *No stay.* A party's right to seek district court enforcement of a non-party document production subpoena under this section shall not automatically stay an enforcement proceeding under of the Safety and Soundness Act.

(3) *Sanctions.* A party's right to seek district court enforcement of a non-party document subpoena shall in no way limit the sanctions that may be imposed by the presiding officer on a party who induces another to fail to comply with any subpoena issued under this section.

§ 1209.32 Deposition of witness unavailable for hearing.

(a) *General rules.* (1) If a witness will not be available for the hearing, a party desiring to preserve that witness's testimony for the record may apply to the presiding officer in accordance with the procedures set forth in paragraph (a)(2) of this section for the issuance of a subpoena or subpoena *duces tecum* requiring attendance of the witness at a deposition for the purpose of preserving that witness's testimony. The presiding officer may issue a deposition subpoena under this section upon a showing that:

(i) The witness will be unable to attend or may be prevented from attending the testimonial phase of the hearing because of age, sickness, or infirmity, or will be otherwise unavailable;

(ii) The subpoenaing party did not cause or contribute to the unavailability of the witness for the hearing;

(iii) The witness has personal knowledge and the testimony is reasonably expected to be materially relevant to claims, defenses, or matters determined to be at issue in the proceeding; and

(iv) Taking the deposition will not result in any undue burden to any other party and will not cause undue delay of the proceeding.

(2) The application must contain a proposed deposition subpoena and a brief statement of the reasons for the issuance of the subpoena. The subpoena must name the witness whose deposition is to be taken and specify the time and place for taking the deposition. A

deposition subpoena may require the witness to be deposed anywhere within the United States, or its Territories and possessions, in which that witness resides or has a regular place of employment or such other convenient place as the presiding officer shall fix.

(3) Subpoenas must be issued promptly upon request, unless the presiding officer determines that the request fails to set forth a valid basis under this section for its issuance. Before making a determination that there is no valid basis for issuing the subpoena, the presiding officer shall require a written response from the party requesting the subpoena or require attendance at a conference to determine whether there is a valid basis upon which to issue the requested subpoena.

(4) The party obtaining a deposition subpoena is responsible for serving it on the witness and for serving copies on all parties. Unless the presiding officer orders otherwise, no deposition under this section shall be taken on fewer than 10 days' notice to the witness and all parties. Deposition subpoenas may be served anywhere within the United States or its Territories and possessions, or on any person doing business anywhere within the United States or its Territories and possessions, or as otherwise permitted by law.

(b) *Objections to deposition subpoenas.*

(1) The witness and any party who has not had an opportunity to oppose a deposition subpoena issued under this section may file a motion with the presiding officer under § 1209.28 of this part to quash or modify the subpoena prior to the time for compliance specified in the subpoena, but not more than 10 days after service of the subpoena.

(2) A statement of the basis for the motion to quash or modify a subpoena issued under this section must accompany the motion. The motion must be served on all parties.

(c) *Procedure upon deposition.* (1) Each witness testifying pursuant to a deposition subpoena must be duly sworn and each party shall have the right to examine the witness. Objections to questions or documents must be in short form, stating the grounds for the objection. Failure to object to questions or

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.34

documents is not deemed a waiver except where the ground for objection might have been avoided if the objection had been presented timely. All questions, answers, and objections must be recorded and transcribed. Videotaped depositions must be transcribed for the record; copies and transcripts must be supplied to each party.

(2) Any party may move before the presiding officer for an order compelling the witness to answer any questions the witness has refused to answer or submit any evidence that, during the deposition, the witness has refused to submit.

(3) The deposition transcript must be subscribed by the witness, unless the parties and the witness, by stipulation, have waived the signing, or the witness is ill, cannot be found, or has refused to sign. If the deposition is not subscribed by the witness, the court reporter taking the deposition shall certify that the transcript is a true and complete transcript of the deposition.

(d) *Enforcing subpoenas.* If a subpoenaed person fails to comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this section or with any order of the presiding officer made upon motion under paragraph (c)(2) of this section, the subpoenaing party or other aggrieved party may, to the extent authorized by section 1379D(c) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4641(c)), apply to an appropriate United States district court for an order requiring compliance with the portions of the subpoena that the presiding officer has ordered enforced. A party's right to seek court enforcement of a deposition subpoena in no way limits the sanctions that may be imposed by the presiding officer on a party who fails to comply with or induces a failure to comply with a subpoena issued under this section.

§ 1209.33 Interlocutory review.

(a) *General rule.* The Director may review a ruling of the presiding officer prior to the certification of the record to the Director only in accordance with the procedures set forth in this section.

(b) *Scope of review.* The Director may exercise interlocutory review of a rul-

ing of the presiding officer if the Director finds that:

(1) The ruling involves a controlling question of law or policy as to which substantial grounds exist for a difference of opinion;

(2) Immediate review of the ruling may materially advance the ultimate termination of the proceeding;

(3) Subsequent modification of the ruling at the conclusion of the proceeding would be an inadequate remedy; or

(4) Subsequent modification of the ruling would cause unusual delay or expense.

(c) *Procedure.* Any motion for interlocutory review shall be filed by a party with the presiding officer within 10 days of his or her ruling. Upon the expiration of the time for filing all responses, the presiding officer shall refer the matter to the Director for final disposition. In referring the matter to the Director, the presiding officer may indicate agreement or disagreement with the asserted grounds for interlocutory review of the ruling in question.

(d) *Suspension of proceeding.* Neither a request for interlocutory review nor any disposition of such a request by the Director under this section suspends or stays the proceeding unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer or the Director.

§ 1209.34 Summary disposition.

(a) *In general.* The presiding officer shall recommend that the Director issue a final order granting a motion for summary disposition if the undisputed pleaded facts, admissions, affidavits, stipulations, documentary evidence, matters as to which official notice may be taken, and any other evidentiary materials properly submitted in connection with a motion for summary disposition show that:

(1) There is no genuine issue as to any material fact; and

(2) The movant is entitled to a decision in its favor as a matter of law.

(b) *Filing of motions and responses.* (1) Any party who believes there is no genuine issue of material fact to be determined and that such party is entitled to a decision as a matter of law may

§ 1209.35

move at any time for summary disposition in its favor of all or any part of the proceeding. Any party, within 30 days after service of such motion or within such time period as allowed by the presiding officer, may file a response to such motion.

(2) A motion for summary disposition must be accompanied by a statement of material facts as to which the movant contends there is no genuine issue. Such motion must be supported by documentary evidence, which may take the form of admissions in pleadings, stipulations, depositions, investigatory depositions, transcripts, affidavits, and any other evidentiary materials that the movant contends support its position. The motion must also be accompanied by a brief containing the points and authorities in support of the contention of the movant. Any party opposing a motion for summary disposition must file a statement setting forth those material facts as to which the party contends a genuine dispute exists. Such opposition must be supported by evidence of the same type as that submitted with the motion for summary disposition and a brief containing the points and authorities in support of the contention that summary disposition would be inappropriate.

(c) *Hearing on motion.* At the request of any party or on his or her own motion, the presiding officer may hear oral argument on the motion for summary disposition.

(d) *Decision on motion.* Following receipt of a motion for summary disposition and all responses thereto, the presiding officer shall determine whether the movant is entitled to summary disposition. If the presiding officer determines that summary disposition is warranted, the presiding officer shall submit a recommended decision to that effect to the Director, under § 1209.53. If the presiding officer finds that the moving party is not entitled to summary disposition, the presiding officer shall make a ruling denying the motion.

§ 1209.35 Partial summary disposition.

If the presiding officer determines that a party is entitled to summary disposition as to certain claims only,

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

he shall defer submitting a recommended decision to the Director as to those claims. A hearing on the remaining issues must be ordered. Those claims for which the presiding officer has determined that summary disposition is warranted will be addressed in the recommended decision filed at the conclusion of the hearing.

§ 1209.36 Scheduling and pre-hearing conferences.

(a) *Scheduling conference.* After service of a notice of charges commencing a proceeding under this part, the presiding officer shall order the representative(s) of record for each party, and any party not so represented who is appearing *pro se*, to meet in person or to confer by telephone at a specified time within 30 days of service of such notice for the purpose of setting the time and place of the testimonial hearing on the record to be held within the District of Columbia and scheduling the course and conduct of the proceeding (the “scheduling conference”). The identification of potential witnesses, the time for and manner of discovery, and the exchange of any pre-hearing materials including witness lists, statements of issues, stipulations, exhibits, and any other materials also may be determined at the scheduling conference.

(b) *Pre-hearing conferences.* The presiding officer may, in addition to the scheduling conference, on his or her own motion or at the request of any party, direct representatives for the parties to meet with (in person or by telephone) at a pre-hearing conference to address any or all of the following:

- (1) Simplification and clarification of the issues;
- (2) Stipulations, admissions of fact and the contents, authenticity and admissibility into evidence of documents;
- (3) Matters of which official notice may be taken;
- (4) Limitation of the number of witnesses;
- (5) Summary disposition of any or all issues;
- (6) Resolution of discovery issues or disputes;
- (7) Amendments to pleadings; and

(8) Such other matters as may aid in the orderly disposition of the proceeding.

(c) *Transcript.* The presiding officer, in his or her discretion, may require that a scheduling or pre-hearing conference be recorded by a court reporter. Any transcript of the conference and any materials filed, including orders, become part of the record of the proceeding. A party may obtain a copy of a transcript at such party's expense.

(d) *Scheduling or pre-hearing orders.* Within a reasonable time following the conclusion of the scheduling conference or any pre-hearing conference, the presiding officer shall serve on each party an order setting forth any agreements reached and any procedural determinations made.

§ 1209.37 Pre-hearing submissions.

(a) *General.* Within the time set by the presiding officer, but in no case later than 10 days before the start of the hearing, each party shall serve on every other party the serving party's:

- (1) Pre-hearing statement;
- (2) Final list of witnesses to be called to testify at the hearing, including name and address of each witness, and a short summary of the expected testimony of each witness;
- (3) List of the exhibits to be introduced at the hearing along with a copy of each exhibit; and
- (4) Stipulations of fact, if any.

(b) *Effect of failure to comply.* No witness may testify and no exhibit may be introduced at the hearing that is not listed in the pre-hearing submissions pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, except for good cause shown.

§ 1209.38 Hearing subpoenas.

(a) *Issuance.* (1) Upon application of a party to the presiding officer showing relevance and reasonableness of scope of the testimony or other evidence sought, the presiding officer may issue a subpoena or a subpoena *duces tecum* requiring the attendance of a witness at the hearing or the production of documentary or physical evidence at such hearing. The application for a hearing subpoena must also contain a proposed subpoena specifying the attendance of a witness or the production of evidence from any place within the United

States or its territories and possessions, or as otherwise provided by law, at the designated place where the hearing is being conducted. The party making the application shall serve a copy of the application and the proposed subpoena on every other party.

(2) A party may apply for a hearing subpoena at any time before the commencement of or during a hearing. During a hearing, a party may make an application for a subpoena orally on the record before the presiding officer.

(3) The presiding officer shall promptly issue any hearing subpoena applied for under this section; except that, if the presiding officer determines that the application does not set forth a valid basis for the issuance of the subpoena, or that any of its terms are unreasonable, oppressive, excessive in scope, or unduly burdensome, he may refuse to issue the subpoena or may issue the subpoena in a modified form upon any conditions consistent with subpart C of this part. Upon issuance by the presiding officer, the party making the application shall serve the subpoena on the person named in the subpoena and on each party.

(b) *Motion to quash or modify.* (1) Any person to whom a hearing subpoena is directed or any party may file a motion to quash or modify such subpoena, accompanied by a statement of the basis for quashing or modifying the subpoena. The movant must serve the motion on each party and on the person named in the subpoena. Any party may respond to the motion within 10 days of service of the motion.

(2) Any motion to quash or modify a hearing subpoena must be filed prior to the time specified in the subpoena for compliance, but no more than 10 days after the date of service of the subpoena upon the movant.

(c) *Enforcing subpoenas.* If a subpoenaed person fails to comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this section or any order of the presiding officer that directs compliance with all or any portion of a hearing subpoena, the subpoenaing party or any other aggrieved party may seek enforcement of the subpoena pursuant to §1209.31. A party's right to seek court enforcement of a hearing subpoena shall in no way

limit the sanctions that may be imposed by the presiding officer on a party who induces a failure to comply with subpoenas issued under this section.

§§ 1209.39—1209.49 [Reserved]

§ 1209.50 Conduct of hearings.

(a) *General rules*—(1) *Conduct*. Hearings shall be conducted in accordance with chapter 5 of Title 5 and other applicable law and so as to provide a fair and expeditious presentation of the relevant disputed issues. Except as limited by this subpart, each party has the right to present its case or defense by oral and documentary evidence and to conduct such cross examination as may be required for full disclosure of the facts.

(2) *Order of hearing*. FHFA counsel of record shall present its case-in-chief first, unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer or unless otherwise expressly specified by law or regulation. FHFA counsel of record shall be the first party to present an opening statement and a closing statement and may make a rebuttal statement after the respondent's closing statement. If there are multiple respondents, respondents may agree among themselves as to the order of presentation of their cases, but if they do not agree, the presiding officer shall fix the order.

(3) *Examination of witnesses*. Only one representative for each party may conduct an examination of a witness, except that in the case of extensive direct examination, the presiding officer may permit more than one representative for the party presenting the witness to conduct the examination. A party may have one representative conduct the direct examination and another representative conduct re-direct examination of a witness, or may have one representative conduct the cross examination of a witness and another representative conduct the re-cross examination of a witness.

(4) *Stipulations*. Unless the presiding officer directs otherwise, all documents that the parties have stipulated as admissible shall be admitted into evidence upon commencement of the hearing.

(b) *Transcript*. The hearing shall be recorded and transcribed. The transcript shall be made available to any party upon payment of the cost thereof. The presiding officer shall have authority to order the record corrected, either upon motion to correct, upon stipulation of the parties, or following notice to the parties upon the presiding officer's own motion.

§ 1209.51 Evidence.

(a) *Admissibility*. (1) Except as is otherwise set forth in this section, relevant, material, and reliable evidence that is not unduly repetitive is admissible to the fullest extent authorized by the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 552 *et seq.*) and other applicable law.

(2) Evidence that would be admissible under the Federal Rules of Evidence is admissible in a proceeding conducted pursuant to subpart C of this part.

(3) Evidence that would be inadmissible under the Federal Rules of Evidence may not be deemed or ruled to be inadmissible in a proceeding conducted pursuant to subpart C of this part if such evidence is relevant, material, probative and reliable, and not unduly repetitive.

(b) *Official notice*. (1) Official notice may be taken of any material fact that may be judicially noticed by a United States district court and of any materially relevant information in the official public records of any Federal or State government agency.

(2) All matters officially noticed by the presiding officer or the Director shall appear on the record.

(3) If official notice is requested of any material fact, the parties, upon timely request, shall be afforded an opportunity to object.

(c) *Documents*. (1) A duplicate copy of a document is admissible to the same extent as the original, unless a genuine issue is raised as to whether the copy is in some material respect not a true and legible copy of the original.

(2) Subject to the requirements of paragraph (a)(1) of this section, any document, including a report of examination, oversight activity, inspection, or visitation prepared by FHFA or by

another Federal or State financial institution's regulatory agency, is admissible either with or without a sponsoring witness.

(3) Witnesses may use existing or newly created charts, exhibits, calendars, calculations, outlines, or other graphic material to summarize, illustrate, or simplify the presentation of testimony. Such materials may, subject to the presiding officer's discretion, be used with or without being admitted into evidence.

(d) *Objections.* (1) Objections to the admissibility of evidence must be timely made and rulings on all objections must appear in the record.

(2) When an objection to a question or line of questioning is sustained, the examining representative of record may make a specific proffer on the record of what he or she expected to prove by the expected testimony of the witness. The proffer may be by representation of the representative or by direct interrogation of the witness.

(3) The presiding officer shall retain rejected exhibits, adequately marked for identification, for the record and transmit such exhibits to the Director.

(4) Failure to object to admission of evidence or to any ruling constitutes a waiver of the objection.

(e) *Stipulations.* The parties may stipulate as to any relevant matters of fact or the authentication of any document to be admitted into evidence. Such stipulations must be received in evidence at a hearing, are binding on the parties with respect to the matters stipulated, and shall be made part of the record.

(f) *Depositions of unavailable witnesses.* (1) If a witness is unavailable to testify at a hearing and that witness has testified in a deposition in accordance with §1209.32, a party may offer as evidence all or any part of the transcript of the deposition, including deposition exhibits, if any.

(2) Such deposition transcript is admissible to the same extent that testimony would have been admissible had that person testified at the hearing, provided that if a witness refused to answer proper questions during the deposition the presiding officer may, on that basis, limit the admissibility of

the deposition in any manner that justice requires.

(3) Only those portions of a deposition or related exhibits received in evidence at the hearing in accordance with this section shall constitute a part of the record.

§ 1209.52 Post-hearing filings.

(a) *Proposed findings and conclusions and supporting briefs.* (1) Using the same method of service for each party, the presiding officer shall serve notice upon each party that the certified transcript, together with all hearing exhibits and exhibits introduced but not admitted into evidence at the hearing, has been filed with the presiding officer. Any party may file with the presiding officer proposed findings of fact, proposed conclusions of law, and a proposed order within 30 days after the parties have received notice that the transcript has been filed with the presiding officer, unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer.

(2) Proposed findings and conclusions must be supported by citation to any relevant authorities and by page and line references to any relevant portions of the record. A post-hearing brief may be filed in support of proposed findings and conclusions, either as part of the same document or in a separate document.

(3) A party is deemed to have waived any issue not raised in proposed findings or conclusions timely filed by that party.

(b) *Reply briefs.* Reply briefs may be filed within 15 days after the date on which the parties' proposed findings and conclusions and proposed order are due. Reply briefs shall be limited strictly to responding to new matters, issues, or arguments raised by another party in papers filed in the proceeding. A party who has not filed proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law or a post-hearing brief may not file a reply brief.

(c) *Simultaneous filing required.* The presiding officer shall not order the filing by any party of any brief or reply brief supporting proposed findings and conclusions in advance of the other party's filing of its brief.

§ 1209.53 Recommended decision and filing of record.

(a) *Filing of recommended decision and record.* Within 45 days after expiration of the time allowed for filing reply briefs under §1209.52(b), the presiding officer shall file with and certify to the Director, for decision, the record of the proceeding. The record must include the presiding officer's recommended decision, recommended findings of fact and conclusions of law, and proposed order; all pre-hearing and hearing transcripts, exhibits and rulings; and the motions, briefs, memoranda, and other supporting papers filed in connection with the hearing. The presiding officer shall serve upon each party the recommended decision, recommended findings and conclusions, and proposed order.

(b) *Filing of index.* At the same time the presiding officer files with and certifies to the Director, for final determination, the record of the proceeding, the presiding officer shall furnish to the Director a certified index of the entire record of the proceeding. The certified index shall include, at a minimum, an entry for each paper, document or motion filed with the presiding officer in the proceeding, the date of the filing, and the identity of the filer. The certified index shall also include an exhibit index containing, at a minimum, an entry consisting of exhibit number and title or description for: each exhibit introduced and admitted into evidence at the hearing; each exhibit introduced but not admitted into evidence at the hearing; each exhibit introduced and admitted into evidence after the completion of the hearing; and each exhibit introduced but not admitted into evidence after the completion of the hearing.

§ 1209.54 Exceptions to recommended decision.

(a) *Filing exceptions.* Within 30 days after service of the recommended decision, recommended findings and conclusions, and proposed order under §1209.53, a party may file with the Director written exceptions to the presiding officer's recommended decision, recommended findings and conclusions, and proposed order; to the admission or exclusion of evidence; or to the failure

of the presiding officer to make a ruling proposed by a party. A supporting brief may be filed at the time the exceptions are filed, either as part of the same document or in a separate document.

(b) *Effect of failure to file or raise exceptions.* (1) Failure of a party to file exceptions to those matters specified in paragraph (a) of this section within the time prescribed is deemed a waiver of objection thereto.

(2) No exception need be considered by the Director if the party taking exception had an opportunity to raise the same objection, issue, or argument before the presiding officer and failed to do so.

(c) *Contents.* (1) All exceptions and briefs in support of such exceptions must be confined to the particular matters in or omissions from the presiding officer's recommendations to which that party takes exception.

(2) All exceptions and briefs in support of exceptions must set forth page or paragraph references to the specific parts of the presiding officer's recommendations to which exception is taken, the page or paragraph references to those portions of the record relied upon to support each exception, and the legal authority relied upon to support each exception. Exceptions and briefs in support shall not exceed a total of 30 pages, except by leave of the Director on motion.

(3) One reply brief may be submitted by each party opposing the exceptions within 10 days of service of exceptions and briefs in support of exceptions. Reply briefs shall not exceed 15 pages, except by leave of the Director on motion.

§ 1209.55 Review by Director.

(a) *Notice of submission to the Director.* When the Director determines that the record in the proceeding is complete, the Director shall serve notice upon the parties that the case has been submitted to the Director for final decision.

(b) *Oral argument before the Director.* Upon the initiative of the Director or on the written request of any party filed with the Director within the time for filing exceptions, the Director may order and hear oral argument on the

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.71

recommended findings, conclusions, decision and order of the presiding officer. A written request by a party must show good cause for oral argument and state reasons why arguments cannot be presented adequately in writing. A denial of a request for oral argument may be set forth in the Director's final decision. Oral argument before the Director must be transcribed.

(c) Director's final decision and order.

(1) Decisional employees may advise and assist the Director in the consideration and disposition of the case. The final decision of the Director will be based upon review of the entire record of the proceeding, except that the Director may limit the issues to be reviewed to those findings and conclusions to which opposing arguments or exceptions have been filed by the parties.

(2) The Director shall render a final decision and issue an appropriate order within 90 days after notification to the parties that the case has been submitted for final decision, unless the Director orders that the action or any aspect thereof be remanded to the presiding officer for further proceedings. Copies of the final decision including findings of fact and an appropriate order of the Director shall be served upon each party to the proceeding and as otherwise required by statute.

(3) The Director may modify, terminate, or set aside an order in accordance with section 1373(b)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4633(b)(2)).

§ 1209.56 Exhaustion of administrative remedies.

To exhaust administrative remedies as to any issue on which a party disagrees with the presiding officer's recommendations, a party must file exceptions with the Director under § 1209.54 of this part. A party must exhaust administrative remedies as a precondition to seeking judicial review of any final decision and order issued under this part.

§ 1209.57 Judicial review; no automatic stay.

(a) *Judicial review.* Judicial review of any final order of the Director shall be exclusively as provided by section 1374

of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4634).

(b) *No automatic stay.* Commencement of proceedings for judicial review of a final decision and order of the Director may not, unless specifically ordered by the Director or a reviewing court, operate as a stay of any order issued by the Director. The Director may, in his or her discretion and on such terms as he finds just, stay the effectiveness of all or any part of an order of the Director pending a final decision on a petition for review of that order.

§§ 1209.58—1209.69 [Reserved]

Subpart D—Parties and Representational Practice Before the Federal Housing Finance Agency; Standards of Conduct

§ 1209.70 Scope.

Subpart D of this part contains rules governing practice by parties or their representatives before FHFA. This subpart addresses the imposition of sanctions by the presiding officer or the Director against parties or their representatives in an adjudicatory proceeding under this part. This subpart also covers other disciplinary sanctions—censure, suspension, or disbarment—against individuals who appear before FHFA in a representational capacity either in an adjudicatory proceeding under this part or in any other matters connected with presentations to FHFA relating to a client's or other principal's rights, privileges, or liabilities. This representation includes, but is not limited to, the practice of attorneys and accountants. Employees of FHFA are not subject to disciplinary proceedings under this subpart.

§ 1209.71 Definitions.

Practice before FHFA for the purposes of subpart D of this part, includes, but is not limited to, transacting any business with FHFA as counsel of record, representative, or agent for any other person, unless the Director orders otherwise. Practice before FHFA also includes the preparation of any statement, opinion, or other paper by a counsel, representative or agent that is filed with FHFA in any certification,

§ 1209.72

notification, application, report, or other document, with the consent of such counsel, representative, or agent. Practice before FHFA does not include work prepared for a regulated entity or entity-affiliated party solely at the request of such party for use in the ordinary course of its business.

§ 1209.72 Appearance and practice in adjudicatory proceedings.

(a) *Appearance before FHFA or a presiding officer*—(1) *By attorneys*. A party may be represented by an attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of any State, commonwealth, possession or territory of the United States, or the District of Columbia, and who is not currently suspended or disbarred from practice before FHFA.

(2) *By non-attorneys*. An individual may appear on his or her own behalf, *pro se*. A member of a partnership may represent the partnership and a duly authorized officer, director, employee, or other agent of any corporation or other entity not specifically listed herein may represent such corporation or other entity; provided that such officer, director, employee, or other agent is not currently suspended or disbarred from practice before FHFA. A duly authorized officer or employee of any Government unit, agency, or authority may represent that unit, agency, or authority.

(b) *Notice of appearance*. Any person appearing in a representative capacity on behalf of a party, including FHFA, shall execute and file a notice of appearance with the presiding officer at or before the time such person submits papers or otherwise appears on behalf of a party in the adjudicatory proceeding. Such notice of appearance shall include a written declaration that the individual is currently qualified as provided in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section and is authorized to represent the particular party. By filing a notice of appearance on behalf of a party in an adjudicatory proceeding, the representative thereby agrees and represents that he is authorized to accept service on behalf of the represented party and that, in the event of withdrawal from representation, he or she will, if required by the presiding of-

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

ficer, continue to accept service until a new representative has filed a notice of appearance or until the represented party indicates that he or she will proceed on a *pro se* basis. Unless the representative filing the notice is an attorney, the notice of appearance shall also be executed by the person represented or, if the person is not an individual, by the chief executive officer, or duly authorized officer of that person.

§ 1209.73 Conflicts of interest.

(a) *Conflict of interest in representation*. No representative shall represent another person in an adjudicatory proceeding if it reasonably appears that such representation may be limited materially by that representative's responsibilities to a third person or by that representative's own interests. The presiding officer may take corrective measures at any stage of a proceeding to cure a conflict of interest in representation, including the issuance of an order limiting the scope of representation or disqualifying an individual from appearing in a representative capacity for the duration of the proceeding.

(b) *Certification and waiver*. If any person appearing as counsel or other representative represents two or more parties to an adjudicatory proceeding, or also represents a non-party on a matter relevant to an issue in the proceeding, that representative must certify in writing at the time of filing the notice of appearance required by § 1209.72 of this part as follows:

(1) That the representative has personally and fully discussed the possibility of conflicts of interest with each affected party and non-party; and

(2) That each affected party and non-party waives any right it might otherwise have had to assert any known conflicts of interest or to assert any non-material conflicts of interest during the course of the proceeding.

§ 1209.74 Sanctions.

(a) *General rule*. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed during the course of any proceeding when any party or representative of record has

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.75

acted or failed to act in a manner required by applicable statute, regulation, or order, and that act or failure to act:

(1) Constitutes contemptuous conduct, which includes dilatory, obstructive, egregious, contumacious, unethical, or other improper conduct at any phase of any proceeding, hearing, or appearance before a presiding officer or the Director;

(2) Has caused some other party material and substantive injury, including, but not limited to, incurring expenses including attorney's fees or experiencing prejudicial delay;

(3) Is a clear and unexcused violation of an applicable statute, regulation, or order; or

(4) Has delayed the proceeding unduly.

(b) *Sanctions*. Sanctions that may be imposed include, but are not limited to, any one or more of the following:

(1) Issuing an order against a party;

(2) Rejecting or striking any testimony or documentary evidence offered, or other papers filed, by the party;

(3) Precluding the party from contesting specific issues or findings;

(4) Precluding the party from offering certain evidence or from challenging or contesting certain evidence offered by another party;

(5) Precluding the party from making a late filing or conditioning a late filing on any terms that may be just; or

(6) Assessing reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by any other party as a result of the improper action or failure to act.

(c) *Procedure for imposition of sanctions*. (1) The presiding officer, on the motion of any party, or on his or her own motion, and after such notice and responses as may be directed by the presiding officer, may impose any sanction authorized by this section. The presiding officer shall submit to the Director for final ruling any sanction that would result in a final order that terminates the case on the merits or is otherwise dispositive of the case.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, no sanction authorized by this section, other than refusing to accept late papers, shall be imposed without prior notice to all parties and an opportunity for any rep-

resentative or party against whom sanctions may be imposed to be heard. The presiding officer shall determine and direct the appropriate notice and form for such opportunity to be heard. The opportunity to be heard may be limited to an opportunity to respond verbally immediately after the act or inaction in question is noted by the presiding officer.

(3) For purposes of interlocutory review, motions for the imposition of sanctions by any party and the imposition of sanctions shall be treated the same as motions for any other ruling by the presiding officer.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be read to preclude the presiding officer or the Director from taking any other action or imposing any other restriction or sanction authorized by any applicable statute or regulation.

(d) *Sanctions for contemptuous conduct*. If, during the course of any proceeding, a presiding officer finds any representative or any individual representing himself to have engaged in contemptuous conduct, the presiding officer may summarily suspend that individual from participating in that or any related proceeding or impose any other appropriate sanction.

§ 1209.75 Censure, suspension, disbarment, and reinstatement.

(a) *Discretionary censure, suspension, and disbarment*. (1) The Director may censure any individual who practices or attempts to practice before FHFA or suspend or revoke the privilege to appear or practice before FHFA of such individual if, after notice of and opportunity for hearing in the matter, that individual is found by the Director—

(i) Not to possess the requisite qualifications or competence to represent others;

(ii) To be seriously lacking in character or integrity or to have engaged in material unethical or improper professional conduct;

(iii) To have caused unfair and material injury or prejudice to another party, such as prejudicial delay or unnecessary expenses including attorney's fees;

(iv) To have engaged in, or aided and abetted, a material and knowing violation of the Safety and Soundness Act,

the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act, the Federal National Mortgage Association Charter Act, or the rules or regulations issued under those statutes, or any other applicable law or regulation;

(v) To have engaged in contemptuous conduct before FHFA;

(vi) With intent to defraud in any manner, to have willfully and knowingly deceived, misled, or threatened any client or prospective client; or

(vii) Within the last 10 years, to have been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, or breach of trust, if the conviction has not been reversed on appeal. A conviction within the meaning of this paragraph shall be deemed to have occurred when the convicting court enters its judgment or order, regardless of whether an appeal is pending or could be taken and includes a judgment or an order on a plea of *nolo contendere* or on consent, regardless of whether a violation is admitted in the consent.

(2) Suspension or revocation on the grounds set forth in paragraphs (a)(1)(ii) through (vii) of this section shall only be ordered upon a further finding that the individual's conduct or character was sufficiently egregious as to justify suspension or revocation. Suspension or disbarment under this paragraph shall continue until the applicant has been reinstated by the Director for good cause shown or until, in the case of a suspension, the suspension period has expired.

(3) If the final order against the respondent is for censure, the individual may be permitted to practice before FHFA, but such individual's future representations may be subject to conditions designed to promote high standards of conduct. If a written letter of censure is issued, a copy will be maintained in FHFA's files.

(b) *Mandatory suspension and disbarment.* (1) Any counsel who has been and remains suspended or disbarred by a court of the United States or of any State, commonwealth, possession or territory of the United States, or the District of Columbia; any accountant or other licensed expert whose license to practice has been revoked in any State, commonwealth, possession or territory of the United States, or the

District of Columbia; any person who has been and remains suspended or barred from practice by or before the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Office of Thrift Supervision, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, the Federal Housing Finance Board, the Farm Credit Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the Commodity Futures Trading Commission is also suspended automatically from appearing or practicing before FHFA. A disbarment or suspension within the meaning of this paragraph shall be deemed to have occurred when the disbarring or suspending agency or tribunal enters its judgment or order, regardless of whether an appeal is pending or could be taken and regardless of whether a violation is admitted in the consent.

(2) A suspension or disbarment from practice before FHFA under paragraph (b)(1) of this section shall continue until the person suspended or disbarred is reinstated under paragraph (d)(2) of this section.

(c) *Notices to be filed.* (1) Any individual appearing or practicing before FHFA who is the subject of an order, judgment, decree, or finding of the types set forth in paragraph (b)(1) of this section shall file promptly with the Director a copy thereof, together with any related opinion or statement of the agency or tribunal involved.

(2) Any individual appearing or practicing before FHFA who is or within the last 10 years has been convicted of a felony or of a misdemeanor that resulted in a sentence of prison term or in a fine or restitution order totaling more than \$5,000 promptly shall file a notice with the Director. The notice shall include a copy of the order imposing the sentence or fine, together with any related opinion or statement of the court involved.

(d) *Reinstatement.* (1) Unless otherwise ordered by the Director, an application for reinstatement for good cause may be made in writing by a person suspended or disbarred under paragraph (a)(1) of this section at any time more than three years after the effective

date of the suspension or disbarment and, thereafter, at any time more than one year after the person's most recent application for reinstatement. An applicant for reinstatement hereunder may, in the Director's sole discretion, be afforded a hearing.

(2) An application for reinstatement for good cause by any person suspended or disbarred under paragraph (b)(1) of this section may be filed at any time, but not less than one year after the applicant's most recent application. An applicant for reinstatement for good cause hereunder may, in the Director's sole discretion, be afforded a hearing. If, however, all the grounds for suspension or disbarment under paragraph (b)(1) of this section have been removed by a reversal of the order of suspension or disbarment or by termination of the underlying suspension or disbarment, any person suspended or disbarred under paragraph (b)(1) of this section may apply immediately for reinstatement and shall be reinstated by FHFA upon written application notifying FHFA that the grounds have been removed.

(e) *Conferences*—(1) *General rule.* The FHFA counsel of record may confer with a proposed respondent concerning allegations of misconduct or other grounds for censure, disbarment, or suspension, regardless of whether a proceeding for censure, disbarment or suspension has been commenced. If a conference results in a stipulation in connection with a proceeding in which the individual is the respondent, the stipulation may be entered in the record at the request of either party to the proceeding.

(2) *Resignation or voluntary suspension.* In order to avoid the institution of or a decision in a disbarment or suspension proceeding, a person who practices before FHFA may consent to censure, suspension, or disbarment from practice. At the discretion of the Director, the individual may be censured, suspended, or disbarred in accordance with the consent offered.

(f) *Hearings under this section.* Hearings conducted under this section shall be conducted in substantially the same manner as other hearings under this part, except that in proceedings to terminate an existing FHFA suspension or disbarment order, the person seeking the termination of the order shall bear the burden of going forward with an application and with proof and that the Director may, in the Director's sole discretion, direct that any proceeding to terminate an existing suspension or disbarment by FHFA be limited to written submissions. All hearings held under this section shall be closed to the public unless the Director, on the Director's own motion or upon the request of a party, otherwise directs.

§§ 1209.76—1209.79 [Reserved]

Subpart E—Civil Money Penalty Inflation Adjustments

§ 1209.80 Inflation adjustments.

The maximum amount of each civil money penalty within FHFA's jurisdiction, as set by the Safety and Soundness Act and thereafter adjusted in accordance with the Inflation Adjustment Act, on a recurring four-year cycle, is as follows:

U.S. Code citation	Description	Adjusted maximum penalty amount
12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(1)	First Tier	\$10,000
12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(2)	Second Tier	50,000
12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(4)	Third Tier (Entity-Affiliated party)	2,000,000
12 U.S.C. 4636(b)(4)	Third Tier (Regulated entity)	2,000,000

§ 1209.81 Applicability.

The inflation adjustments set out in § 1209.80 shall apply to civil money penalties assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Safety and Soundness Act, 12 U.S.C. 4636, and subparts B and

C of this part, for violations occurring after the effective date of July 30, 2008.

§§ 1209.82—1209.99 [Reserved]

**Subpart F—Suspension or Removal
of an Entity-Affiliated Party
Charged With Felony**

§ 1209.100 Scope.

Subpart F of this part applies to informal hearings afforded to any entity-affiliated party who has been suspended, removed, or prohibited from further participation in the business affairs of a regulated entity by a notice or order issued by the Director under section 1377(h) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)).

§ 1209.101 Suspension, removal, or prohibition.

(a) *Notice of suspension or prohibition.*

(1) As provided by section 1377(h)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)(1)), if an entity-affiliated party is charged in any information, indictment, or complaint, with the commission of or participation in a crime that involves dishonesty or breach of trust that is punishable by imprisonment for more than one year under State or Federal law, the Director may, if continued service or participation by such party may pose a threat to the regulated entity or impair public confidence in the regulated entity, by written notice served upon such party, suspend such party from office or prohibit such party from further participation in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of any regulated entity.

(2) In accordance with section 1377(h)(1) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)(1)), the notice of suspension or prohibition is effective upon service. A copy of such notice will be served on the relevant regulated entity. The notice will state the basis for the suspension and the right of the party to request an informal hearing as provided in § 1209.102. The suspension or prohibition is to remain in effect until the information, indictment, or complaint is finally disposed of, or until terminated by the Director, or otherwise as provided in paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) *Order of removal or prohibition.* As provided by section 1377(h)(2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C.

4636a(h)(2)), at such time as a judgment of conviction is entered (or pretrial diversion or other plea bargain is agreed to) in connection with a crime as referred to above in paragraph (a) (the “conviction”), and the conviction is no longer subject to appellate review, the Director may, if continued service or participation by such party may pose a threat to the regulated entity or impair public confidence in the regulated entity, issue an order removing such party from office or prohibiting such party from further participation in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of the regulated entity without the prior written consent of the Director. A copy of such order will be served on the relevant regulated entity, at which time the entity-affiliated party shall immediately cease to be a director or officer of the regulated entity. The notice will state the basis for the removal or prohibition and the right of the party to request a hearing as provided in § 1209.102.

(c) *Effective period.* Unless terminated by the Director, a notice of suspension or order of removal issued under section 1377(h)(1) or (2) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)(1), (2)) shall remain effective and outstanding until the completion of any informal hearing or appeal provided under section 1377(h)(4) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)(4)). The pendency of an informal hearing, if any, does not stay any notice of suspension or prohibition or order of removal or prohibition under subpart F of this part.

(d) *Effect of acquittal.* As provided by section 1377(h)(2)(B)(ii) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)(2)(B)(ii)), a finding of not guilty or other disposition of the charge does not preclude the Director from instituting removal, suspension, or prohibition proceedings under section 1377(a) or (b) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(a), (b)).

(e) *Preservation of authority.* Action by the Director under section 1377(h) of the Safety and Soundness Act (12 U.S.C. 4636a(h)), shall not be deemed as a predicate or a bar to any other regulatory, supervisory, or enforcement action under the Safety and Soundness Act.

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1209.102

§ 1209.102 Hearing on removal or suspension.

(a) *Hearing requests*—(1) *Deadline*. An entity-affiliated party served with a notice of suspension or prohibition or an order of removal or prohibition, within 30 days of service of such notice or order, may submit to the Director a written request to appear before the Director to show that his or her continued service or participation in the affairs of the regulated entity will not pose a threat to the interests of, or threaten to impair public confidence in, the Enterprises or the Banks. The request must be addressed to the Director and sent to the Federal Housing Finance Agency at 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552, by:

(i) Overnight U.S. Postal Service delivery or delivery by a reliable commercial delivery service for same day or overnight delivery to the address stated above; or

(ii) First class, registered, or certified mail via the U.S. Postal Service.

(2) *Waiver of appearance*. An entity-affiliated party may elect in writing to waive his or her right to appear to make a statement in person or through counsel and have the matter determined solely on the basis of his or her written submission.

(b) *Form and timing of hearing*—(1) *Informal hearing*. Hearings under subpart F of this part are not subject to the formal adjudication provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 554 through 557), and are not conducted under subpart C of this part.

(2) *Setting of the hearing*. Upon receipt of a timely request for a hearing, the Director will give written notice and set a date within 30 days for the entity-affiliated party to appear, personally, or through counsel, before the Director or his or her designee(s) to submit written materials (or, at the discretion of the Director, oral testimony and oral argument) to make the necessary showing under paragraph (a) of this section. The entity-affiliated party may submit a written request for additional time for the hearing to commence, without undue delay, and the Director may extend the hearing date for a specified time.

(3) *Oral testimony*. The Director or his or her designee, in his or her discre-

tion, may deny, permit, or limit oral testimony in the hearing.

(c) *Conduct of the hearing*—(1) *Hearing officer*. A hearing under this section may be presided over by the Director or one or more designated FHFA employees, except that an officer designated by the Director (hearing officer) to conduct the hearing may not have been involved in an underlying criminal proceeding, a factually related proceeding, or an enforcement proceeding in a prosecutorial or investigative role. This provision does not preclude the Director otherwise from seeking information on the matters at issue from appropriate FHFA staff on an as needed basis consistent with § 1209.101(d)(2).

(2) *Submissions*. All submissions of the requestor and FHFA's counsel of record must be received by the Director or his or her designee no later than 10 days prior to the date set for the hearing. FHFA may respond in writing to the requestor's submission and serve the requestor (and any other interested party such as the regulated entity) not later than the date fixed by the hearing officer for submissions or other time period as the hearing officer may require.

(3) *Procedures*—(i) *Fact finding authority of the hearing officer*. The hearing officer shall determine all procedural matters under subpart F of this part, permit or limit the appearance of witnesses in accordance with paragraph (b)(3) of this section, and impose time limits as he or she deems reasonable. All oral statements, witness testimony, if permitted, and documents submitted that are found by the hearing officer to be materially relevant to the proceeding and not unduly repetitious may be considered. The hearing officer may question any person appearing in the proceeding, and may make any ruling reasonably necessary to ensure the full and fair presentation of evidence and to facilitate the efficient and effective operation of the proceeding.

(ii) *Statements to an officer*. Any oral or written statement made to the Director, a hearing officer, or any FHFA employee under subpart F of this part is deemed to be a statement made to a

§ 1209.103

Federal officer or agency within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. 1006.

(iii) *Oral testimony.* If either the requestor or FHFA counsel of record desires to present oral testimony to supplement the party's written submission he or she must make a request in writing to the hearing officer not later than 10 days prior to the hearing, as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, or within a shorter time period as permitted by the hearing officer for good cause shown. The request should include the name of the individual(s), a statement generally descriptive of the expected testimony, and the reasons why such oral testimony is warranted. The hearing officer generally will not admit witnesses, absent a strong showing of specific and compelling need. Witnesses, if admitted, shall be sworn.

(iv) *Written materials.* Each party must file a copy of any affidavit, memorandum, or other written material to be presented at the hearing with the hearing officer and serve copies on any other interested party (such as the affected regulated entity) not later than 10 days prior to commencement of the informal hearing, as provided in paragraph (c)(2), or within a shorter time period as permitted by the hearing officer for good cause shown.

(v) *Relief.* The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether the suspension or prohibition from participation in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of the regulated entity will be continued, terminated, or otherwise modified, or whether the order removing such party from office or prohibiting the party from further participation in any manner in the conduct of the affairs of the regulated entity will be rescinded or otherwise modified.

(vi) *Ultimate question.* In deciding on any request for relief from a notice of suspension or prohibition, the hearing officer shall not consider the ultimate question of guilt or innocence with respect to the outstanding criminal charge(s). In deciding on a request for relief from a removal order, the hearing officer shall not consider challenges to or efforts to impeach the validity of the conviction. In either case, the hearing officer may consider facts that show the nature of the events on

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

which the conviction or charges were based.

(4) *Record.* If warranted under the circumstances of the matter, the hearing officer may require that a transcript of the proceedings be prepared at the expense of the requesting party. The hearing officer may order the record be kept open for a reasonable time following the hearing, not to exceed five business days, to permit the filing of additional pertinent submissions for the record. Thereafter, no further submissions are to be admitted to the record, absent good cause shown.

§ 1209.103 Recommended and final decisions.

(a) *Recommended decision*—(1) *Written recommended decision of the hearing officer.* Not later than 20 days following the close of the hearing (or if the requestor waived a hearing, from the deadline for submission of the written materials), the hearing officer will serve a copy of the recommended decision on the parties to the proceeding. The recommended decision must include a summary of the findings, the parties' respective arguments, and support for the determination.

(2) *Five-day comment period.* Not later than five business days after receipt of the recommended decision, the parties shall submit written comments in response to the recommended decision, if any, to the hearing officer. The hearing officer shall not grant any extension of the stated time for responses to a recommended decision.

(3) *Recommended decision to be transmitted to the Director.* The hearing officer shall promptly forward the recommended decision, and written comments, if any, and the record to the Director for final determination.

(b) *Decision of the Director.* Within 60 days of the date of the hearing, or if the requestor waived a hearing, the date fixed for the hearing, the Director will notify the entity-affiliated party in writing by registered mail of the disposition of his or her request for relief from the notice of suspension or prohibition or the order of removal or prohibition. The decision will state whether the suspension or prohibition will be continued, terminated, or otherwise

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1212.2

modified, or whether the order removing such party from any participation in the affairs of the regulated entity will be rescinded or otherwise modified. The decision will contain a brief statement of the basis for an adverse determination. The Director's decision is a final and non-appealable order.

(c) *Effect of notice or order.* A removal or prohibition by order shall remain in effect until terminated by the Director. A suspension or prohibition by notice remains in effect until the criminal charge is disposed of or until terminated by the Director.

(d) *Reconsideration.* A suspended or removed entity-affiliated party subsequently may petition the Director to reconsider the final decision any time after the expiration of a 12-month period from the date of the decision, but no such request may be made within 12 months of a previous petition for reconsideration. An entity-affiliated party must submit a petition for reconsideration in writing; the petition shall state the specific grounds for relief from the notice of suspension or order or removal and be supported by a memorandum and any other documentation materially relevant to the request for reconsideration. No hearing will be held on a petition for reconsideration, and the Director will inform the requestor of the disposition of the reconsideration request in a timely manner. A decision on a request for reconsideration shall not constitute an appealable order.

PART 1212—POST-EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTION FOR SENIOR EXAMINERS

Subpart A [Reserved]

Subpart B—Post-Employment Restriction for Senior Examiners

Sec.

1212.1 Purpose and scope.

1212.2 Definitions.

1212.3 Post-employment restriction for senior examiners.

1212.4 Waiver.

1212.5 Penalties.

AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 4526, 12 U.S.C. 4517(e).

SOURCE: 74 FR 51075, Oct. 5, 2009, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A [Reserved]

Subpart B—Post-Employment Restriction for Senior Examiners

§ 1212.1 Purpose and scope.

This subpart sets forth a one-year post-employment restriction applicable to senior examiners of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA). This restriction is in addition to the post-employment restriction applicable to employees of FHFA under 12 U.S.C. 4523.

§ 1212.2 Definitions.

For purposes of subpart B of this part, the term:

Consultant means a person who works directly on matters for, or on behalf of, a regulated entity or the Office of Finance.

Director means the Director of FHFA or his or her designee.

Employee means an officer or employee of FHFA, including a special Government employee.

Federal Home Loan Bank or *Bank* means a Bank established under the Federal Home Loan Bank Act; the term “Federal Home Loan Banks” means, collectively, all the Federal Home Loan Banks.

Office of Finance means the Office of Finance of the Federal Home Loan Bank System, or any successor thereto.

Regulated entity means the Federal National Mortgage Association and any affiliate thereof, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and any affiliate thereof, any Federal Home Loan Bank; the term “regulated entities” means, collectively, the Federal National Mortgage Association and any affiliate thereof, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and any affiliate thereof, and the Federal Home Loan Banks.

Safety and Soundness Act means the Federal Housing Enterprises Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992, as amended by the Federal Housing Finance Regulatory Reform Act of 2008, Division A of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, Public Law No. 110-289, 122 Stat. 2654 (2008).

§ 1212.3

Senior examiner means an employee of FHFA who has been:

(1) Authorized by FHFA to conduct examinations or inspections on behalf of FHFA;

(2) Assigned continuing, broad and lead responsibility for examining a regulated entity or the Office of Finance; and

(3) Assigned responsibilities for examining, inspecting and supervising the regulated entity or the Office of Finance that—

(i) Represents a substantial portion of the employee's assigned responsibilities; and

(ii) Requires the employee to interact routinely with officers or employees of the regulated entity or the Office of Finance.

§ 1212.3 Post-employment restriction for senior examiners.

(a) *Prohibition.* An employee of FHFA who serves as the senior examiner of a regulated entity or the Office of Finance for two or more months during the last 12 months of his or her employment with FHFA may not, within one year after leaving the employment of FHFA, knowingly accept compensation as an employee, officer, director, or consultant from a regulated entity or the Office of Finance unless the Director grants a waiver pursuant to § 1212.4.

(b) *Effective date.* The post-employment restriction in paragraph (a) of this section shall not apply to any officer or employee of FHFA or any former officer or employee of FHFA who ceased to be an officer or employee of FHFA before November 4, 2009.

§ 1212.4 Waiver.

At the written request of a senior examiner or former senior examiner, the Director may waive the post-employment restriction in § 1212.3 if he or she certifies, in writing, and on a case-by-case basis, that granting a waiver of such restriction does not affect the integrity of the supervisory program of FHFA.

§ 1212.5 Penalties.

(a) *General.* A senior examiner who, after leaving the employment of FHFA, violates the restriction set forth in

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

§ 1212.3 shall be subject to one or both of the following penalties—

(1) An order:

(i) Removing the individual from office at the regulated entity or the Office of Finance or prohibiting the individual from further participation in the affairs of the relevant regulated entity or the Office of Finance for a period of up to five years; and

(ii) Prohibiting the individual from participating in the affairs of any regulated entity or the Office of Finance for a period of up to five years; and/or

(2) A civil money penalty of not more than \$250,000.

(b) *Other penalties.* The penalties set forth in paragraph (a) of this section are not exclusive, and a senior examiner who violates the restrictions in § 1212.3 also may be subject to other administrative, civil, or criminal remedies or penalties as provided in law.

(c) *Procedural rights.* The procedures applicable to actions under paragraph (a) of this section are those provided in the Safety and Soundness Act under section 1376, in connection with the imposition of a civil money penalty; under section 1377, in connection with a removal and prohibition order (12 U.S.C. 4636 and 4636a, respectively); and under any regulations issued by FHFA implementing such procedures.

PART 1213—OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Sec.

1213.1 Purpose and scope.

1213.2 Definitions.

1213.3 Authorities and duties of the Ombudsman.

1213.4 Complaints and appeals from a regulated entity or the Office of Finance.

1213.5 Complaints from a person.

1213.6 No retaliation.

1213.7 Confidentiality.

AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 4511(b)(2), 4517(i), and 4526.

SOURCE: 76 FR 7481, Feb. 10, 2011, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1213.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) *Purpose.* The purpose of this part is to establish within FHFA the Office

Federal Housing Finance Agency

§ 1213.4

of the Ombudsman (Office) under section 1317(i) of the Federal Housing Enterprises Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 4517(i)), as amended, and to set forth the authorities and duties of the Ombudsman.

(b) *Scope.* (1) This part applies to complaints and appeals from any regulated entity and any person that has a business relationship with a regulated entity regarding any matter relating to the regulation and supervision of such regulated entity or the Office of Finance by FHFA.

(2) The establishment of the Office does not alter or limit any other right or procedure associated with appeals, complaints, or administrative matters submitted by a person regarding any matter relating to the regulation and supervision of a regulated entity or the Office of Finance under any other law or regulation.

§ 1213.2 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, the term:

Business relationship means any existing or potential interaction between a person and a regulated entity or the Office of Finance for the provision of goods or services. The term *business relationship* does not include any interaction between a mortgagor and a regulated entity that directly or indirectly owns, purchased, guarantees, or sold the mortgage.

Director means the Director of FHFA or his or her designee.

FHFA means the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Office of Finance means the Office of Finance of the Federal Home Loan Bank System.

Person means an organization, business entity, or individual that has a business relationship with a regulated entity or the Office of Finance, or that represents the interests of a person that has a business relationship with a regulated entity or the Office of Finance. The term *person* does not include an individual borrower.

Regulated entity means the Federal National Mortgage Association and any affiliate, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and any affiliate, and any Federal Home Loan Bank.

§ 1213.3 Authorities and duties of the Ombudsman.

(a) *General.* The Office shall be headed by an Ombudsman, who shall consider complaints and appeals from any regulated entity, the Office of Finance, and any person that has a business relationship with a regulated entity or the Office of Finance regarding any matter relating to the regulation and supervision of such regulated entity or the Office of Finance by FHFA. In considering any complaint or appeal under this part, the Ombudsman shall:

(1) Conduct inquiries and submit findings of fact and recommendations to the Director concerning resolution of the complaint or appeal, and

(2) Act as a facilitator or mediator to advance the resolution of the complaint or appeal.

(b) *Other duties.* The Ombudsman shall:

(1) Establish procedures for carrying out the functions of the Office,

(2) Establish and publish procedures for receiving and considering complaints and appeals, and

(3) Report annually to the Director on the activities of the Office, or more frequently, as determined by the Director.

§ 1213.4 Complaints and appeals from a regulated entity or the Office of Finance.

(a) *Complaints*—(1) *General.* Any regulated entity or the Office of Finance may submit a complaint in accordance with procedures established by the Ombudsman.

(2) *Matters subject to complaint.* A regulated entity or the Office of Finance may submit a complaint regarding any matter relating to the regulation and supervision of a regulated entity or the Office of Finance by FHFA that is not subject to appeal or in litigation, arbitration, or mediation. The Ombudsman may further define what matters are subject to complaint.

(b) *Appeals*—(1) *General.* Any regulated entity or the Office of Finance may submit an appeal in accordance with procedures established by the Ombudsman.

(2) *Matters subject to appeal.* A regulated entity or the Office of Finance may submit an appeal regarding any

§ 1213.5

final, written regulatory or supervisory conclusion, decision, or examination rating by FHFA. The Ombudsman may further define what matters are subject to appeal.

(3) *Matters not subject to appeal.* Matters for which there is an existing avenue of appeal or for which there is another forum for appeal; non-final decisions or conclusions; and matters in ongoing litigation, arbitration, or mediation, unless there has been a breakdown in the process, may not be appealed. Matters not subject to appeal include, but are not limited to, appointments of conservators or receivers, preliminary examination conclusions, formal enforcement decisions, formal and informal rulemakings, Freedom of Information Act appeals, final FHFA decisions subject to judicial review, and matters within the jurisdiction of the FHFA Inspector General. The Ombudsman may further define what matters are not subject to appeal.

(4) *Effect of filing an appeal.* An appeal under this section does not excuse a regulated entity or the Office of Finance from complying with any regulatory or supervisory decision while the appeal is pending. However, the Director, upon consideration of a written request, may waive compliance with a regulatory or supervisory decision during the pendency of the appeal.

§ 1213.5 Complaints from a person.

(a) *General.* Any person that has a business relationship with a regulated entity or the Office of Finance may submit a complaint in accordance with procedures established by the Ombudsman.

(b) *Matters subject to complaint.* A person may submit a complaint regarding

12 CFR Ch. XII (1–1–12 Edition)

any matter relating to the regulation and supervision of a regulated entity or the Office of Finance by FHFA that is not a matter in litigation, arbitration, or mediation. The Ombudsman may further define what matters are subject to complaints.

§ 1213.6 No retaliation.

Neither FHFA nor any FHFA employee may retaliate against a regulated entity, the Office of Finance, or a person for submitting a complaint or appeal under this part. The Ombudsman shall receive and address claims of retaliation. Upon receiving a complaint, the Ombudsman, in coordination with the Inspector General, shall examine the basis of the alleged retaliation. Upon completion of the examination, the Ombudsman shall report the findings to the Director with recommendations, including a recommendation to take disciplinary action against any FHFA employee found to have retaliated.

§ 1213.7 Confidentiality.

The Ombudsman shall ensure that safeguards exist to preserve confidentiality. If a party requests that information and materials remain confidential, the Ombudsman shall not disclose the information or materials, without approval of the party, except to appropriate reviewing or investigating officials, such as the Inspector General, or as required by law. However, the resolution of certain complaints (such as complaints of retaliation against a regulated entity or the Office of Finance) may not be possible if the identity of the party remains confidential. In such cases, the Ombudsman shall discuss with the party the circumstances limiting confidentiality.