

Rural Housing Service, USDA

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such business or ownership relationships. The Agency will determine if such relationships are likely to result in a conflict of interest. This does not preclude lender officials from being on the borrower's board of directors.

§ 3575.28 Transfer of lenders or borrowers (prior to issuance of Loan Note Guarantee).

(a) Prior to issuance of the loan guarantee, the Agency may approve the transfer of an outstanding Conditional Commitment for Guarantee from the present lender to a new eligible lender, provided:

(1) The former lender states in writing why it does not wish to continue to be the lender for this project;

(2) No substantive changes in ownership or control of the borrower has occurred;

(3) No substantive changes in the borrower's written plan, scope of work, or changes in the purpose or intent of the project has occurred; and

(4) No substantive changes in the loan agreement or Conditional Commitment for Guarantee are required.

(b) The substitute lender must execute a new application for loan and guarantee (available in any Agency office).

(c) If approved, the Agency will issue a letter of amendment to the original Conditional Commitment for Guarantee reflecting the new lender who will acknowledge acceptance of the offer in writing.

(d) Once the Conditional Commitment for Guarantee is issued, the Agency will not approve any substitution of borrowers, including changes in the form of the legal entity. Exceptions to a change in the legal entity may be requested when the original borrower is replaced with substantially the same individuals or officers with the same interest as originally approved.

§ 3575.29 Fees and charges by lender.

(a) *Routine charges and fees.* The lender may establish the charges and fees for the loan, provided they do not exceed those charged other borrowers for similar types of transactions. "Similar types of transactions" mean those transactions involving the same type

of loan for which a non-guaranteed loan borrower would be assessed charges and fees.

(b) *Late payment fees.* Late payment charges will not be covered by the Loan Note Guarantee. Such charges may not be added to the principal and interest due under any guaranteed note. Late payment charges may be made only if:

(1) They are routinely made by the lender in all types of loan transactions;

(2) Payment has not been received within the customary timeframe allowed by the lender; or

(3) The lender agrees with the borrower, in writing, that the rate or method of calculating the late payment charges will not be changed to increase charges while the Loan Note Guarantee is in effect.

(c) *Guarantee fees.* The guaranteed loan fee will be the applicable guarantee fee rate multiplied by the principal loan amount multiplied by the percent of guarantee. The one-time guarantee fee is paid when the Loan Note Guarantee is issued.

(1) The fee will be paid to the Agency by the lender and is nonreturnable. The lender may pass the fee to the borrower.

(2) The guarantee fee rates are available in any Agency office.

§ 3575.30 Loan guarantee limitations.

The percentage of guarantee, up to the maximum allowed by this section, is a matter for negotiation between the lender and the Agency.

(a) The maximum guarantee is 90 percent of eligible loss.

(b) The lender will retain a minimum of 5 percent of the total loan amount. The retained amount must be from the unguaranteed portion of the loan and cannot be participated to another lender.

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§ 3575.33 Interest rates.

(a) *General.* Rates will be negotiated between the lender and the borrower.

They may be either fixed or variable rates. Interest rates will be those rates customarily charged borrowers in similar circumstances in the ordinary

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course of business and are subject to Agency review and approval.

(b) *Variable rate publication.* A variable interest rate must be tied to a base rate published periodically in a recognized national or regional financial publication specifically agreed to by the lender and borrower. Such an agreement must be documented in the borrower or lender loan agreement.

(1) Interest rate caps and incremental adjustment limitations will also be negotiated between the lender and the borrower. Notice of any interest rate change proposed by the lender should allow a sufficient time period for the borrower to obtain any required State or other regulatory approval and to implement any user rate adjustments necessary as a result of the interest rate change. The intervals between interest rate adjustments will be specified in the loan agreement (but not more often than quarterly).

(2) The lender must incorporate within the variable rate note, the provision for adjustment of payments coincident with an interest rate adjustment. This will ensure the outstanding principal balance is properly amortized within the prescribed loan maturity and eliminate the possibility of a balloon payment at the end of the loan.

(c) *Changes.* Any change in the interest rate between the date of issuance of the Conditional Commitment for Guarantee and before the issuance of the Loan Note Guarantee must be approved by the Agency. Approval of such change will be shown as an amendment to the Conditional Commitment for Guarantee.

(d) *Different rates on guaranteed and unguaranteed portion of the loan.* It is permissible to have one interest rate on the guaranteed portion of the loan and another interest rate on the unguaranteed portion of the loan, provided the lender and borrower agree, and:

(1) The rate on the unguaranteed portion does not exceed that currently being charged on loans for similar purposes to borrowers under similar circumstances; and,

(2) The rate on the guaranteed portion of the loan will not exceed the rate on the unguaranteed portion. This requirement does not apply when the

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unguaranteed rate is variable and the guaranteed portion is fixed.

(e) *Multi-rates.* When multi-rates are used, the lender will provide the Agency with the overall effective interest rate for the entire loan. Multi-rate loans may be either fixed, variable, or a combination of fixed and variable. When a combination of fixed and variable interest rates are used, the interest rate for the unguaranteed portion will not be lower than the guaranteed portion of the loan.

§ 3575.34 Terms of loan repayment.

(a) *General.* Principal and interest on the loan will be due and payable as provided in the note except, any interest accrued as the result of the borrower's default on the guaranteed loan over and above that which would have accrued at the note rate on the guaranteed loan will not be guaranteed by the Agency. The lender will structure repayments as established in the loan agreement between the lender and borrower. Ordinarily, such installments will be scheduled for payment as agreed upon by the lender and borrower on terms that reasonably ensure repayment of the loan. However, the first installment to include a repayment of principal may be scheduled for payment after the project is operable and has begun to generate income. Such installment must be due and payable within 3 years from the date of the note and at least annually thereafter. Interest will be due at least annually from the date of the note. Monthly payments will be required except for borrowers with income limited to less frequent intervals.

(b) *Term length.* The maximum time allowable for final maturity for a guaranteed CP loan will be limited to the useful life of the facility, not to exceed 40 years.

(c) *Balloon payments.* The principal balance should be properly amortized within the prescribed loan maturity. Balloon payments at the end of the loan are prohibited.