

§ 115.209 Technical assistance.

(a) The Assistant Secretary, through the FHEO regional office, may provide technical assistance to the interim and certified agencies at any time. The agency may request such technical assistance or the FHEO regional office may determine the necessity for technical assistance and require the agency's cooperation and participation.

(b) The Assistant Secretary, through FHEO headquarters or regional staff, will require that the agency participate in training conferences and seminars that will enhance the agency's ability to process complaints alleging discriminatory housing practices.

§ 115.210 Performance deficiency procedures; Suspension; Withdrawal.

(a) HUD may utilize the following performance deficiency procedures if it determines at any time that the agency does not meet one or more of the performance standards enumerated in § 115.206. The performance deficiency procedures may be applied to agencies with either interim certification or certification. If an agency fails to meet performance standard 7, HUD may bypass the technical assistance performance deficiency procedure and proceed to the PIP.

(1) *Technical assistance.* After discovering the deficiency, the FHEO regional office should immediately inform the agency and provide the agency with technical assistance.

(2) *Performance improvement plan.* If, following technical assistance, the agency does not bring its performance into compliance with § 115.206 within a time period identified by the FHEO regional director, the FHEO regional director may offer the agency a PIP.

(i) The PIP will outline the agency's performance deficiencies, identify the necessary corrective actions, and include a timetable for completion.

(ii) If the agency receives a PIP, funding under the FHAP may be suspended for the duration of the PIP.

(iii) Once the agency has implemented the corrective actions to eliminate the deficiencies, and such corrective actions are accepted by the FHEO regional director, funding may be restored.

(iv) The FHEO regional office may provide the agency with technical assistance during the period of the PIP, if appropriate.

(b) *Suspension.* If the agency does not agree to implement the PIP or does not implement the corrective actions identified in the PIP within the time allotted, then the FHEO regional director may suspend the agency's interim certification or certification.

(1) The FHEO regional director shall notify the agency in writing of the specific reasons for the suspension and provide the agency with an opportunity to respond within 30 days.

(2) Suspension shall not exceed 180 days.

(3) During the period of suspension, HUD will not refer complaints to the agency.

(4) If an agency is suspended, the FHEO regional office may elect not to provide funding under the FHAP to the agency during the period of suspension, unless and until the Assistant Secretary determines that the agency is fully in compliance with § 115.206.

(5) HUD may provide the agency with technical assistance during the period of suspension, if appropriate.

(6) No more than 60 days prior to the end of suspension, the FHEO regional office shall conduct a performance assessment of the agency.

(c) *Withdrawal.* If, following the performance assessment conducted at the end of suspension, the Assistant Secretary determines that the agency has not corrected the deficiencies, the Assistant Secretary may propose to withdraw the interim certification or certification of the agency.

(1) The Assistant Secretary shall proceed with withdrawal, unless the agency provides information or documentation that establishes that the agency's administration of its law meets all of the substantial equivalency certification criteria set forth in 24 CFR part 115.

(2) The Assistant Secretary shall inform the agency in writing of the reasons for the withdrawal.

(3) During any period after which the Assistant Secretary proposes withdrawal, until such time as the agency establishes that administration of its