This chapter is applicable upon the PHA’s HOTMA 102/104 compliance date. Prior to this date, the PHA will follow policies as outlined in Chapter 7.A. of the model policy.

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes HUD regulations and PHA policies related to verification of all information that is used to establish the family’s eligibility and level of assistance as follows:

Part I: General Verification Requirements

Part II: Verifying Family Information

Part III: Verifying Income and Assets

Part IV: Verifying Mandatory Deductions

The PHA must follow Notice PIH 2023-27, and this chapter summarizes those requirements and provides supplementary PHA policies

**PART I: GENERAL VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**7-I.A. FAMILY CONSENT TO RELEASE OF INFORMATION [24 CFR 982.516; 24 CFR 982.551; 24 CFR 5.230; and Notice PIH 2023-27]**

**Consent Forms**

The family must supply any information that the PHA or HUD determines is necessary to the administration of the program and must consent to PHA verification of that information. This requires the signing of release forms by family members. While it is required that PHAs use form HUD-9886-A, this form does not release all the information necessary to the administration of the program. The PHA must develop its own release forms to cover all other necessary information. Families must agree to sign all consent forms required by the PHA and HUD. **No PHA policy decisions are required.**

**Form HUD-9886-A [24 CFR 5.230(b)(1), b(2), (c)(4), and (c)(5); and Notice PIH 2023-27]**

All adult family members must sign form HUD-9886-A, Authorization for Release of Information.

The PHA has the discretion to establish policies around when family members must sign consent forms when they turn 18. PHAs must establish these policies stating when family members will be required to sign consent forms at intervals other than at reexamination.

**☑ Decision Point: When will family members who turn 18 be required to sign consent forms?**

Things to Consider

* The PHA cannot use the EIV Income Reports for a family member who turns 18 between recertifications until the tenant has signed the form, even though employment or income will be reported in EIV.
* Option 2 of the model policy states that the family member will be required to sign consent forms at the family’s next annual or interim, whichever is sooner.
* Option 1 states that the family member will be required to come in within 10 days of turning 18, which aligns with the practice in HUD’s Multifamily program. The model policy uses 10 business days as the timeframe for the family member to sign the form for ease of administration since time period is used elsewhere in the policy. The PHA may change this timeframe since this is not a HUD requirement.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Family members turning 18 years of age between annual recertifications will be notified in writing that they are required to sign the required Consent to the Release of Information Form HUD-9886-A within 10 business days of turning 18 years of age.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

Family members turning 18 years of age between annual recertifications will be notified in writing that they are required to sign the required Consent to the Release of Information Form HUD-9886-A at the family’s next annual or interim reexamination, whichever is earlier.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Penalties for Failing to Consent [24 CFR 5.232]**

While the family is obligated to release information to the PHA, under HOTMA, this does not apply if the applicant or participant, or any member of the assistance applicant’s or participant’s family revokes their consent with respect to the ability of the PHA to access financial records from financial institutions, unless the PHA establishes an admission and occupancy policy that revocation of consent to access financial records will result in denial or termination of assistance or admission [24 CFR 5.232(c)].

**☑ Decision Point: Will the PHA establish a policy that revocation of consent to access financial records will result in a denial of admission?**

Things to Consider

* PHAs may establish in written policy that revocation of consent will result in termination of assistance or denial of admission.
  + When PHAs do not establish a policy such that revoking consent will result in termination of assistance, participant families will be required to sign a new consent form by the next regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination, whichever occurs first.
  + PHAs may establish policies to deny admission but allow existing participant families to continue to receive assistance after revoking their consent until the next interim or annual reexamination, whichever is sooner.
  + The PHA must explain to families the consequences, if any, of revoking their consent.
  + The PHA must notify their local HUD office when an applicant or participant family member revokes their consent.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA has established a policy that revocation of consent to access financial records will result in denial of admission or termination of assistance in accordance with PHA policy.

In order for a family to revoke their consent, the family must provide written notice to the PHA.

Within 10 business days of the date the family provides written notice, the PHA will send the family a notice acknowledging receipt of the request and explaining that revocation of consent will result in denial or termination of assistance, as applicable. At the same time, the PHA will notify their local HUD office.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA has established a policy that revocation of consent to access financial records will result in denial of admission. Within 10 business days of an applicant’s written notice to the PHA revoking their consent, the PHA will notify their local HUD office.

However, if program participants revoke consent by written notice to the PHA, the PHA will not immediately pursue termination of assistance. The PHA will send written notice to the family within 10 business days of the family’s written request acknowledging receipt of the request and explaining the consequences of revocation of consent. The family will continue to receive assistance after revoking their consent until the next interim or annual reexamination, whichever is sooner. The PHA will not process an interim or annual, including when a family’s income decreases and the family requests an interim, without the family’s executed consent form. At the family’s next regular reexamination after the family revokes consent, the PHA will request that the family sign required consent forms. If the family continues to revoke their consent at this time, the PHA will move to terminate program assistance in accordance with policies in Chapter 12.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-I.B. USE OF OTHER PROGRAMS’ INCOME DETERMINATIONS [24 CFR 5.609(c)(3) and Notice PIH 2023-27]**

PHAs may, but are not required to, determine a family’s annual income, including income from assets, prior to the application of any deductions, based on income determinations made within the previous 12-month period, using income determinations from means-tested federal public assistance programs.

**☑ Decision Point: Will the PHA use safe harbor income determinations from other means tested federal assistance programs?**

Things to Consider

* PHAs are not required to accept or use determinations of income from other federal means-tested forms of assistance.
* If the PHA adopts a policy to accept this type of verification, the PHA must establish in policy when they will accept Safe Harbor income determinations and from which programs.
* PHAs must also create policies that outline the course of action when families present multiple verifications from the same or different acceptable Safe Harbor programs.
* Option 1 states that the PHA will accept safe harbor determinations at annual reexamination but will not accept safe harbor determinations at new admission or interim. This is because the PHA may wish to establish a baseline income based on their own calculations and more robust third-party verification when the family first comes on the program, particularly since the PHA is determining income eligibility for the family. If the PHA wishes to accept safe harbor determination at new admission, Option 2 should be adopted.
* Option 1 and 2 also state that the PHA will accept documentation from all programs listed in Notice PIH 2023-27, with the exception of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. This is because the tax credit program typically calculates income using the most conservative calculation possible and income amounts often do not reflect family’s actual income. If the PHA wishes to accept certifications from the LIHTC program, Option 1 or 2 should be edited as applicable.
* PHAs must also create policies that outline the course of action when families present multiple verifications from the same or different acceptable safe harbor programs. Option 1 and 2 of the model policy both use the language in Notice 2023-27 that they will accept the most recent income determination, however the model policy adds a caveat not found in the notice that the family may provide acceptable evidence that an alternative verification should be used.
* If the PHA does not wish to use safe harbor determinations of income, nor adopt streamlining policies as outlined below, the PHA should adopt Option 3.
* If the PHA wishes to adopt streamlining policies but not use safe harbor determinations, Option 4 should be selected.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

When available and applicable, the PHA will accept other programs’ Safe Harbor determinations of income at annual reexamination to determine the family’s total annual income. The PHA will still require third-party verification of all deductions such as the health and medical care expense or childcare expense deductions. Further, if the family is eligible for and claims the disability assistance expense or childcare expense deductions, where applicable, the PHA will obtain third-party verification of the amount of employment income of the individual(s) enabled to work in order to cap the respective expenses as required.

Prior to using any Safe Harbor determination from another program, the PHA will ask the family if they agree with the income amounts listed. If the family disputes the income amounts on the Safe Harbor determination, the PHA will obtain third-party verification of all sources of income and assets (as applicable).

The PHA will not accept other programs’ determinations of income for any new admission or interim reexamination.

With the exception of income determinations made under the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, the PHA will accept Safe Harbor determinations from any of the programs listed above.

In order to be acceptable, the income determination must:

Be dated within 12 months of the dates listed above;

State the family size

Be for the entire family (i.e., the family members listed in the documentation must match the family’s composition in the assisted unit, except for household members); and

Must state the amount of the family’s annual income.

The determination need not list each source of income individually. If the PHA does not receive any acceptable income determination documentation or is unable to obtain documentation, then the PHA will revert to third-party verification of income for the family.

When families present multiple verifications from the same or different acceptable Safe Harbor programs, the PHA will use the most recent income determination, unless the family presents acceptable evidence that the PHA should consider an alternative verification from a different Safe Harbor source.

When the PHA uses a Safe Harbor income determination from another program, and the family’s income subsequently changes, the family is required to report the change to the PHA. Depending on when the change occurred, the change may or may not impact the PHA’s calculation of the family’s total annual income. Changes that occur between the time the PHA receives the Safe Harbor documentation and the effective date of the family’s annual reexamination will not be considered. If the family has a change in income that occurs after the annual reexamination effective date, the PHA will conduct an interim reexamination if the change meets the requirements for performing an interim reexamination as outlined in Chapter 11. In this case, the PHA will use third-party verification to verify the change.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

When available and applicable, the PHA will accept other programs’ Safe Harbor determinations of income at annual reexamination and new admission to determine the family’s total annual income. The PHA will still require third-party verification of all deductions such as the health and medical care expense or childcare expense deductions. Further, if the family is eligible for and claims the disability assistance expense or childcare expense deductions, where applicable, the PHA will obtain third-party verification of the amount of employment income of the individual(s) enabled to work in order to cap the respective expenses as required.

Prior to using any Safe Harbor determination from another program, the PHA will ask the family if they agree with the income amounts listed. If the family disputes the income amounts on the Safe Harbor determination, the PHA will obtain third-party verification of all sources of income and assets (as applicable).

The PHA will not accept other programs’ determinations of income for any new interim reexamination.

With the exception of income determinations made under the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, the PHA will accept Safe Harbor determinations from any of the programs listed above.

In order to be acceptable, the income determination must:

Be dated within 12 months of the dates listed above;

State the family size

Be for the entire family (i.e., the family members listed in the documentation must match the family’s composition in the assisted unit, except for household members); and

Must state the amount of the family’s annual income.

The determination need not list each source of income individually. If the PHA does not receive any acceptable income determination documentation or is unable to obtain documentation, then the PHA will revert to third-party verification of income for the family.

When families present multiple verifications from the same or different acceptable Safe Harbor programs, the PHA will use the most recent income determination, unless the family presents acceptable evidence that the PHA should consider an alternative verification from a different Safe Harbor source.

When the PHA uses a Safe Harbor income determination from another program, and the family’s income subsequently changes, the family is required to report the change to the PHA. Depending on when the change occurred, the change may or may not impact the PHA’s calculation of the family’s total annual income. Changes that occur between the time the PHA receives the Safe Harbor documentation and the effective date of the family’s certification will not be considered. If the family has a change in income that occurs after the effective date, the PHA will conduct an interim reexamination if the change meets the requirements for performing an interim reexamination as outlined in Chapter 11. In this case, the PHA will use third-party verification to verify the change.

🞎 *Option 3: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA will not accept verification from other federal assistance programs. All income will be verified in accordance with the requirements of HUD’s verification hierarchy and PHA policies in this chapter.

🞎 *Option 4: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA will not accept verification from other federal assistance programs. With the exception of when the PHA uses streamlined income determinations at annual reexamination as described below, all income will be verified in accordance with the requirements of HUD’s verification hierarchy and PHA policies in this chapter.

🞎 *Option 5: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-I.C. STREAMLINED INCOME DETERMINATIONS [24 CFR 960.257(c) and Notice PIH 2023-27]**

HUD permits PHAs to streamline the income determination process for family members with fixed sources of income. While third-party verification of all income sources must be obtained during the intake process and every three years thereafter, in the intervening years the PHA may determine income from fixed sources by applying a verified cost of living adjustment (COLA) or rate of interest. The PHA may, however, obtain third-party verification of all income, regardless of the source. Further, upon request of the family, the PHA must perform third-party verification of all income sources.

🗹 **Decision Point: Will the PHA streamline the income determination process for family members with fixed sources of income?**

Things to Consider

* The options for streamlining the annual reexamination process are intended to reduce administrative burden by eliminating the need for third-party verification in some situations.
* For example, a client who receives a pension may receive an updated award letter only once per year. A streamlining policy would allow the PHA to apply a verified COLA to the pension amount, eliminating the need for third-party verification dated within 120 days.
* PHAs that adopt streamlined income determinations for fixed sources of income must still obtain family member signatures on the consent forms.
* Option 1 states that the PHA will streamline the income determination process for fixed sources of income.
* For ease of administration, Option 1 states that income from non-fixed sources will be verified annually regardless whether the family receives 90 percent or more of its income from fixed sources.
* Since streamlining policies are optional, Option 2 states that the PHA will instead opt to obtain third-party verification of fixed income annually.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are required.*

When the PHA does not use a Safe Harbor income determination from a federal assistance program to determine the family’s annual income as outlined above, then PHA will use a streamlined income determinations where applicable.

Regardless of the percent of a family’s unadjusted income from fixed income sources:

The PHA will streamline the annual reexamination process by applying the verified COLA/inflationary adjustment factor to fixed-income sources.

The family will be required to sign a self-certification stating that their sources of fixed income have not changed from the previous year.

The PHA will document in the file how the determination that a source of income was fixed was made.

If the family’s sources of fixed income have changed from the previous year, the PHA will obtain third-party verification of any new sources of fixed income.

All other income will be verified using third-party verification as outlined in Notice PIH 2023-27 and Chapter 7 of this policy.

In the following circumstances, regardless of the percentage of income received from fixed sources, the PHA will obtain third-party verification as outlined in Notice PIH 2023-27 and Chapter 7 of this policy:

Of all assets when net family assets exceed the HUD-published threshold ($51,600 for 2025);

Of all deductions and allowances from annual income;

If a family member with a fixed source of income is added;

If verification of the COLA or rate of interest is not available; During the intake process and at least once every three years thereafter.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA chooses not to streamline the annual reexamination process for fixed-income sources. The PHA will obtain third-party verification, where applicable, of all sources of income annually in accordance with PHA policies in the chapter and HUD regulations.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-I.D. VERIFICATION** **HIERARCHY [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

When the PHA does not use a streamlined determination of income or an income determination from a means-tested federal assistance program, HUD requires the PHA to obtain third-party verification of:

* Reported family annual income;
* The value of net family assets when the net value exceeds the HUD-published threshold, as listed in HUD’s Inflation-Adjusted Values tables ($51,600 for 2025);
* Expenses related to deductions from annual income; and
* Other factors that affect the determination of adjusted income.

**No PHA policy decisions are required**.

**File Documentation**

The PHA must document in the file how the figures used in income and rent calculations were determined. All verification attempts, information obtained, and decisions reached during the verification process will be recorded in the family’s file in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the PHA has followed all of the verification policies set forth in this plan. The record should be sufficient to enable a staff member or HUD reviewer to understand the process followed and conclusions reached. **No PHA policy decisions are required.**

**7-I.E.** **LEVEL 5 AND 6 VERIFICATIONS: UP-FRONT INCOME VERIFICATION (UIV)**

**Upfront Income Verification Using HUD’s Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System (Mandatory)**

PHAs must use HUD’s EIV system in its entirety as a third-party source to verify tenant employment and income information during annual and streamlined reexaminations of family composition and income in accordance with 24 CFR 5.236 and administrative guidance issued by HUD. The PHA may, but is not required to, use EIV as a third-party source during interim reexaminations. HUD’s EIV system contains data showing earned income, unemployment benefits, social security benefits, and SSI benefits for participant families. **No PHA policy decisions are required.**

***EIV Income Report***

PHAs are required to obtain an EIV Income Report for each family any time the PHA conducts an annual reexamination. However, PHAs are not required to use the EIV Income Report:

* At annual reexamination if the PHA used Safe Harbor verification from another means-test federal assistance program to determine the family’s income; or
* During any interim reexaminations.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA use income reports from the EIV system?**

Things to Consider

* Because EIV data is based on information from the HUD systems, income information for new admissions is not available.
* HUD requires that the PHA must review the EIV income report as part of the annual reexamination process.
* Option 1 states the PHA will review the report at interim reexamination as necessary in order to give the PHA flexibility.
* The PHA is not required to pull the EIV Income Report at annual reexamination when the PHA uses safe harbor income determinations from other programs. Option 1 states that the PHA will not pull the report in this circumstance. If the PHA did not adopt a policy to use this type of verification, the PHA must edit Option 1.
* Notice PIH 2023-27 states that in order for EIV Income Reports to be valid, they must be pulled within 120 days of the effective date of the annual. Option 1 reflects this language.
* PHA policies should address what action(s) a PHA will take if the PHA determines through use of the EIV system that a family has concealed or under-reported income. Rather than repeating the policies here, the model plan language refers to Chapter 14, Program Integrity where these policies are already contained.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Except for when Safe Harbor verification from another means-tested federal assistance program is used to determine the family’s annual income, the PHA will obtain an EIV Income Report for all annual reexaminations for all families on a monthly basis. Reports will be generated as part of the regular reexamination process. The PHA will ensure that all EIV Income Reports are pulled within 120 days of the effective date of the annual reexamination.

Income reports will only be used in interim reexaminations as necessary. EIV may be used to verify that families claiming zero income are not receiving income from any of these sources listed in EIV.

Income reports will be retained in participant files with the applicable annual documents or interim reexamination documents (if applicable) for the duration of tenancy.

When the PHA determines through EIV reports and third-party verification that a family has concealed or under-reported income, corrective action will be taken pursuant to the policies in Chapter 14, Program Integrity.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

***New Hires Report [Notice PIH 2023-27]***

PHAs that do not require families to undergo interim reexaminations for earned income increases after an interim decrease are not required to review this report between a family’s annual reexamination. If the PHA requires an interim for increases in earned income after an interim decrease, then the PHA must review the report quarterly after the family’s interim decrease.

**☑ Decision Point: Does the PHA require the family to report increases in earned income between annuals?**

Things to Consider

* The PHA must refer to its policy in Chapter 9 to determine when he New Hires Report is pulled.
* If the PHA does not perform interims for increases in earned income in accordance with PHA policies in Chapter 11, Option 1 should be selected.
* If the PHA requires interim increases for increases in earned income when there was a previous decrease in accordance with PHA policies in Chapter 9, Option 2 should be selected.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

In accordance with PHA policies in Chapter 11, the PHA does not process interim reexaminations for families who have increases in earned income. Except for instances in which the PHA uses Safe Harbor income determinations to determine a family’s annual income, the PHA will only review the New Hires Report at annual reexamination.

* *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

In accordance with PHA policies in Chapter 11, the PHA processes an interim reexamination for families who have increases in earned income when there was a previous decrease. Except for instances in which the PHA uses Safe Harbor income determinations to determine a family’s annual income, the PHA will review the report quarterly.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy***.**

***No Income Reported by HHS or SSA Report***

The PHA must identify in its policies and procedures when this report will be pulled [Notice PIH 2023-27].

**☑ Decision Point: When will the PHA pull the No Income Reported by HHS or SSA Report?**

Things to Consider

* Option 1 adopts language from the HUD Handbook 4350.3 as safe harbor guidance on how frequently the report will be pulled. If the PHA wishes to pull the report at different intervals, Option 2 should be selected.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will generate the No Income Reported by HHS or SSA Report quarterly and will retain the report.

The PHA will re-verify the status of tenants identified on the report quarterly. Based on the information provided by the family and in EIV, the PHA may require that family members provide verifications or sign release forms in order to obtain additional verification.

When the PHA determines through this report and third-party verification that a family has concealed or under-reported income, corrective action will be taken pursuant to the policies in Chapter 14, Program Integrity

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy***.**

***EIV Identity Verification Report***

The EIV system verifies tenant identities against SSA records. These records are compared to PIC data for a match on social security number, name, and date of birth.

PHAs are required to use EIV’s *Identity Verification Report* on a monthly basis to improve the availability of income information in EIV [Notice PIH 2023-27].

When identity verification for a participant fails, a message will be displayed within the EIV system and no income information will be displayed.

**☑ Decision Point: What actions will the PHA take when EIV identity verification fails?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will identify participants whose identity verification has failed by reviewing EIV’s *Identity Verification Report* on a monthly basis.

The PHA will attempt to resolve discrepancies by obtaining appropriate documentation from the participant. When the PHA determines that discrepancies exist as a result of PHA errors, such as spelling errors or incorrect birth dates, it will correct the errors promptly.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy***.**

***Deceased Tenants Reports [Notice PIH 2012-4 and Notice PIH 2023-27]***

The Deceased Tenant Report identifies residents that have been reported by the SSA as deceased. The PHA is required to review the report at least quarterly.

**☑ Decision Point: How often will the PHA pull the Deceased Tenant Report?**

Things to Consider

* While HUD only requires that the report be pulled quarterly, Option 1 states that the PHA will pull the report monthly in order to ensure that the PHA is not assisting households in which the sole member is deceased.
* If the PHA wishes to pull the report quarterly instead, Option 2 should be selected.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will review the Deceased Tenants Report on a monthly basis.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA will review the Deceased Tenants Report quarterly.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy***.**

***Other EIV Reports [Notice PIH 2023-27]***

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**Upfront Income Verification Using Non-HUD Systems**

**☑ Decision Point: What UIV sources will the PHA use?**

Things to Consider

* Many PHAs are using UIV information in addition to HUD’s EIV system. All sources of UIV income should be listed in this policy (e.g. TANF, Work Number, etc.). Informing applicants and participants of the use of UIV resources encourages more complete reporting.

**CAUTION:** **You must insert or delete information here. The model plan does not contain language that can be adopted as-is.**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. Insert additional sources of UIV as needed.*

The PHA will inform all applicants and participants of its use of the following UIV resources:

**[Insert any additional UIV sources used by the PHA]**

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-I.F. LEVEL 4 VERIFICATION [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

HUD identifies two types of Level 4 verification: written-third party verification from the source and EIV + self-certification.

**EIV + Self-Certification**

**☑ Decision Point: Which method will the PHA use to calculate income from EIV?**

Things to Consider

* + When calculating income using this method, the PHA may use its discretion to determine which method of calculation is reasonable: the last four quarters combined or an average of any number of quarters.
  + The family must be provided with the information from EIV.
  + Option 1 states that the PHA will use an average of the last two quarters. The default policy uses two rather than four quarters of information. However, if the family disagrees with using only the last two quarters of income listed in EIV, because of the seasonal or otherwise fluctuating nature of a particular family member’s employment, the default policy permits the family to sign a self-certification stating that the average of all four quarters of income listed in EIV is accurate and representative of current annual income and use that amount for calculating annual income.
  + If the PHA wishes to establish a different calculation, Option 2 should be selected.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

At annual reexamination, if the PHA is unable to use a determination of income from a means-tested federal assistance program and if there are no reported changes to an income source, the PHA will use EIV + self-certification as verification of employment income, provided the family agrees with the amounts listed in EIV.

The PHA will use an average of the last two quarters of income listed in EIV to determine income from employment. The PHA will provide the family with the information in EIV. The family will be required to sign a self-certification stating that the amount listed in EIV is accurate and representative of current income. If the family disagrees with using only the last two quarters of income listed in EIV, because of the seasonal or otherwise fluctuating nature of a particular family member’s employment, the PHA will permit the family to sign a self-certification stating that the average of all four quarters of income listed in EIV is accurate and representative of current annual income and use that amount for calculating annual income. If the family disagrees and contends that the amount listed in EIV is not reflective of current income, or if less than two quarters are available in EIV, the PHA will use written third-party verification from the source as outlined below.

The PHA will not use this method of verification at new admission since EIV is not available for applicant families or at interim reexamination since the income information in EIV is not current.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Written Third-Party Verification from the Source**

While HUD considers standardized third-party forms to be less reliable than the third-party written verification described above, this form of verification is mandatory when the family cannot provide acceptable documentation. Written third-party verification is also required when there appears to be unreported income and other forms of verification are not available.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA use written third-party verification from the source?**

Things to Consider

* + Documents generated by a third party are preferred over standardized third-party forms. The documents may be provided to the PHA by the family or by a third party.
  + HUD defines written third-party verification as “an original or authentic document generated by a third-party source.” The PHA may only reject documents which are not original, appear to be forged, or are altered, mutilated, or illegible.
  + While documents must generally be dated within 120 days of the PHA request or reexamination effective date, older documents are acceptable for confirming effective dates of income. For fixed-income sources, a statement dated within the appropriate benefit year is acceptable documentation.
  + The PHA is required to obtain, at minimum, two current and consecutive pay stubs. Option 1 uses two paystubs but gives the PHA discretion to require more when needed. If the PHA wishes to require more paystubs, Option 1 should be edited.
  + When verification of assets is required, PHAs are required to obtain a minimum of one statement that reflects the current balance of banking/financial accounts. Option 1 states the PHA will require one statement. If the PHA wishes to require more, Option 1 should be edited.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

In general, the PHA will use third-party verification from the source in the following circumstances:

At annual reexamination when EIV + self-certification is not used;

For all new admissions; and

For all interim reexaminations.

The PHA will; not use this method if the PHA is able to use an income determination from a means-tested federal assistance program or if the PHA uses EIV + self-certification as outlined above.

In general, third-party documents provided by the family or the source must be dated within 120 days of the date received by the PHA. However, for fixed-income sources, a statement dated within the appropriate benefit year is acceptable documentation.

The PHA may reject documentation provided by the family if the document is not an original, if the document appears to be forged, or if the document is altered, mutilated, or illegible. If the PHA determines that third-party documents provided by the family are not acceptable, the PHA will explain the reason to the family and request additional documentation from the family or will use a lower form of verification such as a written third-party verification form.

When verification of assets held by a banking or financial institution is required, the PHA will obtain one statement that reflects the current balance of the account.

When pay stubs are used, the PHA will require the family to provide the two most current, consecutive pay stubs. At the PHA’s discretion, if additional paystubs are needed due to the family’s circumstances (e.g., sporadic income, fluctuating schedule, etc.), the PHA may request additional paystubs or a payroll record.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-I.G. .** **LEVEL 3 VERIFICATION: WRITTEN, THIRD-PARTY FORM [****Notice PIH 2023 ‑27]**

HUD considers standardized third-party forms to be less reliable than the third-party written verification described above. The PHA may use this method when higher forms are unavailable or are rejected by the PHA or when the family is unable to provide acceptable verification.

**☑ Decision Point: When will the PHA obtain written third-party verification forms?**

Things to Consider

* + The PHA may skip this level of verification and may instead substitute oral third-party verification before moving to self-certification. In order to give the PHA maximum flexibility, Option 1 states that the PHA will typically attempt to obtain this type of verification, but may on a case-by-case basis choose to obtain oral third-party verification instead.
  + If the PHA wishes never to require this type of verification, Option 2 should be selected.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Typically, the PHA will attempt to send written third-party verification forms to the verification source whenever higher forms of verification are unavailable.

However, on a case-by-case basis, the PHA may choose to obtain oral third-party verification without first attempting, and in lieu of, a written-third party verification form.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA will not use written third-party verification forms. The PHA will obtain oral third-party verification without first attempting, and in lieu of, a written-third party verification form.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7.I.H. LEVEL 2: ORAL THIRD-PARTY VERIFICATION [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA utilize oral third-party verifications?**

Things to Consider

* + The PHA may skip this level of verification if they attempted written third-party verification via a form and the source did not respond and move directly to self-certification.
  + Since the default policy above states that the PHA will attempt to obtain third-party verification via a form, Option 1 states that the PHA will typically skip oral verification and move directly to self-certification, but, in order to provide the PHA with maximum flexibility, Option 1 states the PHA may on a case-by-case basis choose to obtain oral third-party verification instead.
  + If the PHA adopts Option 2 above, the PHA may not skip this level of verification and Option 2 should be adopted.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

In general, the PHA will attempt to obtain written third-party verification via a form from the verification source. If written third-party verification forms are not returned within 10 business days, the PHA will accept self-certification from the family without attempting to obtain oral third-party verification.

However, if the PHA chooses to obtain oral third-party verification, the PHA will document in the file the date and time of the telephone call or visit, the name of the person contacted and the telephone number, as well as the information confirmed.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute language as shown below.*

The PHA will not use written third-party verification forms. The PHA will obtain oral third-party verification without first attempting, and in lieu of, a written-third party verification form.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**When Third-Party Information is Not Required [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

Third-party verification may not be available in all situations. HUD has acknowledged that it may not be cost-effective or reasonable to obtain third-party verification of income, assets or expenses when these items would have a minimal impact on the family’s total tenant payment.

**☑ Decision Point: When will the PHA make exceptions to the requirement for third-party verification?**

Things to Consider

* + Under HUD’s current verification hierarchy, a family certification or declaration is the only non-third-party verification source. Therefore, when the PHA bypasses the third-party requirement, a self-certification is accepted.
  + For example, if a family is unable to provide original bank statements, the PHA could elect to request a written third-party verification form from the bank. Alternatively, the PHA could determine that this method would not be cost-effective, in which case a self-certification would be accepted.
  + The cost of verification cannot be passed on to the family.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

If the family cannot provide original documents, the PHA will pay the service charge required to obtain third-party verification, unless it is not cost effective in which case a self-certification will be acceptable as the only means of verification. The cost of verification will not be passed on to the family.

The cost of postage and envelopes to obtain third-party verification of income, assets, and expenses is not an unreasonable cost [VG, p. 18].

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

***Primary Documents***

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**7-I.I. LEVEL 1: NON-THIRD-PARTY VERIFICATION: SELF-CERTIFICATION [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

Non-third-party verification consists of a signed statement of reported income and/or expenses to. This verification method should be used as a last resort when the PHA has not been successful in obtain information via all other required verification techniques.

**☑ Decision Point: What is the PHA’s policy on self-certifications?**

Things to Consider:

* + HUD recommends including language on any self-certification to ensure the certifier understands the consequences of knowingly providing false information. The language in Option 1 is sample language provided in Notice PIH 2023-27. The PHA is not required to use this language and may edit the model policy to remove it.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

When information cannot be verified by a third party or by review of documents, family members will be required to submit self-certifications attesting to the accuracy of the information they have provided to the PHA.

The PHA may require a family to certify that a family member does not receive a particular type of income or benefit.

The self-certification must be made in a format acceptable to the PHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified.

All self-certifications will include the following language:

“I/We, the undersigned, certify under penalty of perjury that the information provided here is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge and recollection. WARNING: Anyone who knowingly submits a false claim or knowingly makes a false statement is subject to criminal and/or civil penalties, including confinement for up to five years, fines, and civil and administrative penalties. (18 U.S.C. 287, 1001, 1010, 1012; 31 U.S.C. 3279, 3802)”.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**PART II: VERIFYING FAMILY INFORMATION**

**7-II.A. VERIFICATION OF LEGAL IDENTITY**

Verification of legal identity is not required by regulations, but is recommended by HUD, notably in Notice PIH 2001-15 and in its appendix, the Improving Income Integrity Guidance Booklet. Since verification of legal identity is a PHA policy issue, the PHA can determine what forms of documentation are acceptable.

**☑ Decision Point: What is the PHA’s policy on verification of legal identity?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will require families to furnish verification of legal identity for each household member.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Verification of Legal Identity for Adults** | **Verification of Legal Identity for Children** |
| Certificate of birth, naturalization papers  Church issued baptismal certificate  Current, valid driver’s license or Department of Motor Vehicles identification card  U.S. military discharge (DD 214)  Current U.S. passport  Current government employer identification card with picture | Certificate of birth  Adoption papers  Custody agreement  Health and Human Services ID  Certified school records |

If a document submitted by a family is illegible for any reason or otherwise questionable, more than one of these documents may be required.

If none of these documents can be provided and at the PHA’s discretion, a third party who knows the person may attest to the person’s identity.The certification must be provided in a format acceptable to the PHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified.

Legal identity will be verified for all applicants at the time of eligibility determination and in cases where the PHA has reason to doubt the identity of a person representing themselves to be a participant.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-II.B. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS [24 CFR 5.216, Notice PIH 2023-27]**

The family must provide documentation of a valid Social Security number (SSN) for each member of the household, with the exception of individuals who do not contend eligible immigration status. Exemptions also include existing program participants as of January 31, 2010, who have either previously disclosed social security numbers HUD has determined to be valid, or who are 62 years of age or older and had not previously disclosed an SSN [24 CFR 5.216(g)].

While PHAs must attempt to gather third-party verification of SSN prior to admission as listed above, PHAs also have the option of accepting a self-certification and a third-party document (such as a bank statement, utility or cell phone bill, or benefit letter) with the applicant’s name printed on it to satisfy the SSN disclosure requirement if the PHA has exhausted all other attempts to obtain the required documentation. If verifying an individual’s SSN using this method, the PHA must document why the other SSN documentation was not available.

**☑ Decision Point: When will the PHA use self-certification and third-party documentation for verification of SSNs?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model policy are needed.*

The PHA will verify an individual’s SSN in the situations described above using the method described above as a last resort when no other forms of verification of the individual’s SSN are available.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

The PHA may only reject documentation of an SSN provided by an applicant or participant if the document is not an original document or if the original document has been altered, mutilated, is illegible, or appears to be forged.

**☑ Decision Point: If the PHA rejects documentation of an SSN, how long will the applicant or participant have to obtain and submit acceptable documentation?**

Things to Consider

* HUD does not prescribe the exact amount of time in which an applicant or participant must submit acceptable documentation for social security numbers after the PHA has rejected documentation. This timeframe will largely depend on your PHA’s other policies. However, because the timeframe of 90 days is specified in the regulations with regards to submitting documentation in similar circumstances, the default policy uses the 90-day timeframe in this context as well.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will explain to the applicant or participant the reasons the document is not acceptable and request that the individual obtain and submit acceptable documentation of the SSN to the PHA within 90 days.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**☑ Decision Point: Under what circumstances would the PHA grant an additional 90‑day compliance period to an SRO individual?**

Things to Consider

* 24 CFR 5.216(h)(2) states that the PHA must grant the applicant an additional 90-day period to comply with the SSN disclosure and documentation requirement, if the PHA determines that the reason individual was unable to comply was due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and were outside of the family’s control.
* Notice PIH 2018-24 gives examples of such circumstances with regards to addition of a new household member. These include, but are not limited to delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, etc. The default policy both lists specific examples and leaves room for other circumstances to be considered.
* Your PHA may want to consider other PHA policies where time extensions are granted for circumstances beyond the family’s control.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will grant one additional 90-day extension if needed for reasons beyond the applicant’s control, such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency. If the individual fails to comply with SSN disclosure and documentation requirements upon expiration of the provided time period, the PHA will terminate the individual’s assistance.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**☑ Decision Point: Under what circumstances would the PHA grant an additional 90‑day compliance period for a child added to the household within 6 months prior to the date of initial voucher issuance?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will grant one additional 90-day extension if needed for reasons beyond the applicant’s control, such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**☑ Decision Point: Under what circumstances would the PHA grant an additional 90‑day compliance period when adding a new household member under the age of 6 who has not been assigned an SSN?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will grant one additional 90-day extension if needed for reasons beyond the participant’s control, such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify each disclosed SSN?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will verify each disclosed SSN by:

Obtaining documentation from applicants and participants that is acceptable as evidence of social security numbers

Making a copy of the original documentation submitted, returning it to the individual, and retaining a copy in the file folder

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**☑ Decision Point: Will the PHA destroy copies of documentation accepted as evidence of social security numbers?**

Things to Consider

* Notice PIH 2018-24 states that once the verification status is classified as “verified,” the PHA may remove and destroy copies of documentation of evidence of social security numbers.
* The notice encourages that PHAs minimize the number of records that display an individual’s full nine-digit SSN. The retention of the EIV report in the individual’s file is adequate documentation. These methods help to minimize the risk of exposing individuals’ SSNs.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Once an individual’s status is classified as “verified” in HUD’s EIV system, the PHA will not remove and destroy copies of documentation accepted as evidence of social security numbers.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-II.C. DOCUMENTATION OF AGE**

Regulations at 24 CFR 982.516(a)(2)(iv) state that in addition to income, assets, and deductions, the PHA must verify “other factors that affect the determination of adjusted income.” Such factors include spousal relationships, age, and citizenship status, among others. Age is especially important for determination of income and deductions when someone in the family is under 18 or is age 62 or older. Generally, a birth certificate or other official record of birth is the preferred form of age verification, and for elderly family members an original document that provides evidence of the receipt of social security retirement benefits is acceptable. The PHA needs to provide guidance to staff when these types of verification are not available.

**☑ Decision Point: What will the PHA accept as verification of age when birth certificates or evidence of social security retirement benefits are not available?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

If an official record of birth or evidence of social security retirement benefits cannot be provided, the PHA will require the family to submit other documents that support the reported age of the family member (e.g., school records, driver's license if birth year is recorded) and to provide a self-certification.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-II.D. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

The relationship of each household member to the head of household may affect the determination of adjusted income and must therefore be verified [24 CFR 982.516(a)(2)(iv)]. Definitions of the primary household relationships are provided in Chapter 3. The PHA must give guidance to staff regarding the extent to which these relationships will be verified.

**☑ Decision Point: How, and to what extent, will the PHA verify family relationships?**

* Typically, PHAs allow for self-certification of relationship status between family members as well as gender identity.
* HUD does not require written or oral verification of family composition. The *HCV Guidebook* states that income tax returns, school records, marriage certificates, birth certificates, divorce actions, VA records, or support payment records may be used as tenant-provided verification of family composition.
* In HUD’s LGBTQIA + Fair Housing Toolkit, HUD suggests that on application forms, if a housing provider is required to collect demographic data, the housing provider may allow applicants to write-in or self-identify their gender and their relationship to other occupants or emergency contacts. Option 1 allows for self-certification of relationship status.
* Further, the Form HUD-50058 includes a field to identify each household member’s gender. The updated 2024 Form HUD-50058 provides for three options: *male*, *female*, or *unspecified or another gender identity*.
* Housheold members may wish to change their gender identity on the Form-HUD 50058 during their participation in the program. While HUD has not directly addressed these types of changes, some things to consider include:
  + - Between 2012 and 2016, HUD promulgated a series of rules to ensure that every person has equal access to HUD programs without being arbitrarily excluded, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. The PHA is prohibited from considering gender identity when making eligibility determinations.
    - In 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court interpreted that “sex” discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a law similar in text and purpose to the Fair Housing Act, includes sexual orientation and gender identity.
    - Requirements for changing a person’s gender marker or sex identity on government documents vary by state. Most government agencies and states are prohibited from asking for medical documentation or legal proof related to gender transition, and this is typically identified through self-declaration.
    - If the PHA wishes not to specifically address changes in gender identity in the ACOP and instead consider the issue under the umbrella of family relationships, adopt Option 1. If the PHA does wish to address changes in gender identity in the ACOP, and wishes to allow for self-certification, Option 2 should be selected. If the PHA wishes to address these changes, but wants to adopt an alternative policy, the PHA should check state law to see if there are any specific requirements and consider that in its 2016 harassment rule, HUD reaffirmed its legal interpretation that the Fair Housing Act’s protection from discrimination because of sex includes discrimination because of gender identity.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Family relationships are verified only to the extent necessary to determine a family’s eligibility and level of assistance.Certification by the head of household normally is sufficient verification of family relationships.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete the model plan language and insert the language below.*

Family relationships are verified only to the extent necessary to determine a family’s eligibility and level of assistance. Certification by the head of household normally is sufficient verification of family relationships.

Certification of a change in a family member’s gender identity either by the adult family member, or in the case of a minor, by the head of household, is sufficient verification.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Marriage**

Marital status could affect the determination of total or adjusted income. Examples would be when the person designated as spouse of the head is working and under age 18, or if the head is not elderly or disabled but the person designated as spouse of the head is. It could also affect the family’s eligibility for the program, depending on the PHA’s definition of family. PHA staff needs guidance on what to do if some information causes staff to doubt the validity of the marital relationship.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify marital status?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Certification by the head of household is normally sufficient verification. If the PHA has reasonable doubts about a marital relationship, the PHA will require the family to document the marriage.

A marriage certificate generally is required to verify that a couple is married.

In the case of a common law marriage, the couple must demonstrate that they hold themselves to be married (e.g., by telling the community they are married, calling each other husband and wife, using the same last name, filing joint income tax returns).

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Separation or Divorce**

There may be situations where the PHA would need to verify a separation or divorce beyond the certification of the head of household. In these situations PHA staff needs guidance on what to do if some information causes staff to doubt the self-certification.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify separation or divorce?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Certification by the head of household is normally sufficient verification. If the PHA has reasonable doubts about a separation or divorce, the PHA will require the family to provide documentation of the divorce or separation.

A certified copy of a divorce decree, signed by a court officer, is required to document that a couple is divorced.

A copy of a court-ordered maintenance or other court record is required to document a separation.

If no court document is available, documentation from a community-based agency will be accepted.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Absence of Adult Member**

When an adult family member is reported as permanently absent, PHA staff needs guidance on how to verify the absence is permanent.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the absence of an adult family member?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

If an adult member who was formerly a member of the household is reported to be permanently absent, the family must provide evidence to support that the person is no longer a member of the family (e.g., documentation of another address at which the person resides such as a lease or utility bill), if the PHA so requests.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Foster Children and Foster Adults**

When a family claims foster children or adults, the PHA needs to verify their status to properly calculate the family’s income and deductions. Guidance needs to be provided as to how the status of foster children and adults will be verified.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the absence of an adult family member?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Third-party verification from the state or local government agency responsible for the placement of the individual with the family is required.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-II.E. VERIFICATION OF STUDENT STATUS**

The status of a student family member could affect the income or deductions for a family. Therefore, guidance needs to be provided as to when student status is to be verified.

**General Requirements**

**☑ Decision Point: Under what circumstances will the PHA verify student status?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA requires families to provide information about the student status of all students who are 18 years of age or older. This information will be verified only if:

The family reports full-time student status for an adult other than the head, spouse, or cohead.

The family reports childcare expenses to enable a family member to further their education.

The family includes a student enrolled in an *institution of higher education.*

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Restrictions on Assistance to Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education**

This section applies only to students who are seeking assistance on their own, separately from their parents. It does not apply to students residing with parents who are seeking or receiving HCV assistance.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify that a student is subject to the eligibility restrictions in 24 CFR 5.612?**

Things to Consider

* The model plan language clearly identifies the factors that must be verified in order for the PHA to determine whether a particular student is exempt from the eligibility restrictions contained in 24 CFR 5.612.
* The model plan language refers to other policies in the administrative plan. Referencing these sections reduces the need to duplicate those policies here.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

In accordance with the verification hierarchy described in Section 7-I.B, the PHA will determine whether the student is exempt from the restrictions in 24 CFR 5.612 by verifying any one of the following exemption criteria:

The student is enrolled at an educational institution that does not meet the definition of *institution of higher education* in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (see Section Exhibit 3-2).

The student is at least 24 years old.

The student is a veteran, as defined in Section 3-II.E.

The student is married.

The student has at least one dependent child, as defined in Section 3‑II.E.

The student is a person with disabilities, as defined in Section 3-II.E, and was receiving assistance prior to November 30, 2005.

If the PHA cannot verify at least one of these exemption criteria, the PHA will conclude that the student is subject to the restrictions on assistance at 24 CFR 5.612. In addition to verifying the student’s income eligibility, the PHA will then proceed to verify either the student’s parents’ income eligibility (see Section 7-III.M) or the student’s independence from their parents (see below).

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

***Independent Student***

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify that a student is independent from their parents for purposes of determining whether the parent’s income is relevant in determining the student’s eligibility?**

Things to Consider

* The criteria for determining independence from parents is contained in Section 3-II.E. If changes are made to the criteria in Chapter 3, the verification requirements in this section will need to be revised accordingly.
* The verification criteria included in the model plan follows the recommended language contained in the September 21, 2016, *Federal Register* notice, “Eligibility of Students for Assisted Housing Under Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937; Additional Supplementary Guidance.”

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will verify a student’s independence from their parents to determine that the student’s parents’ income is not relevant for determining the student’s eligibility by doing all of the following:

Either reviewing and verifying previous address information to determine whether the student has established a household separate from their parents for at least one year, or reviewing and verifying documentation relevant to determining whether the student meets the U.S. Department of Education’s definition of *independent student* (see Section 3-II.E)

Reviewing the student’s prior year income tax returns to verify the student is independent or verifying the student meets the U.S. Department of Education’s definition of *independent student* (see section 3-II.E)

Requesting and obtaining written certification directly from the student’s parents identifying the amount of support they will be providing to the student, even if the amount of support is $0, except in cases in which the PHA determines that the student is a *vulnerable youth* (see section 3-II.E)

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-II.F. DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY**

The PHA must verify the existence of a disability in order to allow certain income disallowances and deductions from income.

**Family Members Receiving SSA Disability Benefits**

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the disability status of family members who are receiving SSA Disability benefits?**

Things to Consider

* Notice PIH 2018-24 describes required procedures for verifying SS/SSI benefits of applicants and participants. If a disabled family member is receiving SSA disability benefits, verifying receipt of these payments serves as adequate verification of the family member’s disability. Therefore this policy reflects the procedures required by, and recommended in, the Notice.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

For family members claiming disability who receive disability benefits from the SSA, the PHA will attempt to obtain information about disability benefits through the HUD Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system. If documentation from HUD’s EIV System is not available, the PHA will request a current (dated within the appropriate benefit year) SSA benefit verification letter from each family member claiming disability status. If the family is unable to provide the document(s), the PHA will ask the family to request a benefit verification letter by either calling SSA at 1-800-772-1213, or by requesting it from [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). Once the applicant or participant receives the benefit verification letter they will be required to provide it to the PHA.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Family Members Not Receiving SSA Disability Benefits**

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the disability status of family members who are not receiving SSA Disability benefits?**

Things to Consider

* In cases where a family is not receiving SSA Disability benefits, the PHA would follow its normal verification process and obtain third-party verification. This policy clarifies that a knowledgeable professional must provide third-party verification that a family member meets the HUD definition of disability.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

For family members claiming disability who do not receive disability benefits from the SSA, a knowledgeable professional must provide third-party verification that the family member meets the HUD definition of disability. See the Eligibility chapter for the HUD definition of disability. The knowledgeable professional will verify whether the family member does or does not meet the HUD definition.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-II.G. CITIZENSHIP OR ELIGIBLE IMMIGRATION STATUS [24 CFR 5.508]**

**Overview**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**U.S. Citizens and Nationals**

HUD requires a declaration be signed by each family member (or by a guardian for minors) who claims to be a U.S. citizen or national. However, HUD states that a PHA may request further verification of the family member’s status. Guidance must be provided as to when and how such verification will be required by the PHA.

**☑ Decision Point: How and when will the PHA require additional verification of U.S. citizen or national status?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Family members who claim U.S. citizenship or national status will not be required to provide additional documentation unless the PHA receives information indicating that an individual’s declaration may not be accurate.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Eligible Immigrants**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**7-II.H. VERIFICATION OF PREFERENCE STATUS**

PHAs determine their own local waiting list preferences.

**☑ Decision Point: If the PHA offers waiting list preferences how will it verify preferences?**

Things to Consider

* The model plan includes a preference for families that have been terminated from the PHA’s HCV program due to insufficient program funding. The PHA will have the necessary documentation to verify this preference in its own files. The model plan language reflects this.
* The model policy also includes a preference for families that include a family member who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking as defined in Section 4-III.C. As the policy language specifies, the PHA will follow documentation requirements outlined in Section 16-IX.D. to verify this preference.
* If the PHA offers other local preferences, the PHA must also determine its methods of verification for those preferences (tenant provided documents, third party written, etc.). The PHA could extend the verification standards found in 24 CFR 982.516(a)(2) to preferences, but this is not mandatory.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will offer a preference to any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding. The PHA will verify this preference using the PHA’s termination records.

The PHA also offers a preference for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking as described in Section 4-III.C. To verify that applicants qualify for the preference, the PHA will follow documentation requirements outlined in Section 16-IX.D.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**PART III: VERIFYING INCOME AND ASSETS**

**☑ Decision Point: Does the PHA accept documentation from means-tested federal assistance programs?**

Things to Consider

* If the PHA adopted a policy earlier in the chapter to accept Safe Harbor documentation from means-tested federal assistance programs, the only information that PHAs are permitted to use to determine income under this Safe Harbor is the total income determination made by the federal means-test program administrator. Other federal programs may provide additional information about income inclusions and exclusions in their award letters; however, these determinations and any other information must not be considered by the PHA for purposes of the HOTMA Safe Harbor provision.
* PHAs are not permitted to mix and match Safe Harbor income determinations and other income verifications.
* Further, when using Safe Harbor to verify a family’s income, PHAs may not further inquire about a family’s net family assets, nor about the income earned from those assets, except with respect to whether or not the family owns assets that exceed the asset limitation in 24 CFR 5.618.
* Option 1 clarifies that the below policies do not apply when the PHA uses this type of verification.
* If the PHA did not adopt a policy to accept Safe Harbor documentation from means-tested federal assistance program, the policy should be deleted.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model policy language shown below. No changes to the model policy are needed.*

The PHA is utilizing Safe Harbor income verifications in accordance with policies listed in 7-I.B. Therefore, when Safe Harbor determinations are used, policies on the verification of income and assets listed below will not apply. However, the PHA will follow policies listed below when:

The PHA does not accept Safe Harbor documentation;

The PHA is unable to obtain Safe Harbor documentation;

The family disputes the other program’s income determination; or

The PHA is required to verify employment income to cap unreimbursed childcare and/or disability assistance expenses.

In the situations listed above, the below policies on the verification of income and assets will apply.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model policy language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.A. EARNED INCOME**

**Tips**

The standard verification policies found in Part I of this chapter apply to the verification of earned income. However, tip income poses a unique situation in that it is difficult to calculate and third-party verification is not always available. Therefore, tip income requires clarification in PHA policy.

**☑ Decision Point: What additional verification policies will the PHA require if a family reports income from tips?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Unless tip income is included in a family member’s W-2 by the employer or UIV verification sources, persons who work in industries where tips are standard will be required to sign a certified estimate of tips received for the prior year or tips anticipated to be received in the coming year.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Wages**

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify wages?**

Things to Consider

* Earlier in the chapter the PHA identified the number of paystubs required when the PHA uses third-party verification. The PHA must ensure that this policy matches the one below.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

When the PHA requires third-party verification of wages, for wages other than tips, the family must provide originals of the two most current, consecutive pay stubs.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.B. BUSINESS AND SELF EMPLOYMENT INCOME**

As with tip income, income from a business or from self-employment is often difficult to verify through a third party. Tax-related documents may be the best source of information; however, this is not anticipated income. Sometimes self-certification may be required. It is an even greater challenge if the business is new, since there will be no historical data to use as a basis for anticipating income. The PHA needs to have policies specific to business and self-employment income to assist staff in understanding what verification methods are to be used.

**☑ Decision Point: What are the PHA’s verification policies for business and self-employment income?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Business owners and self-employed persons will be required to provide:

Income tax returns with corresponding official tax forms and schedules attached and including third-party receipt of transmission for income tax return filed (i.e., tax preparer’s transmittal receipt, summary of transmittal from online source, etc.).

If accelerated depreciation was used on the tax return or financial statement, an accountant's calculation of depreciation expense, computed using straight-line depreciation rules

For self-employed individuals who claim they do not to file tax returns, The PHA will obtain a completed copy of IRS Form 4506-T to verify that no return has been filed.

For those employed in “gig employment” (i.e., those in formal agreements with on-demand companies such as Uber, Lyft, or DoorDash), the PHA will provide a format for the individual to declare their income and expenses. The PHA will also review the printed statement of monthly income from the applicable app for all hours worked and pay received as well as the Schedule C of the individual’s tax return and the corresponding IRS Form 1099 or 1099k.

The PHA will provide a format for any person who is unable to provide such a statement to record income and expenses for the coming year. The business owner/self-employed person will be required to submit the information requested and to certify to its accuracy at all future reexaminations.

At any reexamination the PHA may request documents that support submitted financial statements such as manifests, appointment books, cash books, or bank statements.

If a family member has been self-employed less than three (3) months, the PHA will accept the family member's certified estimate of income and schedule an interim reexamination in three (3) months. If the family member has been self-employed for three (3) to twelve (12) months the PHA will require the family to provide documentation of income and expenses for this period and use that information to project income.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.C. PERIODIC PAYMENTS AND PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF EARNINGS**

The standard verification policies found in Part I of this chapter apply to the verification of periodic payments and payments in lieu of earnings. Social security and SSI income are to be verified by HUD’s EIV System when possible. **No PHA policy decisions are required.**

**7-III.D. ALIMONY OR CHILD SUPPORT**

For alimony and child support, there could be two different scenarios; the family receives the court awarded or agreement amount, or the family does not receive the court awarded or agreement amount. These scenarios can be handled differently.

**☑ Decision Point: What are the PHA’s policies on verification of income from alimony or child support?**

Things to Consider

* Annual income includes “all amounts received,” not the amount that a family may be legally entitled to receive but which they do not receive. For example, a family’s child support or alimony income must be based on payments received, not the amounts to which the family is entitled by court or agency orders.
* A copy of a court order or other written payment agreement alone may not be sufficient verification of amounts received by a family.
* Note the policy in Option 1 mirrors the policy on alimony and child support found in Chapter 6. If Option 1 is edited in Chapter 6, the policy below should also be edited to match.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Verification will be obtained in the following order of priority:

Copies of the receipts and/or payment stubs for the 12 months prior to PHA request

Third-party verification form from the state or local child support enforcement agency

Third-party verification form from the person paying the support

Family’s self-certification of amount received

***Note:*** Families are not required to undertake independent enforcement action.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.E. NONRECURRING INCOME [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

Income that will not be repeated beyond the coming year (i.e., the 12 months following the effective date of the certification), based on information provided by the family, is considered nonrecurring income and is excluded from annual income.

**☑ Decision Point: Will the PHA accept family self-certification that an income source Is non-recurring?**

Things to Consider

* PHAs may accept a self-certification from the family stating that the income will not be repeated in the coming year.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will accept self-certification from the family stating that income will not be repeated in the coming year. However, the PHA may choose, on a case-by-case basis, to require third-party verification that income sources will not be repeated in the coming year.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.F. ASSETS AND INCOME FROM ASSETS**

**Net Family Assets [24 CFR 5.603]**

For families with net assets less than or equal to the HUD-published threshold listed in HUD’s current year Inflation-Adjusted Values tables ($51,600 for 2025), the PHA may accept the family’s self-certification that their assets do not exceed the HUD-published threshold without taking any additional steps to verify the accuracy of the declaration. The PHA must include in its policy whether it will accept self-certification.

**☑ Decision Point: Will the PHA accept family self-certification of the value and expected income of assets less than or equal to the HUD-published threshold?**

Things to Consider:

* + PHAs who choose not to accept a family’s self-certification must verify a family’s net assets.
  + The declaration must include the amount of income the family expects to receive from assets, which must be included in the family’s income.
  + When net family assets have a total value over the HUD-published threshold, the PHA may not rely on the family’s self-certification.
  + The PHA is required to obtain third-party verification of all assets, regardless of the amount, at least once every three years.
  + Accepting a family’s self-certification at admission may reduce the initial burden on applicants and speed up the lease-up process. In deciding whether to accept a self-certification of assets at admission, PHAs are encouraged to consider the local needs and priorities in their communities along with the potential risks of accepting self-certification of net family assets, including the requirement to repay funds for participants/tenants who are later found to be ineligible for assistance.
  + PHAs must develop written policies in their admin plan stating whether they will accept self-certification.
  + HUD has acknowledged that the overall impact of asset income on a PHA’s subsidy need is negligible. However, PHAs may expend considerable time and resources on the process of verifying asset value and asset income. For example, it is administratively burdensome to obtain third-party verification of low-balance checking accounts that do not earn interest.
  + To reduce administrative burden, HUD permits PHAs to accept family self-certification, including certification on an annual reexamination form, of asset value and asset income when the value of total family assets is less than or equal to the HUD-published threshold.
  + Third-party verification must be obtained every three years after program admission.
  + At admission, the PHA may accept self-certification. This may reduce the initial burden on applicants and speed up the lease-up process.
  + Option 1 provides that the PHA will accept self-certification from the family when applicable.
  + Select Option 2 if the PHA wishes to use third-party verification to verify asset value and asset income in all circumstances.
* *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

For families with net assets less than or equal to the HUD-published threshold listed in the current year’s Inflation-Adjusted Values tables, the PHA will accept the family’s self-certification of the value of family assets and anticipated asset income. The family’s declaration must show the total amount of income expected from all assets. All family members 18 years of age and older must sign the family’s declaration. The PHA reserves the right to require additional verification in situations where the accuracy of the declaration is in question. Any income the family expects to receive from assets will be included in the family’s annual income. The PHA will obtain third-party verification of net family assets every three years.

When verification is required, in determining the value of checking or savings accounts, the PHA will use the current balance.

In determining the anticipated income from an interest-bearing checking or savings account when verification is required and the rate of return is known, the PHA will multiply the current balance of the account by the current rate of interest paid on the account. If a checking account does not bear interest, the anticipated income from the account is zero.

🞎 *Option 2: Delete the language in the model plan and insert the language below.*

The PHA will obtain third-party verification of all assets regardless of the amount.

🞎 *Option 3: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Self-Certification of Real Property Ownership [24 CFR 5.618(b)(2); Notice PIH 2023-27]**

The PHA must determine whether a family has present ownership in real property for purposes of determining whether the family is compliant with the asset limitation. The PHA may accept a self-certification from the family stating that the family does not have any present ownership in any real property. If the family certifies that they do not have any present ownership interest in real property, the PHA may take that as sufficient to determine the family is not out of compliance with the real property restriction. If the family declares they have present ownership in real property, the PHA must obtain third-party verification of the family’s legal right to reside in the property, the effective legal authority to sell the property, and whether the property is suitable for occupancy by the family as a residence.

**☑ Decision Point: Will the PHA accept family self-certification of real property ownership?**

The PHA must include in the admin plan whether they will accept self-certification at admission and reexamination.

Things to Consider:

* + When the family declares they do have a present ownership interest in real property, HUD requires the PHA to obtain third-party verification. In cases where a family member is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, however, the PHA must comply with confidentiality and self-certification requirements under VAWA. The model policy makes such an exception.
  + Option 1 provides that the PHA will accept self-certification from the family when applicable.
  + Select Option 2 if the PHA wishes to use third-party verification to verify asset value and asset income in all circumstances.
* *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will accept self-certification from the family stating that the family does not have any present ownership in any real property. The certification must be signed by all family members 18 years of age and older. The PHA reserves the right to require additional verification in situations where the accuracy of the declaration is in question.

If the family declares they have a present ownership in real property, the PHA will obtain third-party verification of the following factors: whether the family has the legal right to reside in the property; whether the family has effective legal authority to sell the property; and whether the property is suitable for occupancy by the family as a residence. However, in cases where a family member is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual, or stalking, the PHA will comply with confidentiality requirements under 24 CFR 5.2007 and will accept a self-certification.

**7-III.G. NET INCOME FROM RENTAL PROPERTY**

Families who receive an income from rental property must provide adequate information for the PHA to anticipate net rental income. The PHA must provide guidance on what is to be reported and what is considered sufficient documentation of the income reported.

**☑ Decision Point: What are the PHA’s policies on verification of net income from rental property?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The family must provide:

A current executed lease for the property that shows the rental amount or certification from the current tenant

A self-certification from the family members engaged in the rental of property providing an estimate of expenses for the coming year and the most recent IRS Form 1040 with Schedule E (Rental Income).

If schedule E was not prepared, the PHA will require the family members involved in the rental of property to provide a self-certification of income and expenses for the previous year and may request documentation to support the statement including: tax statements, insurance invoices, bills for reasonable maintenance and utilities, and bank statements or amortization schedules showing monthly interest expense.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.H. FEDERAL TAX REFUNDS OR REFUNDABLE TAX CREDITS [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**7-III.I. RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS**

Income received from any account under a retirement plan recognized as such by the IRS, including individual retirement arrangements (IRAs), employer retirement plans, and retirement plans for self-employed individuals are excluded from annual income.

However, any distribution of periodic payments from such accounts is included in annual income at the time they are received by the family.

**☑ Decision Point: What are the PHA’s policies on verification of income from retirement accounts?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will accept an original document from the entity holding the account dated no earlier than 12 months before that reflects any distributions of the account balance, any lump sums taken and any regular payments.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.J. INCOME FROM EXCLUDED SOURCES [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

HUD guidance on verification of excluded income draws a distinction between income which is fully excluded and income which is only partially excluded.

For fully excluded income, the PHA is **not** required to verify the income using third-party verification, document why third-party verification is not available, or report the income on the 50058. *Fully excluded income* is defined as income where the entire amount qualifies to be excluded from the annual income determination in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609(b) and any *Federal Register* notice on mandatory exclusions issued by HUD (for example, food stamps, earned income of a minor, or foster care funds).

PHAs may accept a family’s signed application or reexamination form as self-certification of fully excluded income. They do not have to require additional documentation. However, if there is any doubt that a source of income qualifies for full exclusion, PHAs have the option of requiring additional verification.

For partially excluded income, the PHA **is** required to follow the verification hierarchy and all applicable regulations, and to report the income on the 50058. Partially excluded income is defined as income where only a certain portion of what is reported by the family qualifies to be excluded and the remainder is included in annual income (for example, the income of an adult full-time student).

**☑ Decision Point: What is the PHA’s policy on verification of income exclusions?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will accept the family’s self-certification as verification of fully excluded income. The PHA may request additional documentation if necessary to document the income source.

The PHA will verify the source and amount of partially excluded income as described in Part 1 of this chapter.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.K. ZERO INCOME FAMILIES [Notice PIH 2023-27]**

PHAs have discretion to establish reasonable procedures to manage the risk of unreported income.

**☑ Decision Point: What is the PHA’s policy on checking potential income sources for families claiming to have zero income?**

Things to Consider:

* HUD does not require PHAs to conduct periodic zero income reviews.
* PHAs that perform zero income reviews must update local discretionary policies, procedures, and forms. Option 1 states the PHA will perform zero income reviews. If the PHA does not wish to do so, Option 2 should be adopted.
* The Public Housing Occupancy Guidebook suggests the following options:
  + Examine the family’s circumstances every 90 days until they have a stable income.
  + Request zero income families to complete a zero-income form. The form asks tenants to estimate how much they spend for: telephone, cable TV, food, clothing, transportation, health care, childcare, debts, household items, etc., and whether any of these costs are being paid by an individual outside the family. If any such payments are received, they are to be verified accordingly and considered income.
  + Use the EIV No Income Report to cross-reference their list of zero-income households. The PHA can then follow up with those zero-income families who do not appear on the No Income Report. While this option may save time, it requires at least one staff member who has the time and skillset to pull and compare reports from EIV and the system of record.
  + Check another Upfront Income Verification source to determine if zero-income families have any newly reported income. Complete additional verification for those families only.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will check UIV sources and/or may request information from third-party sources to verify that certain forms of income such as unemployment benefits, TANF, SSI, earned income, child support, etc., are not being received by families claiming to have zero annual income.

The PHA will also require that each family member who claims zero income status complete a zero-income form. If any sources of income are identified on the form, the PHA will verify the income in accordance with the policies in this chapter prior to including the income in the family’s annual income.

The PHA will only conduct interims in accordance with PHA policy in Chapter 11.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy*

**7-III.L. STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE [****24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)]**

The regulations under HOTMA distinguish between two categories of student financial assistance paid to both full-time and part-time students.Any assistance to students under section 479B of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Tile IV of the HEA) must be excluded from the family’s annual income [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)(i)].Any other grant-in-aid, scholarship, or other assistance amounts an individual receives for the actual covered costs charged by the institute of higher education not otherwise excluded by the federally mandated income exclusions are excluded [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)(ii)].

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the amount of student financial assistance that must be included in the calculation of annual income?**

Things to Consider

* To properly calculate the annual income of a student enrolled in an institution of higher education, the PHA must verify the amount of student financial assistance the student is receiving, as well as the source of the income.
* Because amounts received student financial assistance in excess of actual covered costs may be included, PHAs must also verify this amount of actual covered costs.
* Much of the information the PHA needs to verify (amounts received under the Higher Education Act of 1965, amounts received from the institution of higher education, and the amount of a student’s tuition) must be provided by the educational institution a student is attending.
* To verify amounts from private sources, the PHA will request that the family provide third-party written verification.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will request written third-party verification of both the source and the amount of student financial assistance. Family-provided documents from the educational institution attended by the student will be requested, as well as documents generated by any other person or entity providing such assistance, as reported by the student. In addition, unless the student’s only source of assistance is assistance under Title IV of the HEA, the PHA will request written verification of the student’s tuition, books, supplies, room and board, and other required fees and charges to the student from the educational institution.

If the PHA is unable to obtain third-party written verification of the requested information, the PHA will pursue other forms of verification following the verification hierarchy in Section 7-I.B.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-III.M. parental INCOME of students subject to eligibility restrictions**

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the income of a student’s parents when this information is required to determine the student’s eligibility?**

Things to Consider

* The model plan lnguage incorporates the language recommended in the April 10, 2006, *Federal Register*.
* To better ensure the integrity of the information, the model plan language clarifies that the PHA will request the information directly from the parents and ask the parents to return it directly to the PHA.
* For administrative ease and consistency, the model plan language gives the parents 10 business days to submit the information to the PHA. This is the standard timeframe used throughout much of the plan. Because many parents may be out of state, the model plan clarifies that in this context, the date of submission will be the date of postmark.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

If the PHA is required to determine the income eligibility of a student’s parents, the PHA will request an income declaration and certification of income from the appropriate parent(s) (as determined in Section 3-II.E). The PHA will send the request directly to the parents, who will be required to certify to their income under penalty of perjury. The parents will be required to submit the information directly to the PHA. The required information must be submitted (postmarked) within 10 business days of the date of the PHA’s request or within any extended timeframe approved by the PHA.

The PHA reserves the right to request and review supporting documentation at any time if it questions the declaration or certification. Supporting documentation may include, but is not limited to, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax returns, consecutive and original pay stubs, bank statements, pension benefit statements, benefit award letters, and other official and authentic documents from a federal, state, or local agency.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**PART IV: VERIFYING MANDATORY DEDUCTIONS**

**7-IV.A. DEPENDENT AND ELDERLY/DISABLED HOUSEHOLD DEDUCTIONS**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**7-IV.B. HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE EXPENSE DEDUCTION**

**Amount of Expense**

The policies related to medical expenses are found in Chapter 6. The standard verification policies found in Part I of this chapter apply to the verification of medical expenses.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the dollar amounts of medical expenses?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Medical expenses will be verified through:

Written third-party documents provided by the family, such as pharmacy printouts or receipts.

When income is projected at new admission or interim, the PHA will make a best effort to determine what expenses from the past are likely to continue to occur in the future. The PHA will also accept evidence of monthly payments or total payments that will be due for medical expenses during the upcoming 12 months.

Written third-party verification forms if the family is unable to provide acceptable documentation.

When income is projected at new admission or interim, if third-party or document review is not possible, written family certification as to costs anticipated to be incurred during the upcoming 12 months.

Before placing bills and documentation in the tenant file, the PHA will redact all personally identifiable information.

If the PHA receives documentation from a verification source that contains the individual’s specific diagnosis, information regarding the individual’s treatment, and/or information regarding the nature or severity of the person’s disability, the PHA will immediately dispose of this confidential information; this information will never be maintained in the individual’s file. If the information needs to disposed of, the PHA will note in the individual’s file that verification was received, the date received, and the name and address of the person/organization that provided the verification. Under no circumstances will PHA include an applicant’s or resident’s medical records in the file [Notice PIH 2010-26].

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Eligible Household**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**Qualified Expenses**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**Unreimbursed Expenses**

The PHA needs to clarify how it will determine that medical expenses will not be reimbursed by other sources.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA determine that health and medical care expenses will not be reimbursed by other sources?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The family will be required to certify that the medical expenses are not paid or reimbursed to the family from any source. If expenses are verified through a third party, the third party must certify that the expenses are not paid or reimbursed from any other source.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Expenses Incurred in Past Years**

At new admission and interim reexamination, families can claim as medical expenses the anticipated costs related to on-going payments of medical bills incurred in past years, provided that the same expenses have not been deducted in prior years. The PHA must provide guidance on how these expenses will be verified.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify anticipated medical expenses related to on-going payments of medical bills incurred in past years at new admission and annual reexamination?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

At new admission and interim reexam, when anticipated costs are related to on-going payment of medical bills incurred in past years, the PHA will verify:

The anticipated repayment schedule

The amounts paid in the past, and

Whether the amounts to be repaid have been deducted from the family’s annual income in past years

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-IV.C. DISABILITY ASSISTANCE EXPENSES**

**Amount of Expense**

The deduction for disability assistance expenses covers both attendant care and auxiliary apparatus. Because one is a care provider and the other is generally a piece of equipment or the servicing of that equipment, the policy for verifying amounts for attendant care will be somewhat different than for auxiliary apparatus. The PHA needs to provide guidance to staff as to how verification of each is to be handled. The standard verification policies found in Part I of this chapter apply to the verification of disability assistance expenses.

***Attendant Care***

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the dollar amounts for disability assistance expenses for attendant care?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Expenses for attendant care will be verified through:

Written third-party documents provided by the family, such as receipts or cancelled checks

Third-party verification form signed by the provider, if family-provided documents are not available

When income is projected at new admission or interim, if third-party verification is not possible, written family certification as to costs anticipated to be incurred for the upcoming 12 months

Before placing bills and documentation in the tenant file, the PHA will redact all personally identifiable information.

If the PHA receives documentation from a verification source that contains the individual’s specific diagnosis, information regarding the individual’s treatment, and/or information regarding the nature or severity of the person’s disability, the PHA will immediately dispose of this confidential information; this information will never be maintained in the individual’s file. If the information needs to be disposed of, the PHA will note in the individual’s file that verification was received, the date received, and the name and address of the person/organization that provided the verification. Under no circumstances will PHA include an applicant’s or resident’s medical records in the file [Notice PIH 2010-26].

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

***Auxiliary Apparatus***

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify the dollar amounts for disability assistance expenses for auxiliary apparatus?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

Expenses for auxiliary apparatus will be verified through:

Written third-party documents provided by the family, such as billing statements for purchase of auxiliary apparatus, or other evidence of monthly payments or total payments that will be due for the apparatus during the upcoming 12 months

Third-party verification form signed by the provider, if family-provided documents are not available

If third-party or document review is not possible, written family certification of estimated apparatus costs for the upcoming 12 months

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Family Member is a Person with Disabilities**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**Family Member(s) Permitted to Work**

The PHA must verify that the expenses claimed actually enable a family member, or members, to work. The person enabled to work could be the person with disabilities but does not have to be. The expense could enable more than one person to work. The PHA needs to provide guidance as to how it is verified that the person or persons who work are enabled to do so by the disability assistance expense.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify that the disability assistance expense enables someone to work?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will request third-party verification from a rehabilitation agency or knowledgeable medical professional indicating that the person with disabilities requires attendant care or an auxiliary apparatus to be employed, or that the attendant care or auxiliary apparatus enables another family member, or members, to work. (See 6-II.E.) This documentation may be provided by the family.

If third-party verification has been attempted and is either unavailable or proves unsuccessful, the family must certify that the disability assistance expense frees a family member, or members (possibly including the family member receiving the assistance), to work.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy.* Edit *the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Unreimbursed Expenses**

The PHA needs to clarify how it will determine that disability assistance expenses will not be reimbursed by other sources.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA determine that disability assistance expenses will not be reimbursed by other sources?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The family will be required to certify that attendant care or auxiliary apparatus expenses are not paid by or reimbursed to the family from any source.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**7-IV.D. CHILDCARE EXPENSES**

**Eligible Child**

No PHA policy decisions are required.

**Unreimbursed Expense**

The PHA needs to clarify how it will determine that childcare expenses will not be reimbursed by other sources.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA determine that childcare expenses will not be reimbursed by other sources?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The family (and the care provider) will be required to certify that the childcare expenses are not paid or reimbursed to the family from any source.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Pursuing an Eligible Activity**

The PHA must verify that the childcare enables a family member or members to seek work, pursue education, or be gainfully employed. The PHA needs to provide staff guidance on what information needs to be gathered, specific to the eligible activity claimed.

**☑ Decision Point: What information needs to be gathered and verified to determine that the childcare enables someone to pursue an eligible activity?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

*Information to be Gathered*

The PHA will verify information about how the schedule for the claimed activity relates to the hours of care provided, the time required for transportation, the time required for study (for students), the relationship of the family member(s) to the child, and any special needs of the child that might help determine which family member is enabled to pursue an eligible activity.

*Seeking Work*

Whenever possible the PHA will use documentation from a state or local agency that monitors work-related requirements (e.g., welfare or unemployment). In such cases the PHA will request family-provided verification from the agency of the member’s job seeking efforts to date and require the family to submit to the PHA any reports provided to the other agency.

In the event third-party verification is not available, the PHA will provide the family with a form on which the family member must record job search efforts. The PHA will review this information at each subsequent reexamination for which this deduction is claimed.

*Furthering Education*

The PHA will ask request third-party documentation to verify that the person permitted to further their education by the childcare is enrolled and provide information about the timing of classes for which the person is registered. The documentation may be provided by the family.

*Gainful Employment*

The PHA will seek third-party verification of the work schedule of the person who is permitted to work by the childcare. In cases in which two or more family members could be permitted to work, the work schedules for all relevant family members may be verified. The documentation may be provided by the family.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Allowable Type of Childcare**

Notice PIH 2004-01, Verification Guidance makes it clear that PHAs cannot choose the type of childcare provided [VG, p. 26]. PHAs must provide clear guidance on what activities will not be covered (such as housekeeping services) and what to do if payments to a provider cover the care of other children who are not eligible for childcare (such as children age 13 and over). See Chapter 6 of this plan for discussion of types of allowable childcare.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify that childcare expenses cover an allowable type of childcare?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The PHA will verify that the type of childcare selected by the family is allowable, as described in Chapter 6.

The PHA will verify that the fees paid to the childcare provider cover only childcare costs (e.g., no housekeeping services or personal services) and are paid only for the care of an eligible child (e.g., prorate costs if some of the care is provided for ineligible family members).

The PHA will verify that the childcare provider is not an assisted family member. Verification will be made through the head of household’s declaration of family members who are expected to reside in the unit.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**Reasonableness of Expenses**

Since only reasonable childcare expenses can be deducted, the PHA must have a system for comparing what is determined as reasonable with the family’s actual childcare expenses. The PHA must further determine what it will do under various circumstances when actual childcare costs exceed what is determined by the PHA to be reasonable.

**☑ Decision Point: How will the PHA verify that childcare expenses are reasonable?**

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model plan language shown below. No changes to the model plan are needed.*

The actual costs the family incurs will be compared with the PHA’s established standards of reasonableness for the type of care in the locality to ensure that the costs are reasonable.

If the family presents a justification for costs that exceed typical costs in the area, the PHA will request additional documentation, as required, to support a determination that the higher cost is appropriate.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model plan language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**FINALIZING THE DOCUMENT**

Take a final look at the changes you have made in this chapter of the administrative plan. Have you:

(1) Added or subtracted any exhibits at the end of the chapter?  Yes  No.

(2) Added, subtracted or reordered any major sections (at the A, B, or C level?)  Yes  No

If you answered yes to either of these questions, you must adjust the chapter to match your changes.

**☑ Decision Point: Are any changes required to this chapter?**

No. No changes to the model plan are needed.

Yes. Edits only. Edit and insert PHA language as appropriate.

Yes. PHA changed the organization of the chapter. Adjust the chapter to reflect your changes **and** review the rest of the document to make sure that any references to section numbers are correct.

**☑ Decision Point: Are changes required in other chapters as a result of changes to this chapter?**

Check the “Things to Consider” under each decision point to identify if changes to the model plan policy will require changes to policies in other chapters of the plan.

No. Changes to other chapters are not necessary.

Yes. Changes to the following chapters are also required: