

Affirmative Marketing Plan Requirements

General Requirements

All recipients of federal HOME funds shall adopt policies and procedures that inform the public, potential tenants, and property owners of its Affirmative Marketing Policy/Strategy. At a minimum, ACDS, on behalf of the County will:

- require the Equal Housing Opportunity logotype in press releases and solicitations for participation in the program;
- have a policy for referrals of housing questions and complaints to a fair housing provider, agency or organization who can provide advice on the State and federal fair housing laws;
- will list all rental housing development communities who have received HOME funds in Anne Arundel County on the ACDS website, along with the property manager information, to make the public aware of affordable housing options in the County; and
- will require owner/developer to register the rental units along with the identification of accessibility features with the Maryland Department Housing and Community Development's at www.mdhousingsearch.org database.

Minimum Compliance Requirements

At a minimum, the Affirmative Marketing Policy/Strategy will require owners of rental housing projects units receiving assistance comply with the following:

1. Institute marketing and outreach to those least likely to apply prior to establishing a waiting list.
2. Prior to sales or rental activity, the project owner shall identify at least three groups, organizations, or agencies actively involved with serving identified people least likely to apply such as minorities and female heads of household. If the project owner does not have enough prospective tenants to form a waiting list, then the owner shall annually provide these groups with information on assisted units throughout the period of affordability.
3. If any units are publicly advertised during the period of affordability, the Equal Housing Opportunity logo must accompany the advertisement.
4. The project owner must display the Equal Housing Opportunity logo and fair housing poster in an area accessible to the public (e.g., the rental office).
5. The project owner will maintain information on head of household, race, sex, and ethnicity of applicants and tenants to demonstrate the results of the owner's affirmative marketing efforts.
6. The project owner will, for the period of affordability, maintain information demonstrating compliance with the items above, and will make such information available to ACDS staff, upon request.

Census and American Community Survey data conclude that the County has a low concentration of minorities and female head of households. This demographic of residents are also more likely to be of lower income and need affordable housing; yet may be least likely to apply for residency in the HOME rental projects especially in areas of opportunities where there are low concentration of minorities. Therefore, project owners who build rental housing communities with federal HOME funding will be required to include minorities in their marketing efforts for both family and senior housing, as well as female head of households for family housing. Projects will be evaluated based on the project/program ability to have the same or higher percentage of minorities as the County as a whole. If a project is in an Area of Opportunity, ACDS may require higher percentage goals.

Nonprofit owners (i.e. local CHDOs) of rental housing and group homes for the special needs population will be required to submit their plans for renting their units. Their plan may include tenants off of a referral list. ACDS staff will review these plans and determine if because of the population being served and how clients are referred, if any additional affirmative marketing will be required.

Documentation of Compliance

Each owner/sponsor shall maintain records indicating compliance with the above policies, which include, but not limited to the following.

- Records documenting the project owner's annual outreach efforts to affirmatively market vacant assisted units, including an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of these efforts. Minimally, this evaluation shall include a discussion with the organizations or agencies, as to the number of referrals made on the basis of the information provided by the owners of assisted units.
- Monitoring records (to be maintained by all recipients of funds) which indicate the extent to which the owner/sponsor has complied with the requirements of these policies and procedures to resolve instances of noncompliance.