

**§ 904.203**

**24 CFR Ch. IX (4-1-02 Edition)**

(a) Enable the potential homebuyer to have a full understanding of the responsibilities that accompany his participation in the Homeownership Opportunity Program;

(b) Enable the potential homebuyer to have an understanding of homeownership tasks with specific training given to individuals as the need and readiness for counseling or training indicates;

(c) Assure that the role of the HBA is understood and plans for its organization are initiated at the earliest practical time;

(d) Develop an understanding of the role of the LHA and of the need for a cooperative relationship between the homebuyer and the LHA;

(e) Encourage the development of self-help by the homebuyer through reducing dependency and increasing independent action;

(f) Develop an understanding of mutual assistance and cooperation that will develop a feeling of self-respect, pride and community responsibility;

(g) Develop local resources that can be of assistance to the individual and the community on an on-going basis.

**§ 904.203 Planning.**

(a) The counseling and training program shall be flexible and responsive to the needs of each prospective homebuyer. While many subjects lend themselves to group sessions, consideration shall be given to individual counseling. Individuals should not be required to attend training classes on subject matter they are familiar with unless they can actively participate in the instructional process.

(b) The program may be provided by contract with an outside organization, or by the LHA staff, in either case with voluntary involvement and assistance of groups and individuals within the community. It is essential that the training entity be completely knowledgeable and supportive of the entire Homeownership Opportunity Program. It may be recognized that most of the objectives stated require specialized instructional skill and content knowledge. There shall be recognition of the differences in communication and in value systems, and an understanding and respect for past experience of the

individual. Maximum possible use shall be made of indigenous trainers to insure good communication and rapport. Special attention shall be directed to the needs of working members of the family for counseling and training sessions to be held where and during the time they can attend. Where the services of outside contractors are utilized, there shall be a close working relationship with the LHA and a program for phasing in LHA staff who will have the on-going responsibility for the program. The value of local agencies, educational institutions, etc., for implementing the program rather than an outside firm shall be carefully considered since the continuing presence of such agencies and institutions in the community can often develop into an on-going resource beyond the contract period.

(c) In planning a homeownership counseling and training program, whether self-administered or contracted, the LHA shall consult with HUD for advice and information on programs, qualified contractors, local resources, reasonable costs, and other similar matters.

(d) Where the program is to be contracted to an outside group, proposals shall be secured either by public advertising or by sending requests for proposals to a number of competent public or private organizations.

(e) In areas where there are large concentrations of homebuyers who do not read, write, or understand English fluently, the native language of the people shall be used. If feasible all instructional materials shall be in both languages.

**§ 904.204 General requirements and information.**

(a) The counseling and training program shall be designed to meet the needs of the homebuyers and be sufficiently flexible to meet new needs as they arise. The nature of the program suggests four phases of counseling: (1) Pre-occupancy; (2) move-in; (3) post-occupancy; (4) assistance to the HBA. While some elements of the program lend themselves more to one phase than another, the program areas shall be coordinated and interrelated. It is recommended that the entity providing

these services work closely with the participants and ensure that policies established are agreeable to both the LHA and the homebuyer.

(b) The following is a description of major elements of the program which experience thus far has shown to be relevant. More detailed information is set forth in Appendix I, "Content Guide for Counseling and Training Program."

(1) *Pre-occupancy phase.* The purpose of this phase is to prepare the selected families to assume the responsibilities of homeownership, and to provide an opportunity for the LHA and each family to reassess the family's potential for successful participation in the homeownership development.

(i) An overload of information should be avoided in this phase since many of the subjects will be dealt with in greater depth after the family is in occupancy, and experience has shown that much of the information will be more relevant at that time.

(ii) This phase should be completed for each family before the beginning of its occupancy.

(2) *Move-in phase.* During this phase, the counseling and training staff should be available to the homebuyers on an individual basis. Services may include (i) inspecting the units, interior and exterior, with the homebuyers and a representative of the LHA, (ii) testing appliances and equipment, (iii) providing information on the moving process (packing, trucks, etc.), and (iv) assisting homebuyers in making adjustments occasioned by the move, serving as liaison among homebuyers, LHA, builder and other agencies, and assisting homebuyers in meeting new neighbors.

(3) *Post-occupancy phase.* Before this phase begins, a period (possibly one month) should elapse to allow homebuyers an opportunity to adjust to their new surroundings. This is a time when new questions and problems come to light that can be dealt with in further counseling and training. This phase should be designed to cover many of the same basic subjects as the pre-occupancy phase, both by review and refresher where necessary but in much greater depth.

(4) *Assistance to the HBA.* The parties responsible for the counseling and

training program shall be responsible for the formation, incorporation, and development of the HBA, including the execution of the Recognition Agreement between the LHA and HBA, as provided in subpart D of this part.

#### § 904.205 Training methodology.

Equal in importance to the content of the pre- and post-occupancy training is the training methodology. Because groups vary, there should be adaptability in the communication and learning experience. Methods to be utilized may include group presentations, small discussion groups, special classes, and workshops. Especially important to a successful program are individual family home visits for discussion and instruction on unique problems and operation of equipment.

#### § 904.206 Funding.

(a) *Source of funds.* For purpose of funding counseling and training pursuant to this subpart and for establishing the HBA, the LHA shall include an amount equal to \$500 per dwelling unit in the development cost budget. If additional funds should be needed for any of these purposes, the LHA with the assistance of the CPC, if any, shall explore all other possible sources of services and funds.

(b) *Planned use of \$500-per-unit funds.* These funds are to be used to pay for:

(1) Pre- and post-occupancy counseling and training;

(2) Establishment and initial operation of the HBA (for operation in the management phase, see § 904.305).

In planning the use of these funds, the LHA shall recognize that for a number of years after the initial counseling and training there is likely to be some turnover and follow-up counseling and training needs. Therefore, the LHA shall limit the amounts for the counseling and training of the initial homebuyers and shall reserve a reasonable amount for future counseling and training needs during the management phase of the development.

(c) *Period of availability of \$500-per-unit funds.* These funds shall be available during the development phase, and a specific amount shall be set aside, in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, to be used for ongoing needs