



NCSHA 2010 Annual Program Awards

**Connecticut Housing Finance Authority Board Initiates Requirement That
All Receiving Housing Development Funding Undertake Efforts
to Employ Very Low Income Persons**

“Everyone should make some effort!”

Background

The mission of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (“CHFA”) is to alleviate the shortage of housing for low- and moderate-income families and individuals. It does so through financing home purchases by qualified first-time homebuyers and financing the development and preservation of affordable rental homes.

Financing the development of affordable rental homes also contributes to the state’s economy, providing employment in the construction sector as well as in related development and professional services and the generation of revenue for the State’s General Fund. Since the onset of the current recession these impacts have taken on added importance.

CHFA supported the implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2008 (ARRA) by managing both the Section 1602 Tax Credit Exchange Program (TCEP) as well as the Tax Credit Assistance Program (TCAP) to spur economic activity and provide jobs.

During implementation the CHFA Board became aware that the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), in the interest of expediting the investment of TCAP funds to meet strict deadlines, had waived the application Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 to TCAP funds.

Section 3 requires that recipients for federal funding through a range of HUD housing assistance programs undertake efforts, to the greatest extent feasible, to provide employment and other economic opportunities to low and very-low income persons.

During public hearing held by the CHFA Board on CHFA plans for the investment of TCAP funds, housing advocates supporting Section 3 urged CHFA to apply Section 3 to TCAP investments in Connecticut despite the HUD waiver. CHFA declined to do so, but several Board members expressed a strong desire for more deliberate consideration of such employment requirements at a later date.

CHFA Board Calls for a New CHFA Policy on Employment in the Development of Affordable Rental Housing

Based on the desire and interest of CHFA Board members the staff embarked on a review of various Federal, State and local requirements that call for the employment of low income persons in the development of affordable rental housing.

The review found that Federal Section 3 applies to many developments typically financed by CHFA by virtue of their also receiving assistance through various Federal assistance programs subject to Section 3. It was also noted that municipal governments, particularly larger towns with significant low income populations and higher unemployment, often apply their own requirements for the employment of local residents in construction of affordable housing.



NCSHA 2010 Annual Program Awards

The review also noted that it was possible, based on the sources of the funds and the location of the development, to have CHFA finance the development of affordable rental housing upon which there were no requirements for any efforts to employ very low income persons or local residents.

Based on this information the CHFA Board requested that staff draft a proposed CHFA policy to reflect the Board's desire that recipients of funding through CHFA make some effort to employ very low income local residents during the development of affordable rental housing.

New Policy Adopted and Implemented

Based on the purposes and direction established by CHFA Board members, the CHFA Board subsequently discussed and adopted a policy on "Very Low Income Construction Employment" that governs substantially all of the funding CHFA invests in affordable rental housing development. This policy was the subject of multiple public discussions among Board and staff to ensure proper balance and strengthen enforcement. The proposed policy was reviewed and discussed directly with the affordable rental housing development community through CHFA's Multifamily Housing Advisory process.

This Board-initiated and led policy development process resulted in the adoption of the following Policy Statement by CHFA in July of 2010:

"The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) requires that applicants for CHFA funded multifamily mortgages and Low Income Housing Tax Credits commit to undertake good faith efforts to hire and train very low income persons from the area of the housing constructed or rehabilitated with CHFA funding"

This requirement will apply when housing is developed or rehabilitated with funds provided through bond issuance, Investment Trust Account proceeds, Community Investment Act funds and Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

CHFA funded developments otherwise required to comply with Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 or a local government hiring program will be deemed in compliance with this policy."

In order to provide clarity and flexibility in the implementation of this Policy the CHFA Board adopted a menu of "good faith efforts" which could be undertaken by funding recipients in order to comply with this policy. The menu of options is weighted and assigned points according to degree of effort, with all applicants required to earn a minimum threshold. Failure to undertake these good faith efforts results in principals being barred from applying to CHFA for mortgage funding or Low Income Housing tax Credits for a period of 12 months.

CHFA initiated implementation of this policy with the 2011 "9%" Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding round. All recipients of mortgage and housing tax credit funding of \$1 million or more are now required to comply. It is believed that this is the only such State HFA-initiated policy of its kind.

A copy of the CHFA Policy on "Very Low Income Construction Employment" adopted by the Board in July of 2010 is attached.



CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY **POLICY STATEMENT**

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
CHFA-2010-3	Very Low-Income Construction Employment	07/29/2010

POLICY STATEMENT

The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) requires that applicants for CHFA funded multifamily mortgages and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits commit to undertaking good faith efforts to hire or train very low-income persons from the area of the housing constructed or rehabilitated with CHFA funding.

This requirement will apply when housing is developed or rehabilitated with funds provided through bond issuance, Investment Trust Account proceeds, Community Investment Act funds and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

CHFA funded developments otherwise required to comply with Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 or a local government hiring program will be deemed in compliance with this policy.

GUIDELINES

CHFA will implement this requirement according to the following guidelines:

- 1) Good faith efforts to hire and train very low-income residents in the area (See "Definitions") can be demonstrated by a range of advertising and outreach activities as well as participation in, and cooperation with, a variety of local job training and employment initiatives.
- 2) CHFA will identify activities that constitute good faith efforts. These activities will be weighted and assigned points according to the degree of effort required. Completing a combination of efforts that totals four points of which no more than two can be from the first category and two from the second or third category will satisfy CHFA's requirement.
- 3) Good faith efforts will be undertaken by Low-Income Housing Tax Credit recipients and mortgagors, and reported according to guidance provided by CHFA.
- 4) Failure to undertake these good faith efforts will result in the principals being barred from applying to CHFA for multifamily development mortgage or Low-Income Housing Tax Credit funding for a period of 12 months unless waived by the Board.
- 5) This policy shall be evaluated as to its cost and effectiveness after two years.



CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY **POLICY STATEMENT**

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
CHFA-2010-3	Very Low-Income Construction Employment	07/29/2010

BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF NEED

The construction and rehabilitation of housing can present opportunities for the hiring and training of very low-income persons. These opportunities can provide very low-income individuals with needed income as well as transferable skills and experience necessary for future employment. Like affordable housing itself, therefore, employment of very low-income area residents can enable individuals and families to become financially stable and secure.

Federal housing assistance programs, such as Public Housing, HOPE VI Public Housing Redevelopment, the HOME Investment Partnership and the Community Development Block Grant programs are subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968. This program requires housing development funded through these programs to meet specific goals for contracting, hiring and training of very low-income persons. Over the past two years 7 of 15 recipients of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits have received HOME program funds subject to Section 3. The 2010 Qualified Allocation Plan provides points to applicants for job training programs in the building trades during development, and for contracting with a Section 3 qualified business.

Local governments that have made a financial contribution or tax/regulatory concession to a particular development may sometimes condition such assistance on the applicants hiring local residents in the construction and rehabilitation activity funded. Typically this is done on a case-by-case basis. Hartford and Bridgeport have from time to time made such hiring a condition of assisting development projects.

IMPLEMENTATION & RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS

CHFA will amend its Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Qualifying Allocation Plan to make compliance with this policy a threshold criterion to apply for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and CHFA multifamily mortgage funding.

CHFA will develop program documentation, guidance and technical assistance to support development teams in their good faith efforts to comply with this policy, including links to job training programs and agencies that can provide "employment ready" persons in the building and related trades.

CHFA will develop reporting requirements to document the efforts of development teams to comply with this policy as well as the persons hired as a result of good faith efforts.



CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY POLICY STATEMENT

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
CHFA-2010-3	Very Low-Income Construction Employment	07/29/2010

Responsible Department: Multifamily Housing Development Programs

Responsible Position: Chief Housing Officer

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Allocation Plan
 CHFA Multifamily Housing Development Program guidelines and requirements
 CHFA lending programs financed through bond issuance, ITA proceeds, CIA funding or
 Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

DEFINITIONS

“Very low-income residents” those qualified under Federal Section 3 of the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 as administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

“Area” the Metropolitan statistical area in which the housing development is located.

“Good faith efforts” are those actions identified by CHFA in Attachment A to this policy or other similar activity accepted by CHFA.

Board Approval

Date of Board Approval:
Effective Date:

July 29, 2010
July 29, 2010

Signed: 

Date: 8/4/10

Timothy F. Bannon
CHFA President-Executive Director



CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY *POLICY STATEMENT*

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
CHFA-2010-3	Very Low-Income Construction Employment	07/29/2010

CHFA Very Low Income Construction Employment Policy

Examples Of Efforts To Offer Training and Employment Opportunities To Very Low-Income Persons

(Undertaking activities totaling 4 points of which no more than 2 points can be from the first category (1 Point category) and two from the second (2 Point category) or third category (3 Point category) complies with CHFA's Requirement)

1 Point

- ___ Advertising training and employment positions by distributing and posting flyers (that identify the positions to be filled, the qualifications required and where to obtain additional information about the application process) to every occupied dwelling unit, common areas, or other prominent areas in the housing development or developments.
- ___ Contacting resident councils, resident management corporations, or other resident organizations, where they exist, in the housing development or developments and community organizations in the neighborhood, to request the assistance of these organizations in notifying residents of the training and employment positions to be filled.
- ___ Consulting with state and local agencies administering training programs funded through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) or Jobs First Employment Services (JFES), probation and parole agencies, unemployment compensation programs, community organizations and other officials or organizations to assist with recruiting very low-income residents.
- ___ Advertising the jobs to be filled through the local media, such as community television networks, newspapers of general circulation, and radio advertising.

2 Points

- ___ Sponsoring (scheduling, advertising, financing or providing in-kind services) a job informational meeting to be conducted by the owner, developer or contractors at a location in the housing development or local neighborhood.
- ___ Arranging assistance in conducting job interviews and completing job applications for residents of the housing developments or developments, and in the neighborhood or area in which the development is located.



CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY

POLICY STATEMENT

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
CHFA-2010-3	Very Low-Income Construction Employment	07/29/2010

- ___ Arranging for a location in the housing development or developments where very low-income persons reside or the neighborhood of the development, where job applications may be delivered to and collected by a recipient or contractor representative or representatives.
- ___ Contacting agencies administering HUD Youthbuild programs, and requesting their assistance in recruiting HUD Youthbuild programs participants.
- ___ Employing a job coordinator or contracting with a business that is licensed in the field of job placement that will undertake, on behalf of the developer, owner or contractors, the efforts to match eligible and qualified very low-income residents with the training and employment positions that the developer, owner or contractors intend to fill.
- ___ Where there are more qualified very low-income residents than there are positions to be filled, maintaining a file of eligible qualified low-income residents for future employment positions.
- ___ Undertaking job counseling, education and related programs in association with local educational institutions.
- ___ Undertaking such continued job training efforts as may be necessary to ensure the continued employment of very low-income residents previously hired for employment opportunities.
- ___ After selection of bidders, but prior to contract execution, incorporating into the contract negotiated provisions for a specific number of very low-income residents to be trained or employed.

3 Points

- ___ Entering into "first source" hiring agreements with organizations representing very low-income residents.
- ___ Sponsoring or establishing employment and training program for other very low-income residents.
- ___ Coordinating employment opportunities and training needs with the local Workforce Investment Board, Department of Labor or local CTWorks office.
- ___ For a developer, owner or contractor, employing very low-income residents directly on either a permanent or a temporary basis to perform work generated by CHFA's funding.
- ___ Subcontracting with a Section 3 certified or public housing resident owned business for a portion of the construction.