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## CHAPTER 5. DETERMINING INCOME AND CALCULATING RENT

### 5-1 Introduction

- A. Owners must determine the amount of a family's income before the family is allowed to move into assisted housing and at least annually thereafter. The amount of assistance paid on behalf of the family is calculated using the family's annual income less allowable deductions. HUD program regulations specify the types and amounts of income and deductions to be included in the calculation of annual and adjusted income.
- B. Although the definitions of annual and adjusted income used for the programs covered in this handbook have some similarities with rules used by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the tax rules are different from the HUD program rules.
- C. The most frequent errors encountered in reviews of annual and adjusted income determinations in tenant files fall in three categories:
1. Applicants and tenants failing to fully disclose income information;
  2. Errors in identifying required income exclusions; and
  3. Incorrect calculations of deductions often resulting from failure to obtain third-party verification.

Careful interviewing and thorough verification can minimize the occurrence of these errors.

- D. Chapter 5 is organized as follows:
- **Section 1: Determining Annual Income** discusses the requirements regarding annual income and the procedure for calculating a family's annual income when determining eligibility. This section also includes guidance on determining income from assets.
  - **Section 2: Determining Adjusted Income** describes the procedures and requirements for determining adjusted income based on allowable deductions.
  - **Section 3: Verification** presents the requirements for verifying information provided by applicants and tenants related to their eligibility.
  - **Section 4: Calculating Tenant Rent** discusses the methods for calculating the tenant's portion of rent under the different programs covered by this handbook.

## 5-2 Key Terms

- A. There are a number of technical terms used in this chapter that have very specific definitions established by federal statute or regulations, or by HUD. These terms are listed in Figure 5-1 and their definitions can be found in the Glossary to this handbook. It is important to be familiar with these definitions when reading this chapter.
- B. The terms “disability” and “persons with disabilities” are used in two contexts – for civil rights protections, and for program eligibility purposes. Each use has specific definitions.
  - 1. When used in context of protection from discrimination or improving the accessibility of housing, the civil rights-related definitions apply.
  - 2. When used in the context of eligibility under multifamily subsidized housing programs, the program eligibility definitions apply.

**NOTE:** See the Glossary for specific definitions and paragraph 2-23 for an explanation of this difference.

**Figure 5-1: Key Terms**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusted income</li> <li>• Annual income</li> <li>• Assets</li> <li>• Assistance payment</li> <li>• Assisted rent</li> <li>• Assisted tenant</li> <li>• Basic rent</li> <li>• Co-head of household</li> <li>• Contract rent</li> <li>• Dependent</li> <li>• Extremely low-income family</li> <li>• Foster adult</li> <li>• Foster children</li> <li>• Full-time student</li> <li>• Gross rent</li> <li>• Hardship exemption</li> <li>• Head of household</li> <li>• Housing assistance payment (HAP)</li> <li>• Income limit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live-in aide</li> <li>• Low-income family</li> <li>• Market rent</li> <li>• Minimum rent</li> <li>• Operating rent</li> <li>• Project Assistance Contract (PAC)</li> <li>• PRAC Operating Rent</li> <li>• Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC)</li> <li>• Project assistance payment</li> <li>• Project rental assistance payment</li> <li>• Tenant rent</li> <li>• Total tenant payment</li> <li>• Unearned income</li> <li>• Utility allowance</li> <li>• Utility reimbursement</li> <li>• Very low-income family</li> <li>• Welfare assistance</li> <li>• Welfare rent</li> </ul>
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## Section 1: Determining Annual Income

### 5-3 Key Regulations

This paragraph identifies the key regulatory citation pertaining to Section 1: Determining Annual Income. The citation and its title are listed below.

- 24 CFR 5.609 Annual Income

### 5-4 Key Requirements

- A. Annual income is the amount of income that is used to determine a family's eligibility for assistance. Annual income is defined as follows:
1. All amounts, monetary or not, that go to or are received on behalf of the family head, spouse or co-head (even if the family member is temporarily absent), or any other family member; or
  2. All amounts anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual recertification effective date.
- B. Annual income includes all amounts that are not specifically excluded by regulation. Exhibit 5-1, Income Inclusions and Exclusions, provides the complete list of income inclusions and exclusions published in the regulations and *Federal Register* notices.
- C. Annual income includes amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access.

### 5-5 Methods for Projecting and Calculating Annual Income

- A. The requirements for determining whether a family is eligible for assistance, and the amount of rent the family will pay, require the owner to project or estimate the annual income that the family expects to receive. There are several ways to make this projection. The following are two acceptable methods for calculating the annual income anticipated for the coming year:
1. Generally the owner must use current circumstances to anticipate income. The owner calculates projected annual income by annualizing *current* income. Income that may not last for a full 12 months (e.g., unemployment compensation) should be calculated assuming current circumstances will last a full 12 months. If changes occur later in the year, an interim recertification can be conducted to change the family's rent.
  2. If information is available on changes expected to occur during the year, use that information to determine the total *anticipated* income from all known sources during the year and divide that total by 12 months. For example, if a verification source reports that a union contract calls for a

2% pay increase midway through the year, the owner may add the total income for the months before, and the total for the months after the increase and divide that sum by 12 months.

### Example – Calculating Anticipated Annual Income

A teacher's assistant works nine months annually and receives \$1,300 per month. During the summer recess, the teacher's assistant works for the Parks and Recreation Department for \$600 per month. The owner may calculate the family's income using either of the following two methods:

1. Calculate annual income based on current income: \$15,600 (\$1,300 x 12 months).

The owner would then conduct an interim recertification at the end of the school year to recalculate the family's income during the summer months at reduced annualized amount of \$7,200 (\$600 x 12 months). The owner would conduct another interim recertification when the tenant returns to the nine-month job.

2. Calculate annual income based on anticipated changes through the year:

\$11,700          (\$1,300 x 9 months)

+ 1,800          (\$ 600 x 3 months)

\$13,500

Using the second method, the owner would not conduct an interim re-examination at the end of the school year. In order to use this method effectively, history of income from all sources in prior years should be available.

- B. Once all sources of income are known and verified, owners must convert reported income to an annual figure. Convert periodic wages to annual income by multiplying:

1. Hourly wages by the number of hours worked per year (2,080 hours for full-time employment with a 40-hour week and no overtime);
2. Weekly wages by 52;
3. Bi-weekly wages (paid every other week) by 26;
4. Semi-monthly wages (paid twice each month) by 24; and
5. Monthly wages by 12.

To annualize other than full-time income, multiply the wages by the actual number of hours or weeks the person is expected to work.

### Example – Anticipated Increase in Hourly Rate

February 1 Certification effective date  
\$7.50/hour Current hourly rate  
\$8.00/hour New rate to be effective March 15

(40 hours per week x 52 weeks = 2,080 hours per year)

February 1 through March 15 =	6 weeks
6 weeks x 40 hours =	240 hours
2,080 hours minus 240 hours =	1,840 hours
(check: 240 hours + 1,840 hours = 2,080 hours)	

Annual Income is calculated as follows:

240 hours x \$7.50 =	\$ 1,800
1,840 hours x \$8.00 =	\$14,720
Annual Income	\$16,520

(See **Appendix 8** for an explanation of the correct approach to rounding numbers.)

- C. Some circumstances present more than the usual challenges to estimating anticipated income. Examples of challenging situations include a family that has sporadic work or seasonal income or a tenant who is self-employed. In all instances, owners are expected to make a reasonable judgment as to the most reliable approach to estimating what the tenant will receive during the year. In many of these challenging situations, midyear or interim recertifications may be required to reflect changing circumstances. Some examples of approaches to more complex situations are provided below.

### Examples – Irregular Employment Income

Seasonal work. Clyde Kunkel is a roofer. He works from April through September. He does not work in rain or windstorms. His employer is able to provide information showing the total number of regular and overtime hours Clyde worked during the past three years. To calculate Clyde's anticipated income, use the average number of regular hours over the past three years times his current regular pay rate, and the average overtime hours times his current overtime rate.

Sporadic work. Justine Cowan is not always well enough to work full-time. When she is well, she works as a typist with a temporary agency. Last year was a good year and she worked a total of nearly six months. This year, however, she has more medical problems and does not know when or how much she will be able to work. Because she is not working at the time of her recertification, it will be best to exclude her employment income and remind her that she must return for an interim recertification when she resumes work.

### Examples – Irregular Employment Income

Sporadic work. Sam Daniels receives social security disability. He reports that he works as a handyman periodically. He cannot remember when or how often he worked last year: he says it was a couple of times. Sam's earnings appear to fit into the category of nonrecurring, sporadic income that is not included in annual income. Tell Sam that his earnings are not being included in annual income this year, but he must report to the owner any regular work or steady jobs he takes.

Self-employment income. Mary James sells beauty products door-to-door on consignment. She makes most of her money in the months prior to Christmas but has some income throughout the year. She has no formal records of her income other than a copy of the IRS Form 1040 she files each year. With no other information available, the owner will use the income reflected on Mary's copy of her form 1040 as her annual income.

## 5-6 Calculating Income—Elements of Annual Income

### A. Income of Adults and Dependents

1. Figure 5-2 summarizes whose income is counted.
2. Adults. Count the annual income of the head, spouse or co-head, and other adult members of the family. In addition, persons under the age of 18 who have entered into a lease under state law are treated as adults, and their annual income must also be counted. These persons will be either the head, spouse, or co-head; they are sometimes referred to as emancipated minors.

**NOTE:** If an emancipated minor is residing with a family as a member other than the head, spouse, or co-head, the individual would be considered a dependent and his or her income handled in accordance with subparagraph 3 below.

3. Dependents. A dependent is a family member who is under 18 years of age, is disabled, or is a full-time student. The head of the family, spouse, co-head, foster child, or live-in aide are never dependents. Some income received on behalf of family dependents is counted and some is not.
  - a. *Earned* income of minors (family members under 18) is not counted.
  - b. Benefits or other *unearned* income of minors is counted.

**Figure 5-2: Whose Income is Counted?**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Employment Income</b>	<b>Other Income (including income from assets)</b>
Head	Yes	Yes
Spouse	Yes	Yes
Co-head	Yes	Yes
Other adult	Yes	Yes
<b>Dependents</b>		
-Child under 18	No	Yes
Full-time student over 18	See Note	Yes
<b>Nonmembers</b>		
Foster child	No	No
Foster adult	No	No
Live-in aide	No	No

**NOTE:** The earned income of a full-time student 18 years old or older who is not the head, co-head, or spouse is excluded to the extent that it exceeds \$480.

- c. When more than one family shares custody of a child and both families live in assisted housing, only one family at a time can claim the dependent deduction. The family that counts the dependent deduction also counts the unearned income of the child. The other family claims neither the dependent deduction nor the unearned income of the child.
- d. Although full-time students who are 18 years of age or older are considered as dependents, a small amount of their earned income will be counted. Count only earned income up to a maximum of \$480 per year for full-time students, age 18 or older, who are not the head of the family or spouse or co-head. If the income is less than \$480 annually, count all the income. If the annual income exceeds \$480, count \$480 and exclude the amount that exceeds \$480.
- e. The income of full-time students 18 years of age or older who are members of the household but away at school is counted the same as the income for other full-time students. The income of minors who are members of the household but away at school is counted as the income for other minors.
- f. All income of a full-time student, 18 years of age or older, is counted if that person is the head of the family, spouse, or co-head.

- g. Payments received by the family for the care of foster children or foster adults are *not* counted. This rule applies only to payments made through the official foster care relationships with local welfare agencies.
- h. Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 are not counted.

## B. Income of Temporarily Absent Family Members

1. Owners must count all income of family members approved to reside in the unit, even if some members are temporarily absent.
2. If the owner determines that an absent person is no longer a family member, the individual must be removed from the lease and the 50059 facsimile.
3. A temporarily absent individual on active military duty must be removed from the family, and his or her income must not be counted unless that person is the head of the family, spouse, or co-head.
  - a. However, if the spouse or a dependent of the person on active military duty resides in the unit, that person's income must be counted in full, even if the military member is not the head, or spouse of the head of the family.
  - b. The income of the head, spouse, or co-head will be counted even if that person is temporarily absent for active military duty.

### Examples – Income of Temporarily Absent Family Members

- John Chouse works as an accountant. However, he suffers from a disability that periodically requires lengthy stays at a rehabilitation center. When he is confined to the rehabilitation center, he receives disability payments equaling 80% of his usual income.  
During the time he is not in the unit, he will continue to be considered a family member. The owner will conduct an interim recertification. Even though he is not currently in the unit, his total disability income will be counted as part of the family's annual income.
- Mirna Martinez accepts temporary employment in another location and needs a portion of her income to cover living expenses in the new location. The full amount of the income must be included in annual income.
- Charlotte Paul is on active military duty. Her permanent residence is her parents' assisted unit where her husband and children live. Charlotte is not currently exposed to hostile fire. Therefore, because her spouse and children are in the assisted unit, her military pay must be included in annual income. (If her dependents or spouse were not in the unit, she would not be considered a family member and her income would not be included in annual income.)

## C. Income of Permanently Confined Family Members

1. An individual permanently confined to a nursing home or hospital may not be named as family head, spouse, or co-head but may continue as a



family member at the family's discretion. The family has a choice with regard to how the permanently confined individual's income will be counted. The family may elect *either* of the following:

- a. *Include* the individual's income and receive allowable deductions related to the medical care of the permanently confined individual;  
or
- b. *Exclude* the individual's income and not receive allowances based on the medical care of the permanently confined individual.

2. The permanently confined member is listed on the 50059 facsimile as an adult who is not the head, spouse, or co-head, even when the permanently confined family member is married to the person who is or will become the head of the family.

#### **D. Educational Scholarships or Grants**

All forms of student financial assistance (grants, scholarships, educational entitlements, work study programs, and financial aid packages) are excluded from annual income. This is true whether the assistance is paid to the student or directly to the educational institution.

#### **E. Alimony or Child Support**

Owners must count alimony or child support amounts awarded by the court unless the applicant certifies that payments are not being made *and* that he or she has taken all reasonable legal actions to collect amounts due, including filing with the appropriate courts or agencies responsible for enforcing payment.

1. The owner may accept printouts from the court or agency responsible for enforcing support payments, or other evidence indicating the frequency and amount of support payments actually received.
2. Child support paid to the custodial parent through a state child support enforcement or welfare agency may be included in the family's monthly welfare check and may be designated in different ways. In some states these payments are not identified as separate from the welfare grant. In these states, it is important to determine which portion is child support and not to count it twice. In other states, the payment may be listed as child support or as "pass-through" payments. These amounts must be counted as annual income.
3. When no documentation of child support, divorce, or separation is available, either because there was no marriage or for another reason, the owner may require the family to sign a certification stating the amount of child support received.

**F. Regular Cash Contributions and Gifts**

1. Owners must count as income any regular contributions and gifts from persons not living in the unit. These sources may include rent and utility payments paid on behalf of the family, and other cash or noncash contributions provided on a regular basis.

**Examples – Regular Cash Contributions**

- The father of a young single parent pays her monthly utility bills. On average he provides \$100 each month. The \$100 per month must be included in the family's annual income.
- The daughter of an elderly tenant pays her mother's \$175 share of rent each month. The \$175 value must be included in the tenant's annual income.

2. Groceries and/or contributions paid directly to the child care provider by persons not living in the unit are excluded from annual income.
3. Temporary, nonrecurring, or sporadic income (including gifts) is not counted.

**G. Income from a Business**

When calculating annual income, owners must include the net income from operation of a business or profession including self-employment income. Net income is gross income less business expenses, interest on loans, and depreciation computed on a straight-line basis.

1. In addition to net income, owners must count any salaries or other amounts distributed to family members from the business, and cash or assets withdrawn by family members, except when the withdrawal is a reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the business.
2. When calculating net income, owners must not deduct principal payments on loans, interest on loans for business expansion or capital improvements, other expenses for business expansion, or outlays for capital improvements.
3. If the net income from a business is negative, it must be counted as zero income. A negative amount must not be used to offset other family income.

## H. Adjustments for Prior Overpayment of Benefits

If an agency is reducing a family's benefits to adjust for a prior overpayment (e.g., social security, SSI, TANF, or unemployment benefits), count the amount that is actually provided after the adjustment.

### Example – Adjustment for Prior Overpayment of Benefits

Lee Park's social security payment of \$250 per month is being reduced by \$25 per month for a period of six months to make up for a prior overpayment. Count his social security income as \$225 per month for the next six months and as \$250 per month for the remaining six months.

## I. Public Assistance Income in As-Paid Localities

1. Special calculations of public assistance income are required for “as-paid” state, county, or local public assistance programs. An “as-paid” system is one:
  - a. In which the family receives an amount from a public agency specifically for shelter and utilities; and
  - b. In which the amount is adjusted based upon the actual amount the family pays for shelter and utilities.
2. The public assistance amount specifically designated for rent and utilities is called the “welfare rent.”
3. To determine annual income for public assistance recipients in “as-paid” localities, include the following:
  - a. The amount of the family's grant for other than shelter and utilities; and
  - b. The maximum amount the welfare department can pay for shelter and utilities for a family of that size (i.e., the welfare rent). This may be different from the amount the family is actually receiving.
4. Each as-paid locality works somewhat differently, and many are subject to court-ordered modifications to the basic policy. Owners should discuss how the rules are applied with the HUD Field Office.

**Example – Welfare Income in “As Paid” Localities**

At application, a family’s welfare grant is \$300, which includes \$125 for basic needs and \$175 for shelter and utilities (based upon where the family is now living). However, the maximum the welfare agency could allow for shelter and utilities for this size family is \$190.

Count the following as income:

\$125 Amount family receives for basic needs

\$190 Maximum for shelter and utilities

\$315 Monthly public assistance income

**J. Periodic Payments from Long-Term Care Insurance, Pensions, Annuities, and Disability or Death Benefits**

1. The full amount of periodic payments from annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, and disability or death benefits is included in annual income. (See subparagraph N below for information on the withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment.) Payments such as Black Lung Sick Benefits, Veterans Disability, and Dependent Indemnity Compensation for the Widow of a Killed in Action Serviceman are examples of such periodic payments.
2. Withdrawals from retirement savings accounts such as Individual Retirement Accounts and 401K accounts that are not periodic payments do not fall in this category and are not counted in annual income (see paragraph 5.7 G.4).

**Example – Withdrawals from IRAs or 401K Accounts**

Isaac Freeman retired recently. He has an IRA account but is not receiving periodic payments from it because his pension is adequate for his routine expenses. However, he has withdrawn \$2,000 for a trip with his children. The withdrawal is not a periodic payment and is not counted as income.

3. If the tenant is receiving long-term care insurance payments, any payments in excess of \$180 per day must be counted toward the gross annual income. (**NOTE:** Payment of long-term care insurance premiums are an eligible medical expense.)

## K. Income from Training Programs

1. Amounts received under HUD-funded training programs are excluded from annual income.
2. Incremental earnings and benefits received by any family member due to participation in qualifying state or local employment training programs are excluded. Income from training programs not affiliated with a local government, and income from the training of a family member resident to serve on the management staff, is also excluded.
  - a. Excluded income must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives and for a specific, limited time period. The initial enrollment must not exceed one year, although income earned during extensions for additional specific time periods may also be eligible for exclusion.
  - b. Training income may be excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program.
  - c. Exclusions include stipends, wages, transportation or child care payments, or reimbursements.
  - d. Income received as compensation for employment is excluded only if the employment is a component of a job training program. Once training is completed, the employment income becomes income that is counted.
  - e. Amounts received during the training period from sources that are unrelated to the job training program, such as welfare benefits, social security payments, or other employment, are not excluded.
3. Owners may ask to use project funds or funds from the Residual Receipts account to underwrite all or a portion of the cost of developing, maintaining, and managing a job training program for project residents if funds are available.
  - a. The Field Office will make the determination if the job training program may be approved, and if project funds are sufficient to fund the job training program and maintain the physical and financial integrity of the project. Job training programs may be either on-site at the project or off-site. For example, job training programs that have partnerships with local colleges, community based organizations, or local business, may have in-house job training programs designed for project residents.
  - b. Funds that an owner may choose to use to underwrite a job training program may include Section 8 funds, Community Development Block Grant funds, or housing authority funds. These funds may be used to cover the costs of various

components of a job training program, including course materials, computer software, computer hardware, or personnel costs. Also, contractors and subcontractors, in connection with work performed under a Flexible Subsidy contract, may elect to hire project residents to perform certain skills required under the contract. If the employment of the project residents was pursuant to an apprenticeship program, this could constitute a training program using HUD funds, and income received by the tenants in the apprenticeship program will qualify as an exclusion from income.

**L. Resident Services Stipends**

Resident services stipends are generally modest amounts of money received by residents for performing services such as hall monitoring, fire patrol, lawn maintenance, and resident management.

1. If the resident stipend exceeds \$200 per month, owners must include the entire amount in annual income.
2. If the resident stipend is \$200 or less per month, owners must exclude the resident services stipend from annual income.

**M. Income Received by a Resident of an Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded or for the Developmentally Disabled (ICF/MR or ICF/DD) and Assisted Living Units in Elderly Projects**

1. An intermediate care facility is a group home for mentally retarded or developmentally disabled individuals (ICF/MR or ICF/DD). The term "intermediate care facility" is one used by state mental health departments for group homes serving these residents.
2. Assisted living units are units in projects developed for elderly residents with project-based assistance that have been converted to assisted living units.
3. The local agency responsible for Medicaid provides funds directly to group home operators and assisted living providers for services.
4. Annual income at an ICF/MR, ICF/DD, or assisted living unit must include:
  - a. The SSI payment a tenant receives or the facility receives on behalf of the tenant; plus
  - b. All other income the tenant receives from sources other than SSI that are not excluded from income by HUD regulations (see Exhibit 5-1). Examples of other sources of income include wages, pensions, income from sheltered workshops, income from a trust, or other interest income.

- c. The personal allowance of an individual residing in an ICF/MR or ICF/DD is not included in annual income. If the owner is unable to determine the actual amount of the personal allowance, use \$30.
5. Annual income does not include the enhanced benefit portion of the SSI that is provided to pay for services.
6. In some instances, a resident's SSI income may be reduced between annual recertifications if the resident's earnings exceed a specified amount. If this happens, the resident may request an interim recertification.

#### **N. Withdrawal of Cash or Assets from an Investment**

The withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment received as periodic payments should be counted as income unless the family can document that the amounts withdrawn are reimbursement of amounts invested. When a family is making regular withdrawals from an account in which it has made an investment, the withdrawals will count as income only after the amount invested has been totally paid out. Withdrawals from investments will be treated as income only when the withdrawals are made on a regular basis, as in the monthly payments received from an annuity.

#### **Example – Documenting That Amounts Withdrawn Are Reimbursement of Amounts Invested**

- David Dow purchased an annuity many years ago. Now that he is retired, he is receiving monthly payments of \$650. When he purchased the annuity, he paid \$75,000. The payments he receives from the annuity should not be counted as income until he has received payments for the full \$75,000 invested.  
  
David has received \$6,500 from the annuity. He will not have received the full \$75,000 for another 8.8 years. The owner should maintain the insurance company information in David's file and should review the payments and status of the annuity with David at each annual recertification, but the annuity payments should not be counted as income for the next 8 years. (The annuity will also not be counted as an asset because David does not have the ability to withdraw the principal amount in the annuity.)
- Josefina and Rodrigo Gomez have received \$300 a month from an annuity for 9.5 years. The Gomez's paid \$36,000 for the annuity when they purchased it years ago. Six months after the current annual recertification becomes effective, the Gomezes will have reclaimed the full amount of their investment. For the second 6 months of the coming year, therefore, the owner will include the \$300 monthly payment from the annuity as income.
- An applicant, Charlie Curran, is receiving \$150 a month from his annuity. He purchased the annuity by making payments of \$25 a month for 20 years. Although he did miss a payment occasionally during the period he was purchasing the annuity, the owner has talked with the insurance company and has received written verification that the total amount Charlie paid for the annuity over time was \$4,750. He began receiving payments from the annuity 3 years ago. To date he has received \$5,400 in annuity payments; therefore, all of the \$150 monthly annuity payments Charlie receives in the coming year will be counted as income.

**O. Lump Sum Payments Counted as Income**

1. Generally, lump sum amounts received by a family, such as inheritances, insurance settlements, or proceeds from sale of property are considered assets, not income.
2. When social security or SSI benefit income is paid in a lump sum as a result of deferred periodic payments, that amount is *excluded* from annual income.
3. Settlement payments from claim disputes over welfare, unemployment, or similar benefits may be counted as assets, but lump sum payments caused by *delays in processing* periodic payments for unemployment or welfare assistance are included as income.

How lump sum payments for delayed start of benefits are counted depends upon the following:

- a. When the family reports the change;
- b. When an interim re-examination is conducted; and
- c. Whether the family's income increases or decreases as a result.

A lump sum payment resulting from delayed benefit income may be treated in either of the two ways illustrated in the example shown in Figure 5-3.

4. Lottery winnings paid in one payment are treated as assets. Lottery winnings *paid in periodic payments* must be counted as income.

**P. Exclusions from Income**

1. Regulations for the multifamily subsidized housing programs covered by this handbook specifically exclude certain types of income from annual income. However, many of the items listed as exclusions from annual income under HUD requirements are items that the IRS includes as taxable income. Therefore, it is important for owners to focus specifically on the HUD program requirements regarding annual income.
2. Among the items that are excluded from annual income are the value of food provided through:
  - a. The Meals on Wheels program, food stamps, or other programs that provide food for the needy;
  - b. Groceries provided by persons not living in the household; and



**Figure 5-3: Treatment of Delayed Benefit Payments Received in a Lump Sum**

Family member loses his/her job on October 19 and applies for unemployment benefits. The family receives a lump sum payment of \$700 in December to cover the period from 10/20 to 12/5 and begins to receive \$100 a week effective 12/6.

**Option A:** The owner processes one interim re-examination immediately effective 11/1 and a second interim after unemployment benefits are known.

	<u>10/1</u>	<u>11/1</u>	<u>12/1</u>	<u>1/1</u>	<u>2/1</u>
Monthly gross income	800	*0	*0	492**	492**
Monthly allowances (three minors x 480 / 12 months)	120	-	-	120	120
Monthly adjusted income	680	0	0	372	372
Total tenant payment (TTP)	204	25	25	25***	112***

\* The family's income is calculated at \$0/month beginning November 1, continuing until benefits actually begin and new income is calculated. TTP is set at the minimum rent.

\*\* Family's actual income for 1/1 is \$100/week x 52 weeks = \$5,200 / 12 = \$433.

However, because the family's TTP was calculated at zero income for the months of November and December (the period eventually covered by the \$700 lump sum payment), the annual income to be used in calculating monthly gross income should be as follows:

\$100/week benefit x 52 weeks = \$5,200 + \$700 lump sum payment = \$5,900 annual gross income / 12 = \$492.

\*\*\* Increased rent does not start until 2/1 in order to give the family notice of rent increase.

**Option B:** The owner processes one interim re-examination after unemployment benefits are known.

	<u>10/1</u>	<u>11/1</u>	<u>12/1</u>	<u>1/1</u>	<u>2/1</u>
Monthly gross income	800	0/800*	0/800*	433*	433*
Monthly allowances (three minors x 480 / 12 Months)	120	120	120	120	120
Monthly adjusted income	680	0/680	0/680	313	313
Total tenant payment	204	204*	204*	94	94
Recalculated TTP	-	94***	94*	94	94
Rent credit (204 - 94=)	-	110	110	-	-

\* Family's actual income for 11/1 and 12/1 is zero, but because the owner does not process an interim re-examination, the family's TTP continues to be calculated using \$800 as monthly gross income. Beginning 1/1, monthly gross income is known to be \$100/week, or \$433/month.

\*\* The lump sum payment is taken into account by making the recertification retroactive to 11/1. Annual income is calculated as \$5,200 / 12 = \$433 monthly gross income.

\*\*\* TTP for November and December recalculated as \$433 monthly gross income and \$313 monthly adjusted income x .30 = 94 with credit or refund to family of \$110/month for each of these two months for difference between TTP paid of \$204 and recalculated TTP of \$94.

- c. Amounts received under the School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, including reduced lunches and food under the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

### Examples – Income Exclusions

- The Value of Food Provided through the Meals on Wheels Program or Other Programs Providing Food for the Needy. Jack Love receives a hot lunch each day during the week in the community room and an evening meal in his apartment. One meal is provided through the Meals on Wheels program. A local church provides the other. The value of the meals he receives is not counted as income.
- Groceries provided by persons not living in the household. Carrie Sue Colby's mother purchases and delivers groceries each week for Carrie Sue and her two year old. The value of these groceries is not counted as income despite the fact that these are a regular contribution or gift.
- Amounts Received Under WIC or the School Lunch Act. Lydia Jeffries' two children receive a free breakfast and reduced priced lunches at school every day through the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The value of this food is not counted as income.

3. Some additional examples of income that is excluded from the calculation of annual income follow.

### Examples – Income Exclusions

- Resident service stipends. Rich Fuller receives \$50 a month for distributing flyers for management. This amount is excluded from annual income.
- Deferred periodic payments of social security benefits. Germain Johnson received \$32,000 in deferred social security benefits following a lengthy eligibility dispute. This delayed payment of social security benefits is treated as an asset, not as income.
- Income from training programs. Jennifer Jones is participating in a qualified state-supported employment training program every afternoon to learn improved computer skills. Each morning, she continues her regular job as a typist. The \$250 a week she receives as a part-time typist is included in annual income. The \$150 a week she receives for participation in the training program is excluded in annual income.
- Earned Income Tax Credit refund payments. Mary Frances Jackson is eligible for an earned income tax credit. She receives payments from her employer each quarter because of the tax credit. These payments are excluded in annual income.
- Student financial assistance. Jeff Alkire won a scholarship from the local civic association. The association sends him a \$1,000 check each semester to help with tuition costs. These funds are excluded from annual income.

## 5-7 Calculating Income from Assets

Annual income includes amounts derived from assets to which family members has access.

### A. What is Considered to Be an Asset?

1. Assets are items of value that may be turned into cash. A savings account is a cash asset. The bank pays interest on the asset. The interest is the *income* from that asset.
2. Some tenants have assets that are not earning interest. A quantity of money under a mattress is an asset: it is a thing of value that could be used to the benefit of the tenant, but under the mattress it is not producing income.
3. Some belongings of value are not considered assets. Necessary personal property is not counted as an asset. Exhibit 5-2 summarizes the items that are considered assets and those that are not.

### B. Determining Income from Assets

**Note:** For families receiving only BMIR assistance, it is not necessary to determine whether family assets exceed \$5,000. The rule for imputing income from assets does not apply to the BMIR program.

1. The calculation to determine the amount of income from assets to include in annual income considers both of the following:
  - a. The total cash value of the family's assets; and
  - b. The amount of income those assets are earning or could earn.
2. The rule for calculating income from assets differs depending on whether the total cash value of family assets is \$5,000 or less, or is more than \$5,000.

### C. Determining the Total Cash Value of Family Assets

1. To comply with the rule for determining the amount of income from assets, it is necessary to first determine whether the total "cash value" of family assets exceeds \$5,000.
  - a. The "cash value" of an asset is the market value less reasonable expenses that would be incurred in selling or converting the asset to cash, such as the following:
    - (1) Penalties for premature withdrawal;
    - (2) Broker and legal fees; and

(3) Settlement costs for real estate transactions.

The cash value is the amount the family could actually receive in cash, if the family converted an asset to cash.

**Example – Calculating the Cash Value of an Asset**

A family has a certificate of deposit (CD) in the amount of \$5,000 paying interest at 4%. The penalty for early withdrawal is three months of interest.

$$\$5,000 \times 0.04 = \$200 \text{ in annual income}$$

$$\$200/12 \text{ months} = \$16.67 \text{ interest per month}$$

$$\$16.67 \times 3 \text{ months} = \$50.01$$

$$\$5,000 - \$50 = \$4,950 \text{ cash value of CD}$$

- b. It is essential to note that a family is not required to convert an asset to cash. Determining the cash value of the asset is done simply as a calculation by the owner because it is a required step when determining income from assets under program requirements.

**D. Assets Owned Jointly**

1. If assets are owned by more than one person, prorate the assets according to the percentage of ownership. If no percentage is specified or provided by a state or local law, prorate the assets evenly among all owners.
2. If an asset is not effectively owned by an individual, do not count it as an asset. An asset is not effectively owned when the asset is held in an individual's name, but (a) the asset and any income it earns accrue to the benefit of someone else who is not a member of the family, and (b) that other person is responsible for income taxes incurred on income generated by the assets.
3. Determining which individuals have ownership of an asset requires collecting as much information as is available and making the best judgment possible based on that information.

**Example – Determining the Cash Value of an Asset**

The “cash value” of an asset is the amount a family would receive if the family turned a noncash asset into cash.

The cash value is the market value—or the amount another person would pay to acquire the asset—less the cost to turn the asset into cash.

If a family owns real estate, it may be necessary to consider the family’s equity in the property as well as the expense to sell the property.

To determine the family’s equity, subtract amounts owed on the property from its market value:

Market value  
- Mortgage amount owed  
Equity in the property

Calculate the cash value by subtracting the expense of selling the property:

Equity  
- Expense of selling  
Cash Value

Juanita Player owns a rental house. The market value is \$100,000. She owes \$60,000. The cost to dispose of this house would be \$8,000. The owner would determine the cash value as follows:

Market Value	\$100,000
Mortgage amount	- <u>\$60,000</u>
	40,000
Cost of disposing of the asset (real estate commission, and other costs of sale)	- <u>\$8,000</u>
<b>Cash Value</b>	<b>\$32,000</b>

- a. In some instances, but not all, knowing whose social security number is connected with the asset may help in identifying ownership. Owners should be aware that there are many situations in which a social security number connected with an asset does not indicate ownership and other situations where there is ownership without connection to a social security number.
- b. Determining who has contributed to an asset or who is paying taxes on the asset may assist in identifying ownership.

**Examples – Jointly Owned Assets**

- Helen Wright is an assisted-housing tenant. She and her daughter, Elsie Duncan, have a joint savings account. Mother and daughter both contribute to the account. They have used the account for trips together and to cover emergency needs for either of them. Assume in this example that state law does not specify ownership. Even though either Helen Wright or Elsie Duncan could withdraw the entire asset for her own use, count Helen's ownership as 50% of the account.
- Jean Boucher's name is on her mother's savings account to ensure that she can access the funds for her mother's care. The account is not effectively owned by Jean and should not be counted as her asset.

**E. Calculating Income from Assets When Assets Total \$5,000 or Less**

If the total cash value of all the family's assets is \$5,000 or less, the actual income the family receives from assets is the amount that is included in annual income as income from assets.

**F. Calculating Income from Assets When Assets Exceed \$5,000**

1. When net family assets are more than \$5,000, annual income includes the greater of the following:
  - a. Actual income from assets; or
  - b. A percentage of the value of family assets based upon the current passbook savings rate as established by HUD. This is called *imputed* income from assets. The passbook rate is currently set at 2%.
2. To begin this calculation, first add the cash value of all assets. Multiply the total cash value of all assets by .02. The product is the "imputed income" from assets. Then, add the actual income from all assets. The greater of the imputed income from assets or the actual income from assets is included in the calculation of annual income.

**Example – Use Actual Income from Assets When  
Total Net Family Assets are \$5,000 or Less**

Type of Asset	Cash Value	Actual Yearly Income
<i>Certificate of Deposit</i> \$1,000 withdrawal fee \$50 interest @ 4%	\$950	\$40
<i>Savings Account</i> \$500 interest @ 2.5%	\$500	\$13
<i>Stock</i> \$300 Not paying dividends	\$300	\$0
	\$1,750	\$53
<b>Total</b>		

The total cash value of the family's assets is \$1,750. Therefore, the amount that is added to annual income as income from assets is the actual income earned or \$53.

**Example – Imputed Income from Assets**

“Imputed” means “attributed” or “assigned.” Imputing income from assets is “assigning” an amount of income solely for the sake of the annual income calculation. The imputed income is not real income.

For example, money under a mattress is not earning income. If the money were put in a savings account it would earn interest. Imputed income from such an asset is the interest the money would earn if it were put in a savings account.

A family with cash under a mattress is not required to put the cash in a savings account; but when the owner is calculating income for a family with more than \$5,000 in assets, the owner must assign an amount that cash would earn if it were in a savings account.

**Example – Determining Income from Assets  
When Net Family Assets Exceed \$5,000**

Type of Asset	Cash Value	Actual Yearly Income
<i>Checking Account</i> (non-interest bearing)	\$455	\$0
<i>Savings Account</i> (interest at 2.5%)	\$6,000	\$150
<i>Stocks</i> (not paying dividends this year)	\$3,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,455</b>	<b>\$150</b>

Total cash value of assets is greater than \$5,000. Therefore, it is necessary to compare the actual income from assets to the imputed income from assets.

The total cash value of assets (\$9,455) is multiplied by 2% to determine the imputed income from assets.

$$.02 \times \$9,455 = \$189$$

\$189 is greater than the actual income from assets (\$150).

In this case, therefore, the owner will add \$189 to the annual income calculation as income from assets.

## G. Calculating Income from Assets - Specific Types of Assets

### 1. Trusts.

#### a. Explanation of trusts.

- (1) A trust is a legal arrangement generally regulated by state law in which one party (the creator or grantor) transfers property to a second party (the trustee) who holds the property for the benefit of one or more third parties (the beneficiaries). A trust can contain cash or other liquid assets or real or personal property that could be turned into cash. Generally, the assets are invested for the benefit of the beneficiaries.
- (2) Trusts may be revocable or nonrevocable. A revocable trust is a trust that the creator of the trust may amend or end (revoke). When there is a revocable trust, the creator has access to the funds in the trust account. When the creator sets up a nonrevocable trust, the creator has no access to the funds in the account.
- (3) The beneficiary frequently will be unable to touch any of the trust funds until a specified date or event (e.g., the



beneficiary's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday or the grantor's death). In some instances, the beneficiary may receive the regular investment income from the trust but not be able to withdraw any of the principal.

- (4) The beneficiary and the grantor may be members of the same family. A parent or grandparent may have placed funds in trust to a child. If the trust is revocable, the funds may be accessible to the parent or grandparent but not to the child.

b. How to treat trusts.

- (1) The basis for determining how to treat trusts relies on information about who has access to either the principal in the account or the income from the account.
- (2) Revocable trusts. If any member of the tenant family has the right to withdraw the funds in the account, the trust is considered to be an asset and is treated as any other asset. The cash value of the trust (the amount the family member would receive if he or she withdrew all that could be withdrawn) is added to total net assets. The actual income received is added to actual income from assets.

**Example – A Trust Accessible to Family Members**

Assez Charaf lives alone. He has placed \$20,000 in trust to his grandson to be available to the grandson upon the death of Assez. The trust is revocable, that is, Assez has control of the principal and interest in the account and can amend the trust or remove the funds at any time. In calculating Assez's income, the owner will add the \$20,000 to Assez's net family assets and the actual income received on the trust to actual income from assets.

- (3) Nonrevocable trusts. If no family member has access to either the principal or income of the trust at the current time, the trust is not included in the calculation of income from assets or in annual income.

If only the income (and none of the principal) from the trust is currently available to a family member, the income is counted in annual income, but the trust is not included in the calculation of income from assets.

- (4) Nonrevocable trust as an asset disposed of for less than fair market value. If a tenant sets up a nonrevocable trust for the benefit of another person while residing in assisted

housing, the trust is considered an asset disposed of for less than fair market value (see subparagraph G.6 below).

- If the trust has been set up so income from the trust is regularly reinvested in the trust and is not paid back to the creator, the trust is calculated as any other asset disposed of for less than fair market value for two years and not taken into consideration thereafter.

**Example – Nonrevocable Trust As an Asset Disposed of for Less Than Fair Market Value**

Sarah Gordy placed \$100,000 in a nonrevocable trust for her grandson. Last year, the trust produced \$8,000, which was reinvested into the trust.

The trust is treated as an asset disposed of for less than fair market value for two years. (See paragraph 5.7 G.6.) No actual income from the trust is included in Sarah's annual income, but the value of the asset when it was given away, \$100,000, is included in net family assets for two years from the date the trust was established.

- Nonrevocable trust distributing income. When a tenant places an asset in a nonrevocable trust but continues to receive income from the trust, the income is added to annual income *and* the trust is counted as an asset disposed of for less than market value for two years. Following the two-year period, the owner will count only the actual income distributed from the trust to the tenant.

**Example – Nonrevocable Trust Distributing Income to the Creator/Tenant**

Reggie Bouchard has established a nonrevocable trust in the amount of \$35,000 that no one in the tenant family controls. Income from the trust is paid to Reggie. Last year, he received \$3,500.

The owner will count Reggie's actual anticipated income from the trust in next year's annual income.

Because the asset was disposed of for less than fair market value (see paragraph 5.7 G.6), the value of the asset given away, \$35,000, is counted as an asset disposed of for less than fair market value for two years.

- (5) Payment of principal from a trust. The beneficiary of a trust may receive funds from the trust in different ways. A beneficiary may receive the full value of a trust at one time. In that instance the funds would be considered a lump sum receipt and would be treated as an asset. A trust set up to provide support for a person with disabilities may pay only income from the trust on a periodic basis. Occasionally, however, a beneficiary may be given a portion of the trust principal on a periodic basis. When the principal is paid out on a periodic basis, those payments are considered regular income or gifts and are counted in annual income.

**Example – Payment of Principal Amounts from a Trust**

Jared Leland receives funds from a nonrevocable trust established by his parents for his support. Last year he received \$18,000 from the trust. The attorney managing the trust reported that \$3,500 of the funds distributed was interest income and \$14,500 was from principal. Jared receives a payment of \$1,500 each month (an amount that includes both principal and interest from the trust).

The owner will count the entire \$18,000 Jared received as annual income.

c. Special needs trusts.

A special needs trust is a trust that may be created under some state laws, often by family members for disabled persons who are not able to make financial decisions for themselves. Generally, the assets within the trust are not accessible to the beneficiary.

- (1) If the beneficiary does not have access to income from the trust, then it is not counted as part of income.
- (2) If income from the trust is paid to the beneficiary regularly, those payments are counted as income.

**Example – Special Needs Trust**

Daryl Rockland is a 55-year-old person with disabilities, living with his elderly parents. The parents have established a special-needs trust to provide income for their son after they are gone. The trust is not revocable; neither the parents nor the son currently have access to the principal or interest. In calculating the income of the Rocklands, the owner will disregard the trust.

2. Annuities.

a. Annuity facts and terms.

- (1) An annuity is a contract sold by an insurance company designed to provide payments, usually to a retired person, at specified intervals. Fixed annuities guarantee a certain payment amount, while variable annuities do not, but have the potential for greater returns.
  - A hybrid annuity (also called a combination annuity) combines the features of a fixed annuity and a variable annuity.
  - A deferred annuity is an annuity that delays income payments until the holder chooses to receive them. An immediate annuity is one that begins payments immediately upon purchase.
  - A life annuity continues to pay out as long as the owner is alive. A single-life annuity provides income benefits for only one person. A joint life annuity is issued on two individuals, and payments continue in whole or in part as long as either individual is alive.
- (2) Generally, a person who holds an annuity from which he or she is not yet receiving payments will also be earning income. In most instances, a fixed annuity will be earning interest at a specified fixed rate similar to interest earned by a CD. A variable annuity will earn (or lose) based on market fluctuations, as in a mutual fund.
- (3) Most annuities charge surrender or withdrawal fees. In addition, early withdrawal usually results in tax penalties.
- (4) Depending on the type of annuity and the current status of the annuity, the owner will need to ask different questions of the verification source, which will normally be the applicant or tenant's insurance broker.

b. Income after the holder begins receiving payments.

- (1) When verifying an annuity, owners should ask the verification source whether the holder of the annuity has the right to withdraw the balance of the annuity. For annuities without this right, the annuity is not treated as an asset.
- (2) Generally, when the holder has begun receiving annuity payments, the holder can no longer convert it to a lump sum of cash.

- In this situation, the holder will receive regular payments from the annuity that will be treated as regular income, and no calculations of income from assets will be made.
- However, the amount that the holder invested in the annuity will not be counted as income (see paragraph 5.6 N on regarding the amount a family has invested in an asset).

**Example – Income from an Annuity**

Christina Cross receives \$200 a month from an annuity. The owner has asked the insurance company to verify the total amount Christina paid and the total amount she has received in payments to date. The verification documents that she paid \$40,000 for the annuity over the years while she was working and she has received a total of \$4,800 in payments since she retired. The owner will not count the annuity payments as income until Christina has received \$40,000 from the insurance company.

c. Calculations when an annuity is considered an asset.

- (1) When an applicant or tenant has the option of withdrawing the balance in an annuity, the annuity will be treated like any other asset. If total net assets exceed \$5,000, it will be necessary to determine the cash value of the annuity in addition to determining the actual income earned.
- (2) In most instances, an annuity from which payments have not yet been made is earning income on the balance in the annuity. A fixed annuity will earn income at a fixed rate in the same manner that a CD earns income. A variable annuity will earn (or lose) based on current market conditions, as with a mutual fund.
- (3) The owner will need to verify with the insurance agent or other appropriate source:
  - The right of the holder to withdraw the balance (even if penalties are involved).
  - The basis on which the annuity may be expected to grow during the coming year.
  - The surrender or early withdrawal penalty fee.
  - The tax rate and the tax penalty that would apply if the family withdrew the annuity.

- 
- (4) The cash value will be the full value of the annuity, less the surrender (or withdrawal) penalty, and less any taxes and tax penalties that would be due.
  - (5) The actual income is the balance in the annuity times the percentage (either fixed or variable) at which the annuity is expected to grow over the coming year. (This money will be reinvested into the annuity, but it is still considered actual income.)
  - (6) The imputed income from the asset is calculated only after the cash value of all family assets has been determined. Imputed income from assets is calculated on the total cash value of all family assets.
3. Lump sum receipts counted as assets.
- a. Commonly, when a family receives a large amount of money, a lump sum payment, the family will put the money in a checking or savings account, or will purchase stocks or bonds or a CD. Owners must count lump sum payments received by a tenant as assets. Examples of lump sum payments include the following:
    - (1) Inheritances;
    - (2) Capital gains;
    - (3) Lottery winnings paid in one payment;
    - (4) Cash from the sale of assets;
    - (5) Insurance settlements (including health and accident insurance, workers compensation, and personal and property losses); and
    - (6) Any other amounts that are received in one-time lump sum payments.

### Example – Calculating the Cash Value of an Annuity

Rodrigo Ramirez, site manager at Fernwood Forrest, has interviewed Barbara Barstow, an applicant who reports holding an annuity from which she will not receive payments for another 15 years when she turns 65. The applicant could not provide any more detail on the annuity but did report the name, address, and phone number of her insurance agent.

Rodrigo called the insurance agent and faxed a copy of the applicant's approval for release of information. As a result, Rodrigo learned that the annuity is a fixed annuity, with a current value of \$20,400 earning interest at an annual rate of 4.5%. The applicant could withdraw the current balance in the account but would pay a surrender penalty of \$3,000. If the annuity is withdrawn, then the applicant will owe \$1,200 in tax penalties.

In this example, the important information for calculating cash value is the current value, \$20,400; the surrender fee, \$3,000; and the tax penalties, \$1,200. If the applicant withdrew the cash from the annuity, after paying the surrender fee and tax penalty, then the amount of cash received would be \$16,200.

The cash value, \$16,200, is recorded as an asset.

Rodrigo will also calculate the actual anticipated income on this asset:  $\$20,400 \times .045 = \$918$ .

- b. A lump sum payment is counted as an asset only as long as the family continues to possess it. If the family uses the money for something that is not an asset—a car or a vacation or education—the lump sum must not be counted.
- c. It is possible that a lump sum or an asset purchased with a lump sum payment may result in enough income to require the family to report the increased income before the next regularly scheduled annual recertification. But this requirement to report an increase in income before the next annual recertification would not apply if the income from the asset was not measurable by the tenant (e.g., gems, stamp collection).

**Examples – Lump Sum Additions to Family Assets (One-Time Payment)**

- JoAnne Wettig won \$500 in the lottery and received it in one payment. Do not count the \$500 as income. At JoAnne's next annual recertification, she will report all of her assets.
- Mia LaRue, a tenant in a Section 8 property, won \$75,000 in one payment in the lottery. She buys a car with some of the money, and puts the remaining amount of \$24,000 in the bank. Mia receives her first bank statement and notices that the income on this asset is \$205 per month. She must report this increase in income because the family has experienced a cumulative increase in income of more than \$200 per month. (See paragraph 7.10 A4 on rules for reporting interim increases in income.) The owner must perform an interim recertification and count the greater of the actual or imputed income on this asset (since the net family assets are greater than \$5,000).

4. Balances held in retirement accounts.
  - a. Balances held in retirement accounts are counted as assets if the money is accessible to the family member. For individuals still employed, accessible amounts are counted even if withdrawal would result in a penalty. However, amounts that would be accessible only if the person retired are not counted.
  - b. IRA, Keogh, and similar retirement savings accounts are counted as assets, even though withdrawal would result in a penalty.
  - c. Include contributions to company retirement/pension funds:
    - (1) While an individual is employed, count only amounts the family can withdraw without retiring or terminating employment.
    - (2) After retiring or terminating employment, count as an asset any amount the employee elects to receive as a lump sum.
  - d. Include in *annual income* any retirement benefits received through periodic payments.



**Examples – Balances Held in an IRA or 401K Retirement Account**

- Jed Dozier's 401K account balance is \$35,000. He is able to terminate his participation in the retirement plan without quitting his job, but if he did so he would lose a part of his employer's contribution and would pay a penalty fee. The total cash he could withdraw, \$18,000, is the amount that is counted as an asset.
- Stephen King is retired. Each month he withdraws \$1,000 from his IRA account. The balance in his IRA account is \$200,000. The balance in his IRA at the end of the year, including interest earned, will be \$194,000. That is the amount that should be counted as an asset. (The \$1,000 withdrawn each month is not counted as income because Stephen has verified that the funds in his IRA are funds he invested.)

5. Mortgage or deed of trust.

- a. Occasionally, when an individual sells a piece of real estate, the seller may loan money to the purchaser through a mortgage or deed of trust. This may be referred to as a "contract sale."
- b. A mortgage or deed of trust held by a family member is included as an asset. Payments on this type of asset are often received as one combined payment which includes interest and principal. The value of the asset is determined by calculating the unpaid principal at the end of the 12-month period following certification. Each year this balance will decline as more principal is paid off. The interest portion of the payment is counted as actual income from an asset.

6. Assets disposed of for less than fair market value. Applicants and tenants must declare whether an asset has been disposed of for less than fair market value at each certification and recertification. Owners must count assets disposed of for less than fair market value during the two years preceding certification or recertification. The amount counted as an asset is the difference between the cash value and the amount actually received. (This provision does not apply to families receiving only BMIR assistance.)

- a. Any asset that is disposed of for less than its full value is counted, including cash gifts as well as property. To determine the amount that has been given away, owners must compare the cash value of the asset to any amount received in compensation.

- b. However, the rule applies only when the fair market value of all assets given away during the past two years exceeds the gross amount received by more than \$1,000.

**Examples – Assets of More or Less Than \$1,000 Disposed of for Less Than Fair Market Value**

- During the past two years, Alexis Turner donated \$300 to the local food bank, \$150 to a camp program, and \$200 to her church. The total amount she disposed of for less than fair market value is \$650. Since the total is less than \$1,000, the donations are not treated as assets disposed of for less than fair market value.
- Jackson Jones gave each of his three children \$500. Because the total exceeds \$1,000, the gifts are treated as assets disposed of for less than fair market value.

- c. When the two-year period expires, the income assigned to the disposed asset also expires. If the two-year period ends in the middle of a recertification year, then the tenant may request an interim recertification to remove the disposed asset(s).

**Example – Asset Disposed of for Less Than Fair Market Value**

Margot Lundberg's recertification will be effective January 1. On that date, it will be 18 months since she sold her house to her daughter for \$60,000 less than its value. The owner will count income on the \$60,000 for only six months. (After six months, the two-year limit on assets disposed of for less than fair market value will have expired.)

- d. Assets disposed of for less than fair market value as a result of foreclosure, bankruptcy, divorce, or separation are *not* counted.
- e. Assets placed in nonrevocable trusts are considered as assets disposed of for less than fair market value except when the assets placed in trust were received through settlements or judgements.
- f. Applicants and tenants must sign a self-verification form at their initial certification and each annual recertification identifying all assets that have been disposed of for less than fair market value or certifying that no assets have been disposed of for less than fair market value.

- g. Owners need to verify the tenant self certification only if the information does not appear to agree with other information reported by the tenant/applicant.

**Examples – Asset Disposed of for Less Than Market Value**

- (1) An applicant “sold” her home to her daughter for \$10,000. The home was valued at \$89,000 and had no loans secured against it. Broker fees and settlement costs are estimated at \$1,800.

\$89,000	Market value
<u>- 1,800</u>	Fees
\$87,200	Cash value
<u>- 10,000</u>	Sales price to daughter
\$77,200	Asset disposed of for less than fair market value

In this example, the asset disposed of for less than fair market value is \$77,200. That amount is counted as the resident’s asset for two years from the date the sale took place.

(The \$10,000 received from the daughter may currently be in a savings account or other asset or may have been spent. The \$10,000 will be counted as an asset if the applicant has not spent the money.)

- (2) A resident contributed \$10,000 to her grandson’s college tuition and gave her two granddaughters \$4,000 each to save for college.

\$10,000	College tuition gift
<u>+ 8,000</u>	Gift to granddaughters
\$18,000	Asset disposed of for less than fair market value

The \$18,000 disposed of for less than fair market value is counted as the tenant’s asset for two years from the date each asset was given away.

## Section 2: Determining Adjusted Income

Section 2 does not apply to families applying for or occupying 221(d)(3) BMIR units without additional subsidy.

### 5-8 Key Regulations

This paragraph identifies the key regulatory citation pertaining to Section 2: Determining Adjusted Income. The citation and its topic are listed below.

- 24 CFR 5.611 Adjusted Income

### 5-9 Key Requirements for Determining Adjusted Income

- A. There are five possible deductions that may be subtracted from annual income based on allowable family expenses and family characteristics. The remainder, after these deductions are subtracted, is called adjusted income. Adjusted income is generally the amount upon which rent is based. See Section 4 of this chapter for information about specific rent calculation methods. This section focuses on the calculation of annual adjusted income. Before rent is calculated, annual adjusted income is converted to monthly adjusted income.
- B. Of the five possible deductions, three are available to any assisted family, and two are permitted only for elderly or disabled families.
1. The three types of deductions available to any assisted family are:
    - a. A deduction for dependents;
    - b. A child care deduction; and
    - c. A disability assistance deduction.
  2. The two types of deductions permitted only for families in which the head, spouse, or co-head is elderly or disabled are:
    - a. An elderly/disabled family deduction; and
    - b. A deduction for unreimbursed medical expenses.

**NOTE:** A family may not designate a family member as head or co-head solely to become eligible for these additional benefits. The remaining member of a family listed in paragraph 5-9 B2 who is not 62 or older or a person with disabilities is not eligible for these allowances.

## 5-10 Calculating Adjusted Income

### A. Dependent Deduction

1. A family receives a deduction of \$480 for each family member who is:
  - a. Under 18 years of age;
  - b. A person with disabilities; or
  - c. A full-time student of any age.
2. Some family members may never qualify as dependents regardless of age, disability, or student status.
  - a. The head of the family, the spouse, and the co-head may never qualify as dependents.
  - b. A foster child, an unborn child, a child who has not yet joined the family, or a live-in aide may never be counted as a dependent.
3. A full-time student is one who is carrying a full-time subject load at an institution with a degree or certificate program. A full-time load is defined by the institution where the student is enrolled.
4. When more than one family shares custody of a child and both live in assisted housing, only one family at a time can claim the dependent deduction for that child. The family with primary custody or with custody at the time of the initial certification or annual recertification receives the deduction. If there is a dispute about which family should claim the dependent deduction, the family should refer to available documents such as copies of court orders or an IRS return showing which family has claimed the child for income tax purposes.

### B. Child Care Deduction

1. Anticipated expenses for the care of children under age 13 (including foster children) may be deducted from annual income if all of the following are true:
  - a. The care is necessary to enable a family member to work, seek employment, or further his/her education (academic or vocational).
  - b. The family has determined there is no adult family member capable of providing care during the hours care is needed.
  - c. The expenses are not paid to a family member living in the unit.
  - d. The amount deducted reflects reasonable charges for child care.

- e. The expense is not reimbursed by an agency or individual outside the family.
  - f. Child care expenses incurred to permit a family member to work must not exceed the amount earned by the family member made available to work during the hours for which child care is paid.
2. When child care enables a family member to work or go to school, the rule limiting the deduction to the amount earned by the family member made available to work applies only to child care expenses incurred while the individual is at work. The expense for child care while that family member is at school or looking for work is not limited.

**Example – Child Care Deduction**  
**Separate Expenses for Time at Work and Time at School**

Bernice and Ernest have two children. Both parents work, but Bernice works only part-time and goes to school half time. She pays \$4.00 an hour for eight hours of child care a day. For four of those hours, she is at work; for four of them she attends school. She receives no reimbursement for her child care expense.

Her annual expense for child care during the hours she works is \$4,000. Her annual expense for the hours she is at school is also \$4,000. She earns \$6,000 a year. Ernest earns \$18,000.

The rule requires that Bernice's child care expense while she is working not exceed the amount she is earning while at work. In this case, that is not a problem. Bernice earns \$6,000 during the time she is paying \$4,000. Therefore, her deduction for the hours while she is working is \$4,000.

Bernice's expense while she is at school is not compared to her earnings. Her expense during those hours is \$4,000, and her deduction for those hours will also be \$4,000.

Bernice's total child care deduction is \$8,000 (\$4,000 + \$4,000). The total deduction exceeds the amount of Bernice's total earnings, but the amount she pays during the hours she works does not exceed her earnings.

If Bernice's child care costs for the hours while she works were greater than her earnings, she would not be able to deduct all of her child care costs.

Bernice is paying a total of \$8,000 in child care expenses. Of that expense, payments of \$4,000 cover the hours while she is in school; payments of \$4,000 cover the hours she works. If Bernice were earning \$3,500, her total child care deduction for the hours she works would be capped at the amount of money she earns. In this case, the total deduction would be \$7,500 (\$4,000 for expenses while she is in school plus \$3,500 of the amount she pays while she is working.)

3. Child care attributable to the work of a full-time student (except for head, spouse, co-head) is limited to not more than \$480, since the employment income of full-time students in excess of \$480 is not counted in the annual income calculation. Child care payments on behalf of a minor who is not living in the applicant's household cannot be deducted.
4. Child care expenses incurred by two assisted households with split custody can be split between the two households when the custody and expense is documented for each household and the documentation demonstrates that the total expense claimed by the two households does not exceed the cost for the actual time the child spends in care.

**C. Deduction for Disability Assistance Expense**

1. Families are entitled to a deduction for unreimbursed, anticipated costs for attendant care and "auxiliary apparatus" for each family member who is a person with disabilities, to the extent these expenses are reasonable and necessary to enable any family member 18 years of age or older who may or may not be the member who is a person with disabilities (including the member who is a person with disabilities) to be employed.

**Examples – Eligible Disability Assistance Expenses**

The payments made on a motorized wheelchair for the 42-year-old son of the head of the family enable the son to leave the house and go to work each day on his own. Prior to the purchase of the motorized wheelchair, the son was unable to make the commute to work. These payments are an eligible disability assistance expense.

Payments to a care attendant to stay with a disabled 16-year-old child allow the child's mother to go to work every day. These payments are an eligible disability assistance expense.

2. This deduction is equal to the amount by which the cost of the care attendant or auxiliary apparatus exceeds 3% of the family's annual income. However, the deduction may not exceed the earned income received by the family member or members who are enabled to work by the attendant care or auxiliary apparatus.
3. If the disability assistance enables more than one person to be employed, the owner must consider the combined incomes of those persons. For example, if an auxiliary apparatus enables a person with a disability to be employed and frees another person to be employed, the allowance cannot exceed the combined incomes of those two people.

**Example – Calculating a Deduction for Disability Assistance Expenses**

Head's earned income	\$14,500
Spouse's earned income	+ <u>\$12,700</u>
Total income	\$27,200
Care expenses for disabled 15-year-old	\$3,850
Calculation:	\$3,850
(3% of annual income)	<u>- \$816</u>
Allowable disability assistance expenses	\$3,034

**(NOTE:** \$3,034 is not greater than amount earned by spouse, who is enabled to work.)

4. Auxiliary apparatus includes items such as wheelchairs, ramps, adaptations to vehicles, or special equipment to enable a sight-impaired person to read or type, but only if these items are directly related to permitting the disabled person or other family member to work.
  - a. Include payments on a specially-equipped van to the extent they exceed the payments that would be required on a car purchased for transportation of a person who does not have a disability.
  - b. The cost of maintenance and upkeep of an auxiliary apparatus is considered a disability assistance expense (e.g., the veterinarian costs and food costs of a service animal; the cost of maintaining the equipment that is added to a car, but not the cost of maintaining the car).
  - c. If the apparatus is not used exclusively by the person with a disability, the owner must prorate the total cost and allow a specific amount for disability assistance.
5. In addition to anticipated, ongoing expenses, one-time nonrecurring expenses of a current resident for auxiliary apparatus may be included in the calculation of the disability assistance expense deduction after the expense is incurred. These expenses may be added to the family's total disability assistance expense either at the time the expense occurs through an interim recertification or in the rent calculation during the following annual recertification.
6. Attendant care includes but is not limited to reasonable expenses for home medical care, nursing services, housekeeping and errand services, interpreters for hearing-impaired, and readers for persons with visual disabilities.



**Example – Calculating a Deduction When Disability Assistance Expenses Exceed Related Earnings**

Kenisha Prior, an individual with disabilities, lives with her mother Grace Prior. Her mother works full time. Kenisha works part time at the library. She requires a motorized wheelchair and special transportation to get to her job.

Grace Prior's Income	\$24,000
Kenisha Prior's Income	+ <u>\$5,000</u>
Total income	\$29,000
Disability Assistance Expense	\$8,000
(3% of annual income)	- <u>\$870</u>
	\$7,130

The \$7,130 exceeds the amount Kenisha earns. The disability assistance deduction, therefore, is limited to the amount earned by the person made available to work or, in this case, \$5,000.

- When the same provider takes care of children and a disabled person over age 12, the owner must prorate the total cost and allocate a specific cost to attendant care. The sum of both child care and disability assistance expenses cannot exceed the employment income of the family member enabled to work.

**Example – Calculating Child Care and Disability Assistance Deductions**

Head's earned income	\$8,300
Spouse's earned income	+ <u>\$6,700</u>
Total income	\$15,000

The family has two children: a 10-year-old son and a 15-year-old son who is disabled. One care provider, who charges \$120 per week, cares for both sons. The care provider reports that the cost for caring for the 10-year-old is \$50 a week and the cost of care for the child with disabilities is \$70 a week.

Child care expense	\$50 x 52 = \$2,600
Total disability assistance expense	\$70 x 52 = \$3,640

Total disability assistance expense (\$3,640) less 3% of annual income (\$450) = \$3,190

Child care deduction	\$2,600
Disability assistance deduction	+ <u>\$3,190</u>
Total deductions	\$5,790

Total deductions when compared to earnings must not exceed employment earnings of \$6,700.

**D. Medical Expense Deduction**

1. The medical expense deduction is permitted only for families in which the head, spouse, or co-head is at least 62 years old or is a person with disabilities (elderly or disabled families).
2. If the family is eligible for a medical expense deduction, owners must include the unreimbursed medical expenses of all family members, including the expenses of nonelderly adults or children living in the family.
3. Medical expenses include all expenses the family anticipates to incur during the 12 months following certification/recertification that are not reimbursed by an outside source, such as insurance.
4. The owner may use the ongoing expenses the family paid in the 12 months preceding the certification/recertification to estimate anticipated medical expenses.
5. The medical expense deduction is that portion of total medical expenses that exceeds 3% of annual income.

**Example – Calculating the Medical Expense Deduction**

Age of head	64	Annual income	\$12,000
Age of spouse	58	Total medical expenses	\$1,500
<u>Sample Calculation</u>			
		Annual income	\$12,000
			<u>x .03</u>
		3% of annual income	\$ 360
		Total medical expenses	\$1,500
			<u>- \$360</u>
		<i>Allowable</i> medical expenses	\$ 1,140

6. In addition to anticipated expenses, past one-time nonrecurring medical expenses that have been paid in full may be included in the calculation of the medical expense deduction. If the tenant is under a payment plan, the expense would be counted as anticipated
  - a. There are two options for addressing one-time medical expenses. These expenses may be added to the family's total medical expenses either: (1) at the time the expense occurs, through an interim recertification, or (2) at the upcoming annual recertification
 

**NOTE:** If the one-time expense is added at an interim recertification, it cannot be added to expenses at the annual recertification.
  - b. The following example illustrates the two options. Tenants may use either option.

### Example – One-Time, Nonrecurring Medical Expenses

Maria and Gustav Crumpler had a total of \$2,932 in medical expenses last year (Year 1). Of this amount, \$932 covered Gustav’s gall bladder surgery; \$2,000 was for routine costs that are expected to re-occur in the coming year. The entire amount may be included in the Crumpler’s medical costs for the coming year (Year 2) despite the fact that the gall bladder surgery is a past event that is not likely to re-occur.

If, during the coming year (Year 2), the Crumplers experience additional one-time medical costs not anticipated at the annual recertification, they may request an interim recertification or wait for their next annual recertification (during Year 3) and ask for the unanticipated expenses to be included in the medical expense calculation for the following year.

The owner may wish to explain to residents that including past one-time medical expenses in an annual recertification rather than in an interim recertification will result in a rent reduction for a larger number of months.

For example, let us assume Maria has unanticipated dental surgery during Year 2 at a cost of \$3,550 six months after the annual recertification. The Crumpler’s current TTP is \$560; their annual income is \$25,000.

Annual income	\$25,000
Less elderly household deduction	- \$400
Less allowable medical deduction (\$2,932 less 3% of \$25,000)	<u>- \$2,182</u>
Adjusted annual income	\$22,418
Adjusted monthly income	\$1,868
TTP	\$560

If the Crumplers request an interim recertification, the \$3,550 additional cost will lower their rent for 6 months; if they wait for their annual recertification, the cost of the dental surgery will affect their rent for 12 months.

Annual income	\$25,000
Less elderly household deduction	- \$400
Less allowable medical deduction* (\$6,482 less 3% of \$25,000)	<u>- \$5,732</u>
Adjusted annual income	\$18,868
Adjusted monthly income	\$1,572
TTP	\$472

At the Crumplers’ current annual income, the large dental bill reduces rent by \$88.

**OPTION #1:** If the Year 2 rent is adjusted through an interim recertification, the Crumplers will save 6 months times \$88 or \$528.

**OPTION #2:** If the Crumplers wait until their annual recertification, the large bill will affect their rent for the 12 months of Year 3, and they will save twice as much, or \$1,056.

7. When a family is making regular payments over time on a bill for a past one-time medical expense, those payments are included in anticipated medical expenses. However, if a family has received a deduction for the full amount of a medical bill it is paying over time, the family cannot continue to count that bill even if the bill has not yet been paid.

**Example – Medical Expense Paid over a Period of Time**

Ursula and Sebastian Grant did not have insurance to cover Sebastian's operation four years ago. They have been paying \$105 a month toward the \$5,040 debt. Each year that amount (\$105 x 12 months or \$1,260) has been included in their total medical expenses. A review of their file indicates that a total of \$5,040 has been added to total medical expenses over the four-year period. However, the Grants bring a current invoice to their annual recertification interview. Over the four-year period they have missed five payments and still owe \$525. Although they still owe this amount, the bill cannot be included in their current medical expenses because the expense has already been deducted.

8. Not all elderly or disabled applicants or participants are aware that their unreimbursed expenses for medical care are included in the calculation of adjusted income for elderly or disabled families. For that reason, it is important for owners to ask enough questions to obtain complete information about allowable medical expenses. The following list highlights some of the most common expenses that may be deducted. A list of examples of eligible medical expenses may be found in Exhibit 5-3.
- a. Services of doctors and health care professionals;
  - b. Services of health care facilities;
  - c. Medical insurance premiums or costs of an HMO;
  - d. Prescription/nonprescription medicines that have been prescribed by a physician;
  - e. Transportation to treatment;
  - f. Dental expenses;
  - g. Eyeglasses, hearing aids, batteries;
  - h. Live-in or periodic medical assistance such as nursing services, or costs for an assistance animal and its upkeep;
  - i. Monthly payments on accumulated medical bills;
  - j. Medical care of a permanently institutionalized family member *if* his or her income is included in annual income; and

- k. Long-term care insurance premiums. The family member paying a long-term care insurance premium must sign the certification form in Exhibit 5-4 that states the insurance is guaranteed renewable, does not provide a cash surrender value, will not cover expenses covered under Medicare, and restricts the use of refunds. The certification must be maintained in the family's occupancy file. (Paragraph 5.6 J.3 describes situations in which long-term care insurance payments must be included in annual income.)
9. Special calculation for families eligible for disability assistance and medical expense deductions. If an elderly family has both unreimbursed medical expenses and disability assistance expenses, a special calculation is required to ensure that the family's 3% of income expenditure is applied only one time. Because the deduction for disability assistance expenses is limited by the amount earned by the person enabled to work, the disability deduction must be calculated before the medical deduction is calculated.
- a. When a family has unreimbursed disability assistance expenses that are less than 3% of annual income, the family will receive no deduction for disability assistance expense. However, the deduction for medical expenses will be equal to the amount by which the sum of both disability and medical expenses exceeds 3% of annual income.
  - b. If the disability assistance expense exceeds the amount earned by the person who was enabled to work, the deduction for disability assistance will be capped at the amount earned by that individual. When the family is also eligible for a medical expense deduction, however, the 3% may have been exhausted in the first calculation, and it then will not be applied to medical expenses.
  - c. When a family has both disability assistance expenses and medical expenses, it is important to review the collected expenses to be sure no expense has been inadvertently included in both categories.

#### **E. Elderly Family Deduction**

An elderly or disabled family is any family in which the head, spouse, or co-head (or the sole member) is at least 62 years of age or a person with disabilities. Each elderly or disabled family receives a \$400 family deduction. Because this is a "family deduction" each family receives only one deduction, even if both the head and spouse are elderly or disabled.

**Example – Special Calculation for Families Who Are Eligible  
for Disability Assistance and Medical Expense Deductions**

The following is basic information on the family:

Head (retired/disabled)—SS/pension income	\$16,000
Spouse (employed)—employment income	+ <u>\$4,000</u>
Total Annual Income	\$20,000
Total disability assistance expenses	\$500
Total medical expenses	\$1,000

Step 1: Determine if the disability assistance expenses exceed 3% of the family's total annual income.

Total disability assistance expenses	\$500
Minus 3% of total annual income	<u>-\$600</u>
	(\$100)

No portion of the disability expenses exceeds 3% of the annual income; therefore, the disability assistance deduction is \$0.

Step 2: Calculate if the medical expenses exceed the balance of 3% of the family's total annual income.

Total medical expenses	\$1,000
Minus the balance of 3% of total annual income	<u>-\$100</u>
<b>Allowable medical expenses deduction</b>	<b>\$900</b>

**F. No Deduction for Alimony or Child Support Paid to a Person outside the Assisted Family**

There is no deduction for an amount paid to a person outside the assisted family for alimony or child support. Even if the amount is garnished from the wages of a family member, it must be included in annual income.

**Example – Child Support Garnished from Wages**

George Graevette pays \$150 per month in child support. It is garnished from his monthly wages of \$950. After the child support is deducted from his salary, he receives \$800. The owner must count \$950 as George's monthly income.

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## Section 3: Verification

### 5-11 Key Regulations

This paragraph identifies key regulatory citations pertaining to Section 3: Verification. The citations and their titles (or topics) are listed below.

- A. 24 CFR part 5, subpart B – Disclosure and Verification of Social Security Numbers and Employer Identification Numbers; Procedures for Obtaining Income Information
- B. 24 CFR 5.659 Family Information and Verification
- C. 24 CFR 8.24, 8.32, 100.204 (Reasonable accommodation)

### 5-12 Verification Requirements

#### A. Key Requirements

- 1. Owners must verify all income, assets, expenses, deductions, family characteristics, and circumstances that affect family eligibility or level of assistance.
- 2. Applicants and adult family members must sign consent forms to authorize the owner to collect information to verify eligibility, income, assets, expenses, and deductions. Applicants and tenants who do not sign required consent forms will not receive assistance.
- 3. Family members 6 years of age and older must provide the owner with a complete and accurate social security number. For any members of the family who do not have a social security number, the applicant or family member must certify that the individual has never received a social security number. This requirement is described in paragraphs 3-9 and 3-28 of this handbook.
- 4. The owner must handle any information obtained to verify eligibility or income in accordance with the Privacy Act.

**Figure 5-4: Privacy Act Notice**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is authorized to collect this information by the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437 et. seq.), by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d), and by the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601-19). The Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 (42 U.S.C. 3543) requires applicants and participants to submit the social security number of each household member who is 6 years old or older.

**Purpose:** Your income and other information are being collected by HUD to determine your eligibility, the appropriate bedroom size, and the amount your family will pay toward rent and utilities.

**Other Uses:** HUD uses your family income and other information to assist in managing and monitoring HUD-assisted housing programs, to protect the Government's financial interest, and to verify the accuracy of the information you provide. This information may be released to appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, when relevant, and to civil, criminal, or regulatory investigators and prosecutors. However, the information will not be otherwise disclosed or released outside of HUD, except as permitted or required by law.

**Penalty:** You must provide all of the information requested by the owner, including all social security numbers you, and all other household members age 6 years and older, have and use. Giving the social security numbers of all household members 6 years of age and older is mandatory, and not providing the social security numbers will affect your eligibility. Failure to provide any of the requested information may result in a delay or rejection of your eligibility approval.

**B. Timeframe for Conducting Verifications**

Owners conduct verifications at the following three times.

1. Owners must verify income, assets, expenses, and deductions and all eligibility requirements prior to initial move-in.
2. Owners must verify each family's income, assets, expenses, and deductions as part of the annual recertification process. Refer to Chapter 7, Section 1 for information on annual recertifications.
3. Owners must verify changes in income, allowances, or family characteristics reported between annual recertifications. Refer to Chapter 7, Section 2 for information on interim recertifications.



## 5-13 Acceptable Verification Methods

### A. Methods of Verification

Owners must use verification methods that are acceptable to HUD. The owner is responsible for determining if the verification documentation is adequate and credible. HUD accepts three methods of verification. These are, in order of acceptability, third-party verification, review of documents, and family certification. If third-party verification is not available, owners must document the tenant file to explain why third-party verification was not available. **Appendix 3** provides a detailed list of acceptable forms of verification by type of information.

### B. Third-Party Verification

The following describes ways in which third-party verification may be obtained.

1. Written. Written documentation sent directly by a third-party source is the preferred method of verification. It is assumed that third-party sources will send written verification to the owner through the mail. (For information about electronic documentation, see subparagraph B3 below.)

The applicant or tenant should not hand-carry the verification to or from the third-party source. If the verification does not contain an original signature or is delivered by the applicant or tenant, the owner should examine the document for evidence of tampering. In these situations, the owner may, but does not have to, accept the document as acceptable verification.

2. Oral. Oral verification, by telephone, from a reliable third-party source is an acceptable verification method. Owners frequently use this method when the third party does not respond to the written verification request. When verifying information over the telephone, it is important to be certain that the person on the telephone is the party he or she claims to be. Generally, it is best to telephone the verification source rather than to accept verification from a source calling the property management office. Oral verification must be documented in the file, as described in paragraph 5-19 C.

**NOTE: Appendix 3** includes selected phone numbers of verification sources for employment and income records. However, they do not take the place of third party verification. The phone numbers contained in **Appendix 3** are not toll free but such calls are valid project expenses.

3. Electronic. The owner may obtain accurate third-party written verification by facsimile, e-mail, or Internet, if adequate effort is made to ensure that the sender is a valid third-party source.

- a. Facsimile. Information sent by fax is most reliable if the owner and the verification source agree to use this method in advance during a telephone conversation. The fax should include the company name and fax number of the verification source.
- b. E-mail. Similar to faxed information, information verified by e-mail is more reliable when preceded by a telephone conversation and/or when the e-mail address includes the name of an appropriate individual and firm.
- c. Internet. Information verified on the Internet is considered third party verification if the owner is able to view web-based information from a reputable source on the computer screen. Use of a printout from the Internet may also be adequate verification in many instances. Refer to subparagraph C. Review of Documents below.

#### **Example – Verification by Internet Printout**

Jose Perez maintains a portfolio of stocks and bonds through an Internet-based stockbroker. The broker only provides electronic account statements and will not respond to a written verification request. The owner may accept a printout of Jose's most recent statement if it includes the relevant information required for a third-party verification and an Internet address and header or footer that identifies the company issuing the statement. If the owner has reason to question the authenticity of a document, the owner may require Jose to access the electronic file via the Internet in the owner's office, without providing the owner with username or password information.

### **C. Review of Documents**

1. An owner may review documents submitted by the applicant or tenant in one of the following situations:
  - a. Third-party verification is not possible or is not required. For example, verifying that a family member is over 62 years old is more appropriately accomplished by examining a birth certificate than through third-party verification.
  - b. Third-party verification is delayed. If information from a third party is not received within two weeks of its request, owners may consider original documents submitted by the tenant. The owner may resort to a review of documents before the two-week date if the owner determines and documents that third-party verification cannot or will not be obtained.

**Examples – Appropriate Occasions to Verify Information through a Review of Documents**

- The owner sent a verification request to the tenant's employer but did not receive a response. The owner then made several calls to the employer but has not received a return call. The owner may use a review of documents (pay stubs) for verification. The owner should insist on a series of consecutive, recent pay stubs and should have a standard policy indicating the number of consecutive pay stubs required.
- The tenant's bank charges the bank account a fee for completing verification requests. The owner allows the resident to provide a current savings account statement or checking account statements for the past six months.
- The tenant's employer uses a 900 phone number, which results in a charge to the owner's phone to provide income verification. (In this case, the owner will accept the most recent consecutive eight pay stubs to verify earned income.)
- In cases where there is no third party available, a review of documents will always be appropriate. To verify a person's age, a birth certificate may be used. A social security card is the best verification of a social security number.

2. An owner must place copies of the reviewed documents in the applicant's or tenant's file. If copies cannot be made, the person reviewing the original documents must list the reviewed documents and the information provided on the documents, and must initial and date the notation.
3. Obtaining accurate verification through a review of documents requires the owner to consider the following:
  - a. Is the document current? Documentation of public assistance may be inaccurate if it is not recent and does not show any changes in the family's benefits or work and training activities.
  - b. Is the documentation complete? Owners may not accept pay stubs to document employment income unless the applicant or tenant provides the most recent four to six weeks of pay stubs to illustrate variations in hours worked. Actual paychecks or copies of paychecks should never be used to document income because deductions are not shown on the paycheck.

- c. Is the document an unaltered original? The greatest shortcoming of documents as a verification source is their susceptibility to undetectable change through the use of high-quality copying equipment. Documents with original signatures are the most reliable. Photocopied documents generally cannot be assumed to be reliable.

#### D. **Family Certification**

An owner may accept a tenant's notarized statement regarding the veracity of information submitted if the information cannot be verified by another acceptable verification method.

### 5-14 **Identifying Appropriate Verification Sources**

An owner must only collect information that is necessary to determine the applicant's or tenant's eligibility for assistance or level of assistance. **Appendix 3** provides a list of acceptable forms of third-party verification.

### 5-15 **Required Verification and Consent Forms**

#### A. **Consent and Verification Forms**

Adult members of assisted families must authorize owners to request independent verification of data required for program participation. To provide owners with this authorization, adult family members must sign two HUD-required consent forms plus the owner's specialized verification forms. Owners must create their own verification forms to request information from employers, child care providers, medical professionals, and others. Families sign these and the two HUD consent forms at the time of initial certification and annual recertification. All adults in each assisted family must sign the required consent forms or the family must be denied assistance. Owners must give the family a copy of each form the family signed, a HUD Fact Sheet, and the Resident Rights and Responsibilities brochure.

#### B. **HUD-Required Consent and Release Forms**

Applicants and tenants must sign two HUD-required consent forms.

1. Form HUD-9887, Notice and Consent to the Release of Information to HUD and to a PHA. Each adult member must sign the form regardless of whether he or she has income. The head of household, spouse, co-head and each family member who is at least 18 years of age must sign this form. The form is valid for 15 months from the date of signature. The consent allows HUD or a public housing agency to verify information with the Internal Revenue Service, the Social Security Administration, and with state agencies that maintain wage and unemployment claim information. Owners must keep the original signed form in the tenant's file and provide a copy to the family. Exhibit 5-5 contains a copy of form HUD-9887.

2. Form HUD 9887-A, Applicant's/Tenant's Consent to the Release of Information – Verification by Owners of Information Supplied by Individuals Who Apply for Housing Assistance. Owners and the head of household, spouse, co-head and each family member who is at least 18 years of age must sign this form. Each adult member must sign the form regardless of whether he or she has income. The consent allows owners to request and receive information from third-party sources about the applicant or tenant. Owners keep the original form in the tenant's file and provide a copy to the family. Exhibit 5-6 contains a copy of form HUD 9887-A.

### C. Information to Tenants

Owners must provide applicants and tenants with the HUD Fact Sheet and a copy of the Resident Rights and Responsibilities brochure.

1. HUD-9887 Fact Sheet. When applicants and tenants sign form HUD-9887 and form HUD 9887-A, owners must provide each family with a copy of the HUD Fact Sheet. This Fact Sheet describes the verification requirements for applicants and tenants and the tenant protections that are part of the verification process. Exhibit 5-7 contains a copy of the HUD Fact Sheet.
2. Resident Rights and Responsibilities Brochure. In addition, owners must provide applicants and tenants with a copy of the Resident Rights and Responsibilities brochure at move-in and annually at recertification. Copies of the brochure may be obtained by calling the HUD National Multifamily Clearinghouse at 800-685-8470.

### D. Owner-Created Verification Forms

1. Owners must create verification forms for specific verification needs and must include the language required by HUD as shown in Figure 5-5. **Appendix 15** contains instructions, a sample verification consent, and guidance about the types of information to request when verifying income and eligibility.
2. It is important that the applicant or tenant know whom owners will ask to provide information and to whom the completed form will be returned. Therefore, verification forms must clearly state in a prominent location that the applicant or tenant may not sign the consent if the form does not clearly indicate who will provide the requested information and who will receive the information. When sending a request for verification to a third party, owners send the verification form with the applicant's or tenant's original signature to the third-party source. Owners must retain a copy of the verification form and provide a copy to the applicant or tenant upon request.

**Figure 5-5: Language Required in all Consent Forms**

The following statement must appear on all consent forms developed by owners:

“Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code states that a person is guilty of a felony for knowingly and willingly making false or fraudulent statements to any department of the United States Government. HUD and any owner (or any employee of HUD or the owner) may be subject to penalties for unauthorized disclosures or improper use of information collected based on the consent form. Use of the information collected based on this verification form is restricted to the purposes cited above. Any person who knowingly or willingly requests, obtains or discloses any information under false pretenses concerning an applicant or participant may be subject to a misdemeanor and fined not more than \$5,000. Any applicant or participant affected by negligent disclosure of information may bring civil action for damages, and seek other relief, as may be appropriate, against the officer or employee of HUD or the owner responsible for the unauthorized disclosure or improper use. Penalty provisions for misusing the social security number are contained in the Social Security Act at 42 U.S.C. 208(f)(g) and (h). Violation of these provisions are cited as violations of 42 U.S.C. 408 (f), (g) and (h).

**5-16 Social Security and Supplemental Security Income Data Match**

- A. Owners verify social security income and supplemental security income electronically through TRACS. If there is a discrepancy between income reported by the tenant or applicant and income provided by the Social Security Administration (SSA), TRACS will automatically generate a message that is sent to the owner. The owner must attempt to contact the applicant or tenant to disclose the discrepancy. Exhibit 5-8 provides detailed guidance on verifying social security and supplemental security income.
- B. Additional information is available on HUD’s website page describing the tenant assessment system (for tenant income verification) (TASS):

[www.hud.gov/offices/reac/products/prodtass.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/reac/products/prodtass.cfm)

TASS is a computer-based tool to assist owners in verifying tenant incomes by comparing tenant-reported information to information in other HUD systems from the Social Security Administration and the Internal Revenue Service.

**5-17 Effective Term of Verifications**

Signed verification and consent forms must be used within a reasonable time after the applicant or tenant has signed if the tenant’s signature is to represent a valid and current authorization by the family. Therefore, HUD has set specific limits on the duration of verification consents. In addition, verified information must be used in a timely manner

since family circumstances are subject to change. HUD places several other limits on the information that may be requested and when and how it may be used.

**A. Duration of Verification Authorization**

Owner-created verification forms and the forms HUD 9887 and 9887-A expire 15 months after they are signed. Owners must ensure that the forms HUD 9887 and 9887-A have not expired when processing verifications. However, there are differences between the duration of form HUD-9887 and that of the individual verification forms.

1. The form HUD 9887-A and individual verification forms can be used during the 120 days before the certification period. During the certification period, however, these forms may be used only in cases where the owner receives information indicating that the information the tenant has provided may be incorrect. Other uses are prohibited.
2. Owners may verify anticipated income using individual verification forms to gather prospective information when necessary (e.g., verifying seasonal employment). Historical information that owners may request using individual verification forms is restricted as follows:
  - a. Information requested by individual verification forms is restricted to data that is no more than 12 months old.
  - b. However, if the owner receives inconsistent information and has reason to believe that the information the applicant or tenant has supplied is incorrect, the owner may obtain information from any time in the last five years when the individual was receiving assistance, as provided by the form HUD 9887-A.
3. The form HUD-9887 may be used at any time during the entire 15 month period. The information covered by the form HUD-9887 is restricted as follows:
  - a. State Wage Information Collection Agency (SWICA). Information received from SWICA is limited to wages and unemployment compensation the applicant or tenant received during the last five years she/he received housing assistance.
  - b. Internal Revenue Service and Social Security Administration. form HUD-9887 authorizes release by IRS and SSA of data from only the current income tax return and IRS W-2 form.

If the IRS or SSA matches reveal that the tenant may have supplied inconsistent information, HUD may request that the tenant consent to the owner acquiring information on the last five years during the periods in which the tenant was receiving assistance.

**B. Effective Term of Verifications**

1. Verifications are valid for 90 days from the date of receipt by the owner.
2. For the next 30 days (days 91–120), the owner may update the verifications orally with the verification source. As with any oral verification, the owner must include written documentation in the file.
3. If verifications are more than 120 days old, the owner must obtain new verifications.
4. Time limits do not apply to information that does not need to be reverified, such as:
  - a. Age;
  - b. Disability status;
  - c. Family membership; or
  - d. Citizenship status.
5. Time limits also do not apply to the verification of social security numbers; however, at each recertification any family member who has previously reported having never received a social security number, must be asked:
  - a. To supply verification of a social security number if one has been received; or
  - b. To certify, again, that he/she has never received a social security number.

**5-18 Inconsistent Information Obtained Through Verifications**

An owner may not take any action to reduce, suspend, deny, or terminate assistance based on inconsistent information received during the verification process until the owner has independently investigated the information. The owner should follow procedures for addressing errors and fraud and for terminating assistance in accordance with Chapter 8.

**5-19 Documenting Verifications****A. Key Requirement**

Owners must include verification documentation in the tenant file.

**B. Documenting Third-Party Verification**

Third-party verification received through the mail or by facsimile transmission must be put in the tenant file.



### C. Documenting Telephone Verification

When verifying information by phone, the owner must record and include in the tenant's file the following information:

1. Third-party's name, position, and contact information;
2. Information reported by the third party;
3. Name of the person who conducted the telephone interview; and
4. Date and time of the telephone call.

### D. Recording Inspection of Original Documents

Original documents should be photocopied, and the photocopy should be placed in the tenant file. If the original document cannot be copied, a clear note to the file must describe the type of document, the information contained in the document, the name of the person who reviewed the document, and the date of that review.

**NOTE:** It is not mandatory that social security cards be copied. See **Appendix 3** for alternate methods.

### E. Documenting Why Third-Party Verification Is Not Available

When third-party verification is not available, owners must document in the file efforts made to obtain the required verification and the reason the verification was not obtained. The owner must include the following documents in the applicant's or tenant's file:

1. A written note to the file explaining why third-party verification is not possible; or
2. A copy of the date-stamped original request that was sent to the third party;
3. Written notes or documentation indicating follow-up efforts to reach the third party to obtain verification; and
4. A written note to the file indicating that the request has been outstanding for four weeks or more without a response from the third party.

**F. Reasonable Accommodation**

If an applicant or tenant cannot read or sign a consent form because of a disability, the owner must provide a reasonable accommodation. See Chapter 2, Section 3, Subsection 4 for a description of the requirements regarding reasonable accommodations.

**Examples – Reasonable Accommodation**

- Provide forms in large print.
- Provide readers for persons with visual disabilities.
- Allow the use of a designated signatory.
- Visit the person's home if the applicant or tenant cannot travel to the office to complete the forms.

**5-20 Confidentiality of Applicant and Tenant Information**

- A. Federal law limits the information owners can collect about an applicant or tenant to only information that is necessary to determine eligibility and level of assistance.
- B. Federal privacy requirements also establish the responsibility of owners and their employees to use information provided by applicants and tenants only for specified program purposes and to prevent the use or disclosure of this information for other purposes.
1. To help ensure the privacy of applicant and tenant information, owners and their employees are subject to penalties for unauthorized disclosure of applicant/tenant information. In addition, applicants and tenants may initiate civil action against an owner for unauthorized disclosure or improper use of the information they provided. Language on the HUD-required consent forms, the verification forms developed by owners, and the 50059 facsimile clearly describes owners' responsibility regarding the privacy of this information and the possible penalties.
  2. HUD encourages owners to develop their own procedures and internal controls to prevent the improper use or unauthorized disclosure of information about applicants and tenants. Adequate procedures and controls protect not only applicants and tenants, but also owners.
- C. Owners must also comply with state privacy laws concerning the information they receive from third-party sources about applicants and tenants. These laws generally require confidentiality and restrict the uses of this information.

## 5-21 Refusal to Sign Consent Forms

- A. If an applicant refuses to sign forms HUD 9887 or 9887-A or the owner's verification forms, the owner must deny assistance.
- B. If a tenant refuses to sign the required verification and consent forms, the owner must terminate assistance. If the owner intends to terminate assistance for this reason, the owner must follow procedures established in the lease that require the tenant to pay the HUD-approved market rent for the unit. In a Section 202 PRAC or Section 811 PRAC project, the tenant may be evicted if the tenant refuses to sign the required verification and consent forms.
- C. If a tenant is unable to sign the forms on time due to extenuating circumstances, the owner must document the reasons for the delay in the tenant file and indicate how and when the tenant will provide the proper signature.

### **Examples – Tenant Failure to Sign Consent Forms Due to Extenuating Circumstances**

- Jonas and Joycelyn Hardwick were to have forms HUD 9887 and 9887-A signed by their adult son. However, he was in an automobile accident and has been in a coma.
- Lydia Bailey's husband has been temporarily assigned to overseas duty as part of a missionary hunger-relief program. She has signed consent forms, and the forms have been mailed to him but have not been returned. She reports that mail has recently been taking five or six weeks.

## 5-22 Interim Recertifications

When processing an interim recertification, the owner must ask the tenant to identify all changes in income, expenses, or family composition since the last recertification. Owners only need verify those items that have changed. For example, if the head of household was laid off from his or her job and asks the owner to prepare an interim recertification, the owner does not need to reverify the spouse's employment income unless that has also changed. When the tenant signs the certification she or he certifies that the information on the report is accurate and current. Additional information about the procedures for conducting interim recertifications is discussed in Chapter 7, Section 2.

## 5-23 Record-Keeping Procedures

- A. Owners must keep the following documents in the tenant's file at the project site:
  - 1. All original, signed forms HUD 9887 and HUD 9887-A;
  - 2. A copy of signed individual consent forms; and

3. Third-party verifications.
  - B. Owners must maintain documentation of all verification efforts throughout the term of each tenancy and for at least three years after the tenant moves out.
  - C. Owners must maintain applicant and tenant information in a way to ensure confidentiality. Any applicant or tenant affected by negligent disclosure or improper use of information may bring civil action for damages and seek other relief, as appropriate, against the employee. Forms HUD 9887 and 9887-A describe the penalties for the improper use of consent forms.

## Section 4: Calculating Tenant Rent

### 5-24 Key Regulations

This paragraph identifies key regulatory citations pertaining to Section 4: Calculating Tenant Rent. The citations and their titles or (topics) are listed below.

- A. 24 CFR 5.628 Total Tenant Payment
- B. 24 CFR 5.630 Minimum Rent
- C. 24 CFR 236.735 Rental Assistance Payments and Rental Charges
- D. 24 CFR 891.105, 891.410, 891.520, 891.640, 891.655, 891.705 (Project rental assistance payment, project assistance payment, tenant rent, total tenant payment, and rent for unassisted units)

### 5-25 Calculating the Tenant Contribution for Section 8, PAC, PRAC, RAP, and Rent Supplement Properties

#### A. Total Tenant Payment (TTP)

The Total Tenant Payment (TTP) is the amount a tenant is expected to contribute for rent and utilities. TTP for Section 8, PAC, PRAC, RAP, and Rent Supplement properties is based on the family's income. The formulas for calculating TTP are shown in Figure 5-6. Exhibit 5-9 also shows the formulas for calculating tenant contributions for all assisted-housing programs.

#### B. Unit Rent

1. The contract rent (basic rent in the Section 236 program) represents the amount of rent an owner is entitled to collect to operate and maintain the property. It is HUD-approved. For Section 202 and 811 PRACS, the contract rent is the operating rent minus the utility allowance.

2. Projects in which the tenant pays all or some utilities have HUD-approved utility allowances that reflect an estimated average amount tenants will pay for utilities assuming normal consumption.

**C. Timeframe for Calculating Rent**

Owners calculate rent at three points in time.

1. Owners must calculate rent prior to occupancy by an applicant.
2. Owners must calculate rent as part of an annual recertification. Refer to Chapter 7, Section 1 for information on annual recertification of income.
3. When assistance is provided through Section 8, PAC, PRAC, RAP, or Rent Supplement, owners must recalculate rent if a tenant reports a change in income, allowances, or family composition. Refer to Chapter 7, Section 2 for information on interim recertifications of income.

**Figure 5-6: Total Tenant Payment Formulas**

**Section 8, PAC, PRAC, and RAP**

- TTP is the greater of the following:
  - ◆ 30% of monthly adjusted income;
  - ◆ 10% of monthly gross income;
  - ◆ Welfare rent (welfare recipients in as-paid localities only); or
  - ◆ The \$25 minimum rent (Section 8 only).
- Section 8, RAP, and PAC programs may admit an applicant only if the TTP is less than the gross rent.
- In PRAC properties, the TTP may exceed the PRAC operating rent.

**Rent Supplement**

- TTP is the greater of the following:
  - ◆ 30% of monthly adjusted income; or
  - ◆ 30% of gross rent.
- At move-in or initial certification, the amount of Rent Supplement assistance may be no less than 10% of the gross rent or the tenant is not eligible.

## 5-26 Procedures for Determining Tenant Contribution for Section 8, PAC, PRAC, RAP, and Rent Supplement Properties

### A. Tenant Rent

Tenant rent is the portion of the TTP the tenant pays each month to the owner for rent. Tenant rent is calculated by subtracting the utility allowance from the TTP. It is possible for tenant rent to be \$0 if the utility allowance is greater than the TTP. (See paragraph 9-13 for more information on utility reimbursements when the utility allowance is greater than the TTP.)

#### Example – Calculating Tenant Rent

TTP:	\$225
Utility allowance:	<u>-\$ 75</u>
Tenant rent:	\$150

### B. Assistance Payments

The assistance payment is the amount the owner bills HUD every month on behalf of the tenant. The assistance payment covers the difference between the TTP and the gross rent. It is the subsidy that HUD pays to the owner.

1. Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is the assistance payment made by HUD to owners with units receiving assistance from the Section 8 program.

#### Example – Calculating HAP

Gross rent	\$564
TTP	<u>-\$175</u>
HAP	\$389

2. Rental Assistance Payment (RAP) is the assistance payment made by HUD to owners for units receiving assistance through the RAP program.
3. Rent Supplement payment is the assistance payment made by HUD to owners for units receiving assistance through the Rent Supplement program.
4. Project Assistance Payment (PAC) is the assistance payment made by HUD for assisted units in a Section 202 project for nonelderly disabled families and individuals (also referred to as Project Assistance Contract [PAC] projects).

5. Project Rental Assistance Payment (PRAC) is the assistance payment made by HUD for assisted units in Section 202 or Section 811 properties with a Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC).

**C. Utility Reimbursement**

When the TTP is less than the utility allowance, the tenant receives a utility reimbursement to assist in meeting utility costs. The tenant will pay no tenant rent. The utility reimbursement is calculated by subtracting the TTP from the utility allowance.

**D. Section 8 Minimum Rent**

Tenants in properties subsidized through the Section 8 program must pay a minimum TTP of \$25.

1. The minimum rent is used when 30% of adjusted monthly income and 10% of gross monthly income, and the welfare rent where applicable, are all below \$25.
2. The minimum rent includes the tenant's contribution for rent and utilities. In any property in which the utility allowance is greater than \$25, the full TTP is applied toward the utility allowance. The tenant will receive a utility reimbursement in the amount by which the utility allowance exceeds \$25.

**Example – Utility Reimbursement for a  
Tenant Paying Minimum Rent**

The Nguyen family qualifies for the minimum total tenant payment of \$25. The family pays its own utility bills. The utility allowance for the unit is \$75 a month. The owner sends the Nguyen family a check each month for \$50 (\$75-\$25) as a utility reimbursement. The Nguyen family does not pay any tenant rent to the owner.

3. Financial hardship exemptions.
  - a. Owners must waive the minimum rent for any family unable to pay due to a long-term financial hardship, including the following:
    - The family has lost federal, state, or local government assistance or is waiting for an eligibility determination.
    - The family would be evicted if the minimum rent requirement was imposed.

- 
- The family income has decreased due to a change in circumstances, including but not limited to loss of employment.
  - A death in the family has occurred.
  - Other applicable situations, as determined by HUD, have occurred.
- b. Implementing an exemption request. When a tenant requests a financial hardship exemption, the owner must waive the minimum \$25 rent charge beginning the month immediately following the tenant's request and implement the TTP calculated at the higher of 30% of adjusted monthly income or 10% of gross monthly income (or the welfare rent). The TTP will not drop to zero unless those calculations all result in zero.
- (1) The owner may request reasonable documentation of the hardship in order to determine whether there is a hardship and whether it is temporary or long term in nature. The owner should make a determination within one week of receiving the documentation.
  - (2) If the owner determines there is no hardship as covered by the statute, the owner must immediately reinstate the minimum rent requirements. The tenant is responsible for paying any minimum rent that was not paid from the date rent was suspended. The owner may not evict the tenant for nonpayment of rent during the time in which the owner was making the determination. The owner and tenant should reach a reasonable repayment agreement for any back payment of rent.
  - (3) If the owner determines that the hardship is temporary, the owner may not impose the minimum rent requirement until 90 days after the date of the suspension. At the end of the 90-day period, the tenant is responsible for paying the minimum rent, retroactive to the initial date of the suspension. The owner may not evict the tenant for nonpayment of rent during the time in which the owner was making the determination or during the 90-day suspension period. The owner and tenant should reach a reasonable repayment agreement for any back payment of rent.



**Example – Temporary Hardship Schedule**

Due to the death of his wife, Yung Kim took a six-week leave of absence from his part-time job. He requests a financial hardship exception. The owner, Oak Knoll Management, reviews his request and determines that the hardship is not long term. Yung Kim and Oak Knoll Management implement the following schedule:

• Current TTP	\$25
• Hardship request received	July 15
• Owner grants temporary hardship	July 20
• August TTP	\$0
• September TTP	\$0
• October TTP	\$0
• 90-day period ends	October 15
• Total balance due 3 x \$25	\$75
• Tenant agrees to pay \$10 extra per month for seven months and \$5 extra on the eighth month.	
• Monthly payment for seven months November – May TTP \$25 + \$10	\$35
• June TTP \$25 + \$5	\$30
• July TTP	\$25

- (4) If the hardship is determined to be long term, the owner must exempt the tenant from the minimum rent requirement from the date the owner granted the suspension. The suspension may be effective until such time that the hardship no longer exists. However, the owner must recertify the tenant every 90 days while the suspension lasts to verify that circumstances have not changed. The length of the hardship exemption may vary from one family to another depending on the circumstances of each family. The owner must process an interim recertification to implement a long-term exemption. Owners must maintain documentation on all requests and determinations regarding hardship exemptions.

**E. Welfare Rent**

1. The term “welfare rent” applies only in states that have “as-paid” public benefit programs. A welfare program is considered “as-paid” if the welfare agency does the following:
  - a. Designates a specific amount for shelter and utilities; and

- b. Adjusts that amount based upon the actual amount the family pays for shelter and utilities.
2. The maximum amount that may be specifically designated for rent and utilities is called the “welfare rent.” See below for an example.

<b>Example – Calculating Welfare Rent</b>	
Published maximum for shelter and utilities:	\$200
Amount of welfare assistance for other needs:	\$220
Other income:	\$100
Monthly income =	\$520
“Welfare rent”=	\$200

## 5-27 Calculating Assistance Payments for Authorized Police/Security Personnel

- A. The amount of the monthly assistance payment to the owner is equal to the contract rent minus the monthly amount paid by the police officer or security personnel. HUD will not increase the assistance payment due to nonpayment of rent by the police officer or security personnel.

**NOTE:** The owner is not entitled to vacancy payments for the period following occupancy by a police officer or security personnel.

- B. For police/security personnel whose income exceeds the income limit for the property, the rent is set by the owner.
  1. The determination of the rent amount in such circumstances should take into consideration the income of the officer, the location of the property, and rents for comparable unassisted units in the area.
  2. Owners should establish a rent that is attractive to the officer, but not less than what the officer would pay as an eligible Section 8 tenant.
  3. Owners are expected to use a consistent methodology for each property when establishing the rents for officers in these circumstances.

## 5-28 Calculating Tenant Contribution for “Double Occupancy” in Group Homes

### A. Double Occupancy

Some group homes for disabled residents provide units that may be shared by unrelated single tenants. The calculations for tenant contribution and for the assistance payment vary depending on whether the project is a Section 202/8 or a Section 811.

**B. Total Tenant Payment**

In both Section 202/8 and Section 811 group homes, each tenant in a double occupancy room is treated as a separate family in the calculation of TTP. Each resident is entitled to any deductions he or she would receive if occupying a single room, including the \$400 elderly/disabled family deduction.

**Example – TTP Calculation for Double Occupancy**

Resident A:

Annual income	\$5,000
Elderly family deduction	- \$400
Medical expense deduction	- \$900
Annual adjusted income	\$3,700
Monthly adjusted income	\$308
	(\$3,700/12 months)
30% of monthly adjusted income	\$92
10% of monthly gross income	\$42
Minimum rent	\$25
<i>TTP for Resident A =</i>	\$92

Resident B:

Annual income	\$3,600
Elderly family deduction	- \$400
Medical expense deduction	- \$2,480
Annual adjusted income	\$720
Monthly adjusted income	\$60
	(\$720/12 months)
30% of monthly adjusted income	\$18
10% of monthly gross income	\$30
Minimum rent	\$25
<i>TTP for Resident B =</i>	\$30

**C. Contract Rent and Assistance Payment in Section 202/8 Group Homes**

1. In Section 202/8 group homes, the contract rent for a room shared by two occupants is split between the two tenants.
2. The assistance payment for the Section 202/8 double occupancy room is calculated separately for each tenant based on half of the contract rent for the unit.

**Example – Assistance Payment, Section 202/8 Double Occupancy**

Contract rent for the unit	\$800
Half of the contract rent for the unit	\$400
TTP for Tenant A =	\$92
Assistance payment for Tenant A is \$400 less \$92 =	\$308
TTP for Tenant B =	\$30
Assistance payment for Tenant B is \$400 less \$30 =	\$370

3. If the tenant rent for either tenant exceeds half of the contract rent, that tenant's rent will be capped at half of the contract rent. In the Section 202/8 double occupancy room, half of the contract rent is the maximum rent one occupant can pay.

**Example – Section 202/8 Double Occupancy**

Gross rent for unit	\$800
Half the contract rent for the unit	\$400

Tenant C has a monthly adjusted income of \$1,500 per month. If 30% of \$1,500 equals \$450. Tenant C's rent is capped at \$400, which represents the maximum Tenant C will pay.

4. Owner's rent-calculation software must reflect the split-unit rent and contain unit numbers that provide a distinction between tenants (e.g., unit 101A, 101B).

**D. Contract Rent and Assistance Payment in Section 811 Group Homes**

1. In a Section 811 property, each tenant is certified separately and pays the greater of 30% of monthly adjusted income, 10% of monthly annual income, or the welfare rent.
2. In the Section 811 double occupancy unit, both occupants will pay the calculated TTP amount regardless of the operating rent for the unit.

**Example – Calculating the Assistance Payment for a Double Occupancy Unit in a Section 811 Group Home**

Operating rent for unit	\$310
TTP Tenant A =	\$160
TTP Tenant B =	\$75
Assistance payment is $\$310 - (\$160 + \$75) =$	\$75

**Example – Section 811 Total Tenant Payments**

Operating rent for the unit	\$310
TTP Tenant A =	\$330
TTP Tenant B =	\$240

Assistance payment is zero; calculated as  $\$310 - (\$330 + \$240) = \$(260)$ .

Although the assistance payment is zero, the monthly voucher must indicate that \$260 over the operating rent was collected on this unit. This is generally indicated by bracketing the \$260.

**E. Calculating Rent at Change in Occupancy**

1. If there is a change in the number of individuals occupying the double occupancy unit, the assistance payment for the whole unit may change.
2. In a Section 202/8 double-occupancy room, the rent and assistance payments are calculated as if each tenant occupied a separate unit each with a rent equaling half of the contract rent for the unit. If one resident moves out, the TTP and assistance payment calculations for the remaining resident remain the same. The other half of the unit is treated like a vacant unit: there is no HAP payment but the owner may be eligible for vacancy loss claims for the vacated half of the unit.

**Example – Section 202/8 Calculation at a Change in Occupancy**

Contract Rent	\$800
Half of the contract rent	\$400
Tenant A Tenant Rent	\$92
Tenant B Tenant Rent	\$30

Tenant A moves out.

Assistance Payment for Tenant B is calculated using half of the contract rent = \$400 less the Tenant Rent for Tenant B \$30 = \$370 housing assistance payment.

There is no HAP payment for the half of the unit vacated by Tenant A. It is vacant. But, the owner may request a vacancy loss payment if appropriate.

- In a Section 811 double-occupancy room, the rent calculation at a change in occupancy is based on the operating rent for the entire unit less the TTP for the remaining tenant in occupancy.

**Example – Section 811 Rent Calculation at a Change in Occupancy**

Operating rent for the unit	\$310
Tenant A moves out.	
Tenant B remains in the unit alone.	
TTP for Resident B =	\$240
Assistance payment is \$310 – \$240 =	\$70

If a new tenant moves into the unit thereafter, the assistance payment will change again, but the operating rent for the unit and the TTP for Resident B will remain the same.

**5-29 Calculating Tenant Contribution for Section 236 and Section 221(d)(3) Below Market Interest Rate (BMIR)****A. Tenant's Rent Contribution**

The tenant's contribution to rent in the Section 236 and Section 221(d)(3) BMIR programs is based on the cost to operate the property and the income of the family. Figure 5-7 presents the rules for determining the tenant rent in these two programs.

- Section 236 property. Every Section 236 property has a HUD-approved basic rent and market rent. Basic rent is the minimum rent all Section 236 tenants must pay. It represents the cost to operate the property after HUD has provided mortgage assistance to reduce the mortgage interest

expense. The market rent represents the amount of rent the owner would have to charge, if the mortgage were not subsidized. Tenants pay a percentage of their income towards rent, but never pay less than the basic rent or more than the market rent for the property.

When a tenant pays more than basic rent, the difference between the tenant’s rent and basic rent is called “excess income.” Excess income is an amount that exceeds what the owner needs to operate the property and is subject to specific requirements. Refer to HUD Handbook 4350.1, *Multifamily Asset Management and Project Servicing*, and other current HUD notices for guidance on handling excess income. Although a tenant may pay more than basic rent, no tenant in a Section 236 property will pay more than the market rent for the property.

**Example – Calculating Excess Income**

Rent for Tenant A (30% of Tenant A's income):	\$350
Basic rent	<u>-\$300</u>
Excess Income	\$50

2. Section 221(d)(3) BMIR property. There is no rent calculation for tenants in a Section 221(d)(3) BMIR property. HUD approves a BMIR rent that all of the tenants must pay. The federal assistance in the BMIR property is provided through a below market interest rate for the mortgage loan. Applicants must meet income eligibility standards to be admitted to a BMIR property. After move-in, if a tenant’s annual income goes above 110% of the BMIR income limit, the tenant must pay 110% the BMIR rent.
3. BMIR cooperative. If a BMIR cooperative member’s annual income exceeds 110% of the BMIR income limit at the time of recertification, the cooperative must levy a surcharge to the member. See the definition of market rent in the Glossary for an explanation of the market carrying charge for over-income cooperative members.

**B. Timeframe for Calculating Rent**

Owners calculate rent at three points in time.

1. Owners must calculate rent prior to occupancy by an applicant.
2. Owners must calculate rent as part of an annual recertification. Refer to Chapter 7, Section 1 for information on annual recertification of income.
3. Owners of Section 236 properties must calculate rent if a tenant reports a change in income, allowances, or family composition. Refer to Chapter 7, Section 2 for information on interim recertifications of income.

**Figure 5-7: Tenant Contributions for the Section 236 and Section 221(d)(3) BMIR**

<b>Section 236</b>	
<b>Section 236 without Utility Allowance</b>	<b>Section 236 with Utility Allowance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant rent is the greater of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 30% of monthly adjusted income; or</li> <li>◆ Section 236 basic rent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tenant rent may not be more than the Section 236 market rent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant rent is the greater of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 30% of monthly adjusted income less the utility allowance; or</li> <li>◆ 25% of monthly adjusted income; or</li> <li>◆ Basic rent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tenant rent may not be more than the Section 236 market rent.</li> </ul>
<b>Section 221(d)(3) BMIR</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At initial certification, the tenant pays the BMIR rent.</li> <li>• At recertification, the tenant's annual income is compared to the BMIR income limits. If the tenant's annual income is:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Less than or equal to 110% of the BMIR income limit, the tenant pays the BMIR rent;</li> <li>◆ Greater than 110% of the BMIR income limit, the tenant pays 110% of the BMIR rent.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

### **5-30 Determining Tenant Contribution at Properties with Multiple Forms of Subsidy**

- A. At many multifamily properties different kinds of subsidies have been combined. For many years, tenant-based Section 8 subsidies have been added to properties built with Section 202 loans or financed with Section 236 and Section 221(d)(3) mortgage subsidies. Recently, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program has been combined with a wide range of programs, from Section 202 projects with Section 8 already in place (Section 202/8) to housing choice voucher assistance.



- B. Although each of the programs combined within one property may have a different formula for determining tenant payments, it is generally possible to determine the correct rent for a family by identifying the available program for which that family is eligible that will provide the best option—or the lowest rent—for the tenant. The one exception to this can be at the recertification of a Section 8 or Rent Supplement family in a property with Low Income Housing Tax Credits. If the family's income has increased since move-in to a point that the assisted rent exceeds the Low Income Housing Tax Credit rent, that family will have to make a choice between the lower tax credit rent and the security of continuing on the rental assistance program.
- C. The tenant rent at properties assisted under more than one program is generally the lowest rent available for which the tenant is eligible.
1. Section 202/Section 8. In a Section 202 property with Section 8 tenant-based assistance, a tenant eligible for Section 8 will pay the tenant rent based on the Section 8 rent formula. If that tenant's income increases to the point that its TTP equals or exceeds the Section 8 contract rent, the family would no longer be eligible for the tenant based assistance.
  2. Section 236/Section 8. A family with a Section 8 subsidy in a Section 236 property will pay the Section 8 tenant rent unless, at recertification, the family's TTP equals or exceeds the Section 8 contract rent. Thereafter, the family will pay the tenant rent based on the Section 236 rent formula. A family living in a Section 236 property receiving Rent Supplement assistance would also stop receiving Rent Supplement assistance at the point the family's TTP increased to the level of the rent supplement contract rent. Thereafter the family will pay the tenant rent based on the Section 236 rent formula.
  3. Section 221(d)(3) BMIR with Section 8. A family receiving Section 8 assistance at a BMIR project would continue to pay the tenant rent based on the Section 8 rent formula until the TTP equaled or exceeded the BMIR rent. Thereafter, the family would pay rent based on the BMIR rent formula.
- D. In some instances, a tenant will not be eligible for the program offering the lowest rent, or a subsidy under that program will not be available for every unit or every tenant.

Sometimes, Section 8 subsidies are not available for the unit size the family needs, and the family must wait for a subsidy for the appropriate unit size. The owner's contract with HUD for the Section 8 assistance allocates Section 8 funding by unit size, and the owner is required to subsidize families based on the unit sizes allocated. If the owner was allocated 10 two-bedroom subsidies and has assigned those subsidies to 10 two-bedroom families, the owner cannot use an available three-bedroom subsidy to assist an 11th two-bedroom family. If the owner has determined that the bedroom distribution in its contract does not match the need in the project, the owner can ask HUD for a contract amendment to revise the unit size designations of the subsidy awarded.

- E. In some instances, a family will not be eligible for a lower rent program available at the property.

For example, a family in a BMIR project with Section 8 may be financially stretched when paying the BMIR rent but may not be income-eligible for the lower-rent Section 8 program.

### 5-31 Procedures for Calculating Rent

- A. Owners must calculate tenant rent payments electronically using on-site software or a service provider. Data used to determine the rent are based on information certified as accurate by the family and independently verified.
- B. The owner's computer software calculates rent based on the appropriate formulas for the tenant's unit and produces a printed copy of the 50059 data requirements to be signed by the tenant and the owner. The owner must produce a printed report in an easily read and understood format that contains all of the information used to calculate the tenant's rent.
- C. The tenant and the owner sign a copy of the report containing a statement certifying the accuracy of the information. Models of the certification statements are provided in Figure 5-7. Additional information on the 50059 data requirements and the certification may be found in Chapter 9.

**Figure 5-7: Model Certification of the Accuracy of Information Provided**

<p><b>Tenant Certification</b></p> <p>I/We certify that the information I/we have provided is true and complete to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.</p> <p>I/we understand that if I/we furnish false or incomplete information I/we can be fined up to \$10,000 or imprisoned up to five years, or lose the subsidy HUD pays and have my/our rent increased.</p> <p>I/We have read the Privacy Act Notice.</p>
<p><b>Owner Certification</b></p> <p>I certify that this tenant's eligibility, rent, and assistance payment have been computed in accordance with HUD's regulations and administrative procedures and that all required verifications were obtained. I also certify that the computations are based upon the data provided by the tenant. I have read and understand the purpose and uses of collecting the required information from applicants and tenants, and I understand that misuse of this information can lead to personal penalties to me.</p>

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- D. The owner must give a copy of the printed 50059 data requirements with the required signatures to the tenant and place another copy in the tenant file.
  - E. The 50059 data requirements are then transmitted electronically to TRACS either directly or through the Contract Administrator. Refer to Chapter 9 for information on 50059 data requirements.

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## Chapter 5 Exhibits

- 5-1. Income Inclusions and Exclusions
- 5-2. Assets
- 5-3. Medical Expenses That Are Deductible and Nondeductible
- 5-4. Certification for Qualified Long-Term Care Insurance Expenses
- 5-5. Form HUD-9887, *Notice and Consent for the Release of Information to HUD and to a PHA*
- 5-6. Form HUD-9887-A, *Applicant's/Tenant's Consent to the Release of Information – Verification by Owners of Information Supplied by Individuals Who Apply for Housing Assistance*
- 5-7. HUD Fact Sheet – Verification of Information Provided by Applicants and Tenants of Assisted Housing
- 5-8. Guidance on Social Security Verification
- 5-9. Tenant Rent Formulas

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## Exhibit 5-1: Income Inclusions and Exclusions

### 24 CFR 5.609(b) and (c)

Examples included in parentheses have been added to the regulatory language for clarification.

#### INCOME INCLUSIONS

- (1) The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services;
- (2) The net income from operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family;
- (3) Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation is permitted only as authorized in paragraph (2) above. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000, annual income shall include the greater of the actual income derived from all net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD;
- (4) The full amount of periodic amounts received from social security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum amount or prospective monthly amounts for the delayed start of a periodic amount, except as provided in paragraph (13) under Income Exclusions (e.g., Black Lung Sick benefits, Veterans Disability, Dependent Indemnity Compensation, payments to the widow of a serviceman killed in action);
- (5) Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment, disability compensation, worker's compensation, and severance pay, except as provided in paragraph (3) under Income Exclusions;
- (6) Welfare Assistance.
  - (a) Welfare assistance received by the family.
  - (b) If the welfare assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustment by the welfare assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of welfare assistance income to be included as income shall consist of:

- (c) The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus
  - (d) The maximum amount that the welfare assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this paragraph shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage;
- (7) Periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony and child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling; and
- (8) All regular pay, special pay, and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces, except as provided in paragraph (7) under Income Exclusions.

### **INCOME EXCLUSIONS**

- (1) Income from employment of children (including foster children) under the age of 18 years;
- (2) Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually persons with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone);
- (3) Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker's compensation), capital gains, and settlement for personal or property losses, except as provided in paragraph (5) under Income Inclusions;
- (4) Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member;
- (5) Income of a live-in aide, as defined in 24 CFR 5.403;
- (6) The full amount of student financial assistance paid directly to the student or to the educational institution;
- (7) The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire (e.g., in the past, special pay included Operation Desert Storm);
- (8)
  - (a) Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD (e.g., training received under Section 3);
  - (b) Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of supplemental security income eligibility and benefits because they are set-aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS);
  - (c) Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs that are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (special equipment, clothing, transportation, child care, etc.) and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program;



- (d) Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by a resident for performing a service for the owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the project. Such services may include, but are not limited to, fire patrol, hall monitoring, lawn maintenance, and resident-initiative coordination. No resident may receive more than one such stipend during the same period of time; or
  - (e) Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying state or local employment training programs (including training programs not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as a resident management staff person. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives, and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program.
- (9) Temporary, nonrecurring, or sporadic income (including gifts);
  - (10) Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era. (Examples include payments by the German and Japanese governments for atrocities committed during the Nazi era);
  - (11) Earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years or older (excluding the head of household and spouse);
  - (12) Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 per adopted child;
  - (13) Deferred periodic amounts from supplemental security income and social security benefits that are received in a lump-sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts;
  - (14) Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under state or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit;
  - (15) Amounts paid by a state agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep the developmentally disabled family member at home; or
  - (16) Amounts specifically excluded by any other federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits under a category of assistance programs that includes assistance under any program to which the exclusions set forth in 24 CFR 5.609(c) apply. A notice will be published in the *Federal Register* and distributed to housing owners identifying the benefits that qualify for this exclusion. Updates will be published and distributed when necessary. The following is a list of income sources that qualify for that exclusion:
    - (a) The value of the allotment provided to an eligible household under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2017 [b]);
    - (b) Payments to Volunteers under the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 5044(g), 5058) (employment through AmeriCorps, Volunteers in Service to America [VISTA], Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Foster Grandparents Program, youthful offender incarceration alternatives, senior companions);
    - (c) Payments received under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1626[c])

- (d) Income derived from certain submarginal land of the United States that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes (25 U.S.C. 459e);
- (e) Payments or allowances made under the Department of Health and Human Services' Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (42 U.S.C. 8624[f]);
- (f) Payments received under programs funded in whole or in part under the Job Training Partnership Act (29 U.S.C. 1552[b]); (effective July 1, 2000, references to Job Training Partnership Act shall be deemed to refer to the corresponding provision of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 [29 U.S.C. 2931], e.g., employment and training programs for Native Americans and migrant and seasonal farm workers, Job Corps, veterans employment programs, state job training programs, career intern programs, Americorps);
- (g) Income derived from the disposition of funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians (Pub. L- 94-540, 90 Stat. 2503-04);
- (h) The first \$2,000 of per capita shares received from judgment funds awarded by the Indian Claims Commission or the U. S. Claims Court and the interests of individual Indians in trust or restricted lands, including the first \$2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians from funds derived from interests held in such trust or restricted lands (25 U.S.C. 1407-1408);
- (i) Amounts of scholarships funded under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, including awards under federal work-study programs or under the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs (20 U.S.C. 1087uu);
- (j) Payments received from programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1985 (42 U.S.C. 3056[f]), e.g., Green Thumb, Senior Aides, Older American Community Service Employment Program;
- (k) Payments received on or after January 1, 1989, from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund or any other fund established pursuant to the settlement in *In Re Agent*-product liability litigation, M.D.L. No. 381 (E.D.N.Y.);
- (l) Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (25 U.S.C. 1721);
- (m) The value of any child care provided or arranged (or any amount received as payment for such care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care) under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858q);
- (n) Earned income tax credit (EITC) refund payments received on or after January 1, 1991, including advanced earned income credit payments (26 U.S.C. 32[j]);
- (o) Payments by the Indian Claims Commission to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of Mescalero Reservation (Pub. L. 95-433);
- (p) Allowances, earnings, and payments to AmeriCorps participants under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12637[d]);
- (q) Any allowance paid under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 1805 to a child suffering from spina bifida who is the child of a Vietnam veteran (38 U.S.C. 1805);
- (r) Any amount of crime victim compensation (under the Victims of Crime Act) received through crime victim assistance (or payment or reimbursement of the cost of such assistance) as determined under the Victims of Crime Act because of the commission of a crime against the applicant under the Victims of Crime Act (42 U.S.C. 10602); and
- (s) Allowances, earnings, and payments to individuals participating in programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2931).

## Exhibit 5-2: Assets

**NOTE:** There is no asset limitation for participation in HUD assisted-housing programs. However, the definition of annual income includes net income from family assets.

- A. Net Family Assets include the following:
1. Cash held in savings and checking accounts, safe deposit boxes, homes, etc. For savings accounts, use the current balance. For checking accounts, use the average balance for the last six months. Assets held in foreign countries are considered assets.
  2. Revocable trusts. Include the cash value of any revocable trust available to the family. See discussion of trusts in paragraph 5-7 G.1.
  3. Equity in rental property or other capital investments. Include the current fair market value less (a) any unpaid balance on any loans secured by the property and (b) reasonable costs that would be incurred in selling the asset (e.g., penalties, broker fees, etc.).
 

**NOTE:** If the person's main business is real estate, then count any income as business income under paragraph 5-6 G of the chapter. Do not count it both as an asset and business income.
  4. Stocks, bonds, Treasury bills, certificates of deposit, mutual funds, and money market accounts. Interest or dividends earned are counted as income from assets even when the earnings are reinvested. The value of stocks and other assets vary from one day to another. The value of the asset may go up or down the day before or after rent is calculated and multiple times during the year thereafter. The owner may assess the value of these assets at any time after the authorization for the release of information has been received. The tenant may request an interim recertification at any time thereafter that a decrease in stock value may result in a decrease in rent.
  5. Individual retirement, 401K, and Keogh accounts. These are included when the holder has access to the funds, even though a penalty may be assessed. If the individual is making occasional withdrawals from the account, determine the amount of the asset by using the average balance for the previous six months. (Do not count withdrawals as income.)

### Example – Withdrawals from a Keogh Account

Ly Pham has a Keogh account valued at \$30,000. When she turns 70 years old, she begins drawing \$2,000 a year. Continue to count the account as an asset. Use the guidance in paragraph 5-7 to determine the cash value and imputed income from the asset. Do not count the \$2,000 she withdraws as income.

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6. Retirement and pension funds.

- a. While the person is employed. Include only amounts the family can withdraw without retiring or terminating employment. Count the whole amount less any penalties or transaction costs. Follow paragraph 5-7 G.4 of the chapter on determining the value of assets.
- b. At retirement, termination of employment, or withdrawal. Periodic receipts from pension and retirement funds are counted as income. Lump-sum receipts from pension and retirement funds are counted as assets. Count the amount as an asset or as income, as provided below.
- (1) If benefits will be received in a lump sum, include the lump-sum receipt in net family assets.
  - (2) If benefits will be received through periodic payments, include the benefits in annual income. Do not count any remaining amounts in the account as an asset.
  - (3) If the individual initially receives a lump-sum benefit followed by periodic payments, count the lump-sum benefit as an asset as provided in the example below and treat the periodic payment as income. In subsequent years, count only the periodic payment as income. Do not count the remaining amount as an asset.

**NOTE:** This paragraph and the example below assume that the lump-sum receipt is a one-time receipt and that it does not represent delayed periodic payments. However, in situations in which a lump-sum payment does represent delayed periodic payments, then the amount would be considered as income and not an asset.

**Example – Retirement Benefits as Lump-Sum and Periodic Payments**

Upon retirement, Eleanor Reilly received a lump-sum payment of \$15,000. She will also receive periodic pension payments of \$350 a month.

The lump-sum amount of \$15,000 is generally treated as an asset. In this instance, however, Eleanor spent \$5,000 of the lump sum on a trip following her retirement. The remaining \$10,000 she placed in her mutual fund with other savings. The entire mutual fund will be counted as an asset.

The owner has verified that Eleanor is now not able to withdraw the balance from her pension. Therefore, the owner will count the \$350 monthly pension payment as annual income and will not list the pension account as an asset.

7. Cash value of life insurance policies available to the individual before death (e.g., the surrender value of a whole life policy or a universal life policy). It would not include a value for term insurance, which has no cash value to the individual before death.
8. Personal property held as an investment. Include gems, jewelry, coin collections, or antique cars held as an investment. Personal jewelry is NOT considered an asset.
9. Lump-sum receipts or one-time receipts. (See paragraph 5-6 O for additional information on what is counted as a lump-sum receipt and how to treat lump-sum receipts.) These include inheritances, capital gains, one-time lottery winnings, victim's restitution, settlements on insurance claims (including health and accident insurance, worker's compensation, and personal or property losses), and any other amounts that are not intended as periodic payments.
10. A mortgage or deed of trust held by an applicant.
  - a. Payments on this type of asset are often received as one combined payment of principal and interest with the interest portion counted as income from the asset.
  - b. This combined figure needs to be separated into the principal and interest portions of the payment. (This can be done by referring to an amortization schedule that relates to the specific term and interest rate of the mortgage.)
  - c. To count the actual income for this asset, use the interest portion due, based on the amortization schedule, for the 12-month period following the certification.
  - d. To count the imputed income for this asset, determine the asset value at the end of the 12-month period following the certification. Since this amount will continually be reduced by the principal portion paid during the previous year, the owner will have to determine this amount at each annual recertification. See the following example:

### **Example – Deed of Trust and Imputed Income**

Computation of imputed income:

An elderly tenant sells her home and holds the mortgage for the buyer. The cash value of the mortgage is \$60,000. The combined payment of principal and interest expected to be received for the upcoming year is \$5,000. The amortization schedule breaks that payment into \$2,000 in principal and \$3,000 in interest. In completing the asset income calculation, the cash value of the asset is \$60,000, and the projected annual income from that asset is \$3,000. Each subsequent year, the cash value of the asset should be reduced by the principal portion paid. In this example, it would be reduced to \$58,000 in the following year (\$60,000 – \$2,000 principal payment = \$58,000). In calculating the imputed income for the following year, the owner would multiply the \$58,000 by the 2% passbook savings rate.

### Regulatory References

(These references are current as of the date of publication. Readers should refer to the latest edition of the Code of Federal Regulations.)

24 CFR part 5.603 defines net family assets as follows:

Net cash value after deducting reasonable costs that would be incurred in disposing of real property, savings, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment, excluding interests in Indian trust land and the equity accounts in HUD homeownership programs. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles shall be excluded. . . . In determining net family assets, owners shall include the value of any business or family assets disposed of by an applicant or tenant for less than fair market value (including a disposition in trust, but not in a foreclosure or bankruptcy sale) during the two years preceding the date of application for the program or recertification, as applicable, in excess of the consideration received therefor. In the case of a disposition as part of a separation or divorce settlement, the disposition will not be considered to be for less than fair market value if the applicant or tenant receives important consideration not measurable in dollar terms.

B. Net family assets **DO NOT** include the following:

**IMPORTANT:** The owner does not compute income from any assets in this paragraph.

1. Personal property (clothing, furniture, cars, wedding ring, other jewelry that is not held as an investment, vehicles specially equipped for persons with disabilities).
2. Interests in Indian trust land.
3. Term life insurance policies (i.e., where there is no cash value).
4. Equity in the cooperative unit in which the family lives.
5. Assets that are part of an active business. "Business" does NOT include rental of properties that are held as investments unless such properties are the applicant's or tenant's main occupation.

#### Example – Assets that are Part of an Active Business

- Laura and Lester Hines own a copier and courier service. None of the equipment that they use in their business is counted as an asset (e.g., the copiers, the FAX machines, the bicycles).
- Alice Washington rents out the home that she and her husband lived in for 42 years. This home is not an active business asset. Therefore, it is considered an asset and the owner must determine the annual income that Alice receives from it.

6. Assets that are NOT effectively owned by the applicant. Assets are not effectively owned when they are held in an individual's name, but (a) the assets and any income they earn accrue to the benefit of someone else who is not a member of the family, and (b) that other person is responsible for income taxes incurred on income generated by the assets.

**NOTE:** Nonrevocable trusts (i.e., irrevocable trusts) are not covered by this paragraph. See information on nonrevocable trusts in paragraph 5-7 G.1.

**Example – Assets not Effectively  
Owned by the Applicant**

Net family assets do not include assets held pursuant to a power of attorney because one party is not competent to manage the assets, or assets held in a joint account solely to facilitate access to assets in the event of an emergency.

**Example:** Alexander Cumbow and his daughter, Emily Bornscheuer, have a bank account with both names on the account. Emily's name is on that account for the convenience of her father in case an emergency arises that would result in Emily handling payments for her father. Emily has not contributed to this asset, does not receive interest income from it, nor does she pay taxes on the interest earned. Therefore, Emily does not own this account. If Emily applies for assisted housing, the owner should not count this account as her asset. This asset belongs to Alexander and would be counted entirely as the father's asset should he apply for assisted housing.

7. Assets that are not accessible to the applicant and provide no income to the applicant. Nonrevocable trusts are not covered under this paragraph. See information on nonrevocable trusts in paragraph 5-7 G.1.

**Example**

A battered spouse owns a house with her husband. Because of the domestic situation, she receives no income from the asset and cannot convert the asset to cash.

### Exhibit 5-3: Medical Expenses That Are Deductible and Nondeductible

The following are examples of eligible items for medical expense deductions. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

Type of Medical Expenses	May Include*
Services of recognized health care professionals	Services of physicians, nurses, dentists, opticians, mental health practitioners, osteopaths, chiropractors, Christian Science practitioners, and acupuncture practitioners
Services of health care facilities; laboratory fees, Xrays and diagnostic tests, blood, oxygen	Hospitals, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), laser eye surgery, out-patient medical facilities, and clinics
Alcoholism and drug addiction treatment	
Medical insurance premiums	Expenses paid to an HMO; Medicaid insurance payments that have not been reimbursed; long-term care premiums (not prorated)
Prescription and nonprescription medicines	Aspirin, antihistamine only if prescribed by a physician for a particular medical condition
Transportation to/from treatment and lodging	Actual cost (e.g., bus fare) or, if driving in a car, a mileage rate based on IRS rules or other accepted standard
Medical care of permanently institutionalized family member IF his/her income is included in Annual Income	
Dental treatment	Fees paid to the dentist; x-rays; fillings, braces, extractions, dentures
Eyeglasses, contact lenses	
Hearing aid and batteries, wheelchair, walker, artificial limbs, Braille books and magazines, oxygen and oxygen equipment	Purchase and upkeep (e.g., additional utility costs to tenant because of oxygen machine [in properties with tenant paid utilities only])
Attendant care or periodic medical care	Nursing services, assistance animal and its upkeep
Payments on accumulated medical bills	Scheduled payments

\* Or any other medically necessary service, apparatus, or medication, as documented by third-party verification.



Some items that **may not** be included in medical expense deductions are listed below.

Medical Expenses	May Not Include
Cosmetic surgery	<p>Do not include in medical expenses amounts paid for unnecessary cosmetic surgery. This applies to any procedure that is directed at improving the patient's appearance and does not meaningfully promote the proper function of the body or prevent or treat illness or disease. Procedures such as face lifts, hair transplants, hair removal (electrolysis), and liposuction generally are not deductible.</p> <p>Amounts paid for cosmetic surgery may be deducted if necessary to improve a deformity arising from, or directly related to, a congenital abnormality, a personal injury resulting from an accident or trauma, or a disfiguring disease.</p>
Health club dues	Do not include in medical expenses the cost of membership in any club organized for business, pleasure, recreation, or other social purpose, such as health club dues, YMCA dues, or amounts paid for steam baths for general health or to relieve physical or mental discomfort not related to a particular medical condition.
Household help	Do not include in medical expenses the cost of household help, even if such help is recommended by a doctor. However, certain expenses paid to a person providing nursing-type services may be deductible as medical costs. Also, certain maintenance or personal care services provided for qualified long-term care can be included in medical expenses.
Medical savings account (MSA)	Do not deduct as a qualified medical expense amounts contributed to an Archer MSA. Do not deduct qualified medical expenses as an itemized deduction if paid with a tax-free distribution from an Archer MSA.
Nutritional supplements	Do not include in medical expenses the cost of nutritional supplements, vitamins, herbal supplements, "natural medicines," etc., unless these can be obtained legally only with a physician's prescription.

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<b>Medical Expenses</b>	<b>May Not Include</b>
Personal use items	Do not include in medical expenses an item ordinarily used for personal, living, or family purposes unless it is used primarily to prevent or alleviate a physical or mental defect or illness. For example, the cost of a wig purchased upon the advice of a physician for the mental health of a patient who has lost all of his or her hair from disease can be included with medical expenses.
Nonprescription medicines	Nonprescription medicines unless prescribed by a physician for a particular medical condition.

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**Exhibit 5-4: Certification for Qualified Long-Term Care Insurance Expenses**

I certify that the long-term care insurance policy for which I pay premiums,  
(insert policy provider name) \_\_\_\_\_,  
policy number \_\_\_\_\_ meets the following conditions.

1. It is guaranteed renewable;
2. It does not provide a cash surrender value which can be paid, assigned, pledged, or borrowed;
3. It provides that refunds (other than refunds on the death of the insured or complete surrender or cancellation of the contract) and dividends under the contract may be used only to reduce future premiums or increase future benefits; and,
4. It does not pay or reimburse expenses incurred for services or items that would be reimbursed under Medicare (except where Medicare is a secondary payer or the contract makes per diem or other periodic payments without regard to expenses).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (sign)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Unit Number

**Exhibits 5-5, 5-6, 5-7: Document Package for Applicant's/Tenant's Consent to the Release of Information**

These exhibits contain form HUD-9887, *Notice and Consent for the Release of Information to HUD and to a PHA*, and form HUD-9887-A, *Applicant's and Tenant's Consent to the Release of Information – Verification by Owners of Information Supplied by Individuals Who Apply for Housing Assistance*, as well as the accompanying HUD Fact Sheet.

### **Exhibit 5-8: Guidance on Social Security Verification**

**NOTE:** See next page.

## Exhibit 5-9: Tenant Rent Formulas

### Section 8, RAP, PRAC, PAC

Total Tenant Payment (TTP) is the greater of:

- 30% monthly adjusted income;
- 10% monthly gross income;
- Welfare rent (welfare recipients in as-paid localities only); or
- \$25 minimum rent (Section 8 only).

**NOTE:** An owner may admit an applicant to the Section 8, RAP, and PAC programs only if the TTP is less than the gross rent. This note does not apply to the PRAC program. In some instances under the PRAC program a tenant's TTP will exceed the PRAC operating rent (gross rent).

### Section 236—No Utility Allowance

Tenant rent is the greater of:

- 30% of monthly adjusted income; or
- Section 236 basic rent.

Tenant rent is never more than market rent.

### Rent Supplement

Total Tenant Payment (TTP) is the greater of:

- 30% of monthly adjusted income; or
- 30% of gross rent.

**NOTE:** For move-ins and initial certifications, the amount of Rent Supplement assistance may be no less than 10% of the gross rent. If the initial amount of Rent Supplement assistance would be less than 10% of the gross rent, the tenant is not eligible for Rent Supplement Assistance.

### Section 236—With Utility Allowance

Tenant rent is the greater of:

- 30% of the monthly adjusted income less the utility allowance;
- 25% of monthly adjusted income; or
- Basic rent.

Tenant rent is never more than market rent.

### Section 221(d)(3) BMIR (Below Market Interest Rate)

At move-in or initial certification, if the tenant's annual income is:

- At or below the BMIR income limit, the tenant is charged the BMIR rent.
- Above the BMIR income limit, the tenant may not be admitted to the project.

At recertification, if the tenant's annual income is:

- Less than or equal to 110% of the BMIR income limit, the tenant pays the BMIR rent.
- Greater than 110% of the BMIR income limit, the tenant pays 110% of the BMIR rent.