



Example Governance Structures for Land Banks

About this Tool

Description:

This document provides background on a sampling of land bank governance models across the country. This document is intended to provide guidance to land banks and land bank programs as they are establishing their governance structure.

Source of Document:

This document was created by the Center for Community Progress with some information taken from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Publication, "Land Bank Authorities" (April 2005), authored by Frank Alexander.

Disclaimer:

This document is not an official HUD document and has not been reviewed by HUD counsel. It is provided for informational purposes only. Any binding agreement should be reviewed by attorneys for the parties to the agreement and must conform to state and local laws.

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Example Governance Structures for Land Banks

Ethical and transparent governance of land banks is critical to the ethical operation and public acceptance of land bank decisions. Governing bodies take a variety of forms, as detailed below:

Items 1-7 contain information taken from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Publication “Land Bank Authorities” (April 2005) authored by Frank Alexander. It can be found at the following link: <http://lisc.org/content/publications/detail/793/>

- 1) A land bank that is a separate legal entity is by law governed by its own board of directors or board of commissioners.
- 2) Members of the governing board may be either private citizens or employees of one of the local governments, and in all cases they serve without compensation.
- 3) The St. Louis Land Bank’s board is composed of three commissioners, appointed by the mayor, the comptroller, and the superintendent of the public schools.²⁰ In Louisville, each participating local government appoints one member of the authority, the local school district appoints one member, and the governor has one appointment.
- 4) Under the Georgia structure, a land bank authority may consist of two or more municipalities in a county, together with the county in which they are located, so the size of the board is limited only by the number of parties to the interlocal agreement.
- 5) For the Atlanta Land Bank, the city and county school districts may appoint a representative to the board to serve in an advisory capacity.
- 6) Local land banks in Michigan specify the size, composition, and method of appointment of board members in the intergovernmental agreement, with the statute requiring only that the board consist of an odd number of members and that the county treasurer be one of them.
- 7) A common requirement is that board members be residents of the local jurisdictions served.

- 8) Policies and procedures are determined by the board of directors, implemented by staff according to adopted policies. The delegation of authority to act on behalf of a the land bank entity is determined by board policy
- 9) Land banks may create local agreements with county, cities, townships, and villages as to the use and transferee of properties within their specific municipalities
- 10) Public participation may include Advisory Council of citizens and interested parties.
- 11) Some land bank legislation requires that a land bank board of directors approve a code of ethics to ensure that the authority of the land bank board and individual members is properly exercised.
- 12) In some cases, a local government or governments forming a land bank may impose general guidance or specific policy under which a land bank may operate.