U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE BRIDGE
THE OFFICE OF HOUSING COUNSELING NEWSLETTER

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Housing Counseling Rocks at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)

Washington, DC - In July 2010, Congress passed and President Obama signed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. The Act created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), the nation's first federal agency whose sole focus is protecting consumers in the financial marketplace.

Since the Bureau opened its doors, it has concentrated on making consumer financial markets work better for the American people, and helping people improve their financial lives.

CFPB's vision is to work toward a finance marketplace where consumers can understand prices and risks upfront so they can easily make product comparisons, and where no one can build a business model around unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau works to:

Educate - An informed consumer is a key line of defense against harmful practices.

Enforce – The CFPB supervises certain banks, credit unions, and other financial companies and enforces federal consumer financial laws.

Study – The CFPB gathers and analyzes available information to better understand consumers, financial services providers, and consumer financial markets.

You Can Help

The CFPB's relationship with housing counselors is mutually beneficial. The Bureau writes rules, including rules that apply to mortgages, supervises many consumer financial services companies, and enforces federal consumer financial protection laws, including those that restrict unfair, deceptive, or abusive acts or practices.

The CFPB monitors financial markets to identify risks to consumers, handles consumer complaints, researches consumer behavior and creates and promotes financial education materials.

Housing counselors help the CFPB serve the public when they:

- Distribute CFPB financial education materials to consumers
- Direct consumers to CFPB's complaint system
- Share information about consumers' experiences in local markets
- Provide feedback on ways the CFPB can better help consumers with their financial challenges.

The CFPB looks forward to our continued relationship working with housing counselors to benefit consumers.

cfpb Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

FROM THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Sarah Gerecke
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Housing

Greetings and Happy Independence Day!

Like many of you, I celebrated the Fourth of July holiday with family and friends. As we commemorated our nation's independence, we also reflected on the generations over time that have sacrificed so much for so many of the freedoms we enjoy today. I also reflect on the freedoms of choice associated with our economy, and the challenges faced by families trying to find or keep their homes. Many markets are facing sky-high rents, persistent foreclosures, and reduced choices for first-time homebuyers. Housing counselors play important roles today to help consumers broaden their housing choices and exercise their rights.

This edition of *The Bridge*, features the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which protects the freedom of consumers by carrying out Federal consumer financial laws. Established by Congress, the CFPB works to ensure that consumers get the information they need to make the best financial decisions for themselves and their families.

The Office of Housing Counseling (OHC) has worked closely with the CFPB on a number of important initiatives. We have provided feedback and guidance during the design stages of some of their consumer tools. We share information about HUD-approved housing counseling agencies for their website, which is used by lenders and consumers to search for a housing counselor. We used the results of the CFPB report to inform our policies around reverse mortgage counseling. And we benefited from their expert guidance on mortgage rules for the HAWK for New Homebuyers pilot program.

The CFPB is a valuable resource for housing counselors and their clients and a great partner of the Office of Housing Counseling. CFPB's mandate to protect consumers in financial markets and to improve consumers' financial lives goes hand-in-hand with the mandate of the OHC, to help consumers make responsible choices that address their housing needs in light of their financial situations. That is why it is vital for the housing counseling community to know and understand how the CFPB works and how we can continue to work together to benefit a greater number of consumers.

There is a wealth of information on the CFPB covered in this issue and I encourage you to familiarize yourself particularly with the tools and resources summarized on page 13. These tools empower all of us to be more knowledgeable about consumer protection and avenues your clients can take to address issues and concerns.

I hope everyone has a great summer while we continue to learn, grow and be a valuable resource to those we serve.

Sarah

COLLABORATING FOR CONSUMERS

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the Office of Housing Counseling (OHC) have much in common. We were both created by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and we both strive to make consumer financial markets work better for consumers and responsible companies.

The CFPB Works for Consumers

One of CFPB's key objectives is to work to ensure that consumers are treated fairly in the financial marketplace. OHC and housing counselors are important to this essential goal.

While we write rules to protect consumers, effective consumer protection depends on people: consumers who ask questions and speak up; front line staff serving the public such as housing counselors who see first-hand the challenges consumers face and help them get help; government agencies' supervision and enforcement staff having a clear view of what potential violations to look out for; and responsible industry employees following the rules.

Housing Counselors Are the CFPB's Eyes and Ears

Housing counselors are a vital component of the coordinated effort between the CFPB and the OHC. Counselors are the CFPB's eyes and ears working with consumers – referrals, including from counselors and other sources, accounted for 19% of all consumer complaints we have received.

The CFPB appreciates the hard work that housing counselors must do to adapt to changing program needs and market conditions. And we recognize that housing counselors are a vital, robust conduit for delivering consumer financial education, including by using and distributing tools and materials we create. One of those tools, "Ask CFPB," provides an online trusted source to get answers to questions about financial services and products.

Educating and Empowering Consumers

To educate and empower consumers to make better informed financial decisions, the CFPB's Consumer Education and Engagement Division has developed and implemented programs, initiatives and digital experiences, including the "Your Money, Your Goals" toolkit. The toolkit provides front line staff in organizations that serve consumers with information they can share on topics such as emergency savings; understanding, correcting and building credit history; cash flow budgeting; and identifying financial products to use to pursue various financial and life goals.

The Bureau also helps consumers who face unique challenges in the financial services market, including the economically vulnerable. Our Office of Financial Empowerment works to improve the lives of these consumers by working with intermediaries such as housing counselors to bring them the tools and resources they need to become financially capable.

We'll highlight many of the initiatives and tools in this issue of '*The Bridge,*' including guides and information about the mortgage rules you can access online. You'll find additional resources and material on our website, in the brochures we make available via the U.S. Government Printing Office, or by calling us at (855) 411 2372.

On behalf of the CFPB, thank you for the work you do every day helping consumers with their housing and other consumer finance issues.

Sincerely,

Gail Hillebrand
Associate Director for Consumer Education and Engagement
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

HAVE A PROBLEM WITH A FINANCIAL PRODUCT OR SERVICE? SUBMIT A COMPLAINT TO THE CFPB

As a housing counselor, you may often work with clients facing one or many financial challenges. It may be difficult to find help or your attempts to serve a consumer sometimes fall short because something in the financial system does not work the way it should.

When your best effort does not get the consumer the response the consumer deserves, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) may be able help. You can submit a complaint on behalf of a consumer, or direct consumers to where they can submit their own complaints.

Live telephone assistance in English and Spanish is available at:

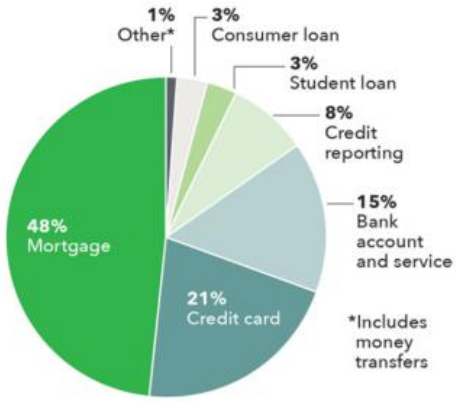
- (855) 411-CFPB (2372) or
- (855) 729-CFPB (2372) TTY/TDD.

The CFPB provides complaint services to consumers in more than 180 languages, and its contact centers answer calls with little to no wait time.

The CFPB has handled more than 395,000 complaints (as of July 1, 2014) and accepts complaints about the following financial products and services:

- Mortgages
- Debt collection
- Payday loans
- Credit reporting
- Student loans
- Bank accounts and services
- Credit cards and prepaid cards
- Money transfers
- Auto or other consumer loans

Types of complaints received by the CFPB as of June 2014

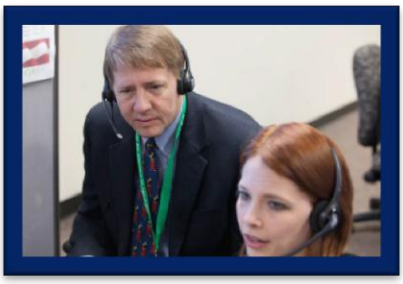


Housing counseling agencies can use the information available through the CFPB's public Consumer Complaint Database to research trends and identify concerns. The database updates nightly, and contains anonymized complaint information provided by consumers in the complaint process, including the type of complaint, the date of submission, the consumer's zip code, and the company that the complaint concerns.

The database also includes information about the actions taken by a company in response to a complaint – whether the company's response was timely, how the company responded, and whether the consumer disputed the company's response.

At the Consumer Complaint Database, housing counselors can:

- Filter data based on specific search criteria
- Aggregate data in various ways, such as by complaint type, company, location, date, or any combination of available variables
- Download data



CFPB Director Richard Cordray listens to a call at the CFPB's contact center in Coralville, Iowa

THE CFPB COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. Complaint Submitted

The consumer submits a complaint about a consumer financial product or service. He or she will receive email updates and can log in to track the status of the complaint.

2. Review and Route

The CFPB forwards the complaint and any documents the consumer provides to the company and works to get a response from it. If another government agency would be better able to assist, the CFPB forwards the complaint to that agency and lets the consumer know.

3. Company Response

The company reviews the complaint, communicates with the consumer as needed, and reports back to the CFPB and to the consumer about the issue identified in the complaint.

4. Consumer Review

The CFPB lets the consumer know when the company responds. The consumer can review that response and give feedback to the CFPB.

5. Review and Investigate

The CFPB shares complaint data with state and federal law enforcement agencies. Complaints tell the CFPB about business practices that may pose risks to consumers. The CFPB will let the consumer know if more information is needed about the complaint.

Complaints are prioritized for investigation based on a review of the complaint, the company's response, and the consumer's feedback. In some cases, complaints are referred to the CFPB's Division of Supervision, Enforcement, and Fair Lending & Equal Opportunity for further discussion.

6. Analyze and Report

Complaints help the CFPB supervise companies, enforce federal consumer financial laws, and write better rules and regulations. It also reports to Congress about the complaints it receives and posts anonymized information in the Consumer Complaint Database.

Know Before You Owe

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) issued a rule integrating the various disclosures that consumers must receive shortly after they apply for a mortgage and shortly before they close pursuant to the Truth in Lending Act and the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act.

Currently, consumers get two documents at each juncture – the Good Faith Estimate (GFE) and the Truth in Lending (TIL) disclosure after application, and the HUD-1 Settlement Statement and a revised TIL at closing.

Starting August 1, 2015, consumers will receive two disclosure forms: a Loan Estimate form in conjunction with the mortgage application and the Closing Disclosure form in conjunction with the closing. The integrated disclosures will make mortgage disclosure easier for consumers to understand and use.

The CFPB has several resources to help housing counselors learn more about the changes:

- **Compliance guide:** This plain-language guide fully explains the regulation behind the change.
- **Guide to forms:** This guide provides detailed, illustrated instructions on completing the Loan Estimate and Closing Disclosure forms.
- **Integrated loan disclosure forms and samples:** These downloadable Loan Estimate and Closing Disclosure forms are available in both English and Spanish and include samples for different loan types.

Servicing Protections for Struggling Consumers: A Guide for Housing Counselors

The CFPB has been working with housing counselors to provide information about the new mortgage servicing rules. Housing counselors working with consumers experiencing mortgage hardship may find the *CFPB's Help for Struggling Borrowers: A guide to the mortgage servicing rules effective on January 10, 2014* can be a useful tool.

The guide covers:

- The loss mitigation application process
- Foreclosure prohibitions under the rule
- Charges and fees that can be imposed on a borrower
- The process for resolving errors by a servicer
- The process for requesting information from a servicer
- Requests for payoff statements.

Key Provisions in New Mortgage Servicing Rules

Intervention

In most cases servicers must make contact with a borrower soon after he or she becomes delinquent.

- *Within 36 days* --The servicer has to talk to the borrower (or make good faith efforts to talk to the borrower) about the circumstances of the borrower's delinquency.

- *Promptly after making live contact with the borrower* – The servicer must tell the borrower about the availability of loss mitigation options if appropriate.

- *Within 45 days* – The servicer must send the borrower a written notice that, among other things, encourages the borrower to contact the servicer and tells the borrower how to find a HUD-approved housing counselor.

(continued on page 7)

When housing counselors or their clients have financial questions, they can find unbiased answers in plain language at *Ask CFPB*, an interactive online tool. *Ask CFPB* contains:

- Answers to common consumer questions about financial products and services
- Information and tips to help consumers navigate common situations.
- Definitions of technical industry jargon for consumer use.
- Explanations of financial product terms and conditions.

Here's a typical *Ask CFPB* question and answer:

Q: What is the ability-to-repay rule and why is it important?

A: The ability-to-repay rule requires most mortgage lenders to make a good-faith effort to determine that you are likely to be able to pay back the loan. This is important because during the financial crisis many lenders made loans without making sure borrowers had enough income to repay their mortgage loans. As a result, many borrowers ended up in risky loans they could not afford. Congress responded by passing a common-sense law that says mortgage lenders must make a reasonable effort to figure out if a borrower has the ability to repay the mortgage before the loan is made.

The CFPB is responsible for enforcing this law, and we have written a rule that says lenders have to make a reasonable and good-faith effort to figure out a borrower's ability to repay a mortgage. In practice this means lenders must generally find out, consider, and document a borrower's income, assets, employment, credit history and monthly expenses.

Lenders cannot just use an introductory or "teaser" rate to figure out if a borrower can repay a loan. For example, if a mortgage has a low interest rate that goes up in later years, the lender has to make a reasonable effort to figure out if the borrower can pay the higher interest rate too.

One way a lender can follow the ability-to-repay rule is by making a "Qualified Mortgage."

(continued from page 6, Key Provisions in New Mortgage Servicing Rules)

If the borrower is more than 45 days delinquent, the servicer must send (with the periodic statement or on a separate letter) the borrower certain information about the loan, including:

- The date the borrower became delinquent;
- An account history covering:
  - the period since the account was last current or for the last six months, whichever is shorter, and
  - showing for that period the amount remaining past due from each billing cycle or,
  - if any such payment was fully paid, the date on which it was credited as fully paid;
- Whether the servicer has made the first notice or filing' required by applicable law for any judicial or non judicial foreclosure process, if applicable;
- How much must be paid by the borrower to bring the account current.

120 Day Foreclosure Prohibition

In most cases servicers cannot make the first notice or filing required by applicable law for any judicial or non judicial foreclosure unless the borrower is more than 120 days delinquent.

Restrictions on Dual Tracking

If the borrower submits a complete loss mitigation application after the servicer has made the first notice or filing required by applicable law for any judicial or non-judicial foreclosure process but more than 37 days before a scheduled foreclosure sale, the servicer cannot move for foreclosure judgment or order of sale, or conduct a foreclosure sale until the servicer has fully processed the completed application.

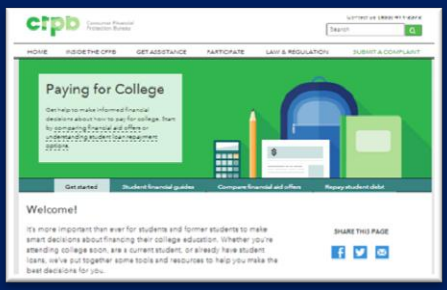
This means the foreclosure prohibitions last until the servicer denies the application for loss mitigation and there is no right to appeal, there is no appeal, or the appeal is denied; or until the borrower has rejected all loss mitigation offers; or until the borrower does not perform as required under a loss mitigation option. This means that if the borrower is performing under a temporary or permanent loss mitigation plan these restrictions apply.

(continued on page 12)

CONSUMER EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Housing counselors help many types of consumers, including those who face unique financial markets or financial challenges. The CFPB has materials and tools tailored to unique groups including servicemembers, students, older Americans, and consumers who have traditionally been underserved in the financial system.

Students



With more than seven million borrowers in default on a federal or private student loan, many housing counseling clients may have student loans on top of their mortgage debt. The CFPB's tools for students range from help making informed financial decisions about paying for college, comparing financial aid offers, understanding student loan repayment options, and information on debt collection and credit reporting for student loans.

Servicemembers

Holly Petraeus, Assistant Director for Servicemember Affairs, speaks with servicemembers at Ft. Myer in Arlington, VA

Servicemembers face distinctive financial challenges, but also have unique protections. Housing counselors serving servicemembers can tap CFPB materials about VA benefits as well as other resources available to servicemembers and may wish to add the CFPB's servicemember materials to their websites.

Older Americans

The CFPB's Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans has tools and information to help seniors navigate financial challenges.

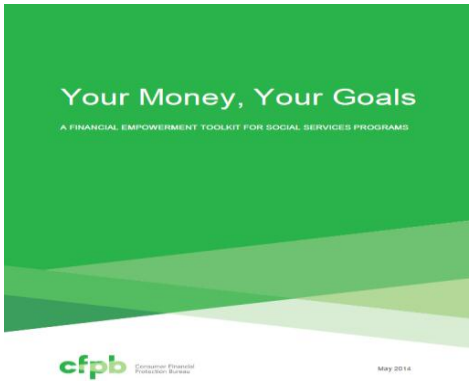
With over 50 million Americans aged 62 and older, older adults are prime targets for financial exploitation both by persons they know and trust and by strangers. Financial exploitation has been called "the crime of the 21st century" with one study suggesting that older Americans lost at least $2.9 billion to financial exploitation by a broad spectrum of perpetrators in 2010.

Housing counselors can learn to spot and prevent elder financial exploitation using *Money Smart for Older Adults – Prevent Financial Exploitation*, which provides a resource guide for individuals and a training module for instructors.

Financial caregiving can also be a challenge. The CFPB's *Managing Someone Else's Money* guides can help housing counselors understand the role of powers of attorney, court-appointed guardians, trustees, and government fiduciaries.

(continued on page 9)

A New Toolkit for Social Services Providers



Money management tools for consumers who are struggling to make ends meet are not easy to find. Effective programs not only provide basic financial education, but also help professionals such as housing counselors talk with their clients about their financial goals.

Your Money, Your Goals*: A Financial Empowerment Toolkit for Social Services Programs* from *the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)* provides tools housing counselors can use when incorporating financial-empowerment support into their work with clients and making referrals to specialized providers.

The toolkit modules cover:

- Building an emergency savings fund
- Understanding, correcting, and building credit history
- Managing debt
- Cash-flow budgeting
- Identifying financial products available to pursue various financial and life goals
- Strengthening personal money management skills

For example, the toolkit includes information that housing counselors can use to help the people they serve grow their skills with basic financial tasks, such as ordering a credit report and understanding and managing debt.

The CFPB field tested the toolkit by training 1,400 front-line social services staff through 26 organizations in more than 30 communities. Your Money, Your Goals*: A Financial Empowerment Toolkit for Social Services Programs* is being released nationwide on July 30.

(continued from page 8, Consumer Education and Engagement)

Empowerment of Traditionally Underserved Consumers

Many economically vulnerable consumers benefit from connecting to networks of public and nonprofit service providers to help address their immediate financial needs. The CFPB's Office of Financial Empowerment focuses on low-income and economically vulnerable consumers who may face barriers to accessing affordable financial products and services.

The Office has implemented programs and initiatives including the *Your Money, Your Goals* financial empowerment toolkit to help social services program professionals as they work with consumers to help them become more financially capable. This enables consumers to improve their credit score, manage their money, choose the right financial products for them or navigate any other financial decision that helps them achieve their financial goals.

The CFPB is working with HUD and other agencies to integrate these tools into the programs that they support or offer to help reach as many front line staff and consumers as they can. To contact the Office, please email: empowerment@cfpb.gov.

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

Q: I'm a HECM Counselor that needs to meet the continuing education requirements for the HECM roster rule. What can I take and what is available?

A: HECM counselors needing continuing education credits can take any of the HECM related courses offered by NeighborWorks and National Council of La Raza. They are the primary providers of HECM counseling training. HUD may also periodically offer courses eligible for HECM continuing education.

To receive a certification of attendance for HUD courses, the housing counselor must view the live broadcast and attend the entire session. HUD's Office of Housing Counseling (OHC) will also permit counselors to meet the requirement by retaking courses they have previously completed.

OHC has also worked with agencies that develop and conduct HECM training that, with our approval, maybe used for continuing education credit. OHC will consider other courses that may not be specifically structured to address HECM counseling as long as it contains components that are related to HECM, for example, loss mitigation courses that cover HECM as well as forward mortgages.

OHC continues to encourage the expansion and development of additional training opportunities in our housing counseling training grants. Visit OHC training opportunities, for more information.

Q: How does the revised Form HUD 9910, *Performance Review of a HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agency or Participating Agency* change the Office of Housing Counseling's (OHC) performance review process?

A: OHC utilized stakeholder and internal reviewer feedback to establish a reformatted form HUD 9910. The form accomplishes three things:

1. A living compliance document for the agency, to change policy when necessary. This affords the agency a complete understanding of compliance requirements.

2. The Housing Counseling Agencies will be responsible for completing the form (when performance review date and time is set), and will require self-certifying the answers.

3. OHC reviewers will review the form and documents ahead of the on-site or desk review, allowing for time to be spent on discussing/understanding compliance issues, rather than using the form as a simple checklist.

CHAMPIONS OF SERVICE

Cathy Lesser Mansfield

Cathy Lesser Mansfield, Policy Analyst with CFPB's Consumer Education and Engagement Division, came to the CFPB in September 2013 for a two year period. A law professor from Iowa who has written about and worked on mortgage and foreclosure issues, she understood the need for housing counselors to understand the new mortgage servicing rules.

She jumped at the opportunity to develop a guide in time for the effective date of the new rules and created "Help for Struggling Borrowers: A guide to the mortgage servicing rules effective on January 10, 2014" just in time.

Along with staff from other teams, including Laurie Maggiano, Jean Healey, Gerald Sachs, Scott Steckel and Brenda Muñiz, Cathy has helped the Bureau provide on-site and virtual trainings to more than 5,000 housing counselors in more than 20 cities, including Columbus, Orlando, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Phoenix, and Albany.

If housing counselors are interested in getting trained on the new rules, please contact the CFPB at housingtraining@cfpb.gov

THE BRIDGE **is pleased to recognize Champions of Service who have provided exemplary service in the Housing Counseling arena.**
Nominations of persons both inside and outside of HUD are welcomed.
Please send your nominations by the 20th of each month to: thebridge@hud.gov.

PROTECTIONS FOR MORTGAGE BORROWERS, cont.

(continued from page 7, Key Provisions in New Mortgage Servicing Rules)

Completing an Application

A loss mitigation application is considered expansively. For example, if -- when the servicer is giving information to the borrower about loss mitigation -- the borrower expresses interest in applying for a loss mitigation option and provides information the servicer would evaluate in connection with a loss mitigation application, the borrower's inquiry has become a loss mitigation application

If a loss mitigation application is received 45 days or more before any scheduled foreclosure sale, and the application is incomplete, the servicer has to send the borrower a written notice within five business days telling the borrower what additional documents and information must be submitted to complete the application and a reasonable date by which the application must be completed.

If the borrower submits the requested information, the application is considered complete. The servicer can then ask for more information or corrected documentation from the borrower and the application is considered facially complete. The borrower is protected by the dual tracking rules described on page 7, so long as the borrower complies with the request.

Evaluation of Complete Applications

All complete applications that are received more than 37 days before any scheduled foreclosure sale, or before any foreclosure sale is scheduled, must be evaluated for all loss mitigation options available to the borrower. This evaluation must be conducted by the servicer within 30 days of the servicer receiving the complete loss mitigation application.

Transfer of Servicing

Servicers must have policies and procedures that are reasonably designed to facilitate transfer of information during servicing transfers. For more information and a list of many of the resources available for housing counselors and consumers visit the new mortgage rules.

High-Cost Mortgage Protections

If a lender offers a high-cost mortgage for a consumer's primary home, where the annual percentage rate (APR) or points and fees charged exceed certain threshold amounts, stronger consumer protections apply.

If you want to learn more about the types of high-cost loans that qualify for the stronger protections, read the 2013 Home Ownership and Equity Protection Act (HOEPA) Rule Compliance Guide.

Enforcing the Law

As the single point of accountability in the federal government for consumer financial protection, the CFPB enforces various consumer financial laws. Our authority extends to many nonbanks, such as mortgage servicing companies, private student lenders, payday lenders, and larger participants of the consumer reporting, consumer debt collection, and student loan servicing markets.

Through enforcement actions, the Bureau has secured hundreds of millions of dollars in refunds and other redress for consumers. For example, it took action against a payday lender for allegedly robo-signing court documents in debt collection suits and overcharging servicemembers and their families to refund millions of dollars to consumers and pay civil money penalties. The Bureau also took action against a leading debt-settlement payment processor, for allegedly helping others to collect millions of dollars in illegal upfront fees from consumers.

As a data-driven agency, the CFPB relies on various information channels to inform its choices about where to focus oversight and enforcement resources. The Bureau reviews complaints, conducts examinations and market analyses, and receives information from other sources. The Bureau also hears from front-line staff of organizations working with consumers who see first-hand the issues and challenges facing consumers.

Any housing counselor who believes a servicer has engaged in potentially systemic or egregious non-compliance with the CFPB's mortgage servicing rules can send an email to CFPB_servicingtips@cfpb.gov.

And, individuals can always inform the Bureau about their experiences at Tell Your Story.

CFPB TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Consumer Complaints and Questions

Submit a Complaint
P.O. Box 4503, Iowa City, Iowa 52244
Fax (855) 237-2392 | (855) 411-CFPB (2372)|
TTY/TDD (855) 729-CFPB (2372)
8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Eastern, Monday – Friday
180+ languages available

Fair Lending

The CFPB helps ensure that financial institutions comply with the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) and the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA). Housing counseling organizations and others can use the CFPB's HMDA Database to study mortgage market trends. Find out more about fair lending protections and the CFPB's work in its report to Congress.

K-12: Why It Matters

To help the public better understand the financial education landscape, the CFPB has made recommendations for helping young Americans improve their financial capability. Housing counselors can read those recommendations in the CFPB's report from its national conference on youth financial education and capability.

Reverse Mortgages

Housing counselors working with older Americans may want to share the CFPB's four-page consumer guide to reverse mortgages or answers to common questions about reverse mortgages on *Ask CFPB*. For an in-depth look at reverse mortgages, consult the CFPB's report to Congress.

Taxpayer Assistance

The CFPB works in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service to encourage Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) recipients to save some portion of their EITC refunds. If your organization helps people prepare their taxes, you can download the *Ready? Set, Save!* materials supporting this initiative:

- Checklist to help taxpayers prepare for their tax appointment (en Español)
- Worksheet to help taxpayers decide how much to save (en Español)
- Web banner for posting on your organization's site
- Poster encouraging taxpayers to consider saving (en Español)

Tell Your Story

The CFPB's *Tell Your Story* gives consumers the opportunity to share their experiences – positive or negative – with consumer financial products and services. These submissions, like formal complaints, are reviewed by CFPB staff to help the Bureau understand current issues in the financial marketplace.

Ask CFPB

Find unbiased answers in plain language at *Ask CFPB*, an interactive online tool.

Special Population Offices

- Empowerment@cfpb.gov
- OlderAmericans@cfpb.gov
- Financialeducation@cfpb.gov
- Students@cfpb.gov
- Military@cfpb.gov

More CFPB Resources for Housing Counselors

Recent reports and publications:

- Data point: Medical debt and credit scores
- Snapshot of older consumers and mortgage debt
- Mortgage closings today
- Supervisory Highlights: Spring 2014
- Semi-Annual Report: Spring 2014
- Other reports, including on overdraft, payday lending, and credit scores

Whistleblowers

The CFPB welcomes tips about potential violations of federal consumer financial law. Whistleblowers and law enforcement tipsters – including current or former employees of potential violators, contractors, vendors, or industry competitors – should contact us directly at whistleblower@consumerfinance.gov or (855) 695-7974.

More Tools and Materials

- Spanish-language materials
- Help for homebuyers
- Help for homeowners
- Housing counselor guide to helping struggling borrowers
- Foreclosure Avoidance Checklist
- Foreclosure Avoidance Procedures
- Factsheet of New CFPB Consumer Protection Rules
- Your Money, Your Goals" toolkit
- Information for Students

Booklets, Brochures, Bookmarks, Posters and More

Housing counselors can use these links to order additional materials for their clients:

- Featured Publications
- Accounts
- CFPB Brochures
- Credit
- Money Management
- Mortgages
- Special Populations
- En Español
- Other Languages

Resources for Servicemembers

- Information for Servicemembers
- Add the CFPB to Your Website and Share on Social Media

Upcoming Training and Stakeholder Meetings

The Office of Housing Counseling has a very busy schedule of training and stakeholder meetings during the upcoming month. A number of them have been announced on the OHC ListServ and others will be coming out in the near future. Be sure to register for the webinars that are of interest to you. Links to the registration can be found at the: OHC Training Calendar.

- **July 29, 2014** FY 14-15 Housing Counseling NOFA Feedback: Intermediaries, SHFAs and MSOs
- **July 31, 2014** HUD's Housing Counseling Program: How Faith–Based Non-profit Agencies can Participate
- **August 4, 2014** FY 14-15 Housing Counseling NOFA Feedback: LHCAs
- **August 12, 2014** Privacy Act Training for Housing Counselors
- **August 15, 2014** Stakeholder Meeting about Training Needs for Housing Counselors (LHCAs, sub-grantees, and affiliates)
- **August 19, 2014** A Look at the New 9902
- **August 28, 2014** Emergency Preparedness Planning for Housing Counseling Agencies

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