



March 6, 2020

PH PROGRAM NEWS

PIH Revises the User Guide to Assigning WASS Roles for the OpFund Web Portal

In an email yesterday to the Financial Management Division (FMD) [mailing list](#), HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing ([PIH](#)) announced that the recently posted PHA user guide to assigning WASS roles for the operating fund (OpFund) web portal contained an error describing the user role capabilities. The [revised guidance](#) is now available on the [OpFund web portal](#). The new guidance impacts all PHA staff and the PHA's third party support authorized to access the OpFund portal. HUD encourages all users and WASS security coordinators to review the changes and update user role assignments.

GENERAL NEWS

HUD Publishes 2020 Inflation Factor for Civil Monetary Penalties

Today in the *Federal Register*, HUD's Office of General Counsel ([OGC](#)) published a [notice](#) which provides the 2020 inflation adjustment factor for HUD's civil monetary penalty (CMP) regulations. Such adjustments are required under the [Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990](#), as amended by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015.

As explained in the notice, the cost-of-living adjustment multiplier for 2020 is 1.01764. Adjustments are rounded to the nearest dollar. The notice includes a table showing the previous amounts and 2020 adjusted amounts for various HUD-related civil penalties. For example, the maximum monetary penalty for a first-time violation of the [Fair Housing Act](#) has increased from \$21,039 to \$21,410.

The effective date for the 2020 inflation adjustment is April 6, 2020.

HUD Awards Additional \$1.1 Million through the FYI Initiative

In a [press release](#) yesterday, the Department of Housing and Urban Development ([HUD](#)) announced that it is awarding an additional \$1.1 million to 10 housing authorities to assist young people aging out of foster care and who are at risk of experiencing homelessness. The funding, awarded under HUD's new Foster Youth to Independence ([FYI](#)) Initiative, will offer housing vouchers to local PHAs to prevent or end homelessness among young adults under the age of 25 who are leaving, or have recently left, the foster care system. Funding is provided in the form of tenant protection vouchers (TPVs) to certain PHAs that do not participate in HUD's Family Unification Program ([FUP](#)). In January, HUD awarded nearly \$500,000 to the FYI Initiative and an additional \$260,000 in February. A complete list of awardees and the amounts they will receive can be found in the [press release](#).

DOJ Settles Disability Discrimination Suit against Ohio Housing Developer

In a [press release](#) yesterday, the Department of Justice ([DOJ](#)) announced that it has reached a settlement with the developer and franchisor of multifamily properties in Ohio. The agreement resolves allegations that they violated the [Fair Housing Act](#) by designing and constructing 32 multifamily properties with steps and other features that made them inaccessible to persons with disabilities.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The Act also requires housing built after March 1991 to contain accessible features for persons with disabilities, including accessible routes without steps to all ground-floor units. Failure to meet these standards it is considered unlawful discrimination.

Under the terms of the [agreement](#), the defendants will pay up to \$2,200,000 to correct inaccessible features in the common areas of the properties and within the individual units. The defendants must also offer to pay current owners to correct certain inaccessible features within condominium units, including those found in bathrooms and kitchens. Additionally, they must establish a \$300,000 settlement fund for people impacted by the accessibility violations, pay a civil penalty of \$51,303 to the United States, and ensure that any future housing they design or construct complies with the Fair Housing Act. Defendants will also pay \$40,000 in damages to the Fair Housing Advocates Association, which filed with HUD the discrimination complaint that initiated this case.



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