


DATE: September 5, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR: Donald A. Billingsley, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Office of Multifamily Housing Programs

Roger A. Lewis, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Office of Healthcare Programs

FROM: Brenda Payette, Regional Vice-President- Region 10, AFGE Council 222

THROUGH: Veronica Bobbitt, Regional Vice-President- Region V, AFGE Council 222 

SUBJECT: Demand to Bargain- Office of Multifamily Housing & Healthcare Programs Portal and Loan Underwriting System (PLUS) Implementation

In accordance with Article 49, Section 49.04(1) of the HUD-AFGE Agreement and the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute at 5 U.S.C. § 7114(a) and (b) and §7106(b)(2) And (3), enclosed please find the AFGE National Council 222's (AFGE Council 222 or Union) demand to bargain and preliminary bargaining proposals in response to HUD management's intent to implement PLUS in both Multifamily Housing Programs (MFH) and Office of Healthcare Programs (OHP).

Proposals

- 1. Demonstrations of the Plus Program:** To ensure transparency and understanding, we request that the department provide a demonstration of the Plus Program at each phase before its rollout or trial. For instance, when the intake department or concept meeting phase is included, a demo of the software expansion should be provided to the union.
- 2. Deliverable Timeframes:** It is crucial for the union to have specific time frames associated with each deliverable. We ask that you confirm these time frames and do not alter the current timelines for work products related to the intake process, underwriting process, closing coordinator process, and construction logs etc. We also request that no additional timelines be introduced that would result in a change in working conditions.
- 3. Tracking Mechanism Assurance:** While the Plus Program serves as a tracking mechanism, we must ensure that production work is tracked throughout the entire process, as it has been historically. Acknowledge that the Minimum Performance Goals (MPG) will not change due to the implementation of the Plus Program, and that the automation will not reduce the time allocated to any position or employee involved in this work.
- 4. Conditions for EPPES Revisions:** We request that management refrain from revising Multifamily Production EPPs (Employee Performance Plans) to include the use of the Plus System until the entire rollout is complete or until beta testing has been successfully conducted over a sufficient period of time.
- 5. Protection Against Derogatory Comments:** It is crucial to ensure that comments or communications directly from the lender in the lender portal of the Plus Program will not be used as derogatory comments against employees. We are aware that lenders may not always be

satisfied with decisions made by underwriters based on critical risk factors. With management now having access to ongoing conversations and lender responses, it is essential to prevent employees from feeling intimidated, threatened, or pressured into compromising their ability to assess risk and make ethical decisions on each project.

6. Oversight and Accuracy Assurance: We request confirmation of who will have oversight of the Plus Program to ensure the accuracy of the data. It would be helpful to specify if this responsibility will be assigned to a specific position, such as the Information Specialist, or if Multifamily will create new positions dedicated to monitoring the Plus software.

7. Visibility and Evaluation Tools: We propose that all users have the ability to review the status of work associated with the entire life of the project. This feature should also allow employees to utilize the information for their self-evaluations if they choose to and enable users to visibly identify any hurdles or bottlenecks that may be occurring on their projects.

8. Lender Collaboration and Project Transition: It is important to confirm whether the Plus system will display lender defaults and allow collaboration with account executives for the review and completion of 2530s, as well as address any Departmental Enforcement Center (DEC) issues. Additionally, we request clarification on whether the Plus system will compile and transfer the project to the Asset Management department after closing and notify assigned employees for archiving purposes.

It is understood that the Agency has full authority to introduce technological advancements. Council 222 is responsible for ensuring that the upgrades do not infringe upon bargaining unit employees (BUEs) contractual rights. These preliminary proposals are intended to further clarify the impact and implementation of PLUS. In accordance with Article 49, Section 49.06(i) of the HUD-AFGE Agreement, the Union reserves the right to submit additional bargaining proposals until negotiations commence or based on new information received during negotiations.

If you wish to meet to discuss our concerns, please contact Brenda Payette, Region 10-Regional Vice President (RVP), by email at Brenda.Payette@hud.gov or Veronica Bobbitt, Region V- RVP, at Veronica.S.Bobbitt@hud.gov.

Cc: Antonio Gaines, President, AFGE HUD Council 222
Antonio Carraway, Chief Negotiator, AFGE HUD Council 222