



# NHTF • The National Housing Trust Fund

## How Can The Money Be Used? General Features\*

### Focus on Rental Housing

At least 90% of the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) money must be used to buy, build, rehabilitate, preserve, or operate rental housing.

NHTF housing must be permanent housing.

NHTF may not be used for transitional housing or emergency shelters.

Up to 10% of NHTF dollars may be used to buy, build, rehabilitate, or preserve housing for first-time homeowners. Down payment and closing cost assistance and interest rate buy-downs may also be provided. (See separate article, “Homeowner Provisions” for details.)

§1338(c)(10) statute  
§93.200(a)(1) regulations

### Focus on Extremely Low Income Households

At least 75% of a state’s NHTF allocation must benefit extremely low income households or households with incomes below the federal poverty line (whichever is greater).

Extremely low income (ELI) is less than 30% of the area median income (AMI).

No more than 25% of a state’s NHTF allocation may benefit very low income (VLI) households, those with income more than 30% of AMI but less than 50% of AMI.

§1338(c)(7)(A)

For years when there is less than \$1 billion available for the NHTF, 100% of a state’s NHTF must benefit extremely low income households.

(See separate article, “Focused on Extremely Low Income Renters” for details.)

§93.250

### Operating Cost Assistance

NHTF may be used to provide operating cost assistance and/or to create an operating cost reserve fund for NHTF-assisted rental homes. However, no more than 33% of a state’s NHTF annual grant may be used for operating cost assistance.

(See separate article, “Operating Cost Assistance” for details.)

§93.201(e) and §93.200(a)(1)

---

\* For specific eligible activities, see separate articles: “Eligible Project Costs,” “Operating Cost Assistance,” “Homeowner Features,” “Public Housing,” and “Ineligible Activities.”

## Forms of Assistance

NHTF assistance may be in the form of equity investments, loans (including no-interest loans and deferred payment loans), interest subsidies, grants, and other forms. States and any local subgrantees may decide the terms of assistance.

§93.200(b)

## General Program Administration and Planning

§93.202

General program administration and planning relates to the cost of overall NHTF program management, coordination, and monitoring. Examples of general administration include state or any local subgrantee staff salaries and related costs necessary for “program administration” such as preparing reports for HUD and ensuring that projects comply with the regulations. Examples of other eligible program administration and planning costs include equipment, office rental, and third party services such as accounting.

General program administration costs differ from “project administration” costs, which are staff and overhead costs directly related to carrying out a specific housing development project.

Up to 10% of a state’s annual NHTF grant may be used to pay for general program administration and planning.

§1338(c)(10)(D)(iii)

In addition, up to 10% of any “program income” may be used for general administration and planning. Program income is money returned to the state or local subgrantee as a result of the use of NHTF dollars; for example, repayment of a rehabilitation loan.

The interim rule allows local subgrantees to use NHTF money for administration and planning, but any subgrantee use counts toward the state’s 10% cap.

States or local subgrantees may decide whether “project administration” is a “program administration” cost or a “project administration cost” that would not count against the 10% cap.

## Some Other Administration and Planning Costs

The interim regulations specifically list as allowable program administration and planning costs:

- Carrying out activities to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH).
- Providing information to residents and community organizations participating in the planning, implementation, or assessment of NHTF projects.
- Preparing the Consolidated Plan, including conducting hearings and publishing materials.
- Complying with other federal requirements regarding: non-discrimination, affirmative marketing, lead-based paint, displacement and relocation, conflict of interest, and fund accountability.

## **Project Costs**

Many eligible “project costs” may be met with NHTF money. They include: property acquisition, development hard costs, relocation, demolition, utility connections, site improvements, project soft costs, refinancing, paying construction loans, operating assistance, and staff costs directly related to carrying out a project.

(See separate articles, “Eligible Project Costs” and “Operating Costs.”)

§93.201

## **Acquisition of Vacant Land/Demolition**

NHTF money may only be used to buy vacant land or demolish property if carried out for a specific housing project that will provide affordable housing for which construction can reasonably be expected to begin within one year.

§93.200(a)(2)

## **Manufactured Homes**

NHTF money may be used to buy and/or rehabilitate a manufactured home, or to purchase the land on which a manufactured home sits.

The home must, at the time of project completion, be:

- Connected to permanent utility hook-ups; and,
- Located on land:
  - Owned by the homeowner; or,
  - For which the homeowner has a lease for a period that at least equals the length of time the home must remain affordable to an income-eligible household (minimum of 30 years).

§93.200(a)(3)

## **Mixed-Unit Projects**

NHTF-assisted housing can be in a project that also contains non-NHTF-assisted housing. After project completion, the number of NHTF-assisted units may not be reduced.

NHTF may be used for housing in a project that also contains public housing units.

(See separate article, “Public Housing”.)

§93.200(c)

REV June 2015