



**OKLAHOMA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY  
HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)**

**WRITTEN NEW CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS**

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## **Introduction and Overview**

Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designated State Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) Participating Jurisdiction (PJ) for the state of Oklahoma.

Pursuant to the Final Rule for HOME, OHFA must develop and adopt Written New Construction Standards for methods and materials to be used for new construction. OHFA must ensure that plans and specifications for new construction that describe the work to be undertaken are in compliance with State and local codes, ordinances, requirements, and OHFA's standards for methods and materials.

## **Required Methods and Materials**

All new construction of housing units funded with HOME funds must meet all State and local codes. It must also meet the latest version of the International Residential Code and Energy Star (where applicable). OHFA will review the plans and specifications for new construction activities to ensure that the work undertaken will be in compliance with these standards and codes. In addition, OHFA will review and approve the written cost estimate for construction and determine if the costs are reasonable. OHFA will further conduct progress and final inspections of construction to ensure that work is done in accordance with the plans and specifications originally presented and in compliance with all relevant standards and codes.

In addition, all housing units funded and constructed with HOME funds must be modest. For housing units constructed for homeownership, the definition of modest includes the valuation limits included in the HOME Final Rule. However, HUD further states that HOME-assisted housing must not include any "luxury improvements." HUD does not provide a comprehensive list of what types of improvements constitute luxury improvements. HUD does specifically mention the following as being considered luxury improvements: air-jet tubs, saunas, outdoor spas, and granite countertops.

Therefore, developers of HOME-assisted housing units must not include air-jet tubs, saunas, outdoor spas or granite countertops. Developers of HOME-assisted housing should also use sound judgment in determining whether or not any other improvements to the housing unit might be considered luxury improvements.

HUD states that discretionary housing improvements (beyond those required to meet property standards) may include modest amenities and aesthetic features that are in keeping with housing of similar type in the community. This would include certain amenities and aesthetic features that are required by neighborhood covenants. HUD and OHFA, in an effort to affirmatively further Fair Housing, encourage developers of HOME-assisted housing to locate the housing units in high opportunity areas. Such areas may require additional modest amenities and aesthetic features.

Lastly, for HOME-assisted rental housing, the useful life of each major system (structural support, roofing, cladding, weatherproofing, plumbing, electrical and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) must meet or exceed the period of affordability. The period of affordability of

newly constructed rental housing is twenty (20) years. The period of affordability does not commence until the project is recorded as completed in HUD's Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS).