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**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**MANUAL OF OPERATIONS**

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**SUBJECT:** Verification Standards

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**SCOPE:** This Section shall apply to all applicants of assisted housing programs administered by the Seattle Housing Authority, unless specifically noted.

**POLICY:**

The verification process during the time of application is a critical task in the administration of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) assisted housing programs. This task requires the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) to verify factors that affect the determination of an applicant's income. The verification process also requires the applicant to provide and disclose information that is true and complete, which is necessary in SHA's administration of HUD's assisted housing programs.

In accordance with the verification guidance issued with Notice PIH 2004-01 which comes from the regulations found at 24 CFR Parts 5, 903, 960 and 982, applicable to the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs, SHA has established written policies that provide for third party verification of income for applicants. HUD regulations, 24 CFR Parts 960.259(c) and 982.516(a), require SHA to obtain and document in the applicant files, independent third party verification (or document the reason why third party verification was not available) of reported applicant income, the value of assets, expenses related to deductions from income and other factors affecting adjusted income. 24 CFR §960.259(c) (1) and §982.516(a) (2)

HUD regulations specify the types and amounts of income and deductions to be included in the calculation of annual income. SHA's verification requirements are designed to maintain program integrity.

To prevent fraud and abuse in HUD programs, the United States Code (USC) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) allow HUD and SHA to obtain information about applicants to determine their eligibility or level of housing assistance. Most importantly, the USC authorizes computer-matching agreements of income information. Below is a summary of laws and regulations that govern the use of "upfront" or computer matching income verification.

24 CFR §5.234 (Requests for Information from SWICAs and Federal Agencies; Restrictions on Use) indicates that income information will generally be obtained through computer matching agreements between HUD and a SWICA or Federal Agency, or between a PHA and a SWICA.

42 USC 3544(c) (2) (A) (Preventing Fraud and Abuse in Housing and Urban Development Programs) provides the legal basis for preventing fraud and abuse in HUD programs. The law allows HUD to require that applicants sign a consent form to request the following: current or previous wages and salaries from employers, wage information and unemployment compensation from the State agency charged with the administration of the State unemployment law, and income information from the Commissioner of Social Security and the Secretary of the Treasury. Where there are partnership agreements, regulatory agreements and/or financial agreements, that have been incorporated into a management plan approved by HUD and / or SHA, the criteria for determining income set forth in those documents shall take precedence over this Section.