

## Housing Counseling Disclosure

### **Services Offered:**

Urban League of the River Valley offers the following HUD one-on-one counseling and group education services: Pre-Purchase Counseling, Foreclosure Prevention Counseling, Rental Counseling, Non-Delinquent Post-Purchase Counseling, Preparing for HomeOwnership Workshops, and Financial Capability Classes.

See the first Addendum, “Services” for a full description of our services.

### **Privacy Statement:**

Urban League of the River Valley values your privacy. When you use our service, we collect personal information in order to provide the services you requested and to support our housing counseling program. We collect the following information: information we receive from your application and other forms, information about your transactions with us, our affiliates, or others, and information we receive from a consumer reporting agency. Our agency takes precautions to keep your information confidential and secure per HUD requirements. Urban League of the River Valley may not use or disclose the information provided by you without written consent except under the following circumstances: as necessary to provide the services you request, as required by law or in response to a subpoena or search warrant, or to outside auditors such as HUD or National Urban League who have agreed to keep the information confidential.

### **Relationships with Industry Partners:**

Urban League of the River Valley has financial relationships with several partners in the industries of credit monitoring and repair, lending, real estate, insurance, and other related fields. See the Addendum “Financial Partnerships” for a list of partnering organizations.

### **No Client Obligation:**

There is no obligation to receive, purchase, or use any product or service offered by this agency or any services of its industry partners or another party in exchange for your receiving HUD housing counseling and/or education services.

### **Alternatives:**

As a condition of our services and in compliance with HUD’s Housing Counseling Program requirements, we may provide information on alternative services, programs, and products available to you.

## Acknowledgments

Please initial that you have read and understand the following acknowledgments:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the Urban League of the River Valley provides housing counseling. A written action plan will be provided consisting of recommendations for handling my situation, possibly including referrals to other housing agencies as appropriate.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that a credit report is required for Urban League of the River Valley to provide the best assessment for customers. I agree to provide my report following the Credit Report Authorization agreement.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the Urban League of the River Valley receives Congressional funds for housing counseling. As such, it is required to submit client-level information through the online reporting system with program administrators or their agents for program monitoring, compliance, and evaluation.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ I may be referred to other housing services or agencies as appropriate to be able to assist with concerns that have been identified. I understand that I am not obligated to use any of the services offered to me.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ I can “opt-out” of disclosures of my nonpublic personal information to third parties (such as your creditors).

**Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **opt-out**                      **Co-Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **opt-out**

6. \_\_\_\_\_ If I choose to “opt-out,” Urban League of the River Valley will not be able to answer questions from my creditors. If at any time, I wish to change my decision regarding my “opt-out” choice, I will have to do so in writing.

## Third-Party Release Information

1. So long as you have not opted out, Urban League of the River Valley may disclose some or all of the information that we collect, as described above, to creditors, where we have determined that it would be helpful to you, would aid us in counseling you, or is a requirement for grant awards.
2. We may also disclose any nonpublic personal information about you as permitted by law (e.g., if we are compelled by legal process).
3. Within the organization, we restrict access to nonpublic personal information about you to those employees who need to know that information to provide services to you. We maintain physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards that comply with federal regulations to guard your nonpublic personal information.

I acknowledge the above and have received a copy of Urban League of the River Valley's privacy policy.

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Applicant Signature

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Date

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Applicant Printed Name

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Co- Applicant Signature

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Date

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Co- Applicant Printed Name

### Credit Report Authorization

A credit report is required for Urban League of the River Valley to review customers' credit files for housing counseling purposes. You may choose to provide your own credit report or allow Urban League of the River Valley to pull one for you. Please read the following acknowledgments and choose how you would like to submit your credit report.

I understand that the Urban League of the River Valley will pull my credit report. I agree to pay \$29.90 per person, per report, at the time of my housing counseling appointment. I understand that if I am facing foreclosure or am homeless, I will not have to pay this fee. I understand that for the Urban League of the River Valley to pull my credit report, I will need to provide a copy of my photo ID and social security number prior to my housing counseling appointment.

I choose to provide the Urban League of the River Valley with my credit report prior to my housing counseling appointment.

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Applicant Signature

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Date

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Applicant Printed Name

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Social Security Number

### Credit Report Authorization - (Co-Applicant)

If you do not have a Co-Applicant, you may SKIP this page.

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- I choose to provide the Urban League of the River Valley with my credit report prior to my housing counseling appointment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number

## Services

### WORKSHOPS

#### **Preparing for Homeownership**

Preparing for Homeownership is an 8-hour workshop where attendees will receive information on topics that will prepare the prospective homebuyer to make informed home purchase decisions. Topics include homebuyer readiness, money management, understanding credit, getting a mortgage loan, shopping for a home, keeping your home, and maintaining a home.

#### **Financial Capability Classes**

Urban League of the River Valley periodically offers free classes, taught by experienced professionals, on a variety of financial topics. Topics can include credit building, money management, insurance, lending, and more.

### HOUSING COUNSELING

#### **Pre-Purchase Counseling**

Clients receive comprehensive one-on-one counseling, which covers the entire home-buying process from beginning to end. Counselors assist their clients with creating a sustainable budget/spending plan for their current household situation, and a clear action plan is developed to achieve the overall goal of homeownership. Clients also receive important material on home inspections, pre-foreclosure, and any other homeownership topic relevant to successfully maintaining a home.

#### **Foreclosure Prevention Counseling**

If you are late on mortgage payments or worried that your payments are not affordable, we have counselors ready to offer assistance. In a counseling session, your counselor will evaluate your situation, explain your options, and help you identify the appropriate next steps.

#### **Rental Counseling**

Our rental counseling service helps renters who would like to improve their rental situation or avoid eviction. This is a personalized approach where you and your counselor can discuss your housing wants and goals. The counselor will discuss your credit report, go over your income and budget, and create an action plan where you can see your suggested next steps toward those goals.

#### **Non-Delinquency Post-Purchase Counseling**

If you are already a homeowner but have questions about what to do next, our housing counselors are available to help. During this session, Clients will receive important material on how to properly maintain a home and refinance a home. Clients are assessed for individual needs and are assisted with the tools and services to successfully maintain a home.

## Financial Partnerships

The Local Housing Counseling Agency at Urban League of the River Valley has financial partnerships with the following organizations:

- McDougle and Associates
- HOME Referral Network
- MTI Financial Services

### Housing Counseling Services Disclosure Statement

As a client of the Urban League of the River Valley, it is important for you to be fully informed about our services, potential conflicts of interest, and your rights. Please review the following disclosures carefully:

1. **Affiliation with Home Referral Network and MTI Financial Services:** Octavia McDougle is the broker of Home Referral Network (a real estate and credit service company) and MTI Financial Services (a mortgage brokerage). While we may provide information about these services, you are under no obligation to use them. Your decision to use any specific credit, real estate or mortgage service is entirely voluntary, and your access to housing counseling services is not contingent upon using these or any other services.
2. **Potential for Financial Benefit:** As the broker of Home Referral Network and MTI Financial Services, Octavia McDougle may receive compensation if you choose to use the services of these entities. However, we are committed to providing you with impartial housing counseling, and you are encouraged to explore all available options.
3. **No Obligation to Use Specific Services or Products:** You are not required to use any services or products offered by the Urban League of the River Valley, its affiliates, or partners. You have the right to seek services, including real estate, loan products, or other financial services, from any provider of your choice.
4. **Disclosure of Financial Relationships:** The Urban League of the River Valley may offer various services through partnerships with entities such as Home Referral Network and MTI Financial Services. Should you choose to use services from any of these affiliates, please be aware that there may be a financial interest in those transactions.
5. **Promotional Agreements/Sponsorships with Service Providers:** The Urban League of the River Valley may have promotional agreements/sponsorships with certain Service Providers for outreach and education efforts. If such agreements exist, you will be informed, and you are under no obligation to use any specific lender's products.
6. **Information on Alternative Service Providers:** To ensure you have a range of options, we will provide you with information on at least three alternative service providers, including real estate agents, mortgage brokers, or lenders, that may meet your needs. At least three alternative Service Providers will be provided to you.
7. **Promotional Agreements/Sponsorships with Lenders:** The Urban League of the River Valley may have promotional agreements/sponsorships with certain lenders for outreach and education efforts. If such agreements exist, you will be informed, and you are under no obligation to use any specific lender's products. At least three alternative loan products will be provided to you.
8. **Commitment to Transparency and Compliance:** The Urban League of the River Valley is committed to transparency and full compliance with HUD regulations and ethical standards. This disclosure provides you with all relevant information about potential conflicts of interest and your rights as a client.

## **Fair Lending Practices**

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination in mortgage lending is prohibited by the federal [Fair Housing Act](#) and HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity actively enforces those provisions of the law. The Fair Housing Act makes it unlawful to engage in the following practices based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap (disability):

- Refuse to make a mortgage loan
- Refuse to provide information regarding loans
- Impose different terms or conditions on a loan, such as different interest rates, points, or fees
- Discriminate in appraising property
- Refuse to purchase a loan or set different terms or conditions for purchasing a loan
- Discriminate in providing other financial assistance for purchasing, constructing, improving, repairing, or maintaining a dwelling or other financial assistance secured by residential real estate.

### **Filing a Complaint**

If you have experienced any one of the above actions, you may be the victim of discrimination.

Recognizing the signs of lending discrimination is the first step in filing a complaint. HUD investigates your complaints at no cost to you. If you believe you have experienced lending discrimination, visit the [housing discrimination complaint website](#) to learn more about the complaint process at:

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/online-complaint](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint)

### **Subprime Lending**

Subprime loans play a significant role in today's mortgage lending market, making homeownership possible for many families who have blemished credit histories or who otherwise fail to qualify for prime, conventional loans. While the subprime mortgage market serves a legitimate role, these loans tend to cost more and sometimes have less advantageous terms than prime market loans. Additionally, subprime lenders are largely unregulated by the federal government. Data shows African Americans are much more likely than whites to get a subprime loan, and many of the borrowers who take out these loans could qualify for loans with better rates and terms. As such, many have expressed fair lending concerns about the subprime market.

### **Predatory Lending**

Some lenders, often referred to as predatory lenders, saddle borrowers with loans that come with outrageous terms and conditions, often through deception. Elderly women and minorities frequently report that they have been targeted, or preyed upon, by these lenders. The typical predatory loan is: (1) in excess of those available to similarly situated borrowers from other lenders elsewhere in the lending market, (2) not justified by the creditworthiness of the borrower or the risk of loss, and (3) secured by the borrower's home. HUD is working hard to fight against predatory lending.

Source: HUD website, for more information visit this link:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/fair\\_lending](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/fair_lending)





## **Ten Important Questions to Ask Your Home Inspector**

### **1. What does your inspection cover?**

The inspector should ensure that their inspection and inspection report will meet all applicable requirements in your state if applicable and will comply with a well-recognized standard of practice and code of ethics. You should be able to request and see a copy of these items ahead of time and ask any questions you may have. If there are any areas you want to make sure are inspected, be sure to identify them upfront.

### **2. How long have you been practicing in the home inspection profession and how many inspections have you completed?**

The inspector should be able to provide his or her history in the profession and perhaps even a few names as referrals. Newer inspectors can be very qualified, and many work with a partner or have access to more experienced inspectors to assist them in the inspection.

### **3. Are you specifically experienced in residential inspection?**

Related experience in construction or engineering is helpful, but is no substitute for training and experience in the unique discipline of home inspection. If the inspection is for a commercial property, then this should be asked about as well.

### **4. Do you offer to do repairs or improvements based on the inspection?**

Some inspector associations and state regulations allow the inspector to perform repair work on problems uncovered in the inspection. Other associations and regulations strictly forbid this as a conflict of interest.

### **5. How long will the inspection take?**

The average on-site inspection time for a single inspector is two to three hours for a typical single-family house; anything significantly less may not be enough time to perform a thorough inspection. Additional inspectors may be brought in for very large properties and buildings.

### **6. How much will it cost?**

Costs vary dramatically, depending on the region, size and age of the house, scope of services and other factors. A typical range might be \$300-\$500, but consider the value of the home inspection in terms of the investment being made. Cost does not necessarily reflect quality. HUD Does not regulate home inspection fees.

### **7. What type of inspection report do you provide and how long will it take to receive the report?**

Ask to see samples and determine whether or not you can understand the inspector's reporting style and if the time parameters fulfill your needs. Most inspectors provide their full report within 24 hours of the inspection.

**8. Will I be able to attend the inspection?**

This is a valuable educational opportunity, and an inspector's refusal to allow this should raise a red flag. Never pass up this opportunity to see your prospective home through the eyes of an expert.

**9. Do you maintain membership in a professional home inspector association?**

There are many state and national associations for home inspectors. Request to see their membership ID, and perform whatever due diligence you deem appropriate.

**10. Do you participate in continuing education programs to keep your expertise up to date?**

One can never know it all, and the inspector's commitment to continuing education is a good measure of his or her professionalism and service to the consumer. This is especially important in cases where the home is much older or includes unique elements requiring additional or updated training.



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# Credit discrimination is illegal






Under federal law, lenders are not allowed to discriminate against you. When you apply for credit or borrow money, it is against the law to discriminate because of:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National origin
- Sex (including gender)\*
- Marital status
- Age
- Receiving money from public assistance

\*Currently, the law supports arguments that the prohibition against sex discrimination also affords broad protection from discrimination based on a consumer's gender identity and sexual orientation.

Lenders are allowed to ask you for this type of information in some situations, but they can't discourage you from applying for credit. And, they can't reject your application for any of the reasons on the list—or for exercising your rights under certain consumer protection laws. Lenders are not allowed to charge higher costs, like a higher interest rate or higher fees, for these reasons either.

The ECOA applies to all forms of credit including:

-  Car loans
-  Credit cards
-  Home loans
-  Student loans
-  Small business loans

Within limits, lenders are allowed to consider other factors, such as income, debt, and credit history, when they decide whether to offer you credit and what terms to offer you.

## You are protected under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA)

ECOA was enacted in 1974. It makes credit discrimination illegal and holds lenders responsible if they break the law. Many parts of the U.S. government enforce the law—including the CFPB as well as the Office of the Comptroller of Currency, Federal Reserve Board, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, National Credit Union National Credit Union Administration, Department of Justice, and Federal Trade Commission.

## Protect yourself from discrimination

### Do your research

Shop around. Learn about the benefits and risks of the loan or credit card you want. Research current interest rates. Compare offers from several lenders. You can more easily spot if someone is trying to take advantage of you if you have facts on hand.

### Know your credit history

Some lenders make decisions based on your credit history. Be sure there are no mistakes or missing items in your credit reports. Request a free copy of your credit report every 12 months from [AnnualCreditReport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com), which includes reports from the three biggest consumer reporting companies.

### Stay in control

Your lender shouldn't make you feel rushed or unnecessarily delay action on your application.

### Be sure before signing

You shouldn't ever feel pressured to sign. Take the time to make sure the credit product and terms work for you.

### Ask questions

Don't focus only on your monthly payment. Ask about rates and the total amount of interest and fees you may pay over the long run.

## Warning signs of discrimination

Credit discrimination often happens behind closed doors, which makes it hard to spot. But there may be warning signs. Pay attention to whether you are:

- Treated differently in person than on the phone
- Discouraged from applying for credit
- Hearing the lender make negative comments about race, national origin, sex, or other factors.
- Refused credit even though you qualify for it based on advertised requirements
- Offered credit with a higher interest rate than the one on the application, even though you qualify for a lower rate based on advertised requirements


### If you believe you are the victim of credit discrimination, seek help

- For legal resources listed state by state, visit: [lawhelp.org](https://www.lawhelp.org)
- To find out about eligibility for assistance from a Legal Services program funded by the Legal Services Corporation, visit: [lsc.gov/what-legal-aid/find-legal-aid](https://www.lsc.gov/what-legal-aid/find-legal-aid)
- Locate your state attorney general's office: [naag.org/naag/attorneys-general/whos-my-ag.php](https://www.naag.org/naag/attorneys-general/whos-my-ag.php)
- Submit a complaint with the CFPB: [consumerfinance.gov](https://www.consumerfinance.gov)

## About the CFPB

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is an independent federal agency built to protect consumers. We write and enforce rules that keep banks and other financial companies operating fairly. We also educate and empower consumers, helping them make more informed choices to achieve their financial goals.

### Contact us


 Online

[consumerfinance.gov](https://consumerfinance.gov)

 By phone

(855) 411-CFPB (2372)


(855) 729-CFPB (2372) TTY/TDD

 By mail

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

P.O. Box 4503

Iowa City, Iowa 52244

 Submit a complaint

[consumerfinance.gov/complaint](https://consumerfinance.gov/complaint)



Consumer Financial  
Protection Bureau

Learn more at [consumerfinance.gov](https://consumerfinance.gov)

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