



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

February 26, 2014

MEMORANDUM NO:
2014-CF-1804

Memorandum

TO: Dane M. Narode
Associate General Counsel for Program Enforcement, CACC

//signed//

FROM: Kimberly Randall
Director, Joint Civil Fraud Division, GAW

SUBJECT: Final Action
Deandra Caison
Section 8 Landlord Settled Violations of the Housing Choice Voucher Program

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Office of Inspector General (OIG), conducted a review of Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program payments made to Deandra Caison, a landlord, for a tenant residing in a property that Ms. Caison no longer owned.

BACKGROUND

HUD's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program provides rental subsidies through tenant-based vouchers for housing units chosen by the tenant in the private market. These vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies. To participate in the program, property owners enter into housing assistance payments contracts with housing authorities. The housing assistance payments contract states that unless the owner has complied with all provisions of the contract, the owner does not have a right to receive payments under the contract. In addition, the property owner certifies to HUD that the assisted family does not own or have an interest in the contract unit. The composition of the household must be approved by the housing agency, other persons may not be added to the household without the prior written approval of the owner and the housing agency, and the contract unit may be used only by the approved household members.

Deandra Caison was a landlord who participated in HUD's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. Ms. Caison entered into a housing assistance payments contract with the Orlando Housing Authority in November 2005 to lease her property to an eligible low-income resident. Ms. Caison received housing assistance payments for her tenant for the period

November 2005 through March 2010. However, she had sold the property in May 2006 and was not eligible to continue receiving the Section 8 payments for the tenant. The Authority discovered the alleged fraud in 2010 when the tenant reported to the Authority that the subsidized home was going into foreclosure. The Authority requested that Ms. Caison repay the \$44,893 in housing assistance paid to her from June 2006 through March 2010. The Authority referred Ms. Caison to HUD OIG when she failed to repay the \$44,893.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

Deandra Caison received Section 8 housing assistance payments from the Authority for a tenant residing in a property that she no longer owned. Ms. Caison had sold the property to her brother in May 2006 but continued to receive housing assistance payments through March 2010. Between November 2007 and March 2010, Caison received \$29,055¹ in housing assistance payments from the Authority.

On or about August 29, 2013, HUD's Office of Program Enforcement issued a complaint against Ms. Caison under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act. To resolve the matter and to avoid the uncertainty of litigation, the parties agreed in January 2014 to settle the matter for a lump-sum payment of \$10,000 based upon Ms. Caison's ability to pay.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that HUD's Office of General Counsel, Office of Program Enforcement,

- 1A. Agree to allow HUD OIG to post the \$10,000 settlement to HUD's Audit Resolution and Corrective Actions Tracking System as an ineligible cost.

¹ Ms. Caison received \$44,893 in housing assistance payments from June 2006 through March 2010; however, HUD sought relief only for payments and claims made after November 1, 2007, due to the statute of limitations under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act.