



CALIFORNIA TAX CREDIT ALLOCATION COMMITTEE

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DATE: May 7, 2026

TO: Low Income Housing Tax Credit Project Owners and Applicants

FROM: California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC)

RE: 2026 Income Limits and Maximum Rents

On May 1, 2026, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the 2026 Income Limits applicable to low-income housing funded with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and projects financed with tax-exempt housing bonds. CTCAC utilizes the information published by HUD to calculate maximum rents and income limits for California LIHTC projects. The 2026 limits go into effect on May 1, 2026. Projects that Place-In-Service (PIS) on or after May 1, 2026 have a 45-day grace period in which they may choose to use either the current 2026 Income and Rent Limits or the prior 2025 Income and Rent Limits for lease up and determining the gross rent floor election (GRFE) for the property. All properties that PIS on or after June 15, 2026, must use the 2026 Income and Rent limits.

The Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA) of 2008 made statutory changes to how income limits were calculated for projects. Prior to HERA Legislation, income and rent limits were determined by HUD on an annual basis and were based on the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) of the county the project was located in. Additionally, if HUD determined there was a decrease in the AMGI, the limits were “held harmless” at the level of the prior year. The HERA legislation changed the “hold harmless” determination of AMGI from an annual county level to a project level, based on the year the project placed in service (HERA Hold Harmless). Additionally, it gave an adjusted increase in the income limits (HERA Special) to projects in counties for which the AMGI had been determined to be held harmless in 2007 and 2008

(Impacted Properties). Please see IRS LIHC Newsletter #35 for more information about what constitutes “determined” and projects that were placed in service before or after the HUD income limit effective dates.

In California, there were initially seven designated HERA Special counties:

- Marin
- Nevada
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
- Solano
- Ventura

In 2010, HUD announced that they were creating the Multifamily Tax Subsidy Program (MTSP) Limits for all LIHTC properties going forward, separating them from the Section 8 limits, and eliminating the previous hold harmless policy. At that time, HUD also established a maximum and minimum amount that the AMI can change from year to year. The income limits issued for the Section 8 and MTSP programs will not increase more than 5% or twice the change in the national non-metro AMGI (whichever is greater), nor will the limits decrease more than 5%. With the change in policy, HERA Hold Harmless provisions apply to all projects that were placed in service on or after January 1, 2009, and all future projects. The elimination of the HUD hold harmless policy created separate income and rent tables, adjusted annually, based on the projects PIS date (Non-Impacted).

Impacted and Non-Impacted MTSP projects:

- **Impacted Project** – An Impacted Project is any project which had area median gross income determined in 2007 or 2008 under the HUD Hold Harmless policy, for which HUD has published a HERA Special limit and meets the following requirements:
 - Any single building project that Placed in Service on or before 12/31/2008.
 - Any multi-building project that had at least one building Place in Service on or before 12/31/2008.
 - Any acquisition/rehab project that has the date of acquisition on or before 12/31/2008.
 - Any rehab only project that had at least one building Place in Service on or

before 12/31/2008.

- **Non-Impacted** – Non-Impacted MTSPs are projects that were not subject to the HUD Hold Harmless policy in 2007 or 2008, placed in service on or after January 1, 2009, or may not be affected by HERA Special Limits at this time. All non-impacted properties are still under the provisions of HERA Hold Harmless once they have placed in service and are subject to the 45-day implementation grace period.
 - For existing non-Impacted projects where the placed in-service date is 1/1/2009 – 5/1/2026, you would use the greater of the previous year (2025) or the current (2026) income and rent limits.
 - The Rent Limit is the greater of the current year (2026) or the gross rent floor election. CTCAC will determine the gross rent floor election to be at carryover allocation for 9% tax credit projects or at preliminary reservation for 4% bond projects unless written notification is made by the owner to CTCAC specifying the gross rent floor election is to be at placed in service.

Changes to the Income Limits for Multifamily Tax Subsidy Projects MTSPs under HERA and subsequent legislation:

On March 23, 2018, the omnibus appropriations bill was signed into law, which included a change to Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code allowing “Average Income Test,” under which a project may include units targeted up to 80% of area median income (AMI) as long as the project’s average targeting does not exceed 60% AMI. In 2018, CTCAC implemented regulation changes that allowed certain projects that would PIS in or after 2018, to change to the Average Income Test set-aside. The 2018 and all future Income and Rent limits reflect the averages from 20% up to 80%.

2026 Income and Rent Limits:

Two counties in California saw a decrease in the AMGI for 2026, all other counties increased or remained the same. The counties with a decrease were:

- Shasta
- Solano

In 2026, CTCAC combined tables with duplicative information and the resulting three (3) income limit tables and three (3) rent limit tables are posted on the CTCAC website:

- 2026 Income Limits for Projects Placed in Service on or before 12/31/2008 (including HERA Special Projects)
- 2026 Income Limits for Projects Placed in Service from 1/1/2009 – 4/30/2026
- 2026 Income Limits for Projects Placing in Service on or after 5/1/2026+

- 2026 Rent Limits for Projects Placed in Service on or before 12/31/2008 (post 1989)
- 2026 Rent Limits for Projects Placed in Service from 1/1/2009 – 4/30/2026
- 2026 Rent Limits for Projects Placing in Service on or after 5/1/2026+

Note: for projects pre-1990 that use a per person based rent limit, please contact Compliance Section Chiefs Mayra Lozano at mayra.lozano@treasurer.ca.gov, Emilio Contreras at emilio.contreras@treasurer.ca.gov or Tara Boynton at tara.boynton@treasurer.ca.gov to receive a copy of the 2026 rent limits.

All income limit tables reflect the current limits as determined by the HERA Special, HERA Hold Harmless, and MTSP guidance for 2009-2026.

Please note this memo provides summary information of published HUD guidance. **Please review the entire Federal Register notice [Docket No. FR-5323-N-03], dated May 17, 2010, prior to determining which income limits and maximum rents are applicable to your project(s).**

If you have any questions on the 2026 Rent & Income limit guidance, please contact Compliance Section Chiefs, Mayra Lozano at mayra.lozano@treasurer.ca.gov, Emilio Contreras at emilio.contreras@treasurer.ca.gov or Tara Boynton at tara.boynton@treasurer.ca.gov or by calling (916) 654-6340.