



January 20, 2012

TO: Office of Community Development Community Housing Improvement Program
(CHIP) Award Recipients and Their Affiliates

FROM: Michael A. Hiler, Deputy Chief, Office of Community Development

SUBJECT: Revision to Home Repair Guidelines

The Ohio Department of Development's Office of Community Development (OCD) is revising its Housing Handbook requirement that currently limits Home Repair assistance to address no more than two specific problems. OCD will now allow grantees, within the limits of assistance, to address more than two specific problems for a Home Repair project. OCD does not intend for the Home Repair activity to be used as a mechanism for performing mini-rehabilitation. Grantees may only utilize the Home Repair activity to address repairs that are related to the health and safety of the occupants, repairs that address the structural integrity of the home, or repairs that provide accessibility improvements for occupants who are physically disabled (as identified in the OCD Housing Handbook).

All other Home Repair guidelines outlined in the Housing Handbook remain in force. The limits of assistance for Home Repair will not be increased. Currently, OCD expects that Home Repair projects will not, on average, exceed \$11,000 (including soft costs), with a maximum of \$12,000 per unit. Regardless of OCD's limit of assistance for Home Repair, grantees will still be held to their local limit of assistance as defined in the community's own OCD-approved Policies and Procedures Manual. This revision does not apply to the Home Repair Septic activity. The Home Repair Septic activity will remain limited to work performed on the septic system and, if necessary, one additional specific problem per project unless a waiver is granted by OCD.

Commentary:

The revised OCD Home Repair policy provides CHIP grantees with greater flexibility when determining the scope of work for CHIP-funded Home Repair projects. CHIP grantees have been limited in what can be addressed through the Home Repair activity. In some cases, OCD has been contacted by grantees to request a waiver to this limitation. The following is an example of the type of project for which a waiver has been requested:

The CHIP client's plumbing is leaking in the bathroom, and the leak has caused the floor to rot. Under the Home Repair guidelines, these are the only two items that can be addressed (repair the floor and fix the plumbing). In addition to the two deficiencies listed, there is a faulty ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

With the revised Home Repair guidelines, the grantee would be able to repair/replace the faulty GFCI in addition to addressing the floor and plumbing without the need for a waiver from OCD.

Access the OCD website at <http://development.ohio.gov/Community/ohcp/publications.htm> for the Housing Handbook. If you have questions on the revised Home Repair guidelines, please contact your assigned Residential Revitalization Specialist at (614) 466-2285.