

Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco  
101 Market Street, San Francisco, California 94105

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To State Member Banks, Bank  
Holding Companies, Financial Holding  
Companies, Savings and Loan Holding Companies,  
and Foreign Banking Offices  
in the Twelfth Federal Reserve District

### **CFPB Issues Guidance on Housing Counselor Requirement**

On April 15, 2015, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) issued a final [interpretive rule](#) that provides instructions for lenders to use in complying with the required provision of mortgage applicants with a list of local homeownership counseling organizations.<sup>1</sup> To comply with this provision, institutions may provide a homeownership counseling list using data made available by the CFPB, through an online tool the CFPB created in 2013,<sup>2</sup> or by generating their own list using the same Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data that the CFPB uses to build its lists. The rule also includes guidance on the qualifications for providing high-cost mortgage counseling and for lender participation in such counseling.

As noted in the CFPB's [press release](#), in addition to restating the detailed guidance issued by the CFPB in 2013, the interpretive rule also provides further instructions about: (a) how to provide applicants abroad with homeownership counseling lists; (b) permissible geolocation tools; (c) combining the homeownership counseling list with other disclosures; (d) use of a consumer's mailing address to provide the list; and high-cost mortgage counseling qualifications; and (e) lender participation in such counseling.

### **Resources**

The CFPB has posted to their website additional implementation resources including compliance guides, reference charts, and supervision and examination materials. To access this information, please visit the CFPB's [regulatory implementation page](#).

### **Additional Information**

All circulars and documents are available on the Internet through the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco's website, at <http://www.frbsf.org/banking-supervision/publications/district-circular-letters/>.

For additional information, please contact:

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<sup>1</sup> The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act included a requirement that mortgage lenders provide applicants with a list of local housing counselors.

<sup>2</sup> The CFPB's online tool can be accessed at <http://www.consumerfinance.gov/find-a-housing-counselor/>.