

58.131 RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOAN SERVICING STANDARDS.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the meanings given.

(b) "Authorized representative" means a person, including but not limited to an attorney, employee, or agent of a government agency, not-for-profit housing counseling organization, or legal services organization, designated by a borrower in a written authorization signed by the borrower or in any other form of verifiable authorization to share information and communicate with a servicer on behalf of the borrower.

(c) "Clearly and conspicuously" means the statement, representation, or term being disclosed is displayed in a size, color, and contrast and is presented in a manner that makes the statement readily noticed and understood by an ordinary consumer.

(d) "Government-sponsored enterprise" means the Federal National Mortgage Association and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation.

(e) "Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act" or "RESPA" means the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974, United States Code, title 12, section 2601, et seq., and regulations adopted pursuant to RESPA, also known as Regulation X, Code of Federal Regulations, title 12, part 1024, as amended.

(f) "Third-party provider" means any person or entity retained by or on behalf of the servicer, including but not limited to foreclosure firms, law firms, foreclosure trustees, other agents, independent contractors, subsidiaries, and affiliates, that provides insurance, foreclosure, bankruptcy, mortgage servicing including loss mitigation, or other products or services in connection with servicing a mortgage loan.

(g) "Transferee servicer" means a servicer that has agreed to obtain the right to service a mortgage loan pursuant to an agreement or understanding.

(h) "Transferor servicer" means a servicer that has agreed to, or been informed that the servicer must, transfer the right to service a mortgage loan to another servicer.

Subd. 2. **General requirements.** (a) A violation of an applicable state law or administrative rule, a federal law or regulation, or a state or federal program is a violation of this section.

(b) In addition to complying with this section, a servicer must comply with:

- (1) other applicable sections of this chapter;
- (2) other applicable state law, including but not limited to chapters 46A, 47, 580, 581, and 582;
- (3) applicable sections of RESPA;
- (4) the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, United States Code, title 50, section 501, et seq.; and
- (5) other applicable federal laws and implementing regulations, as amended, including but not limited to:
 - (i) the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, Public Law 106-102;
 - (ii) the Truth-in-Lending Act, United States Code, title 15, section 1601, et seq.; and
 - (iii) the Fair Credit Reporting Act, United States Code, title 15, sections 1681 to 1681x.

Subd. 3. Servicing and ownership transfers or sales. (a) When acquiring servicing rights from a transferor servicer, a transferee servicer must continue processing loan modification requests and honoring trial and permanent modifications.

(b) When transferring or selling loan servicing with pending modification requests or trial or permanent modifications, a transferor servicer must:

- (1) inform the transferee servicer if a loan modification is pending; and
- (2) obligate the transferee servicer to (i) accept and continue processing loan modification requests, and (ii) honor trial and permanent loan modification agreements.

Subd. 4. Payment processing and fees. (a) A servicer must comply with section 47.59, subdivision 9a, regarding prompt crediting of payments, if the borrower has provided sufficient information to credit the account. A servicer must apply the payment as specified in the loan documents.

(b) A servicer may enter into a written contract with the borrower that allows the servicer to hold certain types of money, or money sent by a certain method, for a period of time until the money is available before crediting the money to the borrower's account.

(c) A servicer must notify the borrower if a payment is received, not credited, and placed in a suspense account. The servicer must send the notification to the borrower within ten business days by United States mail to the borrower's last known address. The notification must identify (1) the reason the payment was not credited or treated as credited to the account, and (2) any actions the borrower must take to make the residential mortgage loan current. If a servicer provides monthly or more frequent statements that include the information under this paragraph, the servicer is not required to provide the information in an additional notice. If this paragraph conflicts with the requirements of an applicable bankruptcy court order, compliance with the bankruptcy court requirements constitutes compliance with this paragraph or paragraph (d).

(d) When a suspense account contains enough money to make a full payment, a servicer must apply the payment to the mortgage on the date the full amount became available in the suspense account.

(e) A servicer must assess an incurred fee to a borrower's account within 60 days of the date the fee was incurred. A servicer must clearly and conspicuously explain the fee in a statement mailed to the borrower at the borrower's last known address no more than 30 days after the date the fee is assessed. If a servicer provides monthly or more frequent statements that include the information under this paragraph, the servicer is not required to provide the information in an additional notice.

Subd. 5. Contracting with third-party providers. A servicer must adopt written policies and procedures governing the oversight of third-party providers, including but not limited to foreclosure trustees, foreclosure firms, subservicers, agents, subsidiaries, and affiliates. A servicer must maintain the policies and procedures as part of the servicer's books and records and must provide the policies and procedures to the commissioner upon request.

Subd. 6. Maintenance of the escrow account. (a) If a servicer collects escrow amounts held for the borrower to pay insurance, taxes, or other charges with respect to the property, the servicer must collect and make all payments from the escrow account. To the extent the servicer has control, the servicer must ensure that no late penalties are assessed or other negative consequences result for the borrower.

(b) At least annually or upon the borrower's request, a servicer must inform the borrower in writing regarding the amount of reserve required in an escrow account. The notice must advise the borrower of any

fees the borrower incurs (1) for not maintaining the reserve amount, or (2) if the servicer advances escrow amounts on the borrower's behalf and subsequently collects the escrow amounts from the borrower.

(c) A servicer may enter into a written agreement with the borrower that specifies the servicer is not required to make escrow payments unless money is available in the escrow account. An agreement under this paragraph must include language that provides notice to the borrower that the borrower is responsible to pay the escrow amounts if an amount sufficient to pay the escrow amounts is not maintained in the escrow account.

(d) A servicer must notify the borrower within ten business days of the date a change is made to the escrow account that modifies the borrower's escrow payment amount. A change requiring notification includes but is not limited to hazard insurance premiums, a reduction in the required reserve amount for the account, or a change in the property's tax assessment. A change resulting from a borrower's regularly scheduled payment is not a change requiring notification.

Subd. 7. Borrower requests for information. (a) A servicer must make a reasonable attempt to comply with a borrower's request for information, including a request for information about loss mitigation, regarding the residential mortgage loan account and must respond to a dispute initiated by the borrower about the loan account. A reasonable attempt under this subdivision includes but is not limited to:

(1) maintaining written or electronic records of each written request for information involving the borrower's account until the residential mortgage loan is paid in full, sold, or otherwise satisfied; and

(2) providing a written statement to the borrower within 30 business days of the date a written request is received from the borrower or by following the response timelines provided by a loss mitigation program. A borrower's request must include the borrower's name and account number, if any, a statement that the account is or may be in error, and sufficient detail regarding the information sought by the borrower to permit the servicer to comply.

(b) At a minimum, a servicer must provide the following information in response to a borrower request received under this subdivision:

(1) whether the account is current or, if the account is not current, an explanation regarding the default and the date the account entered default;

(2) the current balance due on the residential mortgage loan, including the principal due; the amount of money, if any, held in a suspense account; the amount of the escrow balance known to the servicer, if any; and whether any escrow deficiencies or shortages are known to the servicer;

(3) the identity, address, and other relevant information about the current holder, owner, or assignee of the residential mortgage loan; and

(4) the telephone number and mailing address of an individual servicer representative with the information and authority to answer questions and resolve disputes.

(c) A servicer must promptly correct errors and refund fees assessed to the borrower resulting from an error the servicer made.

(d) If the content of a servicer's response meets the requirements under RESPA for a response to a qualified written request, the servicer has complied with this subdivision. A servicer deemed compliant with this subdivision under this paragraph must separately comply with paragraph (c).

(e) In addition to the statement described under paragraph (a), clause (2), a borrower may request more detailed information from a servicer. A servicer that receives a request under this paragraph must provide the information to the borrower within 30 business days of the date a written request from the borrower is received. A borrower's request must include the borrower's name and account number, if any, a statement that the account is or may be in error, and sufficient detail to the servicer regarding information sought by the borrower. If requested by the borrower, a statement provided under this paragraph must also include:

(1) a copy of the original note or, if the original note is unavailable, an affidavit of lost note that includes all endorsements; and

(2) a statement that (i) identifies and itemizes all fees and charges assessed under the loan servicing transaction, (ii) provides a full payment history that identifies in a clear and conspicuous manner all the debits, credits, applications, and disbursements of all payments received from or for the benefit of the borrower, and (iii) identifies other activity on the residential mortgage loan, including escrow account activity and suspense account activity, if any.

(f) For purposes of a borrower request made under paragraph (e), the account history period must cover, at a minimum, the two-year period before the date the request for information is received. If the servicer has not serviced the residential mortgage loan for the entire two-year period, the servicer must provide the information back to the date on which the servicer began servicing the residential mortgage loan and must identify the previous servicer, if known. If a servicer claims delinquent or outstanding sums are owed on the residential mortgage loan prior to the two-year period or the period during which the servicer has serviced the residential mortgage loan, the servicer must provide an account history beginning with the month that the servicer claims any outstanding sums are owed on the residential mortgage loan up to the date the request for the information is received.

(g) If the borrower requests a statement under paragraph (e), a servicer must provide the statement free of charge. A borrower is entitled to only one free statement annually under this paragraph. If a borrower requests more than one statement annually, a servicer may charge \$30 for the second and each subsequent statement.

Subd. 8. Borrower complaints and inquiries. (a) A servicer must establish and maintain:

(1) procedures and systems to respond to and resolve borrower complaints and inquiries in a manner that complies with this section;

(2) a customer service department staffed by trained personnel to whom a borrower may direct complaints and inquiries; and

(3) a toll-free telephone number or collect calling service that enables a borrower to speak, during regular business hours, with a live person trained to answer inquiries and instruct borrowers how to file written complaints.

(b) Each welcome packet, periodic statement, including as applicable either the monthly mortgage statement or annual coupon book that is provided to a borrower, and website maintained by a servicer must clearly and conspicuously state:

(1) an address to which borrowers may direct complaints and inquiries;

(2) the toll-free telephone number or collect calling services provided by the servicer;

(3) whether the servicer is licensed with the commissioner; and

(4) that a borrower may file a complaint and obtain information about the servicer by contacting the Department of Commerce. The information provided under this clause must include the department's current telephone contact information and website.

(c) A servicer must establish and maintain a process that enables borrowers to escalate complaints or pending loss mitigation matters for a supervisory-level review.

Subd. 9. Servicing prohibitions; fair dealing duty. (a) In addition to the prohibitions and standards of conduct under sections 58.12, subdivision 1, paragraph (b), and 58.13, subdivision 1, a servicer is prohibited from:

(1) engaging in unfair, deceptive, or abusive business practices, or misrepresenting or omitting any material information, in connection with servicing a mortgage loan, including but not limited to misrepresenting the amount, nature, or terms of a fee, payment due, or payment claimed due on the loan, the servicing agreement's terms and conditions, or the borrower's obligations under the loan;

(2) requiring money to be remitted by a method that is more costly to the borrower than a bank, certified check, or attorney's check from an attorney's account; or

(3) refusing to communicate with the borrower's authorized representative if the authorized representative provides the servicer with a written authorization, including by electronic transmission, signed by the borrower that affirms the authorized representative may act on behalf of the borrower. A servicer may adopt procedures, excluding collecting the representative's Social Security number, that are reasonably related to verifying that the representative is in fact authorized to act on behalf of the borrower.

(b) A servicer must act in good faith and deal fairly in the servicer's dealings with a borrower in connection with servicing a borrower's mortgage loan. For purposes of this paragraph, acting in good faith and dealing fairly includes but is not limited to the duty to:

(1) safeguard and account for any payment made by the borrower or any money belonging to the borrower;

(2) follow reasonable and lawful instructions from the borrower that are consistent with the underlying note and mortgage;

(3) act with reasonable skill, care, and diligence;

(4) consider alternatives to foreclosure when a borrower (i) demonstrates that the borrower is in imminent risk of delinquency on the mortgage loan as a result of a financial hardship, or (ii) has experienced a financial hardship and is unable to maintain the payment at the current payment amount required under the mortgage loan or make delinquent payments; and

(5) structure loan modifications to result in payments that are reasonably affordable and sustainable for the borrower at the time the modification is made.

Subd. 10. Notices; mailings; evidence of receipt. (a) A notification, mailing, or other correspondence from a mortgage servicer or third-party provider to a borrower must be provided via first-class mail or email if the borrower has provided an email address for notice or communication purposes.

(b) A servicer must provide a mailing address, facsimile number, email address, and a method to facilitate file transfers via the Internet to produce documents requested from the borrower. An option to transfer files via the Internet must allow both the borrower and servicer to view the documents sent and confirm the date the documents were sent for 60 months after the date the documents were produced to the servicer.

(c) A servicer must provide a detailed description of all items received and the items' expiration dates from a borrower within ten business days of the date an item was received via any medium described under this subdivision.

(d) A servicer is prohibited from rejecting documentation from a borrower or potential borrower as incomplete without providing the borrower with details regarding which specific portion of the documentation is incomplete.

History: 2026 c 124 art 1 s 13