TRACS Forum Rules of Conduct

Tenant Rental Assistance Certification System (TRACS)

Welcome!

The TRACS Forum invites stakeholders to share their expertise, experiences, and knowledge to identify best practices, promote better decision-making, spark innovation, and improve the administration of MFH rental assistance programs, community development, urban planning, and other housing-related issues.

Therefore it is essential to share our guidelines for the overall wellness of this forum; we have first compiled a few basic pointers to follow to help you on your posting journey in our discussions.

To promote an enjoyable and healthy atmosphere, you must understand what sort of behavior is expected from our members. Therefore, we ask that you familiarize yourself with these Forums' Rules of Conduct.

Regular Forum Users can request access at: https://tracsforums.hud.gov

Before Posting

- Always use the search function to ensure that a similar thread was not created previously or that the information you are looking for was not already provided elsewhere.

- Make sure to stay informed about any specific posting rules which are applied to sub-forums.

- Make sure to use the right section of the forums.

- If you have lost posting privileges or have been sanctioned, do not use another account to post, as using a secondary account is subject to a permanent ban from the forums.

When Posting, You Should Always

- Take good care of your spelling.

- Develop your answers, and do not behave as in a chat or text messaging and using too many abbreviations.

- Be respectful and polite.

Forums Rules of Conduct

Offensive Language & Content

You may not use or link to content that uses profanity or any language that a reasonable person would find offensive, obscene, or otherwise improper. You agree to behave accordingly. The following are some specific examples of abusive language and content situations:

a) Flaming: You may not engage in "Flaming," which includes messages designed to berate or insult another member personally.

b) Attacks: You may not engage in verbal or written attacks against anyone, including other players, forum participants, or the moderation team. If you want to report another forum participant or members of the moderation team, please send an email message to tracs@hud.gov with the subject line "TRACS Forum Moderator Inquiry."

c) Hate Groups, Hate Speech, and Political & Religious Discussions: You may not use hate speech or use the forums to participate in or form organizations, whether or not officially organized, whose ideology is based on or resembles anti-religious, anti-ethnic, anti-sexual orientation, racist, or sexist philosophies. Further, to maintain a fun, positive environment, you may not create posts in the forums dedicated to real-world politics or religion.

e) Illegal content & Pornographic Content: You may not post or promote any illegal or pornographic content within these forums.

f) Petitions/Polls and Website Polls: Petitions threads are not to be confused with suggestions threads, which are allowed to be posted on their own. A thread is considered a Petition/Poll thread when asking other community members to either agree or virtually sign a proposed Petition/Poll. You may post a Petition/Poll thread in its respective forum knowing that the thread content is subject to the current Forums Rules of Conduct; a moderation team member will therefore review it.

Disruption

You may not in any way disrupt or interfere, or attempt to disrupt or interfere, with the forum's environment or the volunteer moderation team. The following are some specific examples of disruption:

a) Trolling: You may not engage in "Trolling," which is deliberately posting negative comments to "Bait" others into responding a certain way. Please note that publicly accusing someone else of being a troll may constitute a form of trolling itself. In addition, do not re-post or take upon any action to publicly bring up a previously locked, closed, deleted, or otherwise, rule-breaking moderated the discussion.

b) Rant: While we welcome feedback, we prohibit excessively negative comments, comments which are not done in a constructive, civil manner, and comments which are designed to demoralize the spirit of the game.

c) Abuse: You may not engage in the following forms of abuse: Belittling, harassing, intentionally misleading others, etc.

d) Off-topic/Multiple Topics/Cross-Posting: You may not post messages unrelated to the topic at hand, known as "de-railing." In addition, you may not post threads directed to only a single recipient.

e) Bumping/reviving/necro posting: You may not post messages in an old topic merely for the sake of re-positioning it to the top of the forum index or other feed, sometimes known as "bumping" or "reviving/necroposting," to gain normally unwarranted attention.

f) Spamming: You may not use (or abuse) the forums to harass other players by engaging in spamming or "flooding." This includes multiple posting of the same word, message, character, or different in an attempt to bring unwarranted visibility to your cause or for the general annoyance of others. This may also take the form of gibberish or unrelated messaging. In addition, you may not engage in unnecessary pyramid quoting. Messages containing a quote within a quote within a quote can quickly fill pages with unnecessary redundancy, as with spam. Usually, one-to-two quotes are enough, and any further should require trimming before being sent as final.

g) Sharing Account Information & Personal Identifiable Information
For your protection, do not share your account or login information on these forums. You may not share any personnel information of other forum participants, the moderation team, or discuss any moderation, private communications with TRACS Forum members, or account sanctions publicly on the forums; the moderation team shall be the communication tool for that purpose.

The term "PII," as defined in OMB Memorandum M-07-1616 refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. The definition of PII is not anchored to any single category of information or technology. Rather, it requires a case-by-case assessment of the specific risk that an individual can be identified. In performing this assessment, an agency must recognize that non-PII can become PII whenever additional information is made publicly available - in any medium and from any source - that could be used when combined with other available information to identify an individual.

h) Impersonation
You may not impersonate any person or entity or fraudulently represent or any other person or connected or affiliated with TRACS Forum. This also includes accusations of impersonation.

i) Advertising: You may not promote nor advertise any third-party services or products.

Report Abuse of Rules of Conduct

You can report a post or a thread that you may have found breaking these Forum Rules of Conduct by sending an email message to tracs@hud.gov with the subject line "TRACS Forum Moderator Inquiry." This feature is there to simplify the work of the moderators and should not be abused, especially if the thread or post complies with the rules.

Please do not reply to people who do not respect the forum's rules by contributing to a rule-breaking thread or post. In case of rule-breaking, contact a moderator or a community manager to alert them of the issue. Trying to reason with the offender could indeed only encourage further rule-breaking.

Rules and Guidance to Report Abusive Posts or Threads

You can:

- Report a thread or post by adding the link of the original duplicated thread.

- Report multiple offenses by adding the links of the same offense made by a fellow community member.

- Report a thread and ask for it to be closed.

- Report to warn us of one or more dead links in single threads.

Please Do Not Report

- Report all topics or posts made by a spammer. Indeed, it will only be necessary to say that this person is spamming by giving us a few links in the report to look at all the posts or threads created by that person.

- Report a thread or post just because the reported person insulted or had inappropriate behavior towards you outside the forum.

- Report a thread or post just because it contradicts you on a subject.

- Report to ask us our opinion on a subject.

- Report to alert us of a misspell that we may have done when working on the forums.

- A report for the sole purpose of wanting to get noticed by the moderation team.

- Report and notify the forum participant that s/he has been reported.

Anyone who does not respect or follow the Forums Rules of Conduct may be subject to sanctions up to a permanent ban from the forums.