



# Best Practices



September 2024 – Top Quality Findings

September 6, 2024

Correspondent Lending

Housing Finance Agency (HFA)

## Summary

U.S. Bank provides information to help lenders submit complete loan files for purchase. This information provides the most recent Quality Findings and Best Practices to cure.

Rank	Common Error(s)	Best Practice
1	Missing complete and accurate sales contract and all addendums.	Review the sales contract to ensure all named and/or numbered addendums and disclosures are provided. Ensure the document is signed, initialed and dated, if applicable.
		Seller Property Condition Sales Disclosure is required to be with the sales contract if the contract states that one has been completed and attached to the agreement.
		If addendums are numbered: #1, #2 and #3, please ensure that they are all provided and there are no gaps in the sequence.
		Ensure the sales price and/or seller-paid closing costs in the contract matches the final closing disclosure.
	Missing documentation on taxes, insurance and HOA fees for Real Estate Owned.	When the borrower owns mortgaged real estate, the status of the property determines how the existing property's PITIA must be considered in qualifying for the new mortgage transaction.
		Provide documentation to support the mortgage payment, taxes, hazard insurance, and possible HOA dues for all REO including the primary residence, all investment properties and second homes when applicable.
		When a property is owned free and clear, the taxes, insurance and HOA, if applicable, will need to be documented.
	File does not contain documentation supporting AUS data.	For loans underwritten through DU, LPA and GUS, the lender must confirm that all Verification Messages and Approval Conditions that appear in the Findings/Feedback report were satisfactorily resolved and adequately supported by appropriate documentation.
		Provide documents to support all non-U.S. citizen borrowers are legally present in the United States. Ensure Non-Permanent Resident Alien documents are valid for 12-months after the Note date, if applicable.
		Per USDA guidelines, all loans should have the Technology Fee of \$25 collected at the time of closing and listed on the final Closing Disclosure (CD). Fee should be a separate line item on the CD and not lumped into other fees or the Guarantee fee.
	Verification of Borrower(s).	Lenders must confirm each borrower's identity prior to the extension of credit. The lender must include a statement that it has verified the borrower's identity using valid government-issued photo identification at or prior to closing the loan.
	Undisclosed Debts.	Look for automatic withdrawals on asset statements that might indicate a new debt has started repayment.
		Educate borrowers on the importance of disclosing all debts and ask borrowers about new debt with every touchpoint.
Reconcile all inquiries on the credit report to ensure all inquiries are accounted for.		



**Top  
Quality  
Findings,  
continued**

Rank	Common Error(s)	Best Practice
2	Income not properly calculated.	Per both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac guidelines, rental income should be limited to only offset the PITIA when the borrower has less than 2 years property management.
		Utilize an Income Calculator and include the worksheet in the loan file.
		All income that is calculated by an averaging method must be reviewed to assess the borrower's history of receipt, frequency of payment, and trend of the amount of income being received.
		Borrowers relying on overtime or bonus income for qualifying purposes must have a history of no less than 12-months to be considered stable.
		Income with hourly workers with fluctuating hours must document the average hours worked if you are using the current rate of pay for qualifying and must be supported by the earnings history.
	Missing required income and employment documentation.	Income documentation that was relied upon to make an underwriting decision is required to be in the file at the time the file is submitted for purchase.
		Paystubs must be dated within 30-days of the initial loan application date.
Other sources of income included for qualifying must include a history of receipt, the amount, frequency and duration of the income. In addition, evidence of current receipt must be obtained in compliance with the allowable age of credit documents.		
Employment rep and warrant report missing from file.	When the Automated Underwriting Feedback message indicates that the employment entered was validated and that the verification report is acceptable documentation, a copy of the report must be retained in the file. *Applies on a per-borrower, per-employer basis.	
Income rep and warrant report missing from file.	When the Automated Underwriting Feedback message indicates that the amount of income entered was validated and that the verification report is acceptable documentation, a copy of that report must be retained in the file. *Applies on a per-borrower, per-income-source basis.	
Missing Verification of Business (VOB).	A VOB is required for all businesses that contribute to the qualifying income.	
3	Insufficient assets to close.	Fund for closing must come from an acceptable source, have a sufficient balance and be documented per the AUS response.
	AUS condition to verify funds submitted are not documented. <i>Missing asset documentation</i>	The lender can use any of the following types of documentation to verify that a borrower has sufficient funds for closing, down payment, and/or financial reserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request for Verification of Deposit (Form 1006)</li> <li>Copies of bank statements or investment portfolio statements.</li> <li>Copies of retirement account statements.</li> <li>Asset Documentation Provided by a Third-Party Asset Verification Vendor. A copy of the report must be retained in the file.</li> </ul>
	Retirement assets not properly documented.	Vested funds from individual retirement accounts (IRA/SEP/Keogh accounts) and tax-favored retirement savings accounts (401(k) accounts) are acceptable sources of funds for the down payment, closing costs, and reserves.
		The lender must verify the ownership of the account and confirm that the account is vested and allows withdrawals regardless of current employment status.
Gift not properly documented.	Gifts must be evidenced by a letter signed by the donor.	
	The lender must verify that sufficient funds to cover the gift are either in the donor's account or have been transferred to the borrower's account.	
	When the funds are not transferred prior to settlement, the lender must document that the donor gave the closing agent the gift funds in the form of an electronic transfer, certified check, a cashier's check, or other official check.	

## Top Quality Findings, continued

Rank	Common Error(s)	Best Practice
3	Large deposit not properly documented.	If funds from a large deposit are needed to complete the purchase transaction, document that those funds are from an acceptable source.
	Missing CD from sale of home.	The final CD is required when the borrower is relying on the net proceeds for funds to close. Alternate documentation is not acceptable.
	Earnest money deposit not verified.	When the earnest money deposit is being used as part of the borrower's minimum contribution requirement, the lender must verify that the funds are from an acceptable source.
4	Final inspection not received.	Improvements, alterations, and repairs on the subject property must be complete and evidence of completion provided in the closed loan package.
	Appraisal was made 'As-Is' with property defects noted.	When there are incomplete items, physical deficiencies, or items affecting the safety, soundness, or structural integrity of the improvements, the appraisal must be "subject to" completion of the specific repairs or alterations.
		An addendum or correction to the initial appraisal report is required to address deficiencies such as foundation settlement, water seepage, active roof leaks, worn roof shingles, inadequate electrical service or plumbing fixtures, etc.
Expired appraisal.	The Appraisal Update and/or Completion Report (Form 1004D) can be used to update an appraisal and extend the expiration date of the document.	

## Loan Delivery Checklists

U.S. Bank utilizes multiple methods to reduce loan quality findings and eliminate potential delays in purchase including loan delivery and underwriting checklists located in the **Correspondent and HFA Lending Guide** (1100: Exhibits, Forms, & Checklists):

- **Correspondent**
  - [1141.1: Conventional Closed Loan Documentation Requirements](#)
  - [1141.2: Government Closed Loan Documentation Requirements](#)
- **HFA**
  - [Conventional Loan Delivery Checklist](#)
  - [Government Loan Delivery Checklist](#)

Please remember to send a complete loan package, including all credit/underwriting documents, to avoid pre-funding and post-funding deficiencies and quality findings. Lenders may not receive notice of loan deficiencies for all items included on the checklist, however, we do require the credit package along with the full closed loan package.

## Questions



**Correspondent:** Please contact your Account Executive or the Client Support Area at 800.200.5881, option 1.

**HFA:** Please contact the Housing Finance Agency Hotline at 800.562.5165, option 1 for the HFA Customer Care Team.