



**Mayor's Office of Housing  
Sheila A. Dillon, Chief and Director**

**Treatment of Affordable Units in Mixed Income Developments  
Distribution & Comparability Policy**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH), through its funding programs and inclusionary development policy, subsidizes rent and sales prices of existing and newly constructed housing units in order to maintain and create quality, vibrant housing that Boston residents can afford. In accordance with housing program guidelines, and since the City's investment of public subsidy is directly related to the rent or sales price, the City expects there to be no substantial difference between the income-restricted units – Extremely Low Income to High-Moderate Income – and Market-rate units. The goal of this policy is to ensure that units are consistent and equitable in access, size, design, finishes, and quality.

The City may approve deviations from these standards only when a developer demonstrates a substantially superior affordable housing outcome. For example, offering units at a deeper affordability than required. In such a case, the developer must still meet or exceed MOH Design Guidelines.

The City reserves the right to complete its own inspection prior to issuance of a Certificate of Completion.

This policy is consistent with the [Mayor's Executive Order on Inclusionary Development](#), The [BPDA's Inclusionary Development Policy](#), and is modeled and expands on the standards set forth for projects with [HOME](#) funds.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all housing developments with income-restricted units or income-restricted properties that are funded by the City of Boston and includes units that are part of the Inclusionary Development Policy.

**LOCATION AND ARRANGEMENT**

Income-restricted units cannot be clustered, stacked, segregated, or concentrated

within a development based on affordability, subsidy type, and associated set-aside program. Income-restricted units, in all their diversity, must be distributed evenly across floors throughout the building and in each building within multi-building/scattered site developments.

### **EXTERIOR**

Income-restricted and market-rate units need to be indistinguishable in terms of the treatment of the exterior elevations including components – doors, windows, cladding materials, etc. Entry to the building must be the same for all levels of affordability. All residents must have the same access to the building, its amenities, and common areas. There cannot be separate doorways anywhere on-site based on income level.

### **UNIT SIZE AND LAYOUT**

Income-restricted units cannot be confined to a particular bedroom size (1-BR- 2-BR, etc.). They must be evenly distributed by bedroom size in the same proportion as the unit mix in the Development.

Also, the unit sizes, including the size of bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms, must be comparable in square footage and layout of income-restricted and market-rate units throughout the project. For MOH funded projects, the number of unit bathrooms may not exceed the number outlined in the [MOH Design Guidelines](#).

### **INTERIOR FINISHES AND APPLIANCES**

The unit interiors must be visually indistinguishable. Interior finishes, appliances, fixtures, and features are not required to be identical, but distinctions should not be visually discernible.

### **SCHEDULE**

Income-restricted units should normally be constructed and occupied earlier than or at least concurrently with market-rate units. We may consider waiving this requirement under exceptional circumstances.

END