Article - Real Property

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§7–301.

(a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

(b) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Financial Regulation in the Maryland Department of Labor.

(c) "Foreclosure consultant" means a person who:

(1) Solicits or contacts a homeowner in writing, in person, or through any electronic or telecommunications medium and directly or indirectly makes a representation or offer to perform any service that the person represents will:

(i) Stop, enjoin, delay, void, set aside, annul, stay, or postpone a foreclosure sale;

(ii) Obtain forbearance from any servicer, beneficiary or mortgagee;

(iii) Assist the homeowner to exercise a right of reinstatement provided in the loan documents or to refinance a loan that is in foreclosure and for which notice of foreclosure proceedings has been published;

(iv) Obtain an extension of the period within which the homeowner may reinstate the homeowner's obligation or extend the deadline to object to a ratification;

(v) Obtain a waiver of an acceleration clause contained in any promissory note or contract secured by a mortgage on a residence in default or contained in the mortgage;

(vi) Assist the homeowner to obtain a loan or advance of funds;

(vii) Avoid or ameliorate the impairment of the homeowner's credit resulting from the filing of an order to docket or a petition to foreclose or the conduct of a foreclosure sale;

(viii) Save the homeowner's residence from foreclosure;

(ix) Purchase or obtain an option to purchase the homeowner's residence within 20 days of an advertised or docketed foreclosure sale; or

(x) Arrange for the homeowner to become a lessee or renter entitled to continue to reside in the homeowner's residence after a sale or transfer; or

(2) Systematically contacts owners of residences in default to offer foreclosure consulting services.

(d) "Foreclosure consulting contract" means a written, oral, or equitable agreement between a foreclosure consultant and a homeowner for the provision of any foreclosure consulting service.

(e) "Foreclosure consulting service" includes:

(1) Receiving money for the purpose of distributing it to creditors in payment or partial payment of any obligation secured by a lien on a residence in default;

(2) Contacting creditors on behalf of a homeowner;

(3) Arranging or attempting to arrange for an extension of the period within which a homeowner may cure the homeowner's default and reinstate the homeowner's obligation;

(4) Arranging or attempting to arrange for any delay or postponement of the sale of a residence in default;

(5) Arranging or facilitating the purchase of a homeowner's equity of redemption or legal or equitable title;

(6) Arranging or facilitating the sale of a homeowner's residence or the transfer of legal title, in any form, to another party as an alternative to foreclosure; or

(7) Arranging for or facilitating a homeowner remaining in the homeowner's residence after a sale or transfer as a tenant, renter, or lessee under terms provided in a written lease.

(f) "Foreclosure rescue transaction" means a transaction:

(1) In which a residence in default is conveyed by a homeowner who retains a legal or equitable interest in all or part of the property, including an interest

under a lease–purchase agreement, an option to reacquire the property, or any other legal or equitable interest in the property conveyed; and

(2) That is designed or intended by the parties to prevent or delay actual or anticipated foreclosure proceedings against the residence in default.

(g) "Foreclosure surplus acquisition" means a transaction involving the transfer, sale, or assignment of the surplus remaining and due the homeowner based on the audit account during a foreclosure proceeding.

(h) (1) "Foreclosure surplus purchaser" means a person who acts as the acquirer by assignment, purchase, grant, or conveyance of the surplus resulting from a foreclosure sale.

(2) "Foreclosure surplus purchaser" includes a person who acts in joint venture or joint enterprise with one or more acquirers.

(i) "Homeowner" means the record owner of a residence in default or a residence in foreclosure, or an individual occupying the residence under a use and possession order issued under Title 8, Subtitle 2 of the Family Law Article.

(j) "Residence in default" means residential real property located in the State consisting of not more than four single family dwelling units, one of which is occupied by the owner, or the owner's spouse or former spouse under a use and possession order issued under Title 8, Subtitle 2 of the Family Law Article, as the individual's principal place of residence, and on which the mortgage is at least 60 days in default.

(k) "Residence in foreclosure" means residential real property located in the State consisting of not more than four single family dwelling units, one of which is occupied by the owner, or the owner's spouse or former spouse under a use and possession order issued under Title 8, Subtitle 2 of the Family Law Article, as the individual's principal place of residence, and against which an order to docket or a petition to foreclose has been filed.

(l) "Settlement" means an in–person, face–to–face meeting with the homeowner to complete final documents incident to the sale or transfer of real property or the creation of a mortgage or equitable interest in real property, conducted by a settlement agent, during which the homeowner must be presented with a completed copy of the HUD–1 Settlement Form.

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