

TALKING POINTS

HUD Proposed Rule on Mixed-Status Households

1. A home is where faith begins.

You cannot raise your children in faith without a stable place to do it. You cannot keep the Sabbath, observe Ramadan, or gather your family for prayer when you do not know where you will sleep next month. This rule would take housing assistance away from families who have built their lives, their faith, and their communities here. And we are not talking about a small number – nearly 80,000 people could lose their homes. Stability is not a luxury. It is the ground on which a life of faith is built.

2. Dignity is not contingent on immigration status.

Across almost every tradition, there is a teaching that the worth of a person does not come from the state. It comes from something deeper – from God, from creation, from the sacred dignity that no law can grant and no rule can take away. A rule that treats the ineligibility of one family member as grounds to destabilize the entire household treats people as administrative categories rather than moral agents deserving of dignity.

3. This rule affects families and fractures congregations.

When people face housing instability, they disappear from community life. They stop showing up. Congregations shrink. Nearly 37,000 of the people this rule would displace are children – and nearly all of them are U.S. citizens. These are not strangers. They are the children in our pews, our Sunday schools, our youth groups. Weakening pluralism weakens religious freedom for everyone, including those who believe they are unaffected.

4. The state has no business using housing policy to determine who belongs in a community of faith.

Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act already restricts assistance to eligible individuals. This proposed rule goes further – eliminating the "do not contend" provision and ending prorated assistance as a durable option for mixed-status families. It uses federal housing policy as an instrument of exclusion. That is state interference in civic life, and state interference in civic life is interference in religious freedom.

5. Our freedom to worship depends on our willingness to protect the conditions that make worship possible – and we have until April 21 to act.

If the families in our communities are afraid – afraid to stay, afraid to be seen, afraid of what comes next – they cannot worship freely. And when they cannot worship freely, something is taken from all of us. Religious freedom is not just a legal protection. It is a living thing that depends on all of us showing up for each other. The public comment period on this rule closes April 21. That is one week. Our voice matters. That is why we are here.