

Homebuyer Assistance

[Picture: Boy on shoulders of man]

Are you looking to buy a home here in Texas?

If so, there are several programs that may help.

You may qualify for mortgage loans through the state of Texas.

The state offers 30-year fixed rate mortgage loans and will also help you pay your down payment.

[Picture: Boy with mother playing with soccer ball]

You can also reduce how much you owe in federal income taxes by obtaining a mortgage credit certificate.

Keep in mind there's a maximum benefit of \$2,000 each year. In order to be eligible, you must meet certain income requirements and the home must be your primary residence.

[Picture: Family standing in front of new home]

Eligibility requirements, income and purchase price limits vary by county.

To find out more, contact a participating lender by calling 800-792-1119, or visit the "My First Texas Home" website: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/homeownership/fthb/fthb-lenders.htm>

Another program that helps you with down payment and closing costs is the Homebuyer Assistance Program.

[Picture: Man with mother]

It can be combined with housing accessibility modifications for persons with disabilities.

The home must be a primary residence, you must be income eligible, and you are required to complete a homebuyer counseling class.

To find organizations offering the Homebuyer Assistance Program, go to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs “Help for Texans” website:

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/texans.htm>

1. Select ‘Buying a Home’
2. Enter your city or county
3. Select ‘Find Help’

[Pictures: Woman in red shirt, couple working on their home, new construction]

For home buying assistance with a do-it-yourself twist, there’s the Texas Bootstrap Loan Program.

It’s a self-help construction program that provides low-income families an opportunity to purchase or refinance property on which they can build new housing or repair their existing homes.

[Pictures: Man on roof, son and mother, man with saw]

The program offers a zero percent interest mortgage loan for up to 30 years.

In order to be eligible you must:

Meet certain income guidelines;

Provide at least 65% of the labor necessary to build or rehabilitate your home;

Have acceptable credit history indicating your ability and willingness to meet debt obligations; and

You’ll be required to complete an owner-builder education class.

Applications for assistance can be submitted through Colonia Self-Help Centers and state-certified nonprofit organizations.

To find a list of organizations that can help, go to the Bootstrap website:

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/oci/bootstrap.jsp>

The Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation's Homebuyer Assistance programs, which include Mortgage Credit Certificates, mortgage loans, and down payment assistance, provide additional options for low-income homebuyers.

There's also a homebuyer program for "Texas Heroes."

"Texas Heroes" are professional educators, veterans, fire fighters, emergency medical services personnel, nursing and allied health faculty members, corrections officers and public security officers.

Eligibility requirements, income and purchase price limits vary by county.

To find out more, contact a participating lender by calling 877-508-4611 or visit the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation website:

<http://www.tsahc.org/homeownership>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program provides home loans to people who live in rural areas.

[Pictures: People signing papers, boy looking into refrigerator]

Approved local lenders provide financing options.

You must purchase a home within an eligible rural area and meet income requirements.

To find your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Offices go to the website: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=rd>.

[Pictures: volunteers on roof of house, woman volunteering]

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization with affiliates throughout Texas that support new home construction and repair.

With the help of volunteers and the benefit of donated money and materials, you work on your own home, and you purchase your home through no-profit mortgage loans or innovative financing methods.

[Pictures: Mother and son, mother and daughter]

You can apply with local Habitat for Humanity affiliates.

The family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program, and their ability to repay the loan.

To find your local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity, visit their website:

<http://habitatatexas.org/find-your-local-affiliate/>