



Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 03/2015

ATTENTION PREVIOUS APPLICANTS

**If you wish to re-apply for the program, contact your advisor.
Misplaced your advisor's contact information?
Call the toll-free HHF Information Line at
1-(877) 863-5244 for assistance.**

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1. What is Florida HFA Hardest-Hit Fund (HHF)?

Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) was directed by US Treasury (Treasury) to create and administer foreclosure prevention assistance programs that address the unique issues of our state. Treasury requires that Florida use a portion of these funds specifically for targeted unemployment programs that provide temporary assistance to eligible homeowners.

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2. What programs are available?

Florida Housing has two unemployment programs:

Unemployment Mortgage Assistance Program (UMAP)

For homeowners who are underemployed, unemployed, or have had at least a 10-percent reduction of income due to a qualifying financial hardship, loan funds can be used to pay monthly mortgage and escrowed mortgage-related expenses (i.e., property taxes, homeowner insurance, and mortgage insurance) until the homeowner can resume payments or for up to 12 months, with a cap of \$24,000, whichever occurs first.

Additionally, for homeowners who are delinquent on the first mortgage at the time they qualify for the UMAP program, up to \$18,000 can be paid toward any past due amounts. This assistance is typically paid prior to UMAP payments and can help to reinstate the first mortgage.

Mortgage Loan Reinstatement Payment (MLRP) Program

For homeowners who have experienced and recovered from a qualifying financial hardship, loan funds can be used as a one-time payment toward any past due amounts: up to \$25,000 will be paid.

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3. How much assistance is available to me?

For UMAP, a homeowner may receive a maximum of \$24,000 in funds for a period not to exceed 12 months; additionally, homeowners who qualify for the UMAP can receive up to \$18,000 toward any past due amounts on the first mortgage; this assistance is typically paid prior to UMAP payments being made. For MLRP, a one-time payment of up to \$25,000 can be paid toward any past due amounts on the first mortgage. All funds will be disbursed by Florida Housing directly to the loan servicer on behalf of the homeowner.

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4. What are the terms of the assistance?

UMAP/MLRP program funds will be in the form of a zero percent interest, deferred-payment loan that will be subordinate to current mortgages on the home. The loan is forgiven at a rate of 20 percent starting 18 months after acceptance into the program (over a five-year period).

The homeowner will be required to complete a quarterly certification that she/he continues to be eligible for UMAP payments. [See answer for question 12 for more information.](#)

The UMAP/MLRP loan must be paid back if your home is sold prior to the end of the loan period and there are sufficient proceeds from the sale to pay all superior secured loans. Florida Housing will agree to make the UMAP/MLRP loan subordinate for homeowners who refinance their first mortgage to receive more favorable loan terms. However, if a homeowner refinances the first mortgage loan to consolidate debt or receive cash out, the homeowner will be required to repay the UMAP/MLRP loan according to the loan terms.

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5. What are the eligibility requirements?

Eligibility requirements for HHF assistance are organized in three areas.

Homeowners must meet ALL CRITERIA within each category to qualify. However, it is possible for an eligible homeowner to be denied by their mortgage company.

Homeowner Requirements • Must be a legal US resident or legal alien • Must be a Florida resident • Total household income must be below 140 percent area median income (AMI) adjusted for household size at the time of the hardship • The combined monthly cost of the mortgages principal, interest, taxes, insurance, and association dues of all secured mortgages must be greater than 31 percent of the total household's gross income after the financial hardship event • If there has been a bankruptcy, it must be discharged or dismissed • Cannot have a conviction within the last 10 years on a mortgage-related felony (self-certified) ◦ <i>Homeowners will be required to sign an affidavit stating s/he has not been convicted of a mortgage-related felony in the last 10 years; this includes larceny, theft, fraud, forgery, money laundering and/or tax evasion.</i>	Property Requirements • Must be the homeowner's primary residence (proof of homestead required) • Must be located in Florida • Cannot be abandoned, vacant, or condemned • Can be any one of the following structures: ◦ A single-family home, condominium, or townhome ◦ A manufactured or mobile home on a foundation permanently affixed to real estate owned by the homeowners; or ◦ A one-, two-, three- or four-family dwelling unit of which one unit is occupied by the homeowner as the primary residence.
Mortgage Requirements • First mortgage is with a regulated financial institution, Habitat, or USDA • The outstanding principal balance of the first mortgage is \$400,000 or less at the time of application • Homeowner will be ineligible for the program if any subordinate lender (in other words, any lender <u>other than</u> the first mortgage lender) or other entity, including homeowners associations, has initiated a foreclosure claim on the property.	Other Evaluation Criteria • Homeowners who have unencumbered assets or cash reserves (not including items such as retirement or qualified education plans, household goods or motor vehicles necessary for transportation) that are equal to or more than three times the total monthly mortgage payment (including tax and insurance payments), or that total \$5,000 (whichever is greater), must first use those assets toward mortgage payments or other existing debt before being eligible for UMAP/MLRP funds. • The borrower and/or co-borrower, through no fault of their own, must have experienced a financial hardship. The areas of financial hardship that must be reviewed include job loss (unemployed), reduction in income or hours worked (underemployed), reduction of income for a self-employed homeowner, death of a borrower or co-borrower, divorce, or disability. The financial hardship must be as the result of at least a 10 percent reduction in income.

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6. Are there other factors that could make me ineligible for funding?

Even if you meet all of the eligibility requirements listed above, there are a few instances in which you could be deemed ineligible for funding.

- You cannot be participating in a HAMP Trial Modification and receive federal Hardest-Hit funds. You will be contacted by your servicer to verify if you want to remain in the HAMP Trial Modification or proceed with the HHF Program. Mortgage servicers may have different rules regarding the use of Hardest-Hit Funds with their proprietary, or in-house, modification programs.
- In addition, current pending litigation on your primary residence mortgage, up to and including foreclosure proceedings, with the mortgage lender, servicer or other parties may result in a servicer choosing not to receive UMAP/MLRP mortgage payments on your behalf.
- If you have received funding through the Florida Hardest-Hit Fund Principal Reduction program (HHF-PR), the total of your HHF assistance cannot exceed \$50,000.

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7. What documentation will I be asked to provide?

Since HHF program eligibility is determined based on financial need, applicants are required to submit documentation to prove their need.

After you complete the online application, your advisor agency will contact you and ask for the following.

Please note that this is a PRELIMINARY list. It is likely you will be asked to submit additional documents throughout the application process.

- Proof of Florida residency (Florida ID or Florida driver's license)
- Copy of your deed (if available)
- Any correspondence from your mortgage servicer or its attorney (if applicable)
- Most recent mortgage statement
- Last 60 days of pay stubs for all employment and income sources
- Last two months of all current bank statements
- Bankruptcy discharge/dismissal (if applicable)
- Homeowners Association dues statement (if applicable)
- Homeowners Insurance statement
- Property Tax statement
- If unemployed: copy of unemployment eligibility or explanation of benefits
- If self-employed:
 - A copy of the last two year's tax returns with all schedules attached
 - Two months current personal and business bank statements
 - Year-to-date profit and loss statement completed by an independent third party

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8. How do I apply?

To apply for the Florida HHF program, you will need to use our web-based system from a computer with Internet access. The website address is www.FLHardestHitHelp.org. This site contains all the information you will need to begin your application for assistance, with step-by-step instructions and prompts to help you.

If you do not have access to the Internet from your residence, public computers can be found throughout many communities

at public libraries, schools or educational centers, or government-run facilities in your county.

Note: If you receive a "referral code" from an approved Advisor Agency (which is a five-digit number that may be printed on HHF materials), you will need to type that number into the space titled "Referral Code" located on the first page of the online application to ensure you are automatically assigned to that specific Agency. You are not required to a referral code to complete the application; however, if you do not, you will be assigned to an Advisor Agency randomly. Florida Housing will not reassign you once the assignment has been made.

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9. Will a homeowner who receives HHF financial assistance through the UMAP and/or MLRP programs have to pay the money back?

[Please refer to the answer to question 4.](#)

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10. Can a homeowner be a part of another program (HAMP, HARP, other loan modifications and/or trial periods) or HHF-PR and still apply to receive Hardest-Hit Fund financial assistance?

[Please refer to the answer to question 6.](#)

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11. How can I receive help during the application process?

If during the application process you are unsure as to how to complete the application, or you have any questions at all, please click the "Assign Me Now" button, which is located throughout the application. When you click this button, you will be immediately assigned to an advisor that can assist you through the application process. Once they have reached out to you, contact them regarding your questions about the application.

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12. What follow-up is required for the program?

Your assigned advisor is your ONLY point of contact. You will need to contact your advisor for follow-up and updates on your application. Do not call Florida Housing.

Be sure to check the email you used as your username at the beginning of the application, as well as your junk or spam mail folders. The first point of contact from your HHF Advisor may be by phone, but will most likely be by email. It may take up to 10 working days (excluding holidays and weekends) from the completion of your application for your advisor to contact you.

While mortgage payments are being made on your behalf, you will need to certify with your HHF Advisor that you are still unemployed/underemployed and experiencing a financial hardship. This may be done by reviewing bank statements, current paystubs, and other appropriate documentation of your situation or circumstances. If meetings are canceled and the required documentation not submitted to your HHF Advisor in the timeframe provided, you will be terminated from the program.

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13. I am more than 180 days delinquent on my first mortgage. Can I still apply to receive HHF financial assistance?

Yes. Under the most current HHF program eligibility requirements, the number of months your mortgage is delinquent is not considered in determining your eligibility; however, keep in mind that your mortgage servicer has the final say as to whether or not it will accept HHF payments on your behalf.

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14. What happens once I complete the online application?

Once you complete the required information on the website, your initial contact by your assigned advisor may be by phone, but most likely via email. If you have been given an appointment to meet with your advisor, bring your required documents with you. Otherwise, fax or mail them to your advisor. Florida Housing will NOT contact you during the application process; Florida Housing only communicates with your advisor. Your assigned advisor is your point of contact and all of your questions should be directed to him/her.

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15. Where can I find additional information about the HHF programs?

More information on the Florida HHF programs can be found on the website at www.FLHardestHitHelp.org.

For additional questions, please call the Florida Hardest-Hit Fund Toll-Free Information Line at: 1-(877) 863-5244.

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