



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS IMPORTANT PROGRAM UPDATE**

Applications for Florida Hardest-Hit Fund Programs will close January 31, 2018.

If you have not yet completed the application process and would like to see if you are eligible you must fully complete your application by January 31, 2018. If you already have an application in the system, please contact your assigned advisor for additional information on the closing of the program.

*Updated 11/2017*

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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.

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## 2. What programs are available?

Florida Housing has two programs:

### ***Unemployment Mortgage Assistance Program (UMAP)***

For homeowners who are underemployed, unemployed, or have had at least a 10 percent reduction of income through no fault of their own and are experiencing 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 their first mortgage at the time they qualify for the UMAP program, up to \$18,000 can be paid to bring the past due first mortgage current; this assistance will reinstate the first mortgage prior to the UMAP payments beginning.

### ***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 to bring the past-due first mortgage current: up to \$25,000 will be paid.

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## 3. I hear the Hardest-Hit Fund Program is closing. Is that true?

Yes, the deadline to complete an application is January 31, 2018. The online application portals will be closed after that date. If you already have an application in the system, please make sure it is completed by the January 31st deadline and continue to work with your assigned advisor through your application process to determine your eligibility.

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## 4. What is a completed application?

A completed application is defined as completion of the online application and the printing of the application. There are seven steps within the online application, at the end of the seventh step there is a print package button. You will need to print the package. Provided in the application package will be a list of documents that you will be required to submit by the document submittal deadline.

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## 5. What is the document submittal deadline? What will I need to provide?

Provided within the printed application package will be a document submission checklist. All of the documents listed will need to be provided to your assigned advisor agency by April 6, 2018. It will be your responsibility to ensure that the advisor agency is in receipt of those documents. Accepted proof will be an email or letter from the advisor agency stating that they have everything required on the April 6, 2018 to start the review for eligibility. If the advisor agency is missing any document or page of any document you will not be reviewed for eligibility. The documents you will need to provide is listed in question 12 below.

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**6. I already started my application, will the closing impact my application?**

No, if you already have an application in the system you will continue to work with your assigned advisor through your application process to determine your eligibility. Just make sure you have completed the online application by the January 31st deadline as the online portal will be closed after that date. There are required documents that you will need to submit by April 6, 2018 in order to have your application reviewed for eligibility. Please call your assigned advisor who will be able to discuss with you in detail any additional questions you have about the programs closing, your application status and any documents you are missing. Please read question 5 above for further information of deadline and confirmation documents have been received by your advisor.

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**7. I applied before and was deemed ineligible, but want my application re-evaluated before the program closes. Do I need to re-apply?**

You do not need to re-apply, but the deadlines for application completion and document submission will still apply to you. Please read question 4 and 5 above for more information about the application deadline and documents submittal deadline. Please call your assigned advisor—the person who deemed you ineligible during your prior application—and ask that your file be re-evaluated. You should be able to find your Advisor’s contact information in the original application package you submitted. There are required documents that you will need to submit in order to have your application reviewed for eligibility. Your Advisor will be able to discuss with you the changes in the program and determine if your file can be re-opened.

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**8. 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 to bring current their delinquent first mortgage prior to UMAP payments being made. For MLRP, a one-time payment of up to \$25,000 is available to bring current a delinquent first mortgage. All funds will be disbursed by Florida Housing directly to the loan servicer on behalf of the homeowner.

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**9. 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 per the loan terms.

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## 10. 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.**

<p><b>Homeowner Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must be a legal US resident or legal alien</li><li>• Must be a Florida resident</li><li>• Borrower and/or co-borrower combined income must be below 140 percent area median income (AMI) adjusted for household size</li><li>• The combined monthly dollar 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</li><li>• If there has been a bankruptcy, it must be discharged or dismissed</li><li>• Cannot have a conviction within the last 10 years on a mortgage-related felony (self-certified)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <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></li></ul></li></ul>	<p><b>Property Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must be the homeowner's primary residence (proof of homestead required)</li><li>• Must be located in Florida</li><li>• Can be any one of the following structures:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ A single-family home, condominium, or townhome</li><li>◦ A manufactured or mobile home on a foundation permanently affixed to real estate owned by the homeowners; or</li><li>◦ A one-, two-, three- or four-family dwelling unit of which one unit is occupied by the homeowner as the primary residence.</li></ul></li></ul>
<p><b>Mortgage Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First mortgage is with a regulated financial institution, Habitat, or USDA</li><li>• The outstanding principal balance of the first mortgage is \$400,000 or less at the time of application</li><li>• Homeowner cannot have a current pending litigation on the property or mortgage</li></ul>	<p><b>Other Evaluation Criteria</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li></ul>

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

Even if you meet all 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 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 may affect a servicer's participation in receiving mortgage payments on your behalf. Homeowners involved in pending mortgage litigation, up to and including foreclosure proceedings with the mortgage lender, servicer or other parties, **may not be eligible** to receive UMAP/MLRP financial assistance.

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## 12. 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 US Citizenship (Birth Certificate or US Passport)
- 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 a third party

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## 13. 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](http://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 have 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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**14. Will a homeowner who receives HHF financial assistance through the UMAP and/or MLRP programs need to pay the money back?**

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

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**15. 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?**

A homeowner may be in the Hardest-Hit Fund Principal Reduction (PR) program and apply to the UMAP/MLRP program. Homeowners may qualify to be eligible for maximum assistance from both programs.

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**16. 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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**17. 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 will be done by checking unemployment records, 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 time frame provided, you will be terminated from the program.

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**18. 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 it will accept HHF payments on your behalf.

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**19. 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. Otherwise, email, 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 your questions should be directed to him/her.

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

More information on the HHF programs can be found on the website at [www.FLHardestHitHelp.org](http://www.FLHardestHitHelp.org).

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

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