



## Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven Homebuying Program FAQs

### **What is Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven?**

We are a non-profit local housing and community building organization that covers New Haven County and the towns of Killingworth and Clinton. Since our founding in 1986, we have worked alongside individuals and families in the Greater New Haven community to help them build and own their own homes. We have built and rehabbed homes in New Haven, Hamden, and Wallingford. We rely on local volunteers and donors to help build each Habitat home. Habitat homebuyers purchase their home from our organization with a 30-year, no interest, affordable mortgage.

### **How do I apply for the Homebuying Program?**

Applications for the Homebuying Program are available during specific times. We post on our website, on our social media pages, and send out an email alert each time an application period opens. You can join our email list [here](#) to be notified of the next application period. Once the period is open you may print out an application, pick up an application at the Habitat office, or request to have an application mailed to your address.

### **What are the qualifications to be accepted into the Homebuying Program?**

Habitat for Humanity affiliates all over the country look at three qualifications: need for housing, ability to afford a mortgage and other housing payments, and a willingness to partner.

We break those three qualifications down here:

1. A need for housing. Spending in excess of 35% of income on rent, living in an unsafe, unmaintained, or overcrowded space, living in temporary housing, or receiving government assistance for housing all qualify as a need for housing. Other factors may be considered as each applicant has a unique living situation.
2. Willingness to partner. Participating in the Homebuying Program involves completing in-person and online educational classes, completing sweat equity hours on a Habitat build site, and working with Habitat staff members and volunteers. Open communication, working with others, and willingness to share your story are necessary in this program.
3. Ability to pay an affordable mortgage and other housing expenses. During the application period and throughout the Homebuying Program we will examine financial information like income, credit and financial history, and monthly debt.

### **Can you tell me over the phone if I am accepted into the Homebuying Program?**

No, a complete review of the application for the Homebuying Program and the accompanying materials is needed before we can determine if you are qualified. We will communicate our decision or ask for more information via mail. Please make sure your address is up to date so we can reach you.

### **What are the requirements to complete the Homebuying Program?**

Members of the Homebuying Program must complete the required educational classes and one day of sweat equity on the build site. A list of classes and how to schedule them will be available following acceptance into the Homebuying Program. Once the requirements are completed you will be eligible to be entered into the home selection process for any home you are qualified for.

**What is the home selection process?**

As Habitat properties become available, individuals and families who are qualified for each home will be notified. Qualification for each home will depend on the size of the household and the income of the applicant(s). Habitat for Humanity will review your financial information again and ask if you would like to be entered into the home selection process for a specific property or properties. Qualified and interested applicants will be placed into the home selection process. An applicant will be randomly drawn and assigned the property. All individuals and families entered into the home selection process will be notified following the completion of the process.

**What kind of houses do you build?**

We currently build and rehab single-family detached homes. The size and layout of a new home may depend on the lot size and the size and layout of a rehabbed home will depend on the original structure. You can view examples of some of the Habitat homes we have completed [here](#).

**What is sweat equity and how do I complete it?**

Sweat equity is what we call volunteer labor, helping to build Habitat homes. You will have the opportunity to build on multiple home sites and develop skills that will help you maintain a home. Each household is required to complete a minimum of 400 hours of sweat equity prior to purchasing your home. The Habitat staff will work with you to schedule the sweat equity hours and will guide you through the tasks on the build site. Our sweat equity policy will have more information for you to review following the home selection process.

**What is the down payment amount on a Habitat home?**

The down payment for one of our homes is \$600 and this is due within four weeks of being assigned a property.

**What is the interest on a mortgage from Habitat for Humanity?**

Our mortgages are 0% interest.

**What will my monthly payment be on my mortgage for a Habitat home?**

The exact amount will be different for every home but the mortgage will be affordable and the amount will not change over time. You will receive an estimate for the amount of your monthly payment before you enter the home selection process.

**What if I do not qualify for the Homebuying Program right now or I do not get accepted?**

There are many organizations in the New Haven area and throughout the state that specialize in helping individuals and families reach their financial goals. You are welcome to contact one of [these organizations](#) to schedule free one-on-one financial counseling. This can be done prior to applying to the Homebuying Program. If you apply and are not accepted to the Homebuying Program you are always welcome to apply again at a later date.

*If you have a question that you did not find the answer to here please email us at [info@habitatqnh.org](mailto:info@habitatqnh.org). Please note we cannot discuss a decision on an application or your specific financial or housing situation via email, phone, or in-person. To comply with all state and federal lending laws all information must be obtained through the application process only.*