



HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE FUND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) program was established under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) to mitigate financial hardships associated with the coronavirus pandemic. The HAF Program provides funds for the purpose of preventing homeowner mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacement of homeowners experiencing financial hardship after January 21, 2020 through qualified expenses related to mortgages and housing.

Eligible Homeowners

Montana homeowners must meet the following requirements:

- Must have a delinquent Montana Housing loan
- Be listed as a borrower or co-borrower on the mortgage (one application per residence)
- Eligible property type is primary residence, owner-occupied homes located within the state of Montana
- Qualified expenses must be related to current primary residence, owner-occupied home
- Attest to experiencing a financial hardship, directly or indirectly related to Covid-19, after January 21, 2020. The attestation must describe the nature of the financial hardship, e.g., job loss, reduction in income, or increased costs due to healthcare or the need to care for a family member
- Have combined household income equal to or less than 150% area median income, as published by Montana Housing based on household size (assistance will further be prioritized to meet targeting requirements). Homeowners can check their income eligibility using our online tool available at [ARPA.MT.GOV/HOUSING](https://arpa.mt.gov/housing)
- If applicable, the unpaid principal balance of the homeowner’s first mortgage was, at the time of origination, not greater than the conforming loan limit in effect at time of origination. The conforming loan limits for Montana for the last 30 years were:

2022	\$647,200		2002	\$300,700
2021	\$548,000		2001	\$275,000
2020	\$510,400		2000	\$252,700
2019	\$484,350		1999	\$240,000
2018	\$453,100		1998	\$227,150
2017	\$424,100		1997	\$214,600
2016 - 2006	\$417,000		1996	\$207,000
2005	\$359,650		1995 -1993	\$203,150
2004	\$333,700		1992	\$202,300
2003	\$322,700		1991	\$191,250





- HAF assistance may not duplicate other local, state, or federal mortgage assistance received by the household since March 1, 2020

Homeowners must affirm that they reasonably believe, based on the reinstatement and the homeowner's current financial circumstances, that they will be able to continue making mortgage loan payments and avoid displacement. Homeowners who will not be able to resume making regularly scheduled payments, even with assistance through this HAF program, will not be eligible for reinstatement and will be referred to Montana Housing Loan Servicing to explore other loss mitigation options.

Use of Funds:

Eligible households may receive assistance for:

- Mortgage Loan Reinstatement Program: Maximum of \$25,000, *in the form of a loan*, to allow the homeowner to reinstate their mortgage and bring it current, in order to resume making monthly payments. Eligible homeowners will be directed to work with Montana Housing Loan Servicing **first** to determine eligibility for other assistance options available from federal agencies. Funds will be paid directly to Montana Housing Loan Servicing.

Reinstatement Loan Terms:

- 0% interest rate
- Deferred payments for the life of the first mortgage
- Payment due in full when the first mortgage ends (repayment, refinance, transfer of ownership, sale, foreclosure)
- Repayment is subject to review and Montana Housing may, based on homebuyer situation and needs at the time of repayment, require payment in full or establish a payment plan
- Required documentation will include a note and security instrument, recorded as last in line lien on the property

Note: Montana Housing borrowers will have the opportunity to apply for the following types of assistance when the statewide HAF Program launches in early 2022. These programs are not available at this time.

- Lien Prevention Program: Maximum of \$5,000, in the form of a grant, to prevent property tax foreclosure or remove or prevent creation of other liens (HOA, COA, CLT lease payments etc.) that would place homeowner at imminent risk of displacement.
- Utility Payment Assistance: Maximum of \$300 per month, in the form of a grant, to pay past due utilities dating back to April 2020 and not more than three months of future utility payments. Future months of utilities assistance will be determined by using the average of the two most current past due monthly bills. Must be past due on utility payments and qualify for the Mortgage Loan Reinstatement Program or Lien Prevention Program to be eligible.

- Internet/Broadband Payment Assistance: Maximum of \$50 per month, in the form of a grant, to pay past due internet service dating back to April 2020 and not more than three months of future internet payments. Must be past due on internet service payments and qualify for the Mortgage Loan Reinstatement Program or Lien Prevention Program to be eligible.

Resources:

- Questions? Call 406.841.2840.
- Visit <https://www.nwmt.org/partners/> for a list of HUD-approved housing counselors.