



Housing Our Workforce Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Housing Our Workforce program?

Housing Our Workforce (HOW) provides down-payment assistance to homebuyers earning more than 80 percent and up to 120 percent of the area median income. FHLBank Boston has made a commitment to offer grants through the program for three years. In 2019, \$2 million has been set aside for the program.

How does the program work?

HOW provides a two-to-one match of down payments made at time of purchase by eligible homebuyers. For example, if a homebuyer makes a \$1,000 down payment, FHLBank Boston will provide a \$2,000 match. Members approved to participate in the program may make enrollment requests of up to \$20,000 per homebuyer from the pool of funds to assist income-eligible households on a first-come, first-served, homebuyer-by-homebuyer basis.

Are there home purchase price limits associated with the program?

Yes. Home purchase price limits must conform with the 2018 average area purchase prices for mortgage revenue bonds found [here](#).

Can a homebuyer use the HOW program to purchase an investment property?

No. This program is designed to assist homebuyers who are purchasing owner-occupied primary residences. In addition, if the applicant for HOW funds currently owns a primary residence, they must sell the property prior to the purchase of the new owner-occupied, primary residence. They cannot keep the previous primary address and convert it into an investment property.

Can the homebuyer down-payment contribution be a gift or gift of equity?

No. Eligible homebuyers will receive a two-to-one match of down payments they make at time of purchase that must be evidenced on the executed Purchase and Sales agreement. This contribution must be the homebuyer's own funds and not a gift or gift of equity. The homebuyer can receive an additional gift or gift of equity in the transaction, however these sources of funds will not be calculated in the two-to-one match of the grant.

How does my institution participate and submit an application?

Members must apply to participate in the program by completing an online application at housing.fhlbboston.com.

When can I submit an application?

The application period opens on March 20, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. and closes on April 9, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

When will I be notified if my institution has been approved for the program?

Members approved to participate will be notified by email by April 12, 2019.

Is there a limit to how much funding my institution can access?

Yes, there is a member enrollment cap of up to \$100,000 that is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Can homebuyers apply directly to the program to participate?

No, homebuyers must work with a member financial institution that has been approved to participate in the program. If you are a homebuyer, please contact a member financial institution to see if they are an approved participant. FHLBank Boston member financial institutions are listed at fhlbboston.com/aboutus/ourmembers/index.jsp.

Are approved members required to participate in any training?

No, but FHLBank Boston strongly recommends viewing our informational webinars on homebuyer enrollment and disbursement processing.

Does the homebuyer have to complete homeownership education and counseling by an approved agency?

Yes. For more information on what is considered an approved source, please refer to the [EBP/HOW Procedures](#).

Can an exception be made if a homebuyer exceeds the 120 percent Area Median Income?

No. If a household's income exceeds 120 percent, the member will be notified that the enrollment cannot be approved.

What happens if the borrower receiving HOW funds sells the home or refinances?

If a borrower that received funds sells the property, the member providing original financing to the borrower must contact FHLBank Boston to request details and initiate the repayment calculation. Repayment will be due from any net gain on the transaction, unless the home is being sold to a household with income at or below 120 percent of the area median income. If the borrower refinances, the mortgage/deed restriction may remain in place and can be subordinated to the new mortgage loan and repayment calculations will not apply. More information can be found in the [EBP/HOW Procedures](#).

Please refer to the "Resources for Members" on the Housing Our Workforce section of our website.