

What is the Housing Our Workforce program?

Housing Our Workforce (HOW) provides down-payment assistance to homebuyers earning more than 80% and up to 120% of the area median income.

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 \$5,000 down payment, FHLBank Boston will provide a \$10,000 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.

How does the two-to-one match operate?

The homebuyer must contribute down payment at time of purchase and sales agreement and document with a fully executed purchase and sales agreement or amended addendum. The HOW grant cannot be matched with homebuyer cash to close. Members cannot request a grant amount that exceeds the difference between the purchase price minus the first mortgage loan amount. For example, if the purchase price is \$275,000 with a first mortgage loan of \$265,000, the maximum grant is \$10,000.

Are there home purchase price limits associated with the program?

Yes. Home purchase price limits must conform with the 2019 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 apply?

Members must apply by completing an [online application](#).

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?

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.

Are approved members required to participate in any training?

Yes. At least one person/staff member must attend live or pre-recorded enrollment and disbursement training sessions on behalf of the member.

Do homebuyers have to complete homeownership education and counseling by an approved agency?

Homeownership education and counseling is required for first-time homebuyers only. Please refer to the [2020 agency list](#).

Can an exception be made if a homebuyer exceeds the 120% area median income?

No. If a household's income exceeds 120%, 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 homeowner 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 proceeds on the transaction, unless the home is being sold to a household with income at or below 120% of the area median income or the amount due is \$2,500 or less. 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.

Please refer to "Resources for Members" on the [Housing Our Workforce](#) section of our website.