

# Florida Housing's Affordable Housing Programs

## HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS

### First Time Homebuyer Program

Florida Housing issues bonds under the Single Family Mortgage Revenue Bond Program and the proceeds from these bonds are used to originate 30-year mortgage loans through the First Time Homebuyer Program. First-time homebuyers then benefit from lower mortgage interest rates due to the tax-exempt status of the bonds. Eligible borrowers have to meet certain criteria such as the first-time homebuyer requirement, as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, credit worthiness, and an appropriate income level, not exceeding program limits.

### Down Payment Assistance Programs

Funds for down payment assistance and closing costs are often provided in conjunction with the First Time Homebuyer Program through the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP), the HOME Investment Partnerships program, the Homeownership Assistance for Moderate Income (HAMI) program and Three Percent Cash Assistance.

### Homeownership Loan Program

The Homeownership Loan Program allows developers to apply for funding through either the HOME Investment Partnerships program or the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP). Funding is obtained through a competitive process to assist with the construction of homes or to provide purchase assistance to the homebuyer for up to 25 percent of the purchase price of the home. The HOME program is a federal program available to eligible for-profit and nonprofit developers, local housing agencies, community housing development organizations, and public housing authorities. HAP is a state funded program tailored to nonprofit organizations and nonprofit sponsors, as well as community based organizations.

### Mortgage Credit Certificate

A Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) allows the homebuyer to claim a tax credit for some portion of the mortgage interest paid per year. It is a dollar for dollar reduction against their federal tax liability. An MCC may be issued to homebuyers at tax credit rates varying from 10 percent to 50 percent based on the mortgage interest paid per year capped at \$2,000 annually. Florida Housing determines the tax credit rate. The credit is non-refundable but may be carried forward for a period up to three (3) years.

## MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

### Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bonds

The Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond program uses both taxable and tax-exempt bonds to provide below market rate loans to nonprofit and for-profit developers who set aside a certain percentage of their apartment units for low income families. Proceeds from the sale of these bonds are used to construct or acquire and rehabilitate multifamily rental properties. The Bond program's application scoring and ranking criteria encourage increased set asides for low-income households. Special consideration is given to properties that target specific geographic areas such HOPE VI communities.

### Florida Affordable Housing Guarantee

The Florida Affordable Housing Guarantee Program encourages affordable housing lending by issuing guarantees on financing for affordable housing. This program provides guarantees on taxable and tax-exempt bonds, and creates a security mechanism that allows lenders to sell affordable housing loans in the secondary market. It also encourages affordable housing lending activities that would not otherwise have taken place.

### HOME Investment Partnerships

The HOME program provides non-amortizing, low interest rate loans to developers of affordable housing who acquire, rehabilitate, or construct housing for low income families. Loans are offered through the annual Universal Cycle at the simple interest rate of zero percent to nonprofit applicants and three percent to for-profit applicants. Florida Housing's HOME program is designed for smaller developments in rural areas.

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### **Elderly Housing Community Loan**

A portion of State Apartment Incentive Loan funds is set aside to fund the Elderly Housing Community Loan (EHCL) program. This program provides up to \$750,000 in loans to make substantial improvements to existing affordable elderly rental housing. The EHCL program generally has one competitive funding cycle each year and the application period is open for a minimum of 60 days. These funds are available for the purpose of making building preservation, sanitation repairs or improvements required by federal, state or local regulation codes, and for life safety or security related improvements.

### **Low Income Housing Tax Credits**

The competitive Housing Credit program provides for-profit and nonprofit organizations with a dollar-for-dollar reduction in federal tax liability in exchange for the acquisition and substantial rehabilitation, substantial rehabilitation or new construction of affordable rental housing units. Special consideration is given to properties that target specific demographic groups such as the elderly, homeless people, farmworkers and commercial fishing workers. Consideration is also given to properties that target specific geographic areas such as the Florida Keys, rural areas, urban infill areas, and Front Porch Florida communities.

### **State Apartment Incentive Loan Program**

The State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program provides low-interest loans on a competitive basis to developers of affordable rental housing each year. SAIL funds provide gap financing that allows developers to obtain the full financing needed to construct affordable multifamily units. SAIL dollars are available to individuals, public entities, and nonprofit or for-profit organizations for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of multifamily units. Special consideration is given to properties that target specific demographic groups such as the elderly, homeless people, farmworkers, and commercial fishing workers.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

### **Predevelopment Loan Program**

The Predevelopment Loan Program (PLP) assists nonprofit and community based organizations, local governments, and public housing authorities with planning, financing, and developing affordable housing. Eligible organizations may apply for a loan of up to \$500,000 for predevelopment activities such as rezoning, title searches, legal fees, impact fees, administrative costs, soil tests, engineering fees, appraisals, feasibility analyses, audit fees, earnest money deposits, insurance fees, commitment fees, administrative costs, marketing expenses, and acquisition expenses.

### **State Housing Initiatives Partnership**

The State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program provides funds to local governments on a population-based formula as an incentive to produce and preserve affordable housing for very low, low, and moderate income families. These funds are derived from the collection of documentary stamp tax revenues, which are deposited into the Local Government Housing Trust Fund. SHIP funds are distributed on an entitlement basis to all 67 counties and 48 Community Development Block Grant entitlement cities in Florida. The minimum allocation per county is \$350,000. SHIP dollars may be used to fund emergency repairs, new construction, rehabilitation, downpayment and closing cost assistance, impact fees, construction and gap financing, mortgage buy-downs, acquisition of property for affordable housing, matching dollars for federal housing grants and programs, and homeownership counseling. Each participating local government may use up to ten percent of their SHIP funds for administrative expenses.

### **Demonstration Loans**

Florida Housing issues Demonstration Loans under authority of 420.507, F.S. Demonstration Loans are issued through a request for proposals (RFP) process one or more times throughout the year. Each RFP is developed to address a certain type of special needs housing. Demonstration Loans have been approved for housing for the homeless and elderly, farmworkers, persons with disabilities and victims of domestic violence.

### **Affordable Housing Catalyst Program**

The Florida Legislature transferred the Affordable Housing Catalyst Program from the Department of Community Affairs to Florida Housing in 2004. This program provides on-site and telephone technical assistance and training on the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program and other affordable housing programs. This technical assistance includes assisting agencies in leveraging those dollars with other public and private funding sources, training on forming local and regional public/private partnerships, working effectively with lending institutions, implementing regulatory reform, training for boards of directors, implementing rehabilitation and emergency repair programs, developing volunteer programs, assisting with the design and establishment of fiscal and program tracking systems, and compliance requirements of state and federally funded housing programs. Workshops are conducted throughout the year at locations around the state.